

# Returning COM Students to Campus and to Patient Care Settings

## College of Medicine Education Operations during COVID-19

### Optimizing Safety

#### 1. Self-Monitoring

Every member of the MUSC community must monitor themselves for symptoms using the checklist below prior to starting any clinical rotation. You are required to attest (see below attestation) that you have not had any of these symptoms for 14 days prior to returning to patient care. If you have traveled internationally, you would also need to self-quarantine for 14 days from the date your return home.

If you have of the following symptoms, go home/stay home and contact MUSC Health Virtual Care (<https://campaigns.muschealth.org/virtual-care/index.html>) so you can be assessed for testing.

- Do you have *new muscle aches* not related to another medical condition or another specific activity (e.g. due to physical exercise)?
- Do you feel like you may have a *fever* of greater than 100.4°F? (If so, take temperature)
- Do you have *chills*?
- Do you have a *sore throat* not related to another medical condition (e.g. allergies)?
- Do you have a *new or worsening cough* that is not related to another medical condition?
- Do you have *shortness of breath* that is not attributable to another medical condition?
- Do you have recent (<5 days) *loss of smell and/or taste*?
- Do you have new onset of *vomiting or diarrhea* not related to another medical condition?
- ***If you have any symptom listed above in italics, please also take your temperature and contact MUSC Health Virtual Care.***

If you have other concerning or serious symptoms, seek medical care immediately. Students who have underlying conditions that put them at increased risk include the following: age >65 years old, underlying chronic health conditions (see COVID-19 Module for more information), immunosuppression, and pregnancy.

If you have questions about your health, please contact MUSC Student Health <https://education.musc.edu/students/student-health>.

#### 2. Students **may not** be involved in direct care for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients.

The clinical team will help identify appropriate patients for students to see in the clinical setting and will assist them regarding appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) choices.

Should a student have any question about whether they should see a patient or what PPE is appropriate, they should pause and discuss their questions with a care team member (nurse, resident, fellow, attending) before proceeding.

**3. Use hand sanitizer or wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds frequently (e.g. before and after wearing gloves and after donning/doffing PPE) and after touching surfaces.**

**4. Maintain social distancing at approximately 6 feet between individuals...where possible.**

Social distancing is possible in many areas, but there are clear exceptions. For example, distancing cannot be maintained on elevators, in some hallways, and in some clinical or clinical education spaces. Therefore, appropriate masks are required per the MUSC mask policy (see #7 below) in all MUSC facilities to optimize safety.

Areas where social distancing would likely be compromised, like the student **relaxation and study lounges and clinical launchpad**, will remain **locked** in order to decrease risk.

### **5. COVID Monitoring System**

The Returning Students to Clinical Settings Taskforce, the College of Medicine, the University and MUSC Health system have in place robust systems for monitoring COVID incidence, PPE supply, capacity for quality teaching, assessment and supervision, and the effectiveness of the processes and procedures that are in place to continue to optimize safety and risk. These systems are especially important as our community begins to reopen and will ideally allow us to determine and respond appropriately to changes.

### **6. Effective Training : the COVID-19 Module**

Students from the Charleston and AnMed Clinical campuses must review the assigned [COVID-19 Module](#) created by MUSC Student Health that addresses the following:

- COVID symptoms and monitoring guidelines
- Mask and PPE guidelines
- PPE donning and doffing training and videos

AnMed students must check in with Dr. Abercrombie (Campus Dean) for additional preparation that is required.

### **7. Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Masks (based on MUSC Health Mask Guidance May 1, 2020)

#### On Campus

- Students must wear masks while on campus.
- Masks are mandated for use whenever individuals are likely to encounter others on campus and social distancing is not an option (e.g. elevators, moving through hallways, shuttle buses etc.).
- Masks may be removed when social distancing is in place (e.g., two individuals seated in a room at a distance that is >6 feet apart).
- *Isolation masks* will be provided to students for all facilities. Students may wear the same isolation mask for several days as long as it is clean. Responsible use is encouraged.

- If a student chooses to use a reusable, washable masks on campus (non-clinical areas only) they are responsible for washing it and maintaining the mask- see CDC guidance about cloth mask quality and cleaning: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

### In Clinical Settings

All MUSC Health care team members, including clinical students, are required to wear appropriate masks while at work and consistently self-monitor. Clinical care team members are to **only use MUSC-provided masks**, not externally sourced or homemade masks. The type of mask required to be worn depends on the work setting. MUSC-provided masks include isolation masks, N95 respirators or surgical masks. Guidelines for each type of masks are outlined below.

