



Fall 2021 Operations Plan



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Executive Summary	2
2	Introduction	2
2.1	Situation.....	2
2.2	Purpose	3
3	Campuswide Public Health Practices.....	3
3.1	General.....	3
3.2	COVID-19 Vaccinations	4
3.3	Health Self-Monitoring	4
3.4	Healthy Behaviors and Hygiene	4
3.5	Face Coverings/Masks	4
3.5.1	Request for Accommodation Regarding Face Coverings/Masks.....	5
3.5.2	Noncompliance	5
3.6	Physical Distancing.....	6
3.7	Sanitization	6
3.8	Building Ventilation	6
4	COVID-19 Operations.....	7
4.1	General.....	7
4.2	Syndromic Surveillance and Response.....	7
4.2.1	Emergency Operations	7
4.3	Communicating a Positive COVID-19 Test or Exposure.....	8
4.4	COVID-19 Testing and Infection Containment	9
4.4.1	COVID-19 Testing	9
4.4.2	Contact Tracing	9
4.4.3	Quarantine.....	10
4.4.4	Isolation	11
4.4.5	Quarantine and Isolation Operations for Resident Students.....	12

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A year and a half ago, the Coastal Comeback Plan and associated guidelines were created to safely bring our community back to campus and allow us to effectively operate in the midst of a pandemic.

Today, the circumstances surrounding the pandemic are different and we have learned how to navigate the complexities presented by COVID-19 as we see the transition from pandemic to endemic beginning.

As such, the following plan has been established for the fall 2021 semester. Specifically,

- The university will continue monitoring of the situations surrounding COVID-19, including contact tracing, quarantine, and isolation, with operations moving from Emergency Management to Student Health Services.
- Student Health Services now offers the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to CCU students, faculty, and staff.
- Student Health Services offers COVID-19 testing for symptomatic students, faculty, and staff.
- Classes and university-sponsored events may operate at full capacity.
- Face coverings/masks must be worn inside University buildings.
- Enhanced sanitization and disinfection efforts continue across campus, as does the responsibility to all community members to practice healthy behaviors and hygiene.
- Faculty and staff contact tracing, quarantine, and isolation are now handled through Student Health Services and the CCU COVID-19 Call Center. Please see the updated [Employee and Supervisor Protocol for COVID-19](#) for additional information.

Additional information relating to these outlined changes are available within this document and via the links contained herein.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 SITUATION

The Coastal Comeback plans and associated guidelines developed in the Spring of 2020 were based on the COVID-19 pandemic situation created by SARS-CoV-2 (coronavirus), a novel virus with no vaccine impacting a population with no immunity. A year and a half later, circumstances with the pandemic are now different. The scientific community and public health authorities have a better understanding of the virus; the COVID-19 vaccine is widely available across the United States; and there is a level of immunity within the community.

According to the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC), while we remain in a pandemic, the COVID-19 disease is now endemic. This means the disease will continue to be present in the community continuously or seasonally, with transmission maintained at some steady rate. It may not be transmitted at the same rate over the course of the year, but can be expected to appear year-on-year.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Coastal Carolina University has remained flexible in its response by continuously and concurrently assessing operations, implementing new guidance, and planning for future operations. Strategic steps were taken to invest in building our internal capability to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and respond to COVID-19 cases on campus.

The situational changes and expanded capability on campus prompted the Office of Emergency Management and COVID-19 working groups to reevaluate risk assessment processes and response capabilities. The evaluation indicated that the enhanced COVID-19 operational capabilities can manage the current COVID-19 pandemic situation on campus. As a result, the Emergency Management Executive Group made the decision to deactivate emergency operations and transfer oversight of the COVID-19 pandemic situation to Student Health Services.

2.2 PURPOSE

This Plan establishes procedures and/or processes to support the University's management of COVID-19 on campus for the 2021 Fall Semester. Coastal Carolina University's COVID-19 response priorities remain: Protect the health and well-being of the University community; reduce the likelihood for COVID-19 community spread; and continue to provide quality education and services for our students. Because it is not feasible to eliminate all potential risks of an endemic infectious disease, the objective is to provide a systematic and feasible path for operation within the pandemic environment.

This document applies to all members of the Coastal Carolina University community, University volunteers and affiliates, and campus visitors. The Code of Student Conduct encompasses public health behaviors; students who fail to follow public health protocols may be held accountable via the [Code of Student Conduct](#). The Plan is informed by state and federal guidelines and as such is subject to change. The coronavirus pandemic and the national, state, and local response remain fluid. This plan provides a record of information based on the August 6, 2021 transition from COVID-19 Operations Phase Two to non-emergency operations, and the indoor face covering/mask requirement effective August 18, 2021. Additional modifications made to campus operations and services will be communicated on the COVID-19 Fall 2021 Operations Plan [webpage](#).

