

ASU

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY - NEWPORT
NEWPORT • JONESBORO • MARKED TREE



COVID-19 GUIDE

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A LETTER FROM THE CHANCELLOR

February 15, 2022

Dear Aviators,

I want to start by thanking each and every one of you for adhering to ASUN's COVID-19 protocols and helping keep our campuses safe this semester. Because of your conscientiousness and perseverance, ASUN's COVID-19 case count has remained very low, and we have kept all programs and classes on ground. As I promised at the start of the semester, your Executive Cabinet has been meeting regularly to reevaluate the necessity of these protocols – keeping in mind safety, the mental health and morale of our employees and students, the changes taking place in the communities around us, and the growing need for a “return to normal” in how we treat illness and disease in our everyday lives.

I commend you for your diligence and a job well done, and I am proud to announce that ASUN is able to ease its COVID-19 guidelines at this time. **Masks and social distancing are no longer required but are still recommended for those who are high risk.** Case counts around the country are dropping precipitously, and the omicron variant has proven to be less severe than previous variants. While ASUN recognizes that COVID-19 is still a threat, effective vaccines are readily available for those who want to protect themselves from serious illness. ASUN will continue to encourage and provide opportunities for free vaccination on campuses. ASUN will also continue to encourage and provide opportunities for free rapid testing on campuses. Finally, ASUN will distribute additional free N-95 masks for employees and students while supplies last.

Regarding isolation and quarantine, please note the following changes:

- Those who test positive for COVID-19 must complete the [COVID-19 Reporting Form](#). ASUN will continue to enforce its 5-day isolation policy for those who test positive.
- Those who are exposed to COVID-19 are **not** required to complete the form or quarantine **unless** they develop symptoms or test positive.
- Those with fever should stay home until fever-free for 24 hours, even if they test negative for COVID-19.
- Those who exhibit other symptoms of illness should get tested for COVID-19 every 24-48 hours while sick or until an alternative diagnosis is given by a healthcare provider.

I understand that many of you will celebrate this step, while others remain cautious for their safety and that of their loved ones. I encourage everyone to be aware and be respectful of others as we go through this transition together. Should you have any questions, please contact me at chancellor@asun.edu or your COVID Liaison at covid@asun.edu. I look forward to our continued success as a team this Spring 2022 semester.

Sincerely,



Dr. Johnny M. Moore

Disclaimer

This guide provides information specific to minimizing exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. ASUN's response to the COVID-19 pandemic seeks to protect the health of our community while continuing our vital missions of teaching, workforce training and community service.

ASUN's plans will be aligned and consistent with local orders and ordinances of the of communities we serve including Newport, Jonesboro, Marked Tree, Jackson County, Craighead County and Poinsett County. ASUN's procedures will be based upon recommendations from the federal government, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Arkansas Department of Health and the ASU System.

As the pandemic progresses, officials will closely monitor and assess the potential spread of the virus and existing policies and procedures. If localized outbreaks emerge, tighter restrictions may be put in place and limitations to staff and students on campus may be re-implemented. As best practices surrounding COVID-19 continue to emerge, we will update this Guide accordingly.

Please understand these policies and procedures do not ensure safety or protection from COVID-19. These guidelines are in place to provide the safest working and learning environment possible.

Reporting & Return to Campus Requirements

Monitoring and Reporting

Employees and students¹ must monitor symptoms and report positive tests to lessen the community spread of COVID-19. Each day before coming to campus, employees and students should review the Going to Campus Daily Checklist (Appendix A), which requires each person to answer a short list of questions about potential COVID-19 symptoms and testing.

- Those who test positive for COVID-19 must complete the [COVID-19 Reporting Form](#) and begin isolation.
- Those who are exposed to COVID-19 **AND** exhibit symptoms must complete the COVID-19 Reporting Form and begin isolation.
- Those who are exposed to COVID-19 but have no symptoms and have not tested positive are **not** required to complete the form or quarantine **unless** they develop symptoms or test positive.
- Those with fever should stay home until fever-free for 24 hours, even if they test negative for COVID-19.
- Those who exhibit other symptoms of illness should get tested for COVID-19 every 24-48 hours while sick or until an alternative diagnosis is given by a healthcare provider. Isolation is not required based on symptoms alone.

