



SAFE RETURN TO CAMPUS PLAN



As of May 17, 2021 – Please Note: This document is a work-in-progress and is subject to updates as soon as updated state and federal guidelines are communicated to us.

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Table Of Contents

Introduction	5
Preparing For A New Campus Environment	7
Precautions Being Practiced	7
Classroom & Learning	13
Space Activities	15
Laboratory/Clinical, Humanities Faculty & Students Returning	15
Service-Learning & Internships	16
Middlesex Athletics and Special Events	16
Facilities & Cleaning	17
Cleaning Procedures	17
Elevators, Hallways, Etc.	18
Open Spaces	18
Disinfecting Buildings After a Positive Diagnosis	18
Air Quality	19
Frequent Communication	20
Training	21
Check-in Procedures	22
Building Access	22
Mental Health Resources	24
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	24
MCC Operating Procedure Communicable Diseases	25
Communicable Disease Notification Protocol	25
Notification to a College Office:	26

Interview of Reporting Party:	26
Definitions	27
Isolation & Quarantine Guidelines	29
Isolation or Quarantine: What's the difference?	29
Who needs to isolate?	29
Who needs to quarantine?	30
Health Protocols	33
Vaccinations	33
Testing & Contact Tracing	33
Self-Monitoring Responsibility	34
Self-Certification	35
Protocol for Positive COVID-19 Cases at MCC	37
Travel & Exposure Reporting	37
High Risk Populations	38
Space & Staffing Protocols	41
Telework	41
Space Reconfiguration	41
Limited Number of Employees Returning To Work On Campus	42
Staffing Protocol	44
Potential Outbreak Surge Response	46
Preparation for Possible Increased Waves of Infections	46
References	47

Introduction

In preparation for a wider-scale return to campus, constituents of the Middlesex Community College community created this “Safe Return to Campus” Plan. This plan strives to keep Middlesex students, faculty, staff, and community members safe when they are visiting our Bedford and Lowell campuses.

Understanding that information and protocols surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic are subject to constant changes, Middlesex will continually update this document using guidelines from the State of Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Governor Baker’s Phased Reopening Plan, among other reputable sources. This document may change without notice based on the recommendations and requirements of federal, state, and local governments, the CDC, DPH, and other college constituents, including the college’s Emergency Management Team, and MCC faculty and staff. As each area of the college will have their own specific needs, we understand that this document cannot be all encompassing and is not finite in its content.

Middlesex will begin a gradual return to the campuses for students, faculty, and staff in larger numbers on Monday, August 2, 2021 in advance of the Fall 2021 semester. This document details MCC’s general plan for a safe return to campus for all students, faculty, staff, and community members. With this plan as a foundation, individual departments may have additional needs or information that can be worked out with assistance from Human Resources.

MCC will offer six modalities of teaching for the Fall 2021 semester to offer students flexible course formats that best fit their schedule. Teaching modalities are specially assigned to each course depending on what works best for student learning and safety.

- **Online and On-Campus Lecture** – These hybrid (blended) classes combine on-campus and online instruction.
- **Online and On-Campus Lab** – These hybrid (blended) classes combine online instruction and on-campus labs.

- **Lecture** – This is a traditional on-campus face-to-face course. Classes meet weekly on campus with students and instructors.
- **Lecture and Lab** – This is a traditional on-campus face-to-face course and lab. Classes meet weekly on campus with students and instructors.
- **Online with Class Meeting Times** – This is a fully online class format with scheduled meeting days and times. Students must be online during scheduled meeting times.
- **Online with No Class Meeting Times** – This is a fully online class format. There are no scheduled meeting days or times. Lectures, lessons, and exercises are completed online over the course of the semester.

In order to ensure a safe and welcoming environment, MCC's return to campus will require cooperation from all community members.

Preparing For A New Campus Environment

In order to comply with the Massachusetts Mandatory Workplace Safety Standards for reopening workplaces, employees will need to review the following material before returning to either Middlesex campus. These standards are designed to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission to employees and students, and are applicable to all sectors and industries.

In order to maintain hygiene safety and physical distancing best practices, Middlesex Community College will adhere to the standards set by the Commonwealth and other reputable sources, as summarized below.

Precautions Being Practiced

Social Distancing

Through reconfiguration of shared spaces and public gathering areas, as well as the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), employees and students can continue to operate in the workplace and learning environment while still following social distancing requirements. It is recommended to keep a distance of at least six feet between yourself and other people in both indoor and outdoor settings.

Behavioral Signage & Markings

Signage will be posted in conspicuous places and will include reminders such as – but not limited to – sign-in and sign-out, wear a mask, wash your hands, social distance, self-check for symptoms, and stay home if you are sick. The Massachusetts Compliance Attestation Poster is posted at the entrances to the Cowan Center in Lowell and Cataldo Building in Bedford. Other measures will be taken to ensure social distancing. This will include six-foot markings on the floors and pavement in certain areas and limited numbers in elevators at one time – depending on signage in specific elevators.