3 CAMPUSWIDE PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICES

3.1 GENERAL

The COVID-19 Task Force established public health prevention and mitigation standards for the University to operate safely in the COVID-19 environment. The standards remain valid and the implementation of public health prevention and mitigation measures have been updated to reflect current guidance as of the plan's publish date. The standards will continue to be implemented on campus at the direction and guidance of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the state of South Carolina, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC), and other public health authorities.

3.2 COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

The University strongly encourages everyone to get vaccinated to protect themselves and the community. Student Health Services is an approved COVID-19 provider and has the capability to store, manage, and administer the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for free to our students, faculty, and staff. The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine is a two-dose vaccine, requiring a second dose 28 days after the first dose. For additional information about the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine and to schedule a vaccine appointment, visit the Student Health Services [webpage](#).

COVID-19 vaccines are free and widely available to the public. Students, faculty and staff can find an off-campus local COVID-19 vaccine provider on SCDHEC's Vaccine Locator [website](#).

3.3 HEALTH SELF-MONITORING

Students, faculty, and staff are responsible for daily self-screening and self-monitoring for symptoms and/or exposure to COVID-19. Individuals must be free of ANY symptoms related to COVID-19, without a known underlying cause, before reporting to campus or class. Individuals can use the CDC [website](#) to ensure symptom monitoring aligns with the most up-to-date list of COVID-19 related symptoms.

Faculty and staff experiencing COVID-19 symptoms are advised to consult with their primary healthcare provider and not come to campus. Students can make an appointment with Student Health Services (SHS) by calling 843-349-6543 or visit the Student Health Services [webpage](#).

COVID-19 viral testing is available through Student Health Services by appointment only for students, faculty, and staff who are symptomatic or have been identified as a close contact.

3.4 HEALTHY BEHAVIORS AND HYGIENE

Members of the University community are expected to practice healthy behaviors through their individual personal conduct and hygiene practices, such as:

- Wash hands often with soap or use hand sanitizer frequently if soap and water is not available.
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.
- Avoid close contact with others when possible.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover mouth and nose when one coughs or sneezes.
- Clean and disinfect personal surfaces.

3.5 FACE COVERINGS/MASKS

All individuals, regardless of vaccination status, are required to wear face coverings/masks indoors. This applies to all CCU-owned, leased, or controlled buildings, except for private offices and individual residence hall rooms, suites and apartments. An

exception to the mask requirement will also apply for those who are actively eating inside a campus dining facility. The requirement is effective as of Wednesday, August 18, 2021, and the Emergency Management Executive Group will reassess the situation in four weeks to determine if the face covering/ masks mandate should be extended.

Face coverings/masks are an important tool in protecting members of the University community. The CDC [reports](#) that COVID-19 mainly spreads from person-to-person through respiratory droplets. Face coverings provide an extra layer to help prevent the spread from people who do not have symptoms and do not know they are infected.

According to a July 14 CDC [press release](#), the CDC reviewed the latest science and affirms that cloth face coverings are a critical tool in the fight against COVID-19 that could reduce the spread of the disease, particularly when used universally within communities. There is increasing evidence that cloth face coverings help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to others.

July 27, 2021 the CDC released updated [guidance](#) recommending everyone in areas of substantial or high transmission wear a mask in public indoor spaces, even if they are fully vaccinated. CDC issued this new guidance due to several concerning developments and newly emerging data signals about the Delta variant.

- The Delta variant is more than 2-times as contagious as previous variants.
- Some data suggest the Delta variant might cause more severe illness than previous strains in unvaccinated persons.
- Fully vaccinated people with Delta variant breakthrough infections can spread the virus to others. However, vaccinated people appear to be infectious for a shorter period.

Given what we know about the Delta variant, vaccine effectiveness, and that the campus is located in an area of [high community transmission](#), layered prevention strategies, such as wearing masks, are needed to reduce the transmission of this variant.

3.5.1 Request for Accommodation Regarding Face Coverings/Masks

If a **student** has a disability or medical condition and believes they are experiencing an academic barrier as a result of the University's mask wearing requirement, they should engage in the [Accessibility and Disability Services](#) (ADS) accommodation determination process.

Employees with disabilities or medical conditions seeking a work-related accommodation as a result of the University's mask wearing requirement should refer to University policy [FAST-247 Access and Reasonable Accommodation Policy for Employees and Applicants for Employment](#).

