Public Health Guidance
Summer 2021
PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE

COVID-19 Prevention Strategies

INTRODUCTION
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issues guidance to help college and university administrators protect students, faculty and staff from COVID-19 infections and slow the spread of the virus. This guidance includes considerations for expanded and widespread testing; provides a tiered approach to testing in the context of an outbreak; gives examples of successful entry and periodic screening strategies; and discusses the likelihood of off-campus transmission. These CDC considerations are meant to supplement—not replace—any federal, state, local, territorial or tribal health and safety laws, rules and regulations with which Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) must comply. Implementation should be guided by what is feasible, practical and acceptable, as well as tailored to the needs of each community. Read the CDC’s recommendations for IHEs here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html

OVERVIEW
The transmission of the SARS CoV-2 virus (novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19) is preventable with easy changes in behaviors and adaptations to daily activities. These guidelines are recommendations and policies designed to reduce the transmission of the virus.

COVID-19 is generally transmitted person-to-person mainly through respiratory droplets produced by an infected person. And while viral transmission can occur from contaminated surfaces, the majority of transmissions are tied to close contact to an infected person. Maintaining physical distancing and taking precautions not to expose your mouth or nose to the virus significantly reduces the chance of infection. TCU will follow CDC guidelines and recommendations for defining an exposure to COVID-19 and when to quarantine. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html

Therefore, the following behaviors will help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

DAILY HEALTH SELF-ASSESSMENT
TCU requires that every TCU community member conduct a daily health assessment prior to leaving your private residence hall room or coming onto campus. The assessment includes asking yourself whether you have had:

• Exposure (proximity and length) to confirmed or suspected case in the past 10 days
• Fever (greater than 100 degrees without the use of fever-reducing medications)
• New cough
• New shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
• New muscle aches
• Sore throat
• Headache
• Diarrhea
• New loss of taste or smell

Severe symptoms which require immediate medical attention (call 911) include struggling to breathe
even when inactive or resting. The daily health assessment can be found by using the following links:

- Employee Daily COVID-19 Responsibility
- Student Daily COVID-19 Responsibility

**Face Coverings**
TCU requires all community members, including visitors, to wear a face covering that covers both the nose and the mouth of the wearer anytime they are in a public indoor space (including and especially classrooms) or when outdoors if wearer cannot guarantee at least 6-foot distance (for example, when in outdoor spaces like the Intellectual Commons between classes). Please see Appendix B for the full policy.

**Physical Distancing**
According to the CDC, “to practice social or physical distancing, stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from other people who are not from your household in both indoor and outdoor spaces. Social distancing should be practiced in combination with other everyday preventive actions to reduce the spread of COVID-19, including wearing masks, avoiding touching your face with unwashed hands, and frequently washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.” [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html)

**Personal and Domestic Hygiene**

**Hand Washing:** The CDC recommends that you wash your hands frequently to help slow the spread of the virus. Twenty seconds of hand washing with soap and water significantly reduces the chance of spreading the virus to your nose or mouth. It is recommended that you wash your hands when you enter a new space and wash them again when you leave that space.

**Hand Sanitizer:** Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol is effective in killing the COVID-19 virus. Hand sanitizer should supplement, not replace hand washing. It is recommended that you use hand sanitizer before you enter a new space and once you leave that space. TCU will strategically place hand sanitizing stations throughout campus.

**Avoid Touching Your Face:** Touching your face increases the risk of infection through mucus membranes (mouth, nose, and eyes.) Make every effort to avoid touching your face unless you have just washed your hands. Face masks properly worn help remind wearers to avoid face touching.

**Cough and Sneeze Etiquette:** The CDC recommends, and good manners suggest, that you cover your cough and sneeze with either a tissue (and dispose of properly) or your upper sleeve or elbow. Washing your hands or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after sneezing or coughing is further recommended.

**Cleaning & Disinfection**

It is your responsibility to clean the public areas where you intend to spend significant time or have significant contact: classroom desk, library table, rec center exercise equipment, etc. TCU will provide disinfectoring materials to assist in this task. Please dispose of the used wipes in the proper trash facilities.

