

December 30 COVID-19 Update: Cases and preparation for spring semester

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 1 attachments (772 KB)

Request for Student Medical Exemption COVID Vaccine Trinity College final Dec 30.pdf;

December 30, 2021

Dear Students,

We write to provide an update on the presence of COVID in our campus community. As students and employees began to return to campus for various approved or work-related reasons, our testing protocol identified 12 new positive tests. At this time, there are 14 students and 3 employees in isolation. All but one person is isolating at home.

The [alert level status remains at yellow](#) to remind our community of the need to remain vigilant, wear face coverings, and maintain social distancing.

On December 22, the college [announced](#) that we would delay the start of the spring semester from January 27 to Monday, January 31. With this change in calendar, students not already on campus will now return to campus Wednesday, January 26, instead of January 22. In preparing for the start of the spring semester, we wanted to remind/inform you of the following:

1. Students will need to submit a pre-arrival negative PCR COVID test that has been administered within 72 hours of arrival. Given the rapid transmission of the highly contagious Omicron variant over the past three weeks and a significant increase in demand for testing, we urge you to secure a test the week of January 10 and report a positive test outcome to the college. This will allow any individuals who test positive to complete their isolation period and the test outcome will provide the college a clearer understanding of the potential for the presence of COVID in our community. Per CDC guidelines and what are practices have been, any individuals who test positive will be exempt from on campus testing for a 90-day period of time. **Please note: If your test is negative, you will need to do another pre-arrival test within the 72-hour window of your arrival date.**
2. We strongly recommend that you schedule your pre-arrival testing appointments as soon as possible given demand for COVID testing is high across the country.
3. All students granted medical and religious exemptions for the fall will automatically be granted an exemption from the booster and will not be required to submit a request for spring semester. If you met the vaccine requirement in the fall, but now wish to apply for a medical exemption only from the COVID booster shot for spring 2022, please submit a request by using the attached form. Please submit by January 14 to the Health Center at Healthcenter@trincoll.edu. Religious exemptions from the booster will not be granted at this time unless you were not enrolled (e.g. new first year or transfer student) for the fall semester.
4. As a reminder, upon return to campus for spring semester, all members of our community will be required to complete a PCR COVID test on a weekly basis. We plan to test everyone weekly at least through the first month to mitigate the heightened risk of transmission. This will be done at the on-campus testing center in the Memorial Field House. By January 14 we will provide more detailed information on the testing schedule.

5. J-Term students that arrive on Sunday, January 2 must be tested before they attend class on Monday, January 3.

a. Winter sport athletes that are on campus should follow the testing schedule already in place for them.

b. All on-campus J-Term students will be tested on Monday, January 3rd from 8:00-10:00am in the Memorial Field House and will continue to be tested on a weekly basis.

While awaiting test results from January 3rd, you must wear a mask at all times: outside when with groups of people, in all indoor public spaces such as classrooms, shared residence hall spaces, the library, and while inside the dining hall to pick up grab and go meals. We expect to receive test results within 24-36 hours. Students who test positive will be contacted by the Health Center.

As conditions warrant, we will adjust and modify plans while keeping our community as safe and healthy as possible.

Our [COVID-19 Steering Committee](#) continues to meet and will inform the community by early January of any changes to campus protocols as we monitor the global and national issues associated with the Omicron variant.

The Omicron variant of COVID-19 is highly contagious and transmissible. We strongly encourage you to take a cautious approach in the coming weeks by limiting your travel when possible and by wearing your mask in all public places. This will help you protect yourself, your family, and our college community as you develop plans to return in January.

We have updated [the dashboard](#) to reflect the latest data and we will keep you informed as we have information to share.

Sincerely,

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