3.5.2 Noncompliance

Students who refuse to wear a face covering may be held accountable via the [Code of Student Conduct](#). If a student declines to wear a face covering as required, the student should be referred to the Dean of Students Office via the [Community Health Concern Report](#). If the situation occurs in a classroom or other academic setting, it is considered a classroom management issue, and the faculty member should remind the student of the requirement and give the student a chance to comply with it prior to referring the matter to the Dean of Students Office. If the situation occurs in University Housing, it will be handled the same way any other housing violation is addressed,

including University Housing staff addressing the student and educating the student. If the violation persists with the same student, an incident report will be completed and the student will follow the typical student conduct process.

If an **employee** (student employee, faculty, or staff) declines to wear a face covering as required, the supervisor is responsible for addressing it with the employee. Employees should refrain from addressing noncompliance or perceived noncompliance directly with other employees and should instead report issues directly to their supervisors.

Campus visitors and approved vendors who are not abiding by face covering requirements will first be offered a disposable face mask, if possible. If they refuse to comply with face-covering requirements, they will be asked to leave campus.

3.6 PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Physical distancing aids such as plexiglass/glass barriers, signage, and floor markings may be used on campus to support physical distancing, as needed.

3.7 SANITIZATION

The University has implemented enhanced cleaning and disinfection measures. Every member of the University community has a joint responsibility for sanitation in their own work/learning area and when using shared resources (e.g. copiers, meeting rooms, commonly touched surfaces, etc.) Custodial Services staff will perform enhanced cleaning and disinfection as follows:

- High touch surfaces in common areas will continue to see additional occurrences of cleaning and disinfection at least twice per day.
- All classrooms and labs will be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- All restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected daily.

Sanitizing stations are available throughout campus buildings to provide individuals access to resources to sanitize spaces and items before use and to provide hand sanitation and disposable face masks. Custodial Services will monitor supplies and refill them routinely.

3.8 BUILDING VENTILATION

The Facilities Planning and Management Department has applied a layered approach utilizing multiple control strategies to improve air quality and minimize risk of transmission of COVID-19 indoors. Strategies include increasing the amount of outdoor air to be introduced inside buildings, inspection of CO2 sensors, HVAC filter maintenance, and adjusting temperature set points. Staff will continue to monitor systems to ensure they are operating properly.

4 COVID-19 OPERATIONS

4.1 GENERAL

Student Health Services (SHS) serves as the lead department for COVID-19 operations on campus and its scope of services has expanded to address COVID-19 as an endemic, infectious disease in the campus community. Clinical staff can provide the COVID-19 vaccine and test patients for COVID-19. The COVID-19 Call Center performs contact tracing as well as case management services for University community members in quarantine and isolation. Existing COVID-19 working groups such as the COVID-19 Operational Committee Chairs, COVID-19 Transition Advisory Group, and the Quarantine and Isolation Care Group will remain intact and on standby.

This section provides a broad description of how SHS and other departments intend to respond to COVID-19 cases and potential exposures on campus during the Fall 2021 Semester. The Contact Tracing Appendix, Quarantine and Isolation Plan, and other guidance documents will be utilized for specific processes and coordination.

4.2 SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE

Student Health Services collects data daily to assess the COVID-19 risk level on campus, review and interpret strides made to maintain low case levels on campus, monitor for increasing trends, and conduct a disease transmission analysis.

Due to the fact that CCU has a mixed population of individuals who are fully vaccinated and individuals who are not fully vaccinated, the CDC recommends multiple factors should inform the optimal implementation of layered prevention strategies. The Office of Emergency Management and Student Health Services collaborated with SCDHEC as well as internal COVID-19 working groups to develop a process in which the severity and complexity of the situation determines the response. This response strategy allows for the flexibility to initiate targeted prevention and mitigation measures based on the severity and the complexity of each particular situation.

The University's COVID-19 public health prevention and mitigation standards provide the foundation to guide these targeted actions. Once the situation is assessed and risk-level established, SHS will initiate appropriate actions, implementing mitigation and infection containment measures and activating COVID-19 working groups, as needed. Because circumstances may vary, various operational responses may be required.

4.2.1 Emergency Operations

The escalation of complexity, increased transmission severity, or the exhaustion of University mission specific resources may require the re-activation of emergency operations. The Emergency Management Director will consult with the COVID-19 Operations Committee Chairs and the COVID-19 Transition Advisory Group to determine if activating emergency operations is necessary. Upon consensus, the Emergency Management Director will convene the Emergency Management Executive Group within 24-hours of the COVID-19 working groups recommendations. Alternately, the president or the Emergency Management Executive Group may reactivate emergency operations when consultation of the above-groups is not practicable.

If emergency operations are activated, the Emergency Management Director will lead the University's response and management of COVID-19 on campus. The cyclical COVID-19 operations action planning and assessment process, utilized during the University's initial response to COVID-19, will commence. The Coastal Comeback Plan, COVID-19 phase-specific plans, and other existing COVID-19 guidance documents may be used as frameworks and updated to reflect the current situation.

