January 6, 2022

Dear Iowa State Community,

 As we return from our holiday travels and time spent with family and friends, Iowa State’s public health team is seeing more flu and COVID-19 cases and expects the increase to continue as we start the spring semester. That is why we are once again asking for your help to protect the health of our campus community.

 We encourage you to get vaccinated, wear a mask and stay home if you are sick. The [COVID-19 vaccine is safe](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/safety-of-vaccines.html), decreases the risk of severe illness, hospitalization and death and is the best tool we have to protect against COVID-19. And getting a booster shot, when eligible, increases the effectiveness of the vaccine, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html).

 With the [high rate of COVID-19 transmission](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view?list_select_state=Iowa&data-type=Risk&list_select_county=19169) in Story County, the CDC also recommends everyone, regardless of vaccination status, wear a [well-fitting mask](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/effective-masks.html) in public indoor settings. We encourage you to wear a mask in classrooms, shared office settings and other common areas. Masks are required in certain spaces, such as on CyRide. More information about face masks is available on the [Cyclones Care webpage](https://www.care.iastate.edu/).

 Similar to the fall semester, classes and labs will be held in person, unless previously scheduled as an online course, and the university has several public health measures in place.

 **Influenza and COVID-19 vaccines**

Iowa State is working with Hy-Vee to offer another vaccine clinic for employees and students at State Gym. We will share dates and additional information as soon as it’s available on the [COVID-19 Vaccinations webpage](https://web.iastate.edu/safety/updates/covid19/vaccinations), Inside Iowa State and other communication channels.

 Thielen Student Health Center (TSHC) continues to offer the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine/booster and the flu vaccine for students. They can [schedule an appointment online](https://pss.medfusion.net/?bookmarkurl=eyJ0eXBlIjoibG9naW5sZXNzIiwibGlua0d1aWQiOiJhNzUzYzAzMy02NmFkLTRjZjUtYjJjMi00MjUzNzI2MjRlNTAifQ==#/) or call 515-294-5801 and bring their ISUCard to the clinic.

 If employees are unable to attend the vaccine clinic at State Gym, they are encouraged to contact their medical provider or search [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov/) for availability.

 **COVID-19 testing**

Several testing options are available on campus and in the Ames community.

         **Thielen Student Health Center**: Available for students who are experiencing symptoms. Students can [schedule a testing appointment online](https://pss.medfusion.net/?bookmarkurl=eyJ0eXBlIjoibGluayIsImxpbmtHdWlkIjoiMDljNjQ2M2UtNDAxZC00MTc5LWEwNGQtY2NiNjY3NTM2MTU1In0=#/).

         **Free at-home Test Iowa kits**: Available for employees and students at Thielen Student Health Center, Memorial Union and Union Drive Community Center. [Test Iowa](https://www.testiowa.com/en/faq/testing) provides results within 24 hours after the lab receives the sample.

         **Hy-Vee drive-thru clinic**: Available for ISU and Ames community members in Lot F, west of Stephens Auditorium. Both lab (free) and rapid ($119) PCR testing are offered. [Schedule an appointment](https://www.hy-vee.com/my-pharmacy/services/covid-19-testing) (required) online.

**Isolation, quarantine**

Iowa State is moving to the updated CDC recommendations for [isolation and quarantine](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html), effective Jan. 6. The CDC is expected to provide additional guidance for universities and school settings, so the following may be subject to change. If you test positive, you need to isolate for at least five days (day 1 is the first full day after your symptoms developed). After five full days:

         If you still have symptoms and a fever, you need to continue to isolate for another five days (10 total).

         If your symptoms have improved and you are fever-free, you can end isolation. However, you should continue to wear a well-fitting mask at home and in public for an additional five days. If you are unable to wear a mask when around others, you should continue to isolate for a full 10 days.

 The university’s [COVID-19 testing webpage](https://web.iastate.edu/safety/updates/covid19/planning/health) and flow charts have been updated to reflect these changes. The Department of Residence has isolation and quarantine housing available for students living in the residence halls. Students living in the residence halls, sororities and fraternities who test positive for COVID-19 somewhere other than Thielen Student Health Center are asked to [self-report to the public health team](https://iastatesafe.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0VATAS9DpT3yBim).

 [Board of Regents COVID-19 sick time off options](https://iastate.service-now.com/uhr?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0014229&sys_kb_id=40dfb9c51be2b0d032aa99fe034bcba4) are available for employees, including student employees, who test positive. If employees feel well and their job allows them to work from home, they should talk with their supervisor to arrange. We encourage all instructors and supervisors to provide flexibility for students and employees who are not feeling well to limit the spread of all illness.

 **Cyclones Care**

We all have a responsibility to protect the health of our campus community. Please continue to show that [Cyclones Care](https://www.care.iastate.edu/) by getting vaccinated, monitoring your health, staying home if you’re ill and washing your hands often.

 The public health team will continue to monitor COVID-19 and other illnesses for our campus community. Weekly updates will be posted every Wednesday morning on the [COVID-19: By the numbers webpage](https://web.iastate.edu/safety/updates/covid19/numbers). As always, you can find information about vaccines, testing and updates on the [COVID-19: Moving Forward webpage](https://web.iastate.edu/safety/updates/covid19).

 As in the fall, Iowa State’s [Moving Forward Coordinating Committee](https://web.iastate.edu/sites/default/files/safety/COVID-19/MovingForward/MovingForwardCommittee.pdf) and University Response Team will work closely with existing working groups and bring issues to senior leaders as needed. College and unit response teams are also available to assist with issues and concerns from faculty and staff. You can find contact information and a list of team members on the [response team website](https://web.iastate.edu/safety/updates/covid19/team).

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|  Wendy Wintersteen President  | Jonathan Wickert Senior Vice President and Provost  | Toyia Younger Senior Vice President for Student Affairs  | Pam Cain Senior Vice President for Operations and Finance  | Erin BaldwinAssociate Vice President for Student Health and Wellness and Director of Thielen Student Health Center |

*This email was sent to all faculty, staff, and students at Iowa State and is available online at*[*Office of the President Communications*](https://www.president.iastate.edu/communications/messages/2022/1/6-spring22)