

January 4, 2022

CCAC Colleagues,

As you are undoubtedly aware, there has been a significant increase in the number of COVID-19 cases both nationally and here in Allegheny County over the holidays. This is due in part to the emergence of the Omicron variant, which seems to be more transmissible than the original SARS-CoV-2 strain (although it's yet to be determined how it compares to the Delta variant) and is fast becoming the dominant variant.

While the situation is evolving, the CDC continues to stress that vaccines remain the best protection from COVID-19. In addition to being highly effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death, they slow transmission and reduce the likelihood of new variants emerging. As a result, the CDC recommends that everyone 5 years and older protect themselves from COVID-19 by getting fully vaccinated and that everyone aged 18 years and older should get a booster shot at least two months after their initial J&J/Janssen vaccine or six months after completing their primary COVID-19 vaccination series of Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna.

To that end, the college continues to offer free COVID-19 vaccinations and booster shots for all CCAC employees, students, and family members. Both the Pfizer and Moderna versions are available. New clinic dates have been added, so if you or a family member is interested in getting vaccinated, there are many openings available. Please watch for and respond to an Integrated Health 21 (IH21) announcement to register for any of the dates below.

1/18/2022	9:00 AM	12:00 PM	Tue	Allegheny Campus SSC Lobby
1/25/2022	4:00 PM	7:00 PM	Tue	Boyce Campus N417
2/2/2022	4:00 PM	7:00 PM	Wed	West Hills Center Café
2/10/2022	4:00 PM	7:00 PM	Thurs	North Campus Gym
2/15/2022	4:00 PM	7:00 PM	Tue	South Campus Gym
2/22/2022	9:00 AM	12:00 PM	Tue	Allegheny Campus SSC Lobby
3/2/2022	9:00 AM	12:00 PM	Wed	Boyce Campus N417
3/10/2022	9:00 AM	12:00 PM	Thurs	West Hills Center Café
3/16/2022	9:00 AM	12:00 PM	Wed	North Campus Gym
3/22/2022	4:00 PM	7:00 PM	Tue	South Campus Gym
3/30/2022	4:00 PM	7:00 PM	Wed	Allegheny Campus SSC Lobby

In addition to following the recommendations of both the CDC and the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD), it is important to adhere to the college mandate requiring all CCAC employees, students, contractors, vendors and visitors to wear a mask or face covering that meets CDC guidelines at all times indoors in any nonprivate (i.e., more than one occupant) room or other CCAC work location. This applies to everyone, regardless of vaccination status. Face masks are also mandatory in places where the individual will, or is likely to be, in proximity to other individuals (e.g., common areas, lobbies, hallways, elevators, vehicles, etc.) Masks may be removed in designated food service and eating areas, in accordance with posted guidelines and physical distancing requirements that remain in place at all CCAC facilities. Should

you need a mask for whatever reason, stop by your campus or center security desk or see any security officer for a new washable mask. Masks are not required in outdoor locations.

The CDC and ACHD have also announced new safety measures for individuals who have tested positive and/or been exposed to COVID-19, which the college is now following, effective immediately. Should you test positive, you may return to work given the following criteria are met:

- You have completed five days of isolation starting from the day you first experienced symptoms of COVID-19 AND if you are 24 hours free of fever (without the use of medicine to reduce the fever) AND your symptoms are improving.
- If your symptoms are not improving and/or if you are still running a fever (without the use of medicine to reduce the fever), you must remain in isolation longer than five days. You must be fever-free for at least 24 hours and your symptoms need to be improving.
- If you never had symptoms, you can return to work five days after the date of your positive test (the date the sample was taken).
- If you were hospitalized for COVID-19, your isolation may be up to 20 days. Discuss this with your health care provider.
- Do NOT get another PCR test for COVID-19 for the next 90 days unless you develop new symptoms. It is common for a PCR test to remain positive for up to a couple of months, even though you are no longer able to spread the virus.

Additionally, the CDC has updated its recommended quarantine period for anyone in the general public who is exposed to COVID-19. Consequently, CCAC employees who are unvaccinated or are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than two months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted, must now quarantine for five days.

Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine following an exposure. Whenever possible, employees are urged to get tested for SARS-CoV-2 on the fifth day after exposure. If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19. It's also helpful to note that isolation relates to behavior after a confirmed infection. Isolation for five days followed by wearing a well-fitting mask will minimize the risk of spreading the virus to others. Quarantine refers to the time following exposure to the virus or close contact with someone known to have COVID-19.

The college's Office of Human Resources is available to address any questions and/or concerns related to CCAC's COVID-19 testing protocols and reporting. Further information regarding COVID-19 mitigation measures is available via the [CDC](#) and [ACHD](#) websites.

The challenges we continue to face during this pandemic are extremely stressful, complex and ever-changing, but we will get through them if we remain focused on adapting our behavior to meet the evolving nature of the virus and by abiding by all public health measures. Thank you for all you are doing to help keep CCAC a safe place for us all.

Best,
Quintin Bullock
President