

## Sarah Mabrouk

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**From:** Nancy Niemi  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 24, 2022 2:56 PM  
**To:** FacStaff; STUDENTS  
**Subject:** COVID Guidelines  
**Attachments:** FSU COVID Guidelines.docx

August 24, 2022

Dear FSU Community,

I am delighted to see our campus come to life as the new year comes upon us. I hope you have had the opportunity to rest and enjoy some time with those whose company brings you peace and joy. The walkways and streets of campus feel revitalized as student athletes, more faculty and more staff return!

COVID-19 is of course still with us and we begin the new year addressing its new challenges, even as we move from a pandemic to an endemic phase. The attached document contains our current COVID-19 Guidelines. The goal of these guidelines is to keep every member of our community as safe as possible, while also providing as close to a full college experience as we can. I ask that everyone please review the entire document carefully. The information can also be found on our [COVID-19 website](#).

Here are some important highlights of the full guidelines:

- The University's vaccine and booster mandate remains in place. All new employees and students must be in compliance with this requirement or have an approved exemption.
- COVID testing procedures and methods have changed to address the current public health needs of our community.
- Any FSU community member who exhibits COVID-type symptoms should not come to campus until they have tested negative for COVID-19.
- Effective September 1, 2022, no universal mask mandate will be in place at the University. The University reserves the right to increase or decrease mask requirements for on campus activities depending upon the level of known spread of COVID-19 on campus.
- Mask guidelines for various locations on campus have changed to reflect current public health recommendations while always allowing for individuals to mask responsibly depending upon their personal health conditions.

We have a good plan in place to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on our campus this year while moving ahead confidently in this new phase of community health and safety. Thank you in advance for your attention to these guidelines. I am looking forward to a dynamic semester and I am truly excited to meet all of you in the coming weeks. FSU's future is extraordinary.

Warmly,  
Nancy

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**Framingham**  
State University



# Framingham State University

## Academic Year 2022-2023

### COVID-19 Guidelines

#### Introduction

As we enter our third academic year affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the virus has changed and so too will the University's approaches to mitigating the ongoing effects on our campus community. Many of the mitigation components that have proven successful in the past will continue to be utilized but in different ways. The COVID vaccine mandate has been in place for a year for both our students and employees which has significantly altered our campus community's risk of severe illness when or if they contract COVID. This COVID-19 Guide offers structure for the University to follow and use responsibly. We anticipate the virus to continue to evolve and wax and wane dependent upon a variety of factors including increases in indoor gatherings, community specific spread and the introduction of additional boosters to address new variants.

While we must remain vigilant – we must also work equally hard to find our way back to our traditional campus experiences. We all have certain take aways from our time in the pandemic – personal responsibility being foremost in our minds whether that means choosing to mask in certain circumstances, testing when you are asymptomatic, or rapid testing at home when you detect symptoms. The University will continue to support students, faculty and staff in this time of transition by offering guidance and educational materials, testing materials and providing ongoing monitoring of campus conditions to determine if changes are merited. Any and all Memoranda of Agreement that include COVID-19 requirements will be upheld by the University and those subject to the agreements. This content outlines our start of term plan with an intentional level of flexibility that will offer the administration and the COVID Oversight Team options to exercise as we move through the 2022-2023 academic year.

#### Vaccinations & Boosters

All new employees will be required to document and attest to having received the COVID-19 vaccine and any required boosters as a term and condition of employment prior to their start of work. Current employees have either fulfilled their vaccination and/or booster requirements or been approved for a religious or medical exemption.

Students remain subject to the COVID-19 vaccine mandate which currently includes a booster of the initial single or series of inoculations. The University Health Center (UHC) will ensure compliance with this vaccine as they do for other state mandated vaccination requirements. The UHC is always able to refer students to local providers to obtain their vaccines. Any student not fulfilling this requirement completely will have a registration hold placed on their records restricting a subsequent term enrollment.

Employees and students are all encouraged to keep up to date with any boosters that they become qualified to receive to serve as their best defense to resist COVID-19 or minimize its effects if they contract the virus.