Hygiene Protocols

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our community, proper hand hygiene and use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face masks or coverings indoors, will be essential. Hand sanitizing stations will also be available throughout the campus. Face masks/coverings must be worn indoors in all public spaces (including hallways, common areas, stairwells, etc.). This will also include work areas and classrooms.

- Additional hand sanitizing stations have been added throughout campus in areas deemed appropriate.
- “Self-service” cleaning stations are set up throughout campus. Open-top trash receptacles will be available to discard cleaning materials and used PPE.
- Where applicable, each employee should have their own keyboard, mouse, and desk phone that are not shared; or wipe with disinfectant to clean after each shared use. Shared items, such as department coffee makers, microwaves, water coolers, etc. are to be used at the employee’s own risk. It is recommended that only non-perishable food items are brought to campus. If shared refrigerators must be used, ensure items are kept separated from others’ items. Only disposable plates, utensils, etc. should be used and disposed of promptly.

Handwashing

- Hands should be washed frequently for a minimum of 20 seconds with soap and water.
- Hands should be dried with a paper towel, to be thrown away after use.
- If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol can be used. Hand sanitizer will be available at various locations throughout the campuses for use.

Face Masks/Coverings

All visitors to either campus, including faculty, staff, and students, must be wearing masks the entire time they are on campus indoors and in class. Masks are required even for those who have received a vaccine.

Putting on a face mask/covering:

- Wash your hands thoroughly or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer prior to touching your face mask/covering.
- A face mask/covering should completely cover from the bridge of your nose down and around the bottom of your chin. Your nostrils and mouth should be completely covered.
- Adjust the face mask as necessary to your face and press the metal strip to fit snugly against your nose (if applicable).
- Either tie the straps behind your head or place the ear loops around your ears.
- You should avoid touching the front or inner part of the mask while putting it on, or while wearing it.

Removing a face mask/covering:

- When removing the mask, avoid touching the front or inner part of the mask.
- Remove the face mask/covering by touching only the ear loops or straps.
- Disposable masks should be discarded immediately; reusable masks should be laundered after each use.
- Wash your hands or use an alcohol-based sanitizer after removing the face mask/covering.

Acceptable types of facial coverings include:

- Single-use disposable medical mask.

- Personal cloth mask that can be laundered after each use and is able to stay secured on the face without holding it in place. The CDC recommends at least two layers of tightly woven cotton fabric.
- Face shield worn in conjunction with a mask that extends down past the chin and wraps around the side of the face.

Wearing a face shield in conjunction with a face mask:

- If an employee chooses to wear a face shield, it must be worn in conjunction with a face mask.
- When putting on or removing a face shield, perform hand hygiene first.
- Avoid touching the front of the face shield when putting the face shield on.
- The face shield should extend down past the chin and wrap around the sides of the face. The face shield's head piece should be in contact with the forehead without any gaps.
- Face shields should regularly be cleaned with warm, soapy water.
- After cleaning and drying the face shield with a clean paper towel, it may be wiped with 70 percent isopropyl alcohol to disinfect.
- It is not recommended to use household cleaners on a plastic face shield as this may cause damage to the plastic.

Accommodations

Some employees and students may need accommodations due to a need for modified protective gear. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Non-latex gloves, clear masks for lip-reading ability, gowns for wheelchairs, etc.
- Public Safety, Food Service, faculty teaching accommodated students, and others may be asked to wear lip-reading masks/face shields.

Accommodations requests shall be submitted to:

Students: Disability Support Services at disabilityservices@middlesex.mass.edu

Employees: Human Resources at nicholsr@middlesex.mass.edu

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Procedure

All Employees & Students

All employees and students must wear a face mask or covering when indoors.

- Each department should reach out to Public Safety to address their specific PPE needs.
- Appropriate PPE must always be worn.
 - Facial masks/coverings are always required while indoors on campus. If needed, disposable masks can be picked up at Public Safety on either campus, free of charge.
 - Gloves may be required for certain services including, but not limited to, Campus Police, mail delivery, customer service counters, cash handling, food handling, and in the classroom. According to the CDC, gloves are not necessary for general use and are not a replacement for good hand hygiene.
 - MCC does not allow the use of neck gaiters or bandanas as face coverings.

Refusal to Wear PPE

To address the refusal to wear PPE from an employee or student who has not requested or does not seek an accommodation:

- In the case of an immediate concern, such as but not limited to a classroom, lab, or other indoor space, Public Safety should be contacted followed by the appropriate contact for students or employees.

Students: Community Standards at communitystandards@middlesex.mass.edu

Employees: Human Resources at nicholsr@middlesex.mass.edu

These policies apply to all students, faculty, staff, and visitors. It is our collective responsibility to remind our community of these expectations. If you see someone not observing protocol, please remind them at once to do so. Then, if possible, remove yourself from any situation that is unsafe or not in compliance. If a student defies the request to comply, Public Safety should be contacted. Should the behavior persist, even with immediate remedy, the details of said behavior along with the student's name should be submitted by Small Incident Form to the Dean of Students.

Students found in violation of the current policy will be reported to the Office of Community Standards and subject to potential sanctions up to and including removal from campus. [Please review the disciplinary procedure and the MCC Code of Conduct in its entirety.](#) Consultation about how to best engage with students who are not in compliance is available by contacting the Student Assessment and Intervention Team at SAIT@middlesex.mass.edu.