You are responsible for cleaning personal space on campus, including private offices and residence hall rooms. Using disinfecting wipes or solution on door knobs, desk tops, sink and toilet hands, among other spaces, will help slow the spread of COVID-19. Residential students need to provide their own cleaning supplies for personal spaces. TCU will provide wipes for staff and faculty to clean office spaces. TCU’s cleaning and disinfection procedures are listed [here](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html).
TCU COVID-19 Testing Procedures & Strategy

Following CDC recommendations for testing at institutions of higher education, TCU tests symptomatic community members and those who were exposed to a COVID-positive person. Additionally, in consultation with Tarrant County Public health officials, the university engages in broader targeted testing of a particular group or building that shows an increase in symptomatic members or occupants. These broader testing strategies are used when density is such that accurately identifying close contacts of a COVID-19 positive person is not possible or when that group or building is identified as a hot spot.

Close contact

The CDC defines a close contact as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated. CDC definitions evolve and exclusions apply for fully vaccinated individuals or those who have tested positive within last three months. Visit the CDC for more information. [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact)

Student Testing Process

The Brown Lupton Health Center will test those students who

1. Display symptoms consistent with COVID-19; and,
2. Asymptomatic students with recent known suspected exposure to COVID-19 to control transmission.

For a list of TCU testing locations, visit the Connected Campus website: [https://www.tcu.edu/connected-campus/testing-locations.php](https://www.tcu.edu/connected-campus/testing-locations.php)

The Health Center health care providers will instruct students who test positive for COVID-19 to begin immediate isolation procedures including working with a TCU Case Investigator to identify close contacts. Close contacts will be contacted by the contact tracing team and instructed to begin quarantine and encouraged to get tested five days after exposure.

TCU asks that all community members report positive COVID-19 tests via the COVID-19 form at [TCU.edu/self-report](https://www.tcu.edu/self-report) or the COVID-19 Report Line at 817-257-2684. The form is the recommended, fastest method for self-reporting. This process will start the contact tracing and other services for students.

Faculty/Staff Testing Process

Faculty and staff who display symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or were recently exposed to COVID-19 should seek a viral test from an off-campus health provider/testing facility. For a list of TCU testing locations, visit the Connected Campus website: [https://www.tcu.edu/connected-campus/testing-locations.php](https://www.tcu.edu/connected-campus/testing-locations.php)

TCU asks that all community members report positive COVID-19 tests via the online self-reporting form at [TCU.edu/self-report](https://www.tcu.edu/self-report) or the reporting hotline at 817-257-2684. The form is the recommended, fastest method for self-reporting. This report will start the contact tracing and other services for faculty and staff. Faculty or staff who test positive for COVID-19 should remove themselves from campus immediately and begin the isolation process.
**Antibody Testing**
The TCU Health Center can test for COVID-19 antibodies using an off-campus laboratory. Antibody testing requires a blood sample. Currently there is no public health reason to test for COVID-19 antibodies.

**Contact Tracing: Implementation Plan**

**Background**
TCU will follow the protocols established by the CDC under the direction of state and local health authorities. Confirmed positive COVID-19 test results that are reported to TCU will be posted to the Connected Campus website under the **Case Count at TCU section**. Additionally, information will be shared directly with social and residential groups who have interacted with the COVID-19 positive individual(s) over the previous 48 hours, to the extent possible.

*Information regarding COVID-19 and response protocols are fluid and subject to change. As such, the response procedures outlined in this document may fluctuate to stay relevant with current national or local guidelines.*

**Process**

**Notification of a Positive Case**
TCU has created an **online form** and established a COVID-19 hotline for students, faculty and staff to report positive test results. Self-reporting enables the university to respond without delay to enact protective measures, and to provide support and resources to the campus community.