Students and employees who operate fully remotely and do not come to campus for either academic or co-curricular activities are not required to fulfill the vaccination requirement while they remain fully remote.

For student assistance related to the COVID-19 vaccination please contact: [healthcenter@framingham.edu](mailto:healthcenter@framingham.edu) or [upload your vaccination information](#).

For employee assistance related to the COVID-19 vaccination and documentation of the requirement please contact: [humanresources@framingham.edu](mailto:humanresources@framingham.edu) or [upload your vaccination information](#).

## COVID-19 Testing

### Asymptomatic Testing

- The University Health Center (UHC) will establish protocols for the use of the self-service PCR test and the rapid test based on the individual's self-disclosed health status.
- Any FSU community member who has had a known exposure to COVID-19 is encouraged to monitor their symptoms and test 3-5 days after exposure.
- Employees do not receive health services from UHC. Asymptomatic self-administered COVID-19 testing will be made available at no cost through the UHC for any FSU community member who requests it.

### Symptomatic Testing

- Any FSU community member who exhibits any COVID-type symptoms should not come to campus until they have tested negative for COVID-19. Once a negative test is produced, they are encouraged to test daily while symptomatic and to wear a mask on campus.
- Residential students are encouraged to bring rapid tests with them, test themselves if symptomatic and contact the UHC for further guidance.
- For more information on- or off-campus COVID-19 testing contact: [healthcenter@framingham.edu](mailto:healthcenter@framingham.edu)
- For further details on the FSU COVID testing protocol, see Appendix A.

## Contact Tracing

Evidence from our 2021-2022 academic year found very low levels of the spread of COVID-19 on our campus. Massachusetts department of public health support has ceased in the area of contact tracing. As such, when a positive COVID-19 case is identified in a member of the University community, the individual will be asked to communicate directly with their "close contacts" to make them aware of their potential exposure.

As has been our practice in the past, in the event that a student will be absent from class for three or more consecutive days, the Office of the Dean of Students will notify the faculty member of the documented medical absence. No distinctions will be made for COVID-19 versus any other medical or personal situation that prevents a student from attending class.

## Isolation and Quarantine Protocols

The University will follow the [CDC recommendations for isolation and quarantine of COVID-19 positive individuals](#) unless advised otherwise by a health professional.

## Masking

Effective September 1, 2022 no universal mask mandate will be in place at the University. Any and all requirements for masking contained in current labor Memoranda of Agreement related to masking will be upheld by the University and University personnel subject to those agreements. The University reserves the right to increase or decrease mask requirements for on campus activities depending upon the level of known spread of COVID-19 on campus. Any and all individuals seeking to mask while on University property shall have that option and their choice shall be respected.

To the extent that certain specific services or activities pose a higher risk of potential transmission, masks will be required including the University Counseling, Health and Wellness Center and Athletic Training Services consistent with healthcare settings in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Individuals seeking services in these areas should bring and wear masks prior to entry. Masks may be requested or recommended for certain activities or events based on the nature of the venue and/or the activity. In those cases, masks will be offered and provided to participants.

As we begin the 2022-2023 academic year, faculty or librarians who elect to mask while teaching may require that students also wear masks in classrooms and instructional spaces while classes are being taught. Individuals who occupy private offices on campus may require masking of guests in their office and in the event the guest is unable or unwilling to wear a mask, a reasonable remote alternative must be provided to offer the service of that individual or department. Private offices requiring masking must be signed to notify individuals of the requirement prior to entry.

Individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 and have been released from isolation, or those with a known exposure to COVID-19 should mask for the required periods in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#).

Students and employees are encouraged to bring a well-fitting mask with them to campus each day as they move through their daily activities potentially requiring masking. Disposable surgical masks will be made available in a variety of locations on campus for the duration of the academic year to support this effort.

## Athletics

Student athletes will fulfill the same vaccination and COVID related requirements as all other on campus students. Should the Massachusetts State College Athletic Conference (MASCAC) or National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) impose additional restrictions or requirements, that apply to FSU athletics, these will be fulfilled accordingly.

## Residence Life

### Residents

Residential students will fulfill the same vaccination and COVID related requirements as all other on campus students.