Supervisors are responsible for making sure their employees are following the policies and procedures herein. Employees found in violation must be reported to Human Resources.

Visitors and vendors found in violation of the current policy will be asked to leave by Public Safety.

MCC's capacity for monitoring these policies is limited to our mutual oversight. While the college hopes never to have to use a disciplinary process for related offenses, it is available if appropriate. In the majority of cases, reminders of the rules and assistance with compliance should suffice.

Classroom & Learning

In accordance with CDC guidance, it is required that Middlesex Community College students, faculty and staff who are sick with COVID-19, or who have recently had a [close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19, shall not return to campus. However, the requirement to stay home may impact a student's class participation, which often has implications for their course grades. Faculty are responsible for outlining attendance expectations in their syllabi and students are responsible for communicating attendance issues with their instructors with as much notice as possible.

The Safe Return to Campus Plan requires a daily self-evaluation of symptoms prior to arriving on campus. Individuals should not assume or diagnose any visible symptomatic behavior of others.

- Please actively encourage students to stay at home if they feel sick or have any of the [symptoms of COVID-19](#). During this hiatus, please reconsider attendance policies so they do not appear to incentivize sick students coming to campus.
- Students who need to miss a class, or series of classes, due to illness or the need to quarantine/isolate are responsible for emailing their course instructor as soon as possible.
- Students are responsible for understanding their individual instructors' policies and expectations regarding attendance and completing any work that they might miss due to illness or the need to quarantine/isolate, including assignments, quizzes, tests and exams.
- If a student or employee is concerned about their safety in any circumstance (including based on someone's refusal to wear a mask, maintain physical distance, or due to symptomatic behavior), they can remove themselves from the situation and contact Public Safety. (Note: Faculty who choose to leave class should dismiss class prior to departure.)

- Practices such as group work, peer/partner activities, and other course-related student engagement or operations should keep in mind physical distancing. How to achieve learning outcomes within the boundaries of these protocols should be determined at the individual or department level. For guidance on external course-related experiential learning see the following section.

Space Activities

Laboratory/Clinical, Humanities Faculty & Students Returning

Labs and clinics have reopened to students to complete coursework (Nursing, Dental Hygiene, Dental Assisting, Biotechnology, Chemistry, etc.). Additionally, theater, art, and music programs have restored partial programming and will adhere to campus guidelines in place.

- Each lab/clinic has created a plan that addresses their specific areas and requirements.
- Classroom attendance will be taken daily and retained for contact tracing purposes.
- MCC has an adequate supply of PPE and disinfecting supplies for each classroom and student needs.
- There will be more class sections with fewer students to provide proper social distancing and adhere to group gathering guidelines.
- Plexiglass and dividers have been installed in labs and clinics.
- Reasonable accommodations will be made for students who have requested one through Disability Support Services.
- All students will need to be trained for proper PPE use prior to starting. Please review training videos and protocol in this document for further details.
- Protocols are in place, including social distancing, cleaning, PPE wearing, and other health and safety guidelines.

Clinical/Lab faculty and students will need to wear appropriate PPE relative to the specific program. This will vary based on circumstances and may include, but is not limited to, a combination of the following:

- Face mask, gloves, face shield, gown, shoe coverings, and hair coverings.

- Each department will work with the Emergency Management Team to order and supply PPE for in-lab/clinic use.

Service-Learning & Internships

Students participating in Service-Learning and/or Internships will need to wear appropriate PPE relative to the specific site in which they are working. This will vary based on circumstances, and students are expected to follow protocols at their specific site.

Middlesex Athletics and Special Events

Middlesex Community College will be suspending all intercollegiate and intramural sports, club leagues, and recreation for the 2021-2022 Academic Year. On and off-campus MCC sponsored events and programs will be considered on an individual basis and may be gradually re-introduced if all health and safety measures have been adopted and approved.

Facilities & Cleaning

We will continue to provide enhanced cleaning measures to our students and staff. Common areas and restrooms are being sanitized more frequently, and sanitization products will be available upon request.

Cleaning Procedures

Middlesex has secured sufficient cleaning products, supplies, and equipment. We are prepared to disinfect all common surfaces throughout campus at regular, frequent intervals.

- Frequent sanitization will be conducted of high-touch areas throughout the campuses (e.g. light switches, door handles, phones, railings, restrooms, public copiers, etc.).
- Our disinfectant is EPA-approved for COVID-19 effectiveness. It is also certified as non-hazardous and environmentally-friendly.
- Disinfectants and/or cleaning wipes have been provided to each department and classroom.
- Numerous hand sanitizer dispensers are installed and stocked throughout the campus.
- Classrooms are sanitized daily after all classes are done for the day – all desks, chairs, podiums, etc. Disinfection supplies are available in each classroom for use as needed.
- The instructor is encouraged to assist in disinfecting and cleaning the classroom at the end of each class.
- Touchless paper towel and hand soap dispensers have been installed. All hand dryers have been deactivated. Facilities will maintain a frequent schedule of sanitizing restrooms.
- In the cafeteria, hand sanitizer stations are provided, and all surfaces are frequently disinfected.

