

From: [SL Office of Student Life](#)
To: [Pelletier, Jen](#)
Subject: COVID-19 Response Updates
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January 31, 2022

Dear Jen:

It's hard to believe we are approaching the end of the first month of 2022 and already so much has taken place on campus. As you know, for the start of spring semester, we had to put some extra safeguards in place in response to the omicron variant. The good news is that those temporary measures have already proven to be helpful, as we have seen a consistent decrease in positivity rates among our student and employee populations. Our vaccination rate remains strong at higher than 93%, and we continue to see great interest and action among students who are eligible for a booster vaccine.

Still, it is critically important that all Buckeyes continue doing all they can as we continue fighting COVID-19 – be mindful of and follow safe and healthy practices, stay or get up to date on the vaccines for which you are eligible, test if you are required or need to, stay home if you are sick and keep the best interest of your own health – and those around you – in the top of your mind always.

As we once again renew our commitment to ourselves and each other, we are pleased to share with you some updates about our pandemic response guidance:

Events and gatherings

- We greatly appreciate the many student leaders, organizations and departments that quickly transitioned January programming to virtual formats. Your efforts paid off, and we are in a position to begin the transition back to in-person activities. If you want to make the switch, we strongly urge you to implement the appropriate safe and healthy considerations that will help you hold a safe event, and help Ohio State have an uninterrupted semester. As you plan, please incorporate measures that will promote adherence to: local/university mask mandates, appropriate physical distancing, availability of PPE and hand sanitizer, limited distribution of literature and other items, and any other recommendations your event planners, coordinators and public health advisors may have.
- We will also relax restrictions on food and drink at events and gatherings. If you decide to have food and drinks, we continue to encourage pre-packaged items and properly spaced seating/standing areas for eating/drinking and masking between bites and sips.

Athletic concessions and dining

- We appreciate everyone's patience as we have worked to respond to health and safety needs, while providing the on-campus experiences our community desires. Following are some updates we hope you will find helpful:
 - Starting with the February 3 men's basketball game in the Schottenstein Center against Iowa, concessions will resume at all athletic events, with the full menu available for events later in February. We appreciate fans' commitment to mask-wearing and ask that you keep up the good work.
 - Since the end of the first week of classes, we have worked to quickly increase seating capacity throughout all of our on-campus dining locations. Beginning on February 1, you will begin to see all facilities reset to the capacities you enjoyed in autumn semester.

Recreation

- If you have recently recovered from COVID-19, please use caution and be aware of any new symptoms when you resume exercise. If you had significant symptoms, you should discuss the situation with your primary care provider prior to resuming high-intensity exercise. When exercising, if you develop heart symptoms such as chest pain, shortness of breath, abnormal heartbeats, near passing out or passing out, seek medical care from your primary care provider or Student Health Services. If you are aware of others having these symptoms, please encourage them to seek care.
- We know that wearing a mask during strenuous activity can be inconvenient and uncomfortable. Given our campus's significantly high vaccination rate, state and local guidance regarding masking and the strides we have made with COVID-19 testing positivity, beginning February 1, masks will be strongly recommended but not required for members who have no COVID-related symptoms and are taking part in strenuous activity (except for swimming for which masks are not required).
- When members or visitors are not strenuously exercising, masks must be worn at all other times and in all other spaces throughout the recreation facilities.
- We will also be resuming access to the following features:
 - Indoor basketball courts
 - Indoor soccer courts
 - Full capacity in group fitness classes
 - Events and gatherings including rolling resumption of club sports and intramurals, as schedules can be determined.
- We have received some questions about cleaning protocols and materials in the rec centers. We can confirm that our established sanitation protocols are still in place. Members will continue having access to cleaning materials, and we have transitioned from utilizing cleaning wipes to sanitizing spray and paper towels in all facilities.

Common spaces in Student Life facilities

We know that having ample space to come together informally is important to creating community. So, we are pleased that we will be able to resume full seating capacity in public and common spaces in Student Life facilities, including the Ohio Union, recreation centers and the Younkin Success Center.

As always, we will continue to monitor the path of the virus, its effects and expected impacts, and federal, state and local guidance. We will always quickly pivot to make the necessary adjustments as we go through the semester. And don't forget: if you are eligible for a booster, [appointments are available](#) on the Columbus campus, at the Wexner Medical Center and statewide. Those who get a booster can enter the [Buckeye Booster Drawing](#). Weekly, the university will award \$100 gift cards to 50 students who have received their booster shot and entered the drawing. You only need to submit the [entry form](#) and booster information once to be eligible for each drawing.

Thank you for your ongoing patience, spirit and resilience, Buckeyes.



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