

Update on Presence of COVID-19 at Trinity

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To: DiChristina, Joe J. <joseph.dichristina@trincoll.edu>

October 15, 2020

Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff,

With newly received results from COVID-19 testing of students, including those who were quarantined through contact tracing, we write today with an update on presence of the virus in our community.

As we reported previously, last week's increase in active cases led to the quarantining of a significant number of students. Those students have now been tested for the virus at least once and most of them twice, since starting their quarantine. We now have all of those test results, and today we have a total of 56 active cases, up from 47 on Monday.

Identification is a critical part of the mitigation process. Once active cases are identified, we are then able to isolate the individuals, slowing the spread and protecting our community. Our contact tracers, trained through the Connecticut Department of Public Health, have been able to identify individuals and groups at risk and initiate quarantine protocols. As a result of their work, nearly all of the new cases from the last three days have come from students who were in quarantine. We appreciate all the extra hours the contact tracers have dedicated to this important effort.

As we informed the community on October 10, most of the active cases are among students who live together off-campus. If you recall, in September, we had a number of cases associated with students who lived together in a residence hall. What we can see from these two incidents is that the virus can spread quickly in higher-density living environments. This is consistent with trends as reported by state and national public health experts.

As the COVID-19 pandemic rages on across the country and world, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is reporting that small family and friend gatherings are likely the primary drivers of the spread of the virus right now. This happens as people let down their guard, believing it's safe to gather with seemingly healthy individuals who are close family or friends. But as we know—and has been true in most of the positive test results we've seen at Trinity—the virus often presents asymptotically. And the virus can spread easily indoors if appropriate precautions are not taken. Therefore, we remind students of the following:

- Students may leave their residences to get exercise as we described on Monday's update, to pick up grab-and-go meals, and to continue with campus COVID-19 testing
- No gatherings of any size are permitted, indoors or outdoors
- Students may not travel from campus (including locally) for nonessential reasons; If you need to travel for an urgent matter, please contact the office of the dean of student life at doso@trincoll.edu. The office will respond with instructions on what steps you need to take while off campus and when you return. It is very important that you consult this office in advance about your need to travel.
- Students living off-campus may not be in the residence halls; students in campus housing may not visit off-campus houses
- Inside your living spaces please follow all the appropriate CDC guidelines such as washing your hands often and do limit interactions to only the people that live in your

apartment or residential area.

Operationally, for students, faculty, and staff:

- All dining continues to be grab-and-go
- All classes will continue to be conducted remotely (through Friday, October 16)
- Indoor athletic facilities remain closed (the COVID-19 testing center in Ferris will remain open)
- The library is closed, including the 24-hour zone; materials can be obtained or returned by appointment only
- Only employees whose work relates to essential campus functions should be on campus; managers may use their discretion to refine functions deemed essential, and to further reduce density as appropriate

Please call the Health Center (860-297-2018) if you are not feeling well or are experiencing symptoms listed on your daily health report via the [CoVerified app](#). The campus testing center remains open, and it is important that you continue with our testing protocols. Students: if your last name begins with A-K, you should continue to schedule appointments for Monday/Thursday. If your last name begins with L-Z, please continue to schedule appointments for Tuesday/Friday.

The [COVID-19 dashboard](#) has been updated this morning. In the coming days, a number of students will most likely be released from isolation if they show no symptoms, as they pass the required 10-day isolation period. We will provide another update by Friday evening, as we monitor the situation and prepare for the weekend and coming week. For now, we remain at orange alert level. We are very hopeful that we will be able to resume in-person classes the week of October 19.

Sincerely,

Joe DiChristina, Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Management
Jason Rojas, Chief of Staff and Associate Vice President for External Relations