- Shared reading material and pamphlets have been removed from public areas.

Elevators, Hallways, Etc.

For traveling in building hallways, please follow directional arrows for traffic flow. For elevator usage, please adhere to guidelines posted at elevator access points.

Open Spaces

Restoration plans will be gradually introduced and meet with gathering capacity protocols for spaces and resources, including but not limited to:

- Vending Machines
- Lounges
- Shuttles
- Fitness Center
- Centers (Multicultural, Veterans Resource, etc.)
- Cafeterias
- Bookstores
- Lobbies

Disinfecting Buildings After a Positive Diagnosis

If an employee or student that comes to campus is diagnosed with COVID-19, targeted cleaning and disinfecting will be performed.

- When MCC is notified of a positive case, affected areas, rooms, and buildings must be vacated in order to implement cleaning and disinfecting protocols for affected areas.

- Building areas will be temporarily shut down until cleaning is completed and the area is approved as acceptable to reopen.
- Faculty, staff and students will be updated about classroom and building changes as necessary.

Air Quality

In response to inquiries about air quality in MCC properties, the college conducted an inventory and analysis of current systems. [Click here to read MCC's air quality document provided by service vendor NV5.](#)

Frequent Communication

Middlesex Community College is committed to providing timely updates to our students, faculty, staff, and the community through our regular communication channels and new virtual methods. College-wide communication will be coordinated through the Marketing & Communications department. These communications will include, but are not limited to, periodic updates from the President and Emergency Management Team, postings on MCC's COVID-19 webpage, as well as physical signage installed at both MCC locations. The President and Emergency Management Team may provide regular updates via email, virtual meetings, and video messages.

- Students and employees should continue to regularly check their MCC email, [the Middlesex website](#), MyMCC portal, and the college's social media pages, in addition to other communication venues.
- The MCC mobile app and MCCAlert text messages will be used when appropriate.
- [MCC's Return to Campus resource webpage](#) will continue to be updated.
- Programs and services with social media accounts are encouraged to share MCC's announcements with their followers.

Training

Students and employees are encouraged to watch the COVID-19 training videos listed below prior to returning to campus. The training videos are intended to protect the health and safety of the MCC community. Materials also align with the recommendations made by the Governor.

[Help Prevent COVID-19 with Social Distancing](#)

[Stop the Spread of Germs like Seasonal Flu and COVID-19](#)

[How to Safely Cover Your Face Outside of Home](#)

Check-in Procedures

Building Access

Buildings will remain locked through August 2, 2021. Anyone seeking access to a specific building until then should contact Public Safety at the phone numbers posted at each entrance to be granted access. After August 2, MCC properties will continue observing single points of access, but those entrances will be unlocked during identified hours of operation, and Public Safety will not need to be notified.

Until August 2, employees must obtain approval from their supervisor prior to going to either physical MCC location (excluding employees who are currently scheduled to work on campus on a regular basis). Time allotted on campus should be limited in nature. Supervisors that have granted approval to an employee should email emergencymanagement@middlesex.mass.edu with the name, date(s) and time(s) the employee will be on campus. An employee shall not report to work on campus without prior authorization. This is necessary to ensure contact tracing and space sanitization.

Moving forward through the remainder of the summer and heading into the fall semester, Middlesex Community College will continue using our mobile app to help us safely check students, staff, and faculty into our properties. You can download the app using either of these two routes:



Scan the QR code on the left or click the link below.

[Download the MCC Mobile App for Apple users.](#)





Scan the QR code on the left or click the link below.

[Download the MCC Mobile App for Google Play users.](#)



Using the QR (Quick Response) codes installed on standing signs in each of our lobbies, the utilization of the app helps provide a daily, safe, touchless manner for anyone to check in AND out of our properties. This will help our Facilities department continue to conduct targeted cleaning measures, as well as to help us locate individuals in the event of any COVID-19 cases that are reported to us moving forward.

Using your smart phone or device, open the MCC App, press the square icon in the upper left corner, and using your device's camera, take a picture of the QR code. It will log you into and out of buildings electronically with no need to sign in or out on paper!

Mental Health Resources

In order to support MCC students' academic success, a licensed mental health counselor is available to meet with students for mental health assessment, and, if needed, refer to treatment providers and resources in the local community, as well as to other support services within the College. These services are short-term, confidential, and are offered to enrolled students at no charge. [Click here to read more about MCC's Mental Health resources available for students.](#)

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Human Resources realizes that this is a stressful time for our employees. All benefited employees have access to the Mass4You Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefit. Mass4You offers several resources which may be particularly helpful during this stressful time, including counseling, financial, and educational resources. You can contact Mass4You 24/7 at 1-844-263-1982 or by [visiting their website](#). They have also developed helpful online resources specifically geared toward stress caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.

There are also many support services available throughout our community. Information is available at [Greater Lowell Health Alliance](#). All employees can view available support services at their local city or town website as well.

