

UPDATES ON COVID-19

DECEMBER 7, 2021

Government Updates

Federal

- The omicron variant has been identified in at least 15 states, according to CDC. At this time, the delta variant remains the dominant strain throughout the country.

NY State

- New York State COVID-19 updates include: hospitalizations 3,285 (+4), ICU 335 (+2), 7-Day Average Positivity 4.82%; NYC lower but increasing.

NY City:

- Mayor de Blasio announced a new vaccine mandate requiring all private sector employees to get vaccinated by December 27th.
- Mayor de Blasio announced that the City is expanding the Key 2 NYC program to include children ages 5-11 to have one dose as of 12/14 and all persons age 12 and over to have two doses as of 12/27.

Gatherings and Food Policy Effective 11/29

- The University is still in “yellow” on our [monitoring plan](#), but our 99.99% vaccination rate and the consistent rate of less than one percent COVID positive cases among the campus population allowed us to begin to providing some flexibility in dining and gatherings, especially as we go into much colder weather.
- Key points:
 - “Informal/small group dining” for faculty, staff and students is permissible on and off campus, and gatherings of 25 or fewer may serve food and beverages.
 - Events with 26 or more require pre-approval and can only be grab and go.
 - Masking is still a best practice!

1. Eating On and Off Campus in Private or in Small Groups

- Vaccinated individuals may eat indoors with small groupings of students or colleagues, on or off campus; time without masks should be as short as possible.
- Masks should be lowered when eating or drinking and put back on between bites and during conversations and replaced when a meal is finished. Distancing as much as possible is also encouraged.
- Unvaccinated individuals must maintain six-foot distancing if eating and minimize time without masking.
- Individuals should always attempt to take food to a separate location where distancing is feasible so as to protect themselves and others who are at higher risk or who are uncomfortable with eating without distancing.

2. Eating at Gatherings and Events

- Event organizers should ensure their events are planned and conducted in compliance with current University guidelines. These apply to all events hosted on or off-campus such as academic, research and administrative events, as well as to social and extracurricular ones, including holiday gatherings.
- Small gatherings—defined as 25 or fewer—will be subject to the same considerations as above.
- Events with more than 25 persons must be approved via the [Request for Exception form](#). Food for such events is limited to grab-and-go. Beverages are permitted to complement the event, as needed, while masking is required at all times.

Gatherings and Food Policy

For CUID-only Events

- No capacity threshold
- Green Pass required
- Masks required indoors
- Meals may be served consistent with the guidelines in #1, if 25 or fewer persons in attendance
- Meals must be grab-and-go, if group of more than 25 persons

For Events with Non-CUID Guests

- **Non-CUID guests are not allowed without prior approval**
- If approved, proof of vaccination for non-CUID guests is required
- ID information from non-CUID attendees is needed for contact tracing purposes
- Green Pass required for CUID
- Masks required indoors
- Grab-and-go food and beverages only where non-affiliates are present, irrespective of gathering size

Gatherings and Food Policy

These campus policies for COVID safety continue until further notice:

- Events and gatherings with non-CUID holder visitors are restricted and require approval
- Green Pass and daily attestation are required for CUID holders
- Non-CUID visitors must show proof of vaccination
- Surveillance testing for Columbia affiliates
- Weekly testing for unvaccinated individuals with approved vaccination exemptions
- Isolation of COVID-19 cases and extensive contact tracing in the event of a positive case with appropriate management of cases and close contacts