Health Services COVID FAQ Spring 2022:

Q: What are the pre-arrival testing requirements?
A: A diagnostic COVID test needs to be taken within one day prior to your arrival on campus. Ex. Move-in day is 1/17 test can be taken on or after 1/16. These results need to be uploaded in the Vassar College Patient Portal at vassar.medicatconnect.com, under the title “Spring 2022 Pre-Arrival Covid Test”. Please note that any type of test, including at-home test kits are accepted.

If you have tested positive within the last 90 days do NOT get any further testing. Please upload your previous positive COVID test result in the portal in lieu of a current pre-arrival test.

Winter break students will need a test taken starting the week of January 10th. Please contact the ROC for testing supplies.

Commuter students will need to obtain 1 day prior to accessing campus for the first time this semester. Off-campus tests are acceptable and will need to be uploaded into the patient portal under the title “Spring 2022 Pre-Arrival Covid Test”.

Note that if uploading a picture of a self-test kit result, your name/date of birth/date and time of specimen collection/signature must be present in the picture.

Q: What if I don’t have a valid pre-arrival test prior to arrival on campus?
A: The ROC will work with Health Services to get a test for you as soon as possible. If you arrive after regular business hours, you may need to be temporarily housed in the Hampton Inn hotel until testing can be arranged.

Please note that many local pharmacies have rapid antigen tests available to purchase which allows for self-testing including the Rite Aid on Hooker Avenue and CVS on Dutchess Turnpike.

Q: How do I schedule a Post Arrival COVID test?
A: All students regardless of vaccination status will need to have a rapid antigen test 3-5 days after arrival on-campus. This test will be performed at Walker Field House January 17 through January 22 from 9am-430pm. If you have tested positive within the past 90 days you are exempt from this requirement. Scheduling will be through the Medicat patient portal vassar.medicatconnect.com and instructions will be on the homepage.

Winter break students should schedule testing during the week of January 17th.

Commuter students should be tested 3-5 days after first accessing campus. Tests taken off-campus are acceptable but will need to be uploaded into the patient portal under the title “Covid test”.

Students arriving AFTER January 22nd will need to test through Health Services or WMC at the Aula (Wednesdays and Fridays 1-430pm starting January 26th).

1.6.2022 Health Services
Q: What are the booster vaccine requirements and how can I get a booster if I need one?
A: All students are required to have had a booster or have proof of a scheduled upcoming appointment to return to campus for the spring semester. If you have recently had COVID-19 then you are expected to obtain the booster within 90 days after your infection. If you are seeking a medical or religious exemption from this requirement, please complete the appropriate exemption form which can be found under “FORMS” in the patient portal or on our website https://offices.vassar.edu/health-services/.
If you need a booster this link provides resources in the local community: https://www.dutchessny.gov/departments/dbch/covid-19-vaccine-information.htm

Q: How long does it take to get test results?
A: PCR tests generally result within 48-72 hours but this can vary depending upon the volume of tests being processed. Antigen tests result in 10-15 minutes depending upon the brand being used.

Q: If I have had COVID-19 when should I get tested again?
A: You should not get routinely tested for 90 days after a positive COVID-19 test unless you are feeling ill and testing would be at the discretion of the clinician. Students who tested positive within 90 days of returning to campus for the spring semester will not need to have a pre-arrival or post-arrival test.

Note that this recommendation does NOT apply to the test taken on day 5 of isolation to determine eligibility to follow the “shortened” isolation guidance. All students testing positive who are asymptomatic on Day 5 of isolation, with Day 0 being the date of symptom onset or positive test date (if asymptomatic) will need to have an antigen test. If they test positive, they will need to follow the standard 10-day isolation guidance.

Q: How often do I need to get tested?
A: Our current requirements are that unvaccinated individuals be tested twice weekly using an antigen test starting after the post-arrival test is completed. Fully vaccinated individuals do not require routine surveillance testing. This is subject to change depending upon community and campus metrics.
All close contacts, regardless of vaccination status, should be tested 5 days after last exposure to COVID-19. All individuals should be tested, regardless of their vaccination status, if they experience any symptoms of COVID-19. Voluntary testing is available at the AULA Wednesdays and Fridays 1p-430p starting January 26th.

Q: How will I know if I have a positive PCR test?
A: Health Services will call any person directly with positive test results, whether an antigen or PCR tests if they were taken on-campus.

If you took a test off-campus and were notified of a positive result, please let Health Services know so that we can best support you. Please upload this result to the Patient Portal at vassar.medicatconnect.com under “Covid Test”.

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If you take a self-test and it is positive, please call Health Services at 845-437-5800 to report the positive test. If after hours, the night nurse triage service will assist you with the isolation process.

Q: If I test positive, when will I be able to leave isolation?
A: Based on the most current CDC guidelines, individuals are eligible for a “shortened” isolation period if they are asymptomatic on **Day 5 of isolation**, with Day 0 being date of symptom onset OR the date of positive test collection (whichever came first).

The following criteria **MUST** be met to be eligible for a “shortened” isolation period:

- Asymptomatic or symptoms grossly resolved
- Afebrile x 24 hours without use of a fever-reducing medication (ex. Tylenol/Motrin/Ibuprofen)
- Capable of masking when around others including in your housing assignment for additional 5 days (with the exception of eating and drinking)
- Negative rapid antigen test taken on Day 5
- You are not moderately-severely immunocompromised

Please note that if any of these criteria CAN NOT be met, then you must complete the standard 10-day isolation period. If you DO meet the criteria for the shortened isolation period, then you will need to mask around others for the additional 5 days after returning to campus. Being that you cannot mask while eating and drinking, please be sure to distance yourself from others during this activity.