[The Commonwealth has more information on maintaining emotional health and well-being.](#)

MCC Operating Procedure

Communicable Diseases

A communicable disease is one spread from person to person through direct or indirect contact. Massachusetts law requires medical clinicians, laboratories, local boards of health, etc. to inform public health officials of newly confirmed cases of serious communicable diseases. [Click here to read the full list of communicable diseases that must be reported by medical professionals to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the reporting procedure.](#)

Because MCC does not employ any medical professionals in a diagnostic capacity on site, the college is typically notified of a student or employee's diagnosis of a communicable disease from the student or employee, a family member of the student or employee, and/or the DPH. [Click here to view more specific information on MCC's Communicable Disease Protocol.](#)

Communicable Disease Notification Protocol

Identification of Student:

1. Self-Reported to either a doctor/medical facility; or the College or
2. Department of Public Health.

Identification of Employee:

1. Self-Reported to either a doctor/medical facility; or the College or
2. Department of Public Health.

Department of Public Health Contact at MCC:

Patrick Cook

Executive Director of Public Affairs

Work: 978-656-3134

Cell: 781-760-4450

Email: cookp@middlesex.mass.edu

Notification to a College Office:

If Human Resources, the Dean of Students Office, or any other MCC office receives notification of COVID-19 exposure of a student, employee, or community member visiting our campus from the Department of Public Health OR the individual, the email should be forwarded to the Emergency Management Team at emergencymanagement@middlesex.mass.edu.

The employee should reply to the person sending the e-mail notifying them who the College's contact person is and their contact information. The employee shall also put the following statement in the email: "All further communication regarding this matter should go through the contact listed above." The employee shall copy the contact person on the e-mail.

Interview of Reporting Party:

The person reporting the COVID-19 exposure may be asked to provide the following information:

- Name of individuals exposed
- Contact information including phone, email, and emergency contact
- Class schedule, including campus locations
- Work schedule, including campus locations
- Co-curricular activities, including campus locations

- Any other campus contact
- Meeting schedule of employee
- Date and time of diagnosis, symptoms, treatment, and clearance to return to school or work

Definitions

Communicable Disease

An infectious disease that is spread from person to person or from animal to person. The spread or transfer can happen through the air, through contact with contaminated surfaces, or through direct contact with blood, feces, or other bodily fluids.

Communicable Period

The time, usually measured in days, between exposure to an illness and the onset of symptoms.

Quarantine

Restriction of movements and/or action of individuals who are known to have been exposed to or may reasonably be suspected to have been exposed to a communicable disease and who do not yet show signs or symptoms of the infection.

Isolation

Restriction of movement and/or action of individuals infected with a communicable disease to reduce the chance of spreading disease. A decision to allow or restrict any campus or classroom activity for students/staff/faculty will include, but is not limited to, the following considerations:

1. The nature of the risk, or how the disease is transmitted
2. The duration of the risk, or how long is the carrier infectious
3. CDC and or the DPH recommendation for prevention
4. The severity of the risk, or what is the potential harm for third parties
5. The probability that the disease will be transmitted and will cause varying degrees of harm to surrounding students, faculty and staff's academic and employment community

Isolation & Quarantine Guidelines

Per protocols provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Middlesex Community College has adopted the following guidelines to monitor campus ISOLATION and QUARANTINE COVID-19 cases:

Isolation or Quarantine: What's the difference?

Quarantine keeps someone who might have been exposed to the virus away from others. Isolation keeps someone who is infected with the virus away from others, even in their home.

Isolation is used to separate people infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific "sick room" or area and using a separate bathroom (if available).

Who needs to isolate?

- People who have COVID-19
- People who have symptoms of COVID-19 and are able to recover at home
- People who have no symptoms (are asymptomatic) but have tested positive for infection with SARS-CoV-2

I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms – what now?

You can be with others after

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared and
- At least 24 hours with no fever without taking fever-reducing medication and
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving

- ****Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation**

If you had severe illness from COVID-19 (you were admitted to a hospital and needed oxygen), your healthcare provider may recommend that you stay in isolation for longer than 10 days after your symptoms first appeared (possibly up to 20 days) and you may need to finish your period of isolation at home.

I tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms – what now?

If you continue to have no symptoms, you can be with others after:

- 10 days have passed since the date you had your positive test
- If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for “I think or know I had COVID, and I had symptoms.”

Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department.

Who needs to quarantine?

- People who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 - excluding people who have had COVID-19 within the past 3 months*
 - *People who have tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to quarantine or get tested again for up to 3 months as long as they do not develop symptoms again. People who develop symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.

What counts as close contact?

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
- You had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them)
- You shared eating or drinking utensils
- They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you

You should stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19.

Scenario 1

Close contact with someone who has COVID-19 - and will not have further close contact:

- I had close contact with someone who has COVID-19 and will not have further contact or interactions with the person while they are sick (e.g., co-worker, neighbor, or friend).
- Your last day of quarantine is 14 days from the date you had close contact.
- [Date of last close contact with the person who has COVID-19] + [14 days] = end of quarantine.

