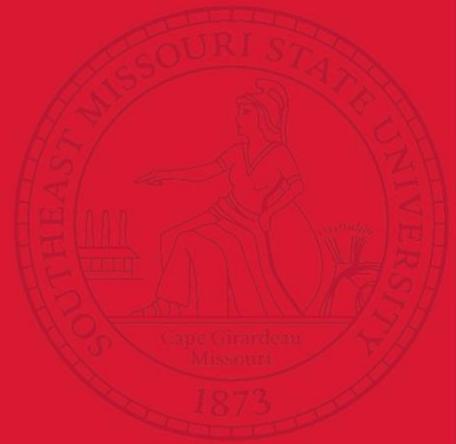


OFFICE OF THE **PRESIDENT**



SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

Monday, August 16, 2021

Dear Redhawk Community,

As the fall semester quickly approaches, I want to share with you some updates to our [Protect the Nest \(PTN\) plan](#). These updates keep in place some of the guidance and practices we communicated at the start of summer classes in May. In other cases, the guidance is new. And, we have worked to streamline the PTN plan to make it simpler and easier to read. I encourage you to read the [PTN plan](#) in its entirety. However, I will highlight here a few important points. They include:

- Effective Tuesday, August 17, the University is instituting a temporary face covering requirement indoors in all University buildings, regardless of vaccination status.
 - This will be reevaluated by September 16.
 - There are some exceptions to this requirement including, but not limited to, in Residence Hall rooms and floors, while eating and drinking, and while exercising indoors in a campus recreation facility.
 - Face coverings are not required outdoors.
- Social distancing limitations will no longer be in place. Classrooms and other facilities will return to pre-pandemic capacities.

- Facilities Management will continue high-touch cleaning and disinfecting practices throughout campus.
- Hand sanitizer, face coverings, and disinfecting supplies will remain available at various locations on campus for faculty, staff, and students.

The vast majority of people I speak to do not like wearing a mask, myself included. However, we feel this measure is important particularly as we prepare to welcome back thousands of students from across Missouri, other states, and other countries. Let me reiterate that the face covering requirement is not permanent and it will be reevaluated in a few weeks. Again, I encourage each of you to review the revised [PTN plan](#) in its entirety prior to the start of the semester.

In preparation for the start of the semester, the University has ordered face coverings to make available to faculty, staff, and students. This supply will include a mixture of disposable and cloth face coverings; as well as N95 and KN95 face coverings that will be available in case they are preferred by employees. We will communicate availability and distribution plans soon.

Vaccines are a critical component of any effort to limit the spread of COVID-19. I know many of our faculty, staff and students have already done so, myself included. To accommodate those who have not yet been vaccinated starting this week, we will offer several convenient opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to be vaccinated right here on campus should they wish to do so. The list of vaccination events can be found on the University's [COVID-19 Information webpage](#) and are listed in the [PTN plan](#). They include:

- Aug. 16, 2-4 p.m. at the International Village Cottage B
- Aug. 17, 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. at the River Campus Cultural Arts Center Atrium
- Aug. 27, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. in the University Center Program Lounge
- Aug. 30, 12-4 p.m. at the River Campus Cultural Arts Center Atrium
- Sept. 3, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. in Towers Complex

We also know some of you may have questions about the vaccine and any potential side effects. Therefore, we are developing vaccine education efforts that will be on-going throughout the semester. Additionally, we know that incentives play a role in our efforts to increase the rate of

vaccination among the university community. As such, we are finalizing an incentive program that will be announced by August 20.

As with all of our COVID-19 decisions, the updates to the PTN plan announced here, and included in the full document, are subject to change. Throughout the semester, the Emergency Response Team (ERT) will continue to meet, and we will continue to review CDC guidance, consult with the Cape Girardeau Public Health Center and other health professionals, and seek feedback from other stakeholders when appropriate to inform our decision-making process.

I look forward to seeing you on campus this fall and want to thank you for your patience and understanding, and for all that you have done and will continue to do to help us have a successful year.

Go Redhawks!



SOUTHEAST MISSOURI
STATE UNIVERSITY · 1873[®]