

Dear Members of the Keystone College Community:

I would like to provide an important update regarding the Keystone College's COVID-19 health and safety policy.

As you know, earlier this summer, Keystone College announced that, in accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), fully vaccinated individuals no longer had to wear face coverings/masks outside or in non-academic buildings. We noted that faculty members would determine whether masks would be required on either a course-by-course or class-by-class basis. We also said that we would keep the campus community informed about any new developments regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and any policy changes that might occur as a result.

As has been widely reported, COVID-19 cases are rising rapidly throughout the nation, including in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The rapid spread of the highly infectious COVID-19 Delta Variant has been extremely alarming. Data has shown that one person infected with this strain can easily infect six to eight additional people, a significantly higher amount than the original strain. Also, infections can be spread by both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.

Keystone has reviewed our masking policy accordingly. We have determined that, in the best interest of the health and safety of the entire college community, we will require masks/face coverings to be worn by all members of the college community inside all campus buildings, including academic buildings, common areas of residence halls, and the student restaurant (when not eating). Masks/face coverings will not be required inside individual residence hall rooms. They will also will not be required in individual employee offices unless assisting in-person visitors. There will be no masking requirements for any outdoor activities. This policy will apply to both vaccinated and non-vaccinated individuals and includes all members of the college community: students, faculty, staff, and visitors to campus. The indoor mask requirement will be effective beginning Tuesday, August 17, 2021.

We encourage everyone to obtain a COVID-19 vaccination if they have not already done so. As previously announced, once the federal “emergency use” authorization is lifted, Keystone College will require that students and employees receive an authorized COVID-19 vaccine. Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine after an exposure to another person with COVID-19 or participate in surveillance testing during the academic year. Also, fully-vaccinated individuals generally experience lesser symptoms and severe illness as a result of “breakthrough” infections. Free vaccine clinics will be offered at Keystone and will be available at various locations in the local community. We will provide additional updates on our COVID-19 policies as needed. For more information on all COVID-19 policies, please visit www.keystone.edu/covid/.

Once again, we are making this decision out of an abundance of caution for the entire campus community. Our top priority is to maintain a safe and healthy campus environment as we resume in-person learning and campus activities for the fall semester. Thank you to everyone for your understanding and perseverance. Please stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Tracy L. Brundage, Ph.D.
President