Please note that moderately-severely immunocompromised individuals will need to follow the standard 10-day isolation requirements.

Please do not leave isolation until you are cleared by Health Services. You will be contacted on Day 5 or Day 10 as appropriate by a staff member who will provide formal clearance for you to return to campus.

Q: What if I have had Covid-19 and I am a student athlete?
A: All student athletes who have had Covid-19 within the past 3 months will need to obtain clearance to participate from Health Services. You can also present Health Services with a clearance note from an off-campus provider that explicitly states you are cleared without restrictions to participate in competitive sports. Please note that if you have already received clearance from Health Services last semester, you do not need to repeat this process. You are encouraged to identify you COVID status to your pertinent individuals in the Athletics Department.
Q: What if I had the COVID vaccine (with or without a booster) and test positive?
A: If you test positive for COVID-19 you will still need to isolate regardless of vaccination status. COVID vaccines do not cause positive antigen or PCR test results. COVID vaccines can only potentially impact antibody test results.

Q: If I am a close contact to COVID, do I need to quarantine if I am fully vaccinated?
A: Individuals who need to quarantine are the following:
- Unvaccinated
- Partially vaccinated with a primary vaccine series
- Completed a vaccine series and are eligible for a booster BUT have NOT obtained the booster dose
All others, including those who tested positive within 90 days of their exposure, do NOT need to quarantine but are encouraged to monitor yourself for the development of symptoms and wear a well-fitting mask when around others for 10 days after your exposure, with date of last exposure being Day 0. All close contacts should obtain a COVID test 5 days after your last exposure to the positive case. If you develop symptoms during the 10-day monitoring period, isolate yourself immediately and notify Health Services at 845-437-5800 to arrange for evaluation and testing.

Q: When can I be off quarantine?
A: Quarantine typically lasts 5 days from the date of last exposure to a positive individual with date of last exposure being Day 0. If symptoms develop, or if a quarantined individual tests positive within those 5 days, they will need to follow isolation guidance.

Q: Do I need to be tested while on quarantine?
A: We strongly recommend that any close contacts to a positive case of COVID get tested on Day 5 after their last exposure to COVID, with the date of last exposure being Day 0. Individuals in quarantine will need to schedule testing through Health Services. Close contacts who are not in quarantine can test with Health Services or at the Aula Wednesdays/Fridays 1-5pm.

Q: If I have been identified as a close contact to a positive case and I am put on quarantine, do my close contacts need to have special housing or get tested for COVID?
A: No, your close contacts are considered “contacts of a contact” and no special testing or accommodations are needed. Continue to encourage all close contacts to practice physical distancing, mask wearing and good hygiene practices.

Q: What if I have had COVID previously?
A: If you have had a positive COVID test within the past 90 days from your exposure to a positive case, your symptoms are completely resolved and you are identified as a close contact, you will NOT need to quarantine.

1.6.2022 Health Services
Q: What if I get a COVID booster vaccine after I am exposed, do I still need to quarantine?
A: Yes. If you have not received a booster vaccine prior to the date of your last exposure, you will still need to quarantine.

Q: If I’m not feeling well what do I do?
A: Call Health Services at 845-437-5800 (M-F 9-5; weekends 12-4). If you are having COVID-like symptoms please self-isolate until you speak to a member of the Health Services team. If you are having a medical emergency call CRC 845-437-7333 or 911 (if off-campus).

Q: What if I am having a medical emergency?
A: If you are on-campus, call CRC at 845-437-7333. During regular business hours a Safety Officer and local emergency response agencies will render aid. After hours a Safety Officer and an NYS emergency medical technician along with Vassar College EMS will be sent to your location. Local emergency services will be dispatched when necessary. If you are housed off-campus, call 911 directly.

Q: What do I do if I have a mental health concern?
A: During normal business hours, call Counseling Services at 845-437-5700. After hours call the CRC at 845-437-7333 to speak to the Counselor on Call or to activate an emergency response if necessary.

Q: What if I think I am a close contact to a positive person?
A: Close contacts are identified by the person who tested positive for COVID-19 during the contact tracing process. Close contacts are people who between 2 days prior to symptom onset/positive test date and the date of the positive case entering isolation were within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more during a 24-hour period (with or without masks). All people identified as close contacts by the positive case are notified and are encouraged to complete the close contact screening form through the patient portal. There have been cases where COVID positive individuals have failed to identify a close contact, so if you believe you may have been exposed and are not contacted by a contact tracer, please call Health Services during normal business hours to discuss your potential exposure risk.
All close contacts should seek testing on Day 5 after their exposure and should monitor for symptoms and mask when around others for 10 days after their last exposure. If symptoms develop, self-isolate and obtain testing as soon as possible.

Q: How do I get prescriptions?
A: Prior to returning to campus, it is best to fill all existing prescriptions. Opt for a 90-day supply when possible. Switching over to mail order pharmacy is a good option. Two local pharmacies that are delivering to campus are: CVS 722 Dutchess Turnpike Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 845-452-7117 and Rite Aid 238 Hooker Ave. Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 845-486-6166. If you are still having difficulty, contact Case Management (epappas@vassar.edu) for assistance.

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