



Latest Update September 9, 2021
Updated August 5, 2021
Issued July 19, 2021

While Illinois is in Phase 5, this guidance replaces all previous guidance issued by the Illinois Board of Higher Education and the Illinois Community College Board under the Restore Illinois plan.

On July 27, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its guidance for fully vaccinated people based on new evidence on the Delta variant. The CDC's updated guidance has been adopted by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). On September 3, 2021, Governor Pritzker issued [Executive Order 2021-22](#) which included certain requirements applicable to students and employees of higher education institutions. IBHE and ICCB are updating this guidance consistent with CDC and IDPH recommendations and the requirements under the Governor's Executive Order. Updates are identified below.

The CDC updated its [Guidance for Institutions of Higher Education \(IHEs\)](#). Please refer to that guidance for additional detail not covered here.

- 1. COVID-19 Vaccination (Updated September 9, 2021).** Vaccination against COVID-19 is now widely available, and all persons over the age of 12 are eligible. Vaccination is the leading prevention strategy against COVID-19. [Executive Order 2021-22](#) requires higher education personnel and students, as those terms are defined in the Executive Order, to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or submit to weekly testing. Any individual who is not fully vaccinated, including those who are exempted from the requirement due to medical or religious reasons, must undergo weekly COVID-19 testing to protect campus populations and slow COVID-19 transmission in surrounding communities. All IHEs are strongly encouraged to provide information to promote vaccine trust and confidence and address vaccine hesitancy.
- 2. Use of Masks or Face Coverings and Physical Distancing (Updated September 9, 2021).**
 - [Executive Order 2021-22](#) requires all individuals over the age of two who are able to medically tolerate a face covering to wear a face covering over their nose and mouth when in an indoor public place, regardless of physical distance or vaccination status. This applies to indoor public spaces and workplaces at institutions of higher education. Workers may remove face coverings when they can consistently maintain six feet of distance (such as when workers are in their offices or cubicle space).
 - Unvaccinated persons and those who might need to take extra precautions should, where feasible, maintain physical distance while indoors. Institutions should use space wisely to allow for physical distancing to the extent practicable.
 - Individuals are encouraged to wear face coverings in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with others who are not fully vaccinated.

- All individuals, including those who are fully vaccinated, are required to wear face coverings on public transportation, in congregate facilities, in health care settings, and where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations.
3. **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette.** IHEs should continue to promote and facilitate health-promoting behaviors such as [hand hygiene](#) and [respiratory etiquette](#).
 4. **Cleaning, Improving Ventilation, and Maintaining Healthy Facilities.** IHEs should continue routine cleaning of high-touch surfaces and shared objects and maintaining improved ventilation in accordance with [CDC recommendations](#).
 5. **Contact Tracing, Isolation and Quarantine, and Testing (Updated September 9, 2021).** IHEs should refer to [CDC Guidance](#) on these topics. Pursuant to [Executive Order 2021-22](#), higher education personnel and students are required to undergo weekly COVID-19 testing if they are not fully vaccinated by September 19, 2021, and until they are fully vaccinated.
 6. **Symptom Screening.** IHEs should continue to encourage students, faculty, and staff to perform daily health screenings for infectious illnesses, including COVID-19. Those with signs or symptoms of infectious illness should stay home and use a [COVID-19 self-checker](#) to determine whether to seek testing or medical care.
 7. **Shared Housing and Communal Spaces.** IHEs should consider the [CDC Guidance for Housing and Communal Spaces](#) where feasible for placement in shared housing. Additional considerations can be found in the CDC's [Guidance for Institutions of Higher Education \(IHEs\)](#).
 8. **Food Service and Communal Dining.** While there is [no evidence](#) to suggest that COVID-19 is spread by [handling](#) or eating food, IHEs should continue to promote practices that prevent the spread of COVID-19 due to close proximity among unmasked individuals, especially those who are not vaccinated. Refer to [CDC guidelines](#) for more specific information.
 9. **Health Equity.** Racial and ethnic minority groups have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 due to [long-standing systemic health and social inequities](#). IHEs should address these inequities and protect people at [increased risk for COVID-19](#) by following CDC guidelines for [promoting health equity](#).
 10. **Considerations for Students, Faculty, and Staff with Disabilities.** Disability support service providers should follow [CDC guidance](#) when determining individualized approaches and accommodations for [people with disabilities](#). IHEs should make [exceptions](#) to any mask mandates for a person with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 11. **Gatherings, Events, Visitors, and Sports.** Individuals who are not fully vaccinated should continue to [avoid large gatherings](#), maintain physical distancing, and practice good hand hygiene if they choose to attend. Fully vaccinated individuals may participate in sports without wearing a mask or physically distancing, but unvaccinated individuals should follow CDC guidance for [playing sports](#).
 12. **Study Abroad and Travel.** IHEs planning study-abroad programs should refer to CDC's destination-specific [Travel Health Notices](#) (THNs), postpone programs in [destination or host countries](#) with very high (Level 4 THN) COVID-19 levels, and be ready to take action if situations in the destination or host countries worsen while students, faculty, or staff are present there.
 13. **International Students (Updated September 9, 2021).** Pursuant to Executive Order 2021-22, all students, including international students, are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 with a CDC- or World Health Organization-approved vaccine prior to arrival. International students vaccinated outside of the United States should refer to [CDC guidance](#) for the need for vaccinations upon arrival in the United States. International students are eligible to be vaccinated in Illinois. Any individual who is not fully vaccinated, including those who are exempted from the requirement due to medical or religious reasons, must undergo weekly COVID-19 testing to protect campus populations and slow COVID-19 transmission in surrounding communities.
 14. **Updates to Guidance.** This guidance remains subject to change pursuant to updated public health guidance and changing public health conditions. Future updates will be posted at [IBHE.org](#) and [ICCB.org](#).