**Students**
Symptomatic students are encouraged to call ahead and schedule an appointment at the Brown Lupton Health Center. These results will be made immediately available to Health Center staff. If a student receives a test off campus at a private or unaffiliated lab, the student will be responsible for notifying the university via the **online form**, which is the preferred method, or the COVID-19 hotline at 817-257-2684. Upon receiving notification of a campus positive the TCU COVID Case Investigator (TCU CCI) shall attain data to assist in the response process.

After students have reported or have tested positive for COVID-19, a representative from TCU will serve as the **Case Investigator** and interview the student. The purpose of this interview will be to determine the time period to elicit close **contacts**. The case investigator will provide recommendations for the student regarding self-isolation and will then connect them to the **Care Coordinator** for assistance with **Wrap-Around Services**.

![Fig 1. Student COVID Positive Process](image-url)
**Employees**
After receiving a positive test result, the employee will be responsible for notifying the university via the [online form](#), which is the preferred method, or the Covid-19 hotline at 817-257-2684.

Upon completing the form or calling the hotline the TCU employee will be prompted through a series of questions that will direct them to the TCU COVID Care Coordinator for employees. Upon receiving notification of a campus positive the Care Coordinator shall obtain data to assist in the response process.

**Isolation Guidelines**

**Students**
Students who have a confirmed or probable diagnosis of COVID-19 who have been told to self-isolate by the Case Investigator will have access to the following resources:

- Wrap around services which may include assistance with notifying professors about class attendance, food, laundry, etc. It also includes telephone visits with a health care provider and virtual counseling services and support groups.

Students will be asked to perform daily self-monitoring of symptoms and communicate with the Health Center if there are any new symptoms or symptoms of increasing severity.

**Instructions for Students in Isolation**
The following provides guidance on how students in isolation can prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- If students live in a single room or an apartment where they have exclusive use of a bathroom, they should return to their room and not leave.

- If students do not have a single room with a bathroom or an apartment where there is exclusive use of a bathroom, the Care Coordinator will work with the student to discuss relocation.

- Students who live on campus will be provided with meals during the isolation period.

- Students in isolation may not have visitors during this period of isolation.

- If students must leave their room, they must wash your hands before leaving and wear face covering. Minimize any contact with surfaces and other people.

- Students should take and log their temperature twice a day.
The decision to discontinue self-isolation will be based on guidance set by CDC and is described below:

**People with COVID-19 or its symptoms who are recovering in the residence hall will not be tested to determine if they are no longer contagious and can discontinue isolation when**

- Released by a TCU Health Center clinician
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared and or 20 days if person was hospitalized for at least 24 hours or is severely immunocompromised
- At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
- Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

**People who DID NOT have COVID-19 symptoms, but tested positive to determine if they are no longer contagious can discontinue isolation when**

- At least 10 days have passed since the date of the first positive test **AND**
- They continue to have no symptoms

The idea of isolation is to eliminate any contact exposure until the student recovers. Staying in their room, apartment, and house is one way to isolate. The university acknowledges that students may want to return to their permanent residence home during this time. Students should use face coverings and gloves (or sanitized hands) if traveling in a car with someone else. If a student intends to isolate from a location other than their residence hall room, apartment, or campus home, they should notify the Care Coordinator of their new location. For specific information about the process for students who test positive for COVID-19, please review the [decision tree document](#) that can be found on the [TCU Microsite](#).

**Instructions for Employees in Isolation**

Employees will need to remain in isolation until two criteria have been met: 1.) At least 10 days have passed since the onset of symptoms or 20 days if person was hospitalized for at least 24 hours or is severely immunocompromised and 2.) At least 24 hours have passed since the employee has had fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine and symptoms are improving. If the employee does not have any symptoms, they need to isolate for 10 days from the time they test positive. The TCU Care Coordinator will contact the employee when their isolation period has ended to determine how the employee is doing and if they are able to return to work based on guidelines provided above and based on information provided by the [Tarrant County Public Health Department](#). For specific information about the process for employees who test positive for COVID-19, please review the [decision tree document](#) that can be found on the [TCU Microsite](#).