- Isolation Masks: Social distancing is difficult in health care settings. Universal use of isolation masks while at work may help reduce transmission of COVID-19 from individuals with mild or unrecognized COVID-19 symptoms. Universal mask use will not prevent COVID-19 infection by inhalation of aerosols; however, it may reduce droplet spread. Isolation masks should be worn while at work in all clinical or common areas of the hospital, except when required to wear the N95 respirator or surgical mask for patient care situations as defined below. Wearing of isolation masks should improve patients' confidence in our commitment to ensuring a safe environment. Care team members must don a new isolation mask each day upon reporting to work and dispose of the mask in a trash bin at the conclusion of work. Any mask which becomes soiled or wet with secretions during work should be disposed of and a new mask donned.
- N95 Respirators are for care team members who are in the room of a symptomatic rule-out COVID-19 or any lab-confirmed COVID-19 patient. These masks are designed to reduce exposure to > 95 % airborne contaminants. To be effective they must be individually selected to fit the wearer's face and provide a good seal. A respirator should be worn when caring for COVID-19 patients, especially when performing aerosol generating procedures (bronchoscopy, intubation, etc.). **STUDENTS ARE RESTRICTED FROM DIRECT CARE OF COVID-19** confirmed or suspected patients.
- Surgical masks must be worn in the operating room and should not be worn outside of the operating room areas.

**If at any point a student cannot secure a mask from the hospital or clinical setting, they may obtain one from the COM Dean's office.**

**[Report PPE shortages through the COM Student Concern Reporting System!](#)**

Bouffant caps and non-rated yellow isolation gowns may also be utilized by students in the patient care setting as need in the course of daily clinical work.

In research laboratories and other circumstances which may make social distancing impossible, additional PPE or other measures may be required to minimize risk.

## 8. In Case of an Illness or New Symptoms

- If you are experiencing COVID or flu-like symptoms, **go home/stay home**, and log in to the **MUSC Health Virtual Care** to complete a virtual visit. They will refer you for testing as appropriate. (<https://campaigns.muschealth.org/virtual-care/index.html>) Students who have symptoms and do not get testing, and students who test positive for COVID-19 are required to be quarantined for 14 days. As the health system policies evolve, *repeat testing may be necessary in order to clear students to return to clinical settings*. Student Health is notified of students who contract COVID-19, and will follow-up and work with students to explain when it is safe to return to clinical care.
- If you are experiencing serious or concerning symptoms, seek medical care immediately.

### Reporting an Absence or Illness through the COVID Absence Portal

Students can easily report their absence/illness AFTER they leave the clinical setting and campus through the **COVID Student Absence Portal** linked to the COM Student Affairs web page. Student Affairs will notify the course director, but the student is encouraged to notify the course director by email once they arrive home. Curriculum make-up plans for absences are developed for each student based on the specific circumstances of the absence and the curriculum/experiences missed. The Course/Clerkship Director and Associate Deans for Curriculum will collaborate to develop make up plans. Extensive absences can result in academic delays; students affairs is available to meet with students to provide support and advising. Curriculum deans are available to discuss timeline alterations and impact on curriculum and program completion.

### Student Support and Contact Information

- **MUSC Student Health: 843-792-3664** Students are encouraged to contact student affairs for any concerns or questions. The student should leave a voicemail stating a brief description of the concern, the urgency of the issues, along with their name and call back number. Staff will return the call within 3 hours during normal operating clinic hours (Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM). Calls left outside of normal operating clinic hours will be returned the following business day. *For serious health concerns, seek emergency medical care immediately*. Should a student contract COVID, student health will work with the health system and the student to identify when they may return to clinical care. <https://education.musc.edu/students/student-health>
- **COM Student Affairs: 843-792-2530**
  - Students must contact student affairs to **report an absence** through the absence portal.
  - Student Affairs is available to answer questions and direct students to resources.
- **AnMed Health Clinical Campus**
  - Student Affairs (Dr. Amanda Davis) 864-512-4439
  - Employee Health- Main Campus 864-512-1306
  - Employee Health- North Campus 864-512-4813

Students may find these numbers on their respective VIP card attached to their student ID badges with other information about blood borne pathogen exposure, CAPS contact information, etc.

