

November 12, 2020

Dear Campus Community,

As we approach the end of the Fall Semester, we wish to thank our students, staff and faculty for their efforts to follow public health measures as Massachusetts and the nation work to combat the concerning rise in coronavirus cases. As we've said throughout the fall, "It's hard, but it helps," and your vigilance and perseverance make a huge difference. With Thanksgiving approaching, we are writing to provide travel guidance and COVID-19 testing information for the winter break and spring preparations.

Updated testing hours

[Asymptomatic testing](#) by the Public Health Promotion Center (PHPC) at the Mullins Center will adopt a modified schedule during winter break. **Starting Monday, Nov. 23** the PHPC will be open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, *except for* Nov. 25-26, Dec. 23-24 and Dec. 30-31. Spring Semester begins Monday, Feb. 1. As we get closer to the start of Spring Semester, the PHPC may establish additional operating hours and will provide timely, related updates.

[Symptomatic testing](#) will be available through University Health Services during winter break. Please visit the [UHS website](#) for hours of operation. This service is available to students, faculty, staff and their spouses, domestic partners, and dependents with symptoms of COVID-19, or those who have been exposed to COVID-19.

Get a test before leaving the Amherst area

It is important to follow your regular testing protocol before leaving the Amherst area. All students should get a COVID-19 test two or three days before their planned scheduled departure. This is important to guard against spreading the virus in your home environment. For students who test positive, the university will offer isolation space.

If you will be living outside the Amherst area during winter break, we recommend getting tested at a site near you. Visit the [Massachusetts testing location site](#) for more information.

Winter break travel guidance

All academic work and final exams after Nov. 20 will be provided via remote means to minimize the need for travel around the holidays and to reduce on-campus interactions. The most effective way to reduce this risk is to minimize

travel, strictly limit the size of gatherings, wear a mask and maintain a 6-foot distance from others whenever possible. Please visit Massachusetts' [tips for a safe and healthy Thanksgiving](#).

Returning to UMass

- **Faculty and staff** who travel outside of Massachusetts need to follow the [Massachusetts COVID-19 Travel Order](#). In addition, the university continues to require a 14-day quarantine for all travelers returning from an international or higher-risk domestic destination. You cannot substitute a negative COVID-19 test result in place of quarantine.
- **Students** who travel outside of Massachusetts must follow the [Massachusetts COVID-19 Travel Order](#). If you are returning from any international or higher-risk domestic destination to work on campus or live in winter break housing, you must self-quarantine for 14 days in university-designated quarantine facilities.

Thank you, as always, for your outstanding efforts as we continue to navigate these complex and difficult times together.

Sincerely,

Co-Directors of the Public Health Promotion Center (PHPC)
Jeffrey Hescok, Executive Director of Environmental Health and Safety
Ann Becker, Public Health Director

[University of Massachusetts Amherst](#)