**Identifying Contacts**

A close contact is defined as a person who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the infected person is isolated. A close contact can also include someone who provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19. Close contacts can also be anyone that had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them), and/or
shared eating or drinking utensils.\(^2\)

The Care Coordinator or Case Investigator will conduct an interview with the case to gather a list of people who meet the criteria for close contacts. Information will also be collected to determine buildings and locations where the case was on-campus. The Care Coordinator or Case Investigator will also gather information about additional areas or social settings where the case may have been. The Care Coordinator and Case Investigator, with consult from local health authorities, will determine if any additional notification needs to be made for these distal contacts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATE/MONITOR CASES BASED ON PRIORITY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priority 1 (Close Contacts)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students who were identified as close contacts with the case</td>
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<tr>
<td>• First responders who may have interacted with the case</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Roommates</td>
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Once all Priority 1 close contacts have been identified, the Care Coordinator will distribute this information to the **Contact Tracers** so that they can follow-up with each contact.

Contact tracers will consist of volunteer students, faculty and staff who have been trained in the elements of contact tracing, effective communication and cultural competency. Contact Tracers will provide contacts with information signs and symptoms for COVID-19 as well as guidelines for being in **quarantine**.

**Quarantine Guidelines**

**Employees in Quarantine**

Employee contacts will be asked to self-monitor and to communicate and promptly report any new symptoms or symptoms of increasing severity to their primary care physician. Contacts should be tested for COVID-19 after five days of exposure or after five days of notification of exposure. If testing

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is done and the contact is positive for COVID-19, the employee will need to complete the online self-reporting form (preferred) or call the TCU COVID hotline at 817-257-2684. A Care Coordinator will follow-up with the employee to collect the following information 1) last time they were on campus, 2) list of close contacts for contact tracing, 3) locations visited while on campus. If test results are negative for COVID-19, the employee will remain in quarantine.

Should employees be contacted by an outside agency such as the Tarrant County Health Department and told to quarantine, they should let their supervisor know. Additionally, employees can complete the online contact exposure form (preferred) or call the COVID-19 hotline to report that they will be in quarantine. For specific information about employee exposure and what to do, please review the decision tree that can be found on the TCU microsite.

**Students in Quarantine**

Student contacts will be asked to self-monitor and to communicate and promptly report any new symptoms or symptoms of increasing severity to the TCU Health Center. Contacts should be tested for COVID-19 after five days of exposure or after five days of notification of exposure. If testing is done and the contact is positive for COVID-19, the Case Investigator at the Health Center will collect a list of names for contact tracing. **If test results are negative for COVID-19, the student will remain in quarantine.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Close contacts with symptoms should self-isolate and contact the TCU Health Center to discuss symptoms and options for testing.³</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close contacts without symptoms should self-quarantine for 10 days from their last potential exposure and be tested for COVID-19 after five days of exposure.</td>
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</table>

**Per the CDC, community members with the following conditions do not need to quarantine:**

- Those who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months and recovered, as long as they do not develop new symptoms.
- Those 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.
- Those have been fully vaccinated against the disease within the last three months and show no symptoms. Verify your COVID-19 vaccine with TCU using this form.

**Instructions for Students in Quarantine**

TCU is a vibrant community that cares about the health and safety of all of its members. As such, when close contacts are informed that they have been exposed to a student who has tested positive for COVID-19, we expect for them to play their part in keeping other Horned Frogs safe.

The following provides guidance on how close contacts can prevent the spread of COVID-19⁴:

- Contacts should be tested for COVID-19, regardless of the presence of symptoms.
- Contacts should return to their room

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• Contacts should not have visitors during this period.
• If contacts must leave the room, they must wash their hands or sanitize their hands before leaving their room and wear a face covering. They should also minimize any contact with surfaces and other people.
• Contacts should self monitor by taking and logging their temperature twice a day.
• Contacts can return to normal behavior after 10 days, as long as they are symptom free and without fever (fever <100).