Scenario 2

Close contact with someone who has COVID-19 - and live with the person but can avoid further close contact:

- I live with someone who has COVID-19 (e.g., roommate, partner, family member), and that person has isolated by staying in a separate bedroom. I have had no close contact with the person since they isolated.
- Your last day of quarantine is 14 days from when the person with COVID-19 began home isolation
- [Date person with COVID-19 began home isolation] + [14 days] = end of quarantine

Scenario 3

Under quarantine and had additional close contact with someone who has COVID-19:

- I live with someone who has COVID-19 and started my 14-day quarantine period because we had close contact. What if I ended up having close contact with the person who is sick during my quarantine? What if another household member gets sick with COVID-19? Do I need to restart my quarantine?
- Yes. You will have to restart your quarantine from the last day you had close contact with anyone in your house who has COVID-19. Any time a new household member gets sick with COVID-19 and you had close contact, you will need to restart your quarantine.
- [Date of additional close contact with person who has COVID-19] + [14 days] = end of quarantine

Scenario 4

Live with someone who has COVID-19 and cannot avoid continued close contact

- I live in a household where I cannot avoid close contact with the person who has COVID-19. I am providing direct care to the person who is sick, don't have a separate bedroom to isolate the person who is sick, or live in close quarters where I am unable to keep a physical distance of 6 feet.
- You should avoid contact with others outside the home while the person is sick, and quarantine for 14 days after the person who has COVID-19 meets the criteria to end home isolation.
- [Date the person with COVID-19 ends home isolation] + [14 days] = end of quarantine

Health Protocols

Vaccinations

At this time, Middlesex Community College is not mandating vaccinations for students, staff or faculty. However, moving forward the college will potentially begin tracking vaccinations for students using current vaccination management programs. Those confidential records will be maintained by Enrollment Services.

All Massachusetts residents ages 12+ are eligible to access appointments.

At Middlesex Community College, we strongly urge our students, employees and the rest of our college community to receive a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as they are able. Top health officials for the state and the country, the CDC, and our community leaders have all demonstrated that the available vaccines are not only safe but are the most effective way to limit the spread of the coronavirus. The vaccines currently being administered have met the Food and Drug Administration's rigorous scientific standards for safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing quality needed to support emergency use authorization. Millions of people in the U.S. have already received COVID-19 vaccines, and these vaccines will continue to undergo the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history.

Testing & Contact Tracing

MCC's Emergency Management Team will work closely with the BOH and DPH in monitoring positive cases of COVID-19 on our campuses. In an effort to keep our campuses as healthy as possible, COVID-19 surveillance testing will be done at University Crossing at UMass Lowell, during designated hours of operation. Testing will be conducted, free of charge, for asymptomatic MCC students, faculty, and staff Monday-Thursday. Requests for access to a test should be emailed to EmergencyManagement@middlesex.mass.edu.

Although not a requirement, students, faculty, and staff who regularly take classes or work on campus are strongly encouraged to take advantage of free COVID-19 testing as an effective way to help keep MCC's campuses as healthy as possible.

Those who are experiencing symptoms should contact their doctor or urgent care center to be tested and should not report to be tested on campus. By being tested, individuals who may be asymptomatic can be identified and therefore help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

All information related to an individual, including whether they tested positive for COVID-19 or are a close contact, is strictly confidential. In compliance with HIPAA regulations, the Emergency Management Team will only notify the necessary departments if a student or employee tests positive for COVID-19.

COVID-19 Testing Consent Form

[Click here to read about MCC's COVID-19 Testing Consent Form.](#)

Self-Monitoring Responsibility

Employees and students shall self-monitor their health status daily prior to reporting to work at either MCC location. Those who are feeling ill must not come to campus and should follow the appropriate sick notification procedure, as well as speak with their supervisor/instructor about completing work remotely, if possible. Additionally, employees and students experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should contact their doctor or local urgent care center for further guidance and testing procedures, as necessary.

According to CDC guidance, potential COVID-19 symptoms include, but may not be limited to:

- Fever or chills
- New cough (not related to a chronic condition)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle aches or weakness
- Sore throat

- New nasal congestion or runny nose (not related to seasonal allergies)
- New loss of smell or taste
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

[Please review the CDC's Symptoms of Coronavirus for more information.](#)

Self-Certification

Each time before coming to campus, every employee and student shall self-certify that they are healthy in order to enter either of MCC's locations. Self-certifying includes asking themselves the questions included on the checklists below:

[COVID-19 Daily Checklist](#)

Self-Certification Questions:

- Do you have a fever (temperature over 100.3 degrees F) without having taken any fever-reducing medications?
- Are you experiencing loss of smell or taste?
- Are you experiencing muscle aches?
- Do you have a sore throat?
- Do you have a cough?
- Are you experiencing shortness of breath?
- Are you experiencing chills?
- Do you have a headache?

- Have you experienced any gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, or loss of appetite?
- Have you, or anyone you have been in close contact with, been diagnosed with COVID-19 or been placed on quarantine for possible contact with COVID-19?
- Have you been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by a medical professional or a local public health official?

According to the CDC, a “close contact” is “someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.” If you suspect you are a close contact or have otherwise been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or are experiencing symptoms of the virus, please consider contacting the Emergency Management Team at EmergencyManagement@middlesex.mass.edu.