## Guests

Guests entering the residence halls for either a short term or overnight stay are strongly encouraged to be up to date with the COVID-19 vaccine.

## Signage

To aid individuals in navigating the FSU campus safely and knowledgeably, signage will notify occupants of any FSU ground or facility that requires masking. FSU respects but does not universally require mask wearing by individuals on campus. Unless otherwise indicated at a location or activity, masks are not required. This policy is subject to change based on current public health conditions. Occupants of private offices may designate a mask requirement and display that information prominently at the entrance of their office (a template will be provided). Individuals not wishing to comply with this requirement must be offered an alternate remote meeting or service in lieu of an in-person meeting.

## COVID Oversight Team

A COVID Oversight Team will continue to meet on a bi-weekly basis or as needed to review current public health trends, assess campus conditions based on reports from related departments and determine if changes in current COVID-19 protocols should be recommended to the President and Executive Staff. The proposed composition of this group will include (2) MSCA members, (1) Residence Life staff, (1) Facilities staff, (1) Dean of Students staff, (1-2) University Health Center staff, (1) Human Resources staff, (1) Athletics staff, (1) Academic Affairs staff. The Chief of Staff & General Counsel will convene the group who will meet alternating Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. beginning on September 13, 2022.

## Closing

Since March of 2020, the Framingham State University campus community has worked together to keep the campus as safe as possible in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. These guidelines will continue to move us forward and allow for the necessary adjustments as we proceed through this ongoing public health situation.

*Release date: August 24, 2022*

## APPENDIX A

### Covid-19 Testing Protocol, Fall 2022

Framingham State University no longer requires asymptomatic surveillance testing for any students. Framingham State University no longer requires asymptomatic surveillance testing staff or faculty unless they have received an approved exemption from the COVID vaccine from the University. Testing requirements may be re-implemented should COVID conditions worsen. Protocol and procedure related to COVID-19 are based on guidance from the CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Testing is strongly recommended:

- After developing new COVID-like symptoms such as cough, fever, runny nose, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, etc.
- 3-5 days after known exposure to COVID-19

### Self-Administered Rapid Antigen Tests:

Framingham State University Health Center (UHC) encourages all students and employees to keep rapid COVID antigen tests on hand to self-administer as needed, especially in the event of COVID-like symptoms, or a recent known exposure.

UHC will continue to distribute free rapid antigen COVID tests as supplies last. Rapid tests can be picked up outside of Foster Hall, Room 208 as needed. Contact Pam Lehmberg at [Plehmberg@framingham.edu](mailto:Plehmberg@framingham.edu) with any questions about obtaining rapid tests on campus.

Students and employees can obtain rapid antigen tests off campus via:

- Individual health insurance plan's preferred pharmacy
- Every residence in the U.S. is eligible to order four free at-home COVID-19 tests. FSU students living on campus can use their campus mailing address to receive the tests.

### Self-Administered PCR Tests

Effective September 1, 2022, PCR testing will be made available *when clinically indicated* via self-collection through a partnership with [COLOR](#). COLOR kits can be picked up and dropped off on Mondays, between 10am-1pm in the designated area outside Foster Hall, room 208. In the event of a Monday holiday, PCR test kits can be picked up and dropped off on Tuesdays, between 10am-1pm. Specimens must be collected on the same day that the test kit is activated and dropped off. Results will be available 24-48 hours after drop off. Contact [Plehmberg@framingham.edu](mailto:Plehmberg@framingham.edu) with questions about self-administered PCR tests.

### Positive COVID-19 Test Results Notification

Students who have tested positive should inform the UHC at [Healthcenter@framingham.edu](mailto:Healthcenter@framingham.edu) to receive care and consultation as needed.

Faculty and staff who test positive should inform Human Resources at [hr-leaves@framingham.edu](mailto:hr-leaves@framingham.edu) or call 508-626-4570.

### UHC Clinical Services

The UHC provides in-person and telehealth care exclusively to Framingham State University students. UHC does not provide healthcare to FSU staff or faculty. FSU staff and faculty with COVID symptoms should seek medical advice and care from their PCP or local urgent care centers.