

8/18/21

Hello Trailblazers!

We are excited to see you on campus this fall! We continue to navigate the most current county, state, and federal guidance so we may keep our campus open and safe. Our shared goal is to provide an in-person learning experience that is as safe as possible for everyone. All students, staff, and faculty have a part in achieving this goal. In this email, you will find details about COVID-19 protocols, course delivery, residence areas, and more. There is a lot of information here! Take your time and review it carefully. This information is also located [online](#) for easy referral.

Student Indoor Mask Policy

MCLA requires all students, regardless of vaccination status, to be masked in all indoor spaces, including classrooms, common spaces, and residence areas outside of their own rooms. This policy is necessary to begin the semester based on the latest data and information surrounding the Delta variant. As with all of our COVID-19 protocols, this is subject to change, based on prevailing public health data and best practices.

Testing and Contact Tracing

MCLA has once again engaged with the Broad Institute for a campus testing plan coordinated by our Health Services office. MCLA's opening testing plan is as follows:

- **All resident students must provide proof at move-in of a negative PCR (molecular) COVID-19 test conducted in the previous 72 hours. This must be printed out with your name clearly indicated, date of the test, and result included. We cannot accept results from a phone screen.**
- **Resident students with an approved religious or medical exemption will need to bring a negative PCR test (explained above), receive a COVID-19 test upon arrival, and will quarantine in their room until a negative result is received from the Broad Institute.**
- **Commuter students with an approved medical or religious exemption will need to present a negative PCR test at Health Services before their first class, no later than Friday, September 3.**
- All students with an approved medical or religious exemption will be surveillance tested on a weekly basis through Health Services

After consulting with our local Department of Public Health (DPH) contact, MCLA has determined that at this time we will not conduct surveillance testing of vaccinated students. Health Services will continue to conduct symptomatic testing for students and contact tracing driven testing for any employee and student considered a close contact in a case of campus transmission.

These testing guidelines follow MA Department of Public Health recommendations for symptomatic and asymptomatic complaints. Individuals will be triaged and referred to on or off-campus testing, as deemed medically necessary.

Similar to last year, MCLA Health Services staff will lead the contact tracing efforts for any confirmed positive cases through our Broad Institute testing program. They partner with the necessary offices on campus to ensure close contacts are notified and work hand-in-hand with our local DPH contacts to ensure a swift response.

Quarantine and Isolation Protocols

The protocols below were developed in consultation with our local DPH contacts and MCLA's Health Services staff, in alignment with the latest state and federal guidance.

Vaccinated Individuals:

- If a vaccinated individual tests positive for COVID-19, they will need to isolate for 10 days.
- If a vaccinated individual has had close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, the below applies:
- No initial test or quarantine needed
- Self-monitor for symptoms and test if symptoms develop.
- Testing should occur on the 5th day from the initial contact due to COVID-19 Delta variant incubation period
- Continue to self-monitor for symptoms until day 14.

Unvaccinated Individuals:

- If an unvaccinated individual has close contact with any person who tests positive for COVID-19, they will need to do the following:
 - Day 1- take a test
 - Day 5- take a test
 - Day 8- If both tests have returned negative results, and the student is still showing no symptoms, they are deemed cleared.
- Days 9-14- Continue to self-monitor for symptoms
- If an unvaccinated student has close contact with any person who tests positive for COVID-19 and **develops symptoms**, they need to do the following:
 - Test on any day symptoms start and then again on day 5.
 - If symptoms have resolved **and** the day 5 test is negative, they will continue to quarantine until day 8 as long no further symptoms occur. They would need to continue to monitor for 14 days for symptoms.
 - If symptoms are unresolved by day 8, and the student has had negative test results, they are to be tested one more time before they are cleared.

MCLA is holding isolation space in the residence areas for COVID-19 positive cases.

Trailblazer Agreement

As a member of our community, we expect you to do your part to ensure your continued health and safety, as well as the health and safety of those around you. To this end, all students are expected to abide by the health and safety guidelines MCLA has developed. Failure to abide by the guidelines may result in disciplinary action through the Student Conduct Program outlined in the Community Standards, including dismissal from MCLA.

We ask you to remember that the opportunity to remain on campus to live and learn depends on our ability to control the spread of COVID-19, which is dependent upon all community members adhering to the guidelines set by MCLA and our local and state health agencies.

These guidelines include:

- Wear a mask indoors in public when outside your own room/home, including in instructional settings, in campus buildings, and other public areas or as directed by the college or local/state health authorities;
- Monitor your own health daily; and to stay home when ill or running a fever;
- Wash your hands frequently or use hand sanitizer when washing is not possible;
- Take a COVID test when asked to do so by the college;
- Respond to any requests from contact tracers to help control the spread of the virus.