If any employee answers ‘yes’ to any of the questions above, they should stay home and do the following:

- Contact their supervisor per normal sick notification procedures
- Be encouraged to contact their doctor or urgent care center
- Continue to work remotely if able
- Be allowed to use one’s leave time
- If they are not able to use paid time off or would like to discuss other paid leave options, they should contact Human Resources.
- Should an employee report to work sick and another employee is concerned, they should contact their immediate supervisor. The supervisor may reference training guidelines and recognize the need for employees to stay home and take care when they are sick. Supervisors can contact Human Resources for additional information on coaching and training resources as needed for compliance with the guidelines.

If any student answers 'yes' to any of the questions above, they should stay home and do the following:

- Contact MCC's Emergency Management Team
- Be encouraged to contact their doctor or urgent care center
- Contact their instructor to let them know they will not be attending class
- Should a student report to class sick and someone is concerned, they should contact the Emergency Management Team at EmergencyManagement@middlesex.mass.edu.

Protocol for Positive COVID-19 Cases at MCC

- The local BOH or DPH will contact MCC's Emergency Management Team if there are any confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Contact tracing for those diagnosed with COVID-19 will be completed should the BOH/DPH contact MCC and indicate they need assistance. Otherwise, all contact tracing will be conducted by the agency, which may go back 2 weeks prior to testing positive.
- The BOH will advise on the next steps regarding appropriate cleaning, closure of buildings, etc.
- The identity of a student or employee who has tested positive for COVID-19 will not be shared with anyone outside of the Emergency Management Team or Human Resources. Contact tracing will determine who needs to be notified if they are determined to be a close contact.

Travel & Exposure Reporting

Domestic and travel abroad opportunities have been suspended at this time. So that the college may take appropriate preventative measures, offer available resources, and immediately assist any member of our community who may become ill or has been in close

proximity with someone who has become ill, it is asked that employees consider sharing information with the college regarding possible exposure to the virus. The information voluntarily submitted will assist the college in implementing any precautions or protocols recommended by public health agencies. All information gathered through this process will be maintained confidentially only with MCC's Emergency Management Team, will be separate from personnel files or student records, and shall be used only to assist the college in providing and maintaining a healthy learning and working environment.

Travel

If you are traveling, please review the updated [Student & Employee Travel Protocols](#). Throughout the summer and into the fall, students, staff and faculty are urged to monitor current State Department travel regulations and CDC guidelines as potential outbreaks globally could impact timely return to our campuses. [Please review the U.S. State Department travel advisories](#) for the latest updates.

Exposure to COVID-19

Should you be informed that you are a close contact to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, MCC follows guidance that a 14 day quarantine period should be observed. An email should immediately be sent to EmergencyManagement@middlesex.mass.edu. A close contact may receive an Exposure Report form that will outline guidance, which may include, but may not be limited to, not visiting either of MCC's campuses for up to 14 days and producing a negative test result.

[Please read a list of available testing sites](#). Some testing sites are free and do not require insurance. Please call ahead to confirm.

High Risk Populations

According to the CDC, age increases the risk of COVID-19 infections. Additionally, individuals of any age with certain conditions may have a higher risk for COVID-19 infection.

Individuals are considered at an increased risk if they have any of the following conditions which may include, but are not limited to:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index, or BMI, of 30 or higher)
- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Individuals might be at an increased risk if they have any of the following conditions which may include, but are not limited to:

- Asthma (moderate to severe)
- Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Hypertension or high blood pressure
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
- Neurologic conditions, such as dementia
- Liver disease

- Pregnancy
- Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues)
- Smoking
- Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder)
- Type 1 diabetes mellitus

Please refer to CDC guidance for a complete list of those who might be at higher risk. Students who may fall into these categories may voluntarily reach out to Disability Support Services regarding accommodations for their return to on-campus learning. Employees who may fall into these categories may voluntarily reach out to Human Resources regarding accommodations for their return to the workplace.

Space & Staffing Protocols

Telework

While waiting until Massachusetts telework policies are further developed, there is an expectation that staff will work 50 percent of hours on-campus commencing August 2. Further updates regarding telework policies will be shared by Human Resources incorporated into this document moving forward.

Space Reconfiguration

Much consideration has been taken to help create a campus environment where social distancing guidelines are possible. Everyone, including employees, students, and vendors, must wear a face mask and remain at least six feet apart to the greatest extent possible inside campus buildings. To aid in this, Middlesex has taken the following initiatives:

- Office Reconfiguration
 - Desks are spaced an appropriate distance apart. Plexiglass barriers have been installed in lobbies, waiting rooms, office welcome areas, and other locations as deemed necessary.
- Classroom Reconfiguration
 - There will be a limited number of students/faculty allowed in face-to-face classroom offerings, according to state guidance. Desks have been spaced out and extra seating has been removed in classrooms to allow for six-foot social distancing.
- Where necessary, markers have been placed on floors and pavements to indicate six-foot social distancing.
- All restrooms on campus, regardless of size, will adhere to occupancy limits delineated on signage on respective doors.

