

Subject: Updated COVID-19 Procedures From SRU

Jan. 12, 2022

To The University Community:

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Slippery Rock University has been closely following the trajectory of the virus and adjusted our campus response accordingly. Based on the rise of the highly transmissible Omicron variant and current positivity rates in local counties, we are sharing some important information with you as we prepare for the spring 2022 semester.

Current State of COVID

- According to the CDC, 95% of all current COVID cases in the U.S. are Omicron.
- Our health partner, Allegheny Health Network, is predicting Omicron to crest either the last week of January or the first week of February.
- Vaccination remains the best protection against serious illness, hospitalization and death from COVID infection. If you haven't yet done so, please consider [starting your vaccine series](#) or [receiving your booster](#).
- The CDC is now defining "fully vaccinated" as people who have received their initial vaccination series plus a booster.
- While vaccination may not fully protect you from Omicron infection, those who have received all their shots are better protected and incur milder symptoms.
- Regardless of vaccination status, individuals – except those who have had COVID in last 90 days – are at risk of spreading Omicron.
- The CDC has changed quarantine and isolation procedures to include:
 - If you are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms, isolate for five days and mask for five days following isolation; test if you can.
 - Symptomatic individuals can stop isolation after five days if they are fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.
 - If you are exposed to someone with COVID: fully vaccinated and boosted people can avoid quarantine and should wear a mask for 10 days; people who are not fully vaccinated and boosted should quarantine for five days, and mask for five days following.
 - Individuals who are exposed or test positive will have varying actions depending on vaccination status.
 - [Refer to this chart from the CDC for additional Q&I information.](#)

On-Campus Testing

Employees and students who need a COVID test after being exposed, or in response to having symptoms, can be tested at SRU's Mass Testing Center located inside the University Union.

Beginning Jan. 31, the University will use the MTC to serve students, staff and faculty who fall into these categories:

- Most symptomatic individuals. Previously, students with symptoms were being tested at the Student Health Center. Students should call Student Health Services at 724.738.2052 and speak to a nurse if they have symptoms beyond that of a mild cold. Staff and faculty should contact their personal care physician.
- Post-quarantine testing (after Day 5).
- Testing five days after COVID exposure for fully vaccinated individuals.
- Any individual who needs a test for employment, event attendance or to participate in a campus activity.

To Schedule Your COVID Test:

- Log in to the [Student Health Portal](#) (both students and employees) using your SRU login.
- Choose “Schedule a COVID-19 Test” and follow the steps.
- After you have finished scheduling your test, you will receive an email with a QR code.
- Open the email with your unique QR code and save it to your phone or tablet.
- Bring your unique QR code to the testing site at the time of your appointment.
- Do not arrive more than five minutes before your appointment time.
- [Testing FAQs are available on SRU’s COVID-19 webpages.](#)

If you have questions about testing or need assistance scheduling your test, please contact SRU’s Mass Testing Center at 724.738.2003 or covidtesting@sru.edu.

In mid-February, based on needed testing and in consultation with AHN, the University will determine if it needs to reinstitute mass screening or just do post-spring break testing for all residents, similar to what is being done at the beginning of the spring 2022 semester.

Upgrading Face Masks

The CDC has advised that cloth masks are not as effective against Omicron and that, if possible, all people should be wearing disposable surgical masks or KN95 or N95 masks.

The spring semester will require cooperation and participation by everyone to ensure that our campus remains a safe place for all to live, learn and work. We appreciate your diligence in ensuring SRU remains “Rock Solid.”

All the best,

William J. Behre, Ph.D.
President