Case Investigation

ASUN will conduct an internal case investigation when an employee or student tests positive for COVID-19.

Upon completing the COVID-19 Reporting Form, you should expect a telephone call or email. ASUN's COVID liaison will conduct a short interview to determine your potential return date.

ASUN follows the CDC guidelines for the general public in terms of isolation. Generally speaking, ASUN requires a 5-day isolation for anyone who tests positive for COVID-19.² More information regarding CDC guidelines can be found [here](#).

Process for Returning to Campus Following Isolation

On the last day of your isolation, the COVID Liaison will contact you via email to determine if you are eligible to return to campus. You are not allowed to return to campus until approved by the COVID Liaison. The COVID Liaison will notify your supervisor/faculty when you are approved to return. The CDC recommends that you continue to wear a well-fitted mask, avoid going places in which you cannot wear a mask, and avoid eating and drinking around others for an additional 5 days.

Employees/students are responsible for communicating with their supervisor or faculty members regarding absences.

¹ Maverick students should report to their employer. IGNITE students should report to their respective high school.

² Individuals with weakened immune systems and those that have to be hospitalized due to COVID-19 must isolate for at least 10 days.

Health and Safety Protocol

Personal Safety Practices

The COVID-19 pandemic requires multiple layers of protection to serve as safeguards for our community. When used together consistently, the holes (or weaknesses) in any single layer of protection may be reduced by the strengths of multiple layers of protection.

Vaccination

ASUN strongly encourages employees and students to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and booster, if eligible. ASUN will host vaccination clinics on campus to encourage vaccination.

Vaccination is not mandatory. Your vaccination status will not impact your insurance coverage or employment/student status. Please note that even once you have been fully vaccinated, you must continue to adhere to the procedures outlined in this Guide including the reporting requirements. For more information about vaccination, visit:

<https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/covid-19-vaccine-faqs>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>

Face Masks

Face masks are recommended by the CDC to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and help prevent asymptomatic carriers from unknowingly transmitting it to others. Properly fitted N95 and KN95 masks provide the best individual protection. Well-fitted surgical/medical masks are the next best option. Generally speaking, cloth masks are the least effective at preventing the spread of COVID-19. Double-masking by placing a cloth mask over a surgical mask is also a good option.

ASUN recommends that anyone with high risk for serious illness if infected with COVID-19 wear a mask when indoors. ASUN has a limited supply of N95 masks available for employees and students. Contact covid@asun.edu for more information.

Social Distancing

Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools we have to avoid COVID-19 exposure and to slow its spread. Because people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, or without ever developing symptoms, it is important to keep your distance from others, even if you have no symptoms or are wearing a face mask.

ASUN recommends that anyone with high risk for serious illness if infected with COVID-19 practice social distancing. Due to the high demand for in-person classes and the nature of many of our offerings, ASUN cannot ensure social distancing in all classroom settings.

Testing

ASUN recommends that anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 get tested. Symptoms of COVID-19 often resemble the common cold or flu. If you feel sick, get tested! Please note that a negative test is not a guarantee that you do not have COVID-19. Individuals exhibiting symptoms should test every 1-2 days and exercise caution. ASUN also recommends that those who have been exposed to COVID-19 get tested immediately after exposure and again 5 days after exposure. ASUN has rapid antigen tests available for free on each of its campuses. Email covid@asun.edu for more information.

Cleaning/Disinfecting

Institutional Services will have primary responsibility for cleaning offices, workspaces, classrooms, and other high touch point surfaces on campus. Although Institutional Services will have primary responsibility for disinfecting surfaces, employees and students should assist:

- It will continue to be the responsibility of building occupants to clean their own, non-public spaces such as cubicles and offices.
- Building occupants should wipe down their own frequently used surfaces before and after use. Please frequently wipe down work surfaces, doorknobs, and any other high touch surfaces including shared-space equipment (e.g., copiers, printers, computers, A/V and other electrical equipment, coffee makers, lab and office light switches). Institutional Services will provide the materials necessary for cleaning.
- Classrooms, the Hub and the Delta Grill will be stocked with supplies for self-cleaning of individual spaces.