- Food Services
 - The Cafeteria will plan to reopen with limited options. There will be grab and go items only. You may order ahead via app and pickup. Limited seating will be available. Food Services employees will wear appropriate PPE (face masks, gloves), and a plexiglass barrier has been installed at the cashier station.
- Public Areas
 - All furniture will be spaced out more than six feet apart and shall not be moved out of that configuration. In an effort to keep our campus as clean as possible, individuals should always ensure that they maintain social distance, sanitize tables before and after use, and throw away their trash. A face mask should always be worn indoors unless eating or drinking.
- Prior to August 2, all buildings are accessible with the assistance of Public Safety. Signage is displayed to let visitors know access to the campus is limited. Employees scheduled to work remotely shall obtain supervisory approval and ensure Public Safety is notified when visiting campus for contact tracing purposes.

Limited Number of Employees Returning To Work On Campus

Public Safety keeps a daily log of who is on campus each day and requests access to buildings. Along with the daily logs, they keep the schedules of employees working on campus on a regular basis (e.g. Facilities, Enrollment, ITS, etc.). All buildings are accessible with the assistance of Public Safety.

- Employees who have specific tasks that cannot be accomplished remotely must be approved by their VP, Dean, or Supervisor for on-campus work.
- Once an employee gains approval to work on campus, Public Safety should be contacted via email at SecurityCity@middlesex.mass.edu by the approving supervisor to notify them that the employee has approval prior to their arrival on campus listing specific dates and times.

- If an employee is reporting to campus for approved specific tasks that are unable to be completed remotely:
 - The employee will go directly to their building on campus, wait outside, and call Public Safety while they are outside of the building. No employee should enter a building without Public Safety's knowledge, with the exception of Facilities.
 - The employee should spend the minimum required amount of time on campus.
 - More time may be spent on campus with supervisory approval.
 - Only complete those tasks which are deemed necessary.
 - While on campus, employees should follow established precautions and wear a face mask/covering indoors, maintain social distancing of six feet from others, and practice frequent hand hygiene.
 - The employee should stay in their workspace and not visit other areas, except for the nearest restroom or to get lunch. A face mask must be worn indoors at all times on campus if the employee is not in their private office, alone with the door closed. Employees may eat in their office, alone, with the door closed.
 - The employee should leave campus promptly upon completion of the tasks.
- A limited number of employees who cannot work remotely may come back to campus to work.
 - Employees, being notified ahead of time, may be asked to return on a rotating schedule to work on campus.
 - Each department shall keep a sign-in sheet for visitors to their office, which will include the individual's name, contact information, and date and time of visit to be used should contact tracing need to occur.
 - Childcare needs/plans will be taken into consideration.

- Dependent on schools' reopening plans (full-time, hybrid or remote).
- Dependent on daycare availability.
- Dependent on availability of summer camp/programs for children.
- Mail is continuing to be delivered, in a limited capacity, on a regular basis during the week.
- Continued dress-down attire will be allowed until further notice. This is important so items can be washed daily, which might not be the case for typical business clothing.

Staffing Protocol

Protocols have been established to ensure that employees can practice adequate social distancing. The number of people on campus and in buildings at one time is being limited to approved personnel and current students. The following options may be considered to accomplish this protocol:

- Rotating employees who will be working on campus and who will work remotely.
- Those employees who can continue to work remotely will do so.

There will be no public access to campus buildings except for authorized campus personnel and students before August 2, 2021. Access to the grounds by the public is permitted, but wearing face masks/coverings indoors and social distancing is a standard practice.

Middlesex employees will return to the two campus locations starting August 2 with the knowledge that appropriate social distancing will be followed, there is PPE available, and opportunities for testing and vaccine capabilities for COVID-19 are available in the greater community.

Staffing levels will be coordinated departmentally to mitigate potential risks and ensure the safety of the Middlesex community. No unit or department should return to staffing capacity

levels beyond current needs to support essential operations without approval. This does not apply to academic classrooms.

Management shall consider alternating work schedules to allow for appropriate social distancing for employees. Managers shall also consider a staggered/rotating schedule for those employees reporting to and departing from the workplace to reduce density at main entrances/exits.

All meetings are encouraged to remain virtual, and large gatherings will not be permitted until further notice and upon receipt of related guidance from the Commonwealth.

If outbreaks reemerge in the MCC service area or among the campus populations, it may become necessary to further reduce staffing, and protocols will then be reassessed.

Potential Outbreak

Surge Response

Preparation for Possible Increased Waves of Infections

1. A sufficient inventory of PPE, hand sanitizer, and cleaning supplies will be kept on hand and ordered regularly.
2. Policies, protocols, and procedures will continue to be reviewed and updated as necessary.
3. Closing procedures will be in place should the pandemic return at a level deemed necessary for closure by state guidance.
4. MCC will remain focused on being prepared for technology needs of staff and students if remote work is reinstated.

Middlesex is dedicated to the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff, and will be diligent in following the guidelines and protocols set forth in this guide as a model for the protection from COVID-19 and other infections.

References

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

[Commonwealth of Massachusetts](#)

[Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#)

[MCC Safe Return to Campus Webpage](#)