For specific information about the process for students who test positive for COVID-19, please review the decision tree document that can be found on the TCU microsite. For instructions on what to do in quarantine, visit tcu.edu/quarantine. For instructions on what to do in isolation, visit tcu.edu/isolation. Close contacts who do not have COVID-19 related symptoms are able to leave the room to retrieve meals. However, we expect these asymptomatic contacts to wash or sanitize their hands before leaving their room and wear a face covering. Also, to reduce the risk of possible spread, we ask that these close contacts minimize contact with surfaces and other people and return as soon as possible to the room. Close contacts regardless of symptoms are asked to not attend class. The Care Coordinator will work with close contacts regarding professor notification if there is a need to miss class.

COVID-19 Vaccine

TCU is registered with the Texas Department of State Health Services to be a provider of the COVID-19 vaccination, for TCU students, faculty and staff. TCU encourages all students, faculty and staff to receive the vaccine and report it to TCU using the online report form. The Office of Emergency Management and TCU Health Center is in regular consultation with state and local health officials for distribution planning, updates and considerations for the TCU community. For updated vaccine information for students, faculty and staff, visit: www.tcu.edu/connected-campus/covid-19/vaccine-information-students-employees.php

Appendix A

TCU Public Health Committee

Usage of Face Coverings During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Updated May 2021

Policy Statement
To protect the health and safety of the TCU Community face coverings must be worn by all individuals (students, staff, faculty, and visitors) in the following areas:

- Indoor public areas on campus including all non-private office spaces or common areas of residence halls. Face coverings must be worn even if alone in these non-private spaces. Face masks can be removed while eating.
- Outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is not possible. Walking through campus when it is busy will require face coverings.

The use of a face covering does not replace the continued need to maintain physical distances from others, at least 6 feet, but instead augments physical distancing.

This policy is informed by and in compliance with current CDC guidelines.

Face Covering Definitions
Face coverings must cover both the nose and mouth and should be made of multiple layers of tightly woven fabric. FDA approved surgical masks may also be used as face covering. A clean face covering should be used each day.

Please refer to the current CDC guidelines for more information on how to wear and clean your face coverings.

Policy Rationale
Face coverings reduce the amount of virus spreading from the wearer (who may not know they are spreading the virus) into the environment and to others. The secondary purpose of the face covering is to reduce the likelihood that large droplets containing virus that are generated by others may enter the nose and mouth of the wearer.

Exceptions
Some classroom settings prevent the use of face masks, primarily in the performing arts courses. In these instances, instructors and students must follow the policies established by the department or college.

Students who seek a medical exception to the face covering policy should solicit assistance from the Student Access and Accommodations by emailing studentaccommodation@tcu.edu. Faculty and Staff should contact Human Resources by emailing fmla/ada@tcu.edu
**Terms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Case</strong></td>
<td>Person with COVID-19 by meeting confirmed or probable evidence.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Close Contact</strong></td>
<td>Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for more than 15 cumulative minutes over a 24 hour period starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Case Investigator</strong></td>
<td>Conducts interviews of clients with confirmed or probable COVID-19.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Care Coordinator</strong></td>
<td>Assesses social support for cases and contacts and provides support for maintaining a healthy living environment (as appropriate) for residential students and faculty and staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact Tracer</strong></td>
<td>Communicates with contacts to notify them of exposure, provides disease and transmission information, gathers data on demographics, living arrangements and daily activities. Provides referrals as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quarantine</strong></td>
<td>Separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Isolation</strong></td>
<td>The separation of sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. Isolation incorporates and enhances the conditions placed on quarantine.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wrap-Around Services</strong></td>
<td>A TCU-specific term that encompasses additional student services for those affected by an illness or circumstance. For COVID-19, all students will receive assistance with notifying professors about class attendance, access to telehealth visits from a healthcare provider and access to virtual counseling services and support groups. For students living in residence halls who are in isolation because of COVID-19, wrap-around services also include meals, laundry and other services since they cannot leave their isolation locations.</td>
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