Handwashing/Hand Sanitizing

Washing your hands is one of the easiest things you can do to stay healthy and stop the spread of bacteria and viruses. You should wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds:

- after touching eyes, nose or mouth
- after blowing nose
- after sneezing or coughing into the hand
- after touching contaminated surfaces
- after using a disinfectant product
- before preparing food
- before and after eating

If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes/nose/mouth. Wash hands after touching your face.

Institutional Services will maintain hand-sanitizing stations in all buildings on campus (subject to the availability of hand sanitizer) and ensure bathrooms are adequately stocked for regular handwashing.

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

ASUN recognizes that COVID-19 creates stress from fear of becoming ill or loved ones becoming ill, financial insecurity, and changes to our normal routines, including wearing masks and having to practice social distancing. We want, therefore, to make sure that all employees and students are aware of ASUN's support resources.

ASUN offers free and confidential support for employees through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). To request assistance, call the St. Bernard's Counseling Center at 870.930.9090 or toll-free at 1.800.346.0183. The professionally trained staff will request information about your specific needs so that an assessment can be scheduled for you.

ASUN has partnered with The Virtual Care Group to allow degree-seeking students access to their telehealth platform. We encourage you to take advantage of this free service which includes unlimited medical visits with board-certified physicians, as well as unlimited 50-minute scheduled therapy, life coaching, and a 24/7 on-demand crisis counseling. You can find more information at <https://www.asun.edu/counseling-services>.

Appendix A

Going to Campus Daily Checklist

<p>I have tested positive for COVID-19</p>	<p>Do not come to campus. Complete the COVID-19 Reporting Form here.</p>
<p>I have symptoms of COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cough • Sore throat • Congestions or runny nose • Headache • Fatigue • Muscle or body aches • Fever or chills • Shortness of breath • Difficulty breathing • Loss of taste or smell • Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea 	<p>If you have a fever: do not come to campus until you have been fever-free for at least 24 hours, even if you test negative.</p> <p>If you have been in direct contact with a COVID-19 positive person: Do not come to work/class. Complete the COVID-19 Reporting Form here.</p> <p>If you have not been in direct contact with a COVID-19 positive person: you do not have to complete the COVID-19 reporting form and are not required to isolate/quarantine unless you have fever. ASUN recommends that you get tested every 24-28 hours while sick or until an alternative diagnosis is given by a healthcare provider.</p>
<p>I have had direct contact with a COVID-19 positive person.</p> <p>Direct contact is defined as having any of the following contacts during the positive person's "infectious period":</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes • Provided in-home care • Direct physical contact (i.e. hug, kiss) • Shared eating/drinking utensils • Been coughed on, sneezed on, etc. <p>People are considered infectious for 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms or a positive test.</p>	<p>If you are exhibiting symptoms: Do not come to work/class. Complete the COVID-19 Reporting Form here.</p> <p>If you are not exhibiting symptoms: you do not have to complete the COVID-19 Reporting Form or quarantine unless you develop symptoms or test positive. ASUN recommends that you get tested every 24-48 hours following exposure.</p>

Appendix B

Tracking of Campus/Program Opening/Closure

<u>Campus/Program</u>	<u>Status</u>
All campuses/programs	Remote 3/20/2020
All campuses/programs	Phase 1 5/4/2020
All campuses/programs	Phase 2 7/13/2020
All campuses/programs	Phase 3 8/3/2020
Marked Tree Cosmetology	Remote 9/29/20-10/13/2020
Marked Tree Practical Nursing	Remote 9/29/20-10/13/2020
All campuses/programs	Phase 2 11/30/20
All campuses/programs	Phase 3 1/4/2021
Newport Traditional Registered Nursing Year 1	Remote 3/11/21-3/18/21

Appendix C

Resources

COVID Liaison: Kristen Smith, 870-512-7850, covid@asun.edu

Arkansas Department of Health (ADH): www.healthy.arkansas.gov

ADH COVID-19 Hotline: 1-800-803-7847

ADH Jackson County Unit: 870-523-8968

ADH Poinsett County Unit: 870-578-4480

ADH Craighead County Unit: 870-933-4585

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov

If you are feeling ill or need immediate medical assistance, please call your healthcare provider.

Additional resources can be found at www.asun.edu/coronavirus.