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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

Thursday, Oct. 14, 2021

Dear Redhawk Community,

Today I am announcing that we will be modifying the on-campus face covering requirement and plan to finish the semester with this change in place. Effective Monday, Oct. 18 face coverings will no longer be required in residence halls, the student recreation center, office spaces, dining areas, and common areas on campus such as lobbies, hallways, lounges, etc. More details can be found in the [Protect the Nest Plan \(PTN\)](#).

Face coverings will still be required through the end of the semester in the following areas: indoor instructional spaces during class or labs; campus shuttles pursuant to federal law; the University School for Young Children consistent with current CDC recommended guidance; and health-related spaces, including the Campus Health Clinic, which is operated by SoutheastHEALTH. Guidance for the spring semester will be provided no later than Jan. 10, 2022.

We will be updating existing signage on campus in the coming weeks to reflect the modifications communicated here.

Over the past month regional statistics pertinent to COVID-19 have improved (e.g., ICU bed capacity, hospital inpatient bed capacity, vaccinations rates, etc.), and we have also seen a decline in the number of active COVID-19 cases on campus and in the number of individuals in quarantine or isolation. As such, and after consultation with the University's Emergency Response Team (ERT) and the Cape Girardeau County Public Health Center, I believe adjusting the face covering requirement is appropriate.

At the same time, we have seen our on-campus vaccination rate climb. I'm pleased to say today we are at 64 percent, which is 6 points away from our campus goal of a 70 percent vaccination rate.

Vaccination remains critically important in reducing the spread and risks associated with COVID-19 and we are so close to our 70 percent goal for the [Great SEMO Give Away Get Away incentive program](#). The Nov. 1 deadline to reach our goal is only a few weeks away. Information on weekly vaccination clinics on campus can be found on our [COVID informational webpage](#).

For those of you who have already been vaccinated, make sure to share that with us. You can upload your card [here](#) now. If you prefer not to upload your card, present it in person at the Student Recreation Center, Room 413 in the University Center, the River Campus Chart Clinic in Dobbins Center, any of the weekly vaccination clinics or at any of the locations listed [here](#) under the second bullet. Recognizing that the first dose is the first step to being fully vaccinated, we are now counting first doses in our incentive program. Therefore, if you have received even just one dose of the vaccine, please be sure to share that information with us.

While we are easing the masking requirement in most areas, please continue to be respectful of everyone's personal decisions and situations. Those who prefer wearing a mask should continue that practice.

I want to thank each of you for your efforts to keep our Redhawk Community safe and our campus open. It has made a difference and is what makes this modification possible.

Best wishes for the remainder of the semester!

Sincerely,
Carlos