### **Requesting Leave of Absence or a major Academic Plan Modification**

Medical students should contact Student Affairs if you meet any of the following **three criteria** and would like to discuss a modified plan. Student affairs requires the minimum amount of information necessary to make an approval for modification or leave; student health information is kept confidential:

- In a vulnerable population such as: elderly, people with immunosuppression or co-morbidities, pregnant women
- Those living with vulnerable individuals
- Other medical or personal reasons for seeking a leave of absence

Students can discuss the potential for a modified plan which may include, but is not limited to, the following if approved: a medical or personal leave of absence, a leave to pursue a non-clinical degree (e.g. MPH, MSCR), review for potential transfer into the combined MD-MSCR degree to complete the MSCR portion of the degree, or completion of one non-clinical elective activity. Many of the potential options may or will result in a delay in completion of program requirements and graduation. Students should also reach out if they have other concerns.

### **College of Medicine Curriculum Modification during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

The didactic portion of the majority of courses and/or educational activities will remain on-line until further notice, with a progressive transition back to in-person education activities. Programs may bring students to campus for exams, simulations or clinical experiences as long as either (1) students maintain social distancing, or (2) students utilize appropriate PPE if distancing cannot be maintained (e.g. clinical teams caring for a patient or working together in the simulation center).

### **COVID Acknowledgement of Responsibility and Risk (in E\*Value)**

NOTE: Students are required to complete the acknowledgment in E\*Value prior to stating clinical rotation activities in a clinical setting. An email from E\*Value will be sent to all clinical students.

- **I understand that medical students are restricted from caring for patient with COVID-19 or suspected of having COVID-19.**
- I have reviewed all materials presented on the COVID-19 Student Resources Page provided by the COM Student Affairs, to include how to optimize my safety, PPE requirements/procedures, and the important use of the COVID absence portal for reporting flu-like or COVID symptoms.

- I have reviewed the training materials provided regarding the appropriate use of personal protective equipment and the donning and doffing of PPE.
- I have reviewed the information about COVID-19 symptoms, screening, reporting, testing and care; I commit to self-monitoring, and will not come to campus or clinical settings if I have symptoms, except in the case of needing to seek medical care. If I develop symptoms while on campus I will go home immediately and seek medical care.
- I understand the importance of, and will therefore take, necessary precautions and follow prescribed protocols to decrease the risk of infection to patients, to members of the MUSC community, and to myself.
- I attest that at the start of clinical rotation activities, I will have been in the community or region of my rotation for 14 days and have not had flu-like or COVID symptoms (described in training materials) during that time period.
- I acknowledge that working in the clinical setting inherently carries increased risk regarding potential exposure to any number of communicable diseases and other significant risks, including but not limited to those posed by COVID-19. Other risks associate with COVID-19 may not be presently foreseeable.
- I acknowledge that some vulnerable individuals have an increased risk of harm from COVID-19, including but not limited to, elderly, people with immunosuppression or co-morbidities, and pregnant women.
- I understand that for medical or personal reasons I can request to delay return to clinical activities; it is my responsibility to contact Student Affairs immediately to discuss the process and seek approval.
- I assume responsibility for risks associated with my participation, and understand that I may pursue options for a leave of absence if I am uncomfortable with the risk.
- I understand that some of the options for delay may result in a delay in completion of program requirements and graduation.
- I agree to seek clarification if I have any questions about information provided.

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| <b>Travel Policies</b> |
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**International and Domestic Travel**

All MUSC-sponsored domestic out-of-state and international travel continues to be prohibited until further notice. This applies to all university faculty and staff and all MUSC Health employees, in addition to students, residents, and fellows. Exceptions to this directive will be granted only in the rarest

circumstances and must be approved by the respective dean, provost and/or the International Travel Oversight Committee. Personal domestic and international travel is strongly discouraged.

### **MUSC travelers returning to campus**

Upon return from international or domestic out-of-state travel, whether MUSC-sponsored or personal travel, university faculty, staff, fellows, residents and students and all MUSC Health employees are required to continue following MUSC's COVID-19 self-monitoring and return to work guidance.

<https://horseshoe.musc.edu/~media/files/hr-files/univ-files/covid19/employee-self-monitoring-and-return-to-work-guidance.pdf?la=en>

### **Student Activities and Events**

All non-mission critical events should be cancelled or offered virtually until further notice. Exceptions to this will only be granted in rare circumstances and with written approval from the dean.

### **Parking**

Note that the Hagood parking lot is currently closed and no shuttles are running. Campus parking is available in any parking lot on a first-come, first-served basis.

On or about June 1, we anticipate that the Hagood lot will reopen, shuttles will begin operating, and normal parking in assigned lots will resume.

### **Campus visitors**

All non-mission critical visitors to campus are prohibited until further notice.