Immunization Requirements, Including the COVID-19 Vaccine

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires all full-time college students under 30 years old to provide proof of immunization for a variety of diseases. This year, The State Universities in

Massachusetts added a COVID-19 vaccine requirement. The specifics can be found [here](#). In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential that we are extra vigilant in prohibiting the introduction additional contagious viruses/diseases to campus.

Health Services has already contacted those students who still need to provide this immunization proof. Please contact them directly at Healthservices@mcla.edu to follow up. We will strictly adhere to this requirement and **all resident students who have not provided proof of immunization to Health Services or made arrangements with them PRIOR to move-in, will not be allowed to move into residence areas until this requirement has been satisfied.** All commuter students who have not provided proof of immunization or made arrangements with Health Services due to their circumstance before classes begin may be at risk of disenrollment

Fall 2021 Course Schedule

This fall, MCLA courses will return to a fully in-person format. Continue to check your course schedule for updates in Self-Service Banner, and contact your Department Chair, (if you have declared your major) advisor, (if you have an undeclared major), or the Registrar's Office with questions. The Add/Drop process this semester will be online should you need to make changes to your schedule.

Specific Information for Resident Students:

Resident students received an email on Friday, 8/13 with detailed move-in information and continue to receive information. **Please remember you will need to show proof of a negative PCR (molecular) COVID-19 test upon your arrival to campus. This must be printed out with your name clearly indicated, date of the test, and result included. We cannot accept results from a phone screen.**

The move-in schedule has been designed to assure a smooth move-in process and the safest possible environment for all. Please adhere to the following expectations to make sure we can achieve that goal.

- You are limited to a two-hour move-in period. Please do not come earlier than your assigned time. Please make sure that your designated helpers leave campus by the end of your assigned time.
- You are limited to two designated helpers. These are the **only** individuals (other than you) who will be allowed in your assigned residence area on move-in day.
- You and your designated helpers must wear masks at all times during the move-in process.
- You and your designated helpers should bring hand sanitizer. Gloves are also recommended.

You must know your room assignment when you come to campus. Remember, you can access your room assignment information on [Self-Service THD](#). Regardless of your assignment, work swiftly to move your belongings in. This is a DIY move-in process.

Additional Detail of Residential Life

- **Cleaning:** All residence areas have been cleaned and sanitized during the summer months in preparation for your arrival to campus.
- **Guests/Visitors:** Students will be allowed to have students from other residence areas visit. No guests can visit during the month of September, including overnight guests. We will assess this policy based on COVID-19 data in late September to accommodate Fall Family Weekend, scheduled for October.
- **Bathrooms:** Our facilities staff will clean bathrooms in Berkshire Towers/Hoosac Hall daily. Supplies will be maintained in each bathroom to allow students to clean fixtures between uses.

Students in the Townhouses will be responsible for cleaning their own bathrooms and cleaning/disinfecting solutions will be provided.

- Laundry: Laundry is free to all residents in their own residence area.

Trailblazer Athletics

Athletics is planning on competing in full schedules for this year. We are following NCAA and MASCAC guidelines related to COVID. At this time fans are welcome to attend both indoor and outdoor sporting events and must follow the campus masking policies that are in place. If you are interested in participating in a sport please reach out to the coach via email <https://athletics.mcla.edu/information/directory/index>.

The Trailblazer Fitness Center will be open once classes begin and will follow any campus masking policies in place.

Parking Permits

Parking permits for all students are managed by the Department of Public Safety. Vehicles parked on campus must be registered with Public Safety and have a valid parking decal. The vehicle you plan to register must be owned by you, a parent or legal guardian, or a spouse. Commuter decals are \$30 per semester and authorize parking in designated commuter lots; Resident student decals are \$100 per semester and authorize parking in designated resident lots. To request a parking decal, complete the [Parking Pass Request](#)

Please continue to practice good hand washing hygiene, self-monitor for any COVID-19 related symptoms and stay home if you feel ill. The Berkshire Health Systems COVID hotline continues to remain an additional valuable resource. Please call for vaccine and testing appointments: Nurses are available to take your calls from 8am to 4:30pm seven days a week- call 855-BMC-LINK, or 855-262-5465. MCLA's COVID-19 hotline and COVID-19 landing page remain operational and we will continue to archive all campus communications there.

As a student choosing to be part of the MCLA community, you have a responsibility to help keep our community as safe and healthy as possible and the role you play is an important one. Thank you for your collective efforts as we prepare to return to campus this fall!



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