

COVID-19 RESTART UPDATE

Essex County College is updating its Restart Plan to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and staff as they return to campus. The Restart Plan is an evolving document that the College will continue to update in accordance with local, state, and federal guidelines as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE). Here are a few important highlights for you to know now:

Vaccination Is Required for Students, Faculty and Staff

All eligible students (i.e., above 12 years of age), faculty, and staff who will be on campus are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. With the aim of facilitating a seamless start to the fall semester, the College is coordinating with the County of Essex to provide vaccinations to students, faculty, and staff.

All students and employees must submit documentation which demonstrates they have received a full course of COVID-19 vaccination. Proof of vaccination will be kept confidential. Information on how to provide proof of vaccination to the College will be forthcoming shortly.

For the Fall 2021 semester, students will have the option to enroll for fully in-person, hybrid, virtual, and pure on-line classes in accordance with public health guidance. Students who cannot be vaccinated for medical or religious reasons must request an exemption from the vaccination requirement. The College shall comply with all federal and state laws in granting appropriate exemptions for these reasons with proper documentation. If you need additional information, please contact *Dr. L. Bello DeCastro* at bellodecastro@essex.edu.

Likewise, staff and faculty may seek accommodations for a disability that prevents vaccination, a medical or religious exemption or “opt out” of the required vaccination for personal reasons. Please contact *Laura Byrd* in *Human Resources* at lbyrd1@essex.edu if you choose to do so.

Indoor Masking is Required Regardless of Vaccination Status Unless Exempt or Have Accommodation

At the moment, given the Delta variant, the College requires all individuals to wear a mask/face covering indoors regardless of your vaccination status unless they have an accommodation or exemption approved by the College. Faculty and staff cannot “opt out” of the College’s masking requirements. Please note that wearing a mask is not an indication that an individual is or is not vaccinated. Faculty and staff are not required to wear a mask when they are at their work station alone.

COVID-19 Safety Protocols

The College Facilities Department, on a consistent basis, will continue to regularly sanitize all frequently touched surfaces. Additionally, hand sanitation stations are provided throughout the campus. The College will provide disinfecting wipes in each classroom. Students, faculty, and staff will be encouraged to use disinfectant wipes on desks, lab equipment, shared objects and surfaces. The College will continue to promote good hygiene habits, like washing hands.

The College will continue to utilize existing screening, testing, and contact tracing protocols. Individuals exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or have a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 are required to stay home and/or should seek medical advice. Individuals presenting with symptoms or a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 will not be granted entry into the College and should continue to follow the CDC guidelines on quarantine and isolation.

If you would like more information about the vaccine or to schedule a vaccination, check www.essexcovid.org for appointment openings or call the county's COVID-19 Hotline at 973-877-8456. Also, visit <https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/vaccine> to learn about vaccine options offered outside Essex County.

Restart Plan – What You Need to Know

- Students will have the option to enroll for fully in-person, hybrid, virtual and pure online classes for the Fall semester.
- Proof of vaccination is required for all students except those with an approved accommodation or exemption.
- Proof of vaccination is required for all faculty and staff, except those with an approved accommodation or exemption or those who “opt out”.
- Students, faculty and staff regardless of vaccination status **MUST** wear masks indoors unless the individual has an accommodation or exemption approved by the College. There is no “opt out” provision for the College’s masking requirements. Faculty and staff are not required to wear a mask when they are alone at their work station.
- Cleaning and sanitization protocols will remain in effect.
- ECC will continue to follow all local, state, and federal COVID-19 guidelines and revise its Restart Plan as needed.