4.3 COMMUNICATING A POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST OR EXPOSURE

Students:

- If you were potentially exposed to COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19 **off-campus** and Student Health Services is not aware, please take the following steps:
 - Notify the COVID-19 Call Center by e-mail at covid@coastal.edu to provide that information. A CCU contact tracer will follow-up for contact tracing and provide a quarantine/isolation letter via your Coastal email.
 - Notify your professors of your quarantine/isolation period and that you have already notified Student Health Services. Communicate with each professor and discuss with them arrangements for alternative learning activities, makeup work, or remote instruction. Such arrangements will be made on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the nature of the course material. Absences due to isolation will be considered excused with appropriate documentation, and students will be responsible to complete missed assignments per college or department practice.
 - Respond to any communication from CCU contact tracers promptly so as to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
 - Notify Student Health Services and your off-campus medical provider if you begin to experience symptoms while in quarantine or if your symptoms change while in isolation.
- If you were potentially exposed to COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19 **on-campus** at Student Health Services, please:
 - Notify the COVID-19 Call Center by e-mail at covid@coastal.edu of the potential exposure incident. A CCU contact tracer will follow-up for contact tracing.
 - Notify your professors of your quarantine/isolation period and that Student Health Services is already aware of your illness. Student Health Services will provide an isolation letter via the [MySHS portal](#).
 - Communicate with each professor and discuss with them arrangements for alternative learning activities, makeup work, or remote instruction. Such arrangements will be made on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the nature of the course material. Absences due to isolation will be considered excused with appropriate documentation, and students will be responsible to complete missed assignments per college or department practice.

- Respond to any communication from CCU contact tracers promptly so as to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Failure to report a positive COVID-19 test result to Student Health Services/the COVID-19 Call Center endangers the health and safety of the community. Students who fail to inform the University of their positive COVID-19 status may be held accountable via the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

Employees:

Employees should follow the [Employee and Supervisor Protocol for COVID-19](#) and complete the Notification of a COVID-19 Incident [form](#) online. A CCU contact tracer from the COVID-19 Call Center will then follow up for contact tracing and important quarantine/isolation information.

4.4 COVID-19 TESTING AND INFECTION CONTAINMENT

4.4.1 COVID-19 Testing

Student Health Services provides COVID-19 testing for students, faculty, and staff who are symptomatic or have been identified as a close-contact. SHS offers COVID-19 rapid, molecular point-of-care testing with test results provided during the appointment. SHS also has a partnership with LabCorp for off-site testing for COVID-19, Nucleic Acid Amplification (test results in 2-4 days). Specimen collection for both types of tests is a swab of the nasal turbinates.

To make an appointment, visit the Student Health Services [webpage](#) or call 843-349-6543. SHS clinical staff reports all COVID-19 positive cases to SCDHEC and the COVID-19 Call Center to initiate contact tracing and case management activities.

The SC Department of Environmental Health and Control (SCDHEC) hosts many free COVID-19 community testing sites throughout the state for symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals. To find a free testing site near you, visit SCHED's COVID-19 Testing Locations [website](#) and check the 'free testing' box in the search fields.

4.4.2 Contact Tracing

CCU's COVID-19 Call Center is staffed with contact tracers who rapidly respond to known COVID-19 campus cases to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 on campus. Contact tracers work with students, faculty, and staff who have a COVID-19 positive diagnosis to identify campus close contacts and provide important information such as isolation procedures and a release date. They also notify campus close contacts of their potential exposure and provide quarantine instructions and release dates.

If the contact tracer finds that a COVID-19 positive individual attended a face-to-face class or gathering during their infectious period, they will assess the scope of exposure and determine actions to mitigate community spread. Steps may include initiating quarantine and moving an in-person class online.

The University's contact tracers are familiar with campus operations and facilities. Their institutional knowledge provides insight to better serve the University community with thoughtful assistance during a difficult time.

Contact tracing is an imperative part of managing COVID-19 spread. It is the University's expectation that students participate in the contact tracing process and provide as much information as possible. Students who fail to communicate with contact tracers may be held accountable via the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

4.4.3 Quarantine

Quarantine is used to keep someone *who might have been exposed to COVID-19* away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. CCU's procedures for quarantine and isolation align with the current [CDC](#) and [SCDHEC](#) guidance.

People who are fully vaccinated do NOT need to quarantine after contact with someone who has COVID-19 unless they have symptoms. However, the [CDC](#) recommends that fully vaccinated people should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even they don't have symptoms, and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative.

Students, faculty, and staff who are not fully vaccinated and who have been identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case should quarantine and follow the CDC guidelines.

Quarantine Options:

- A full 14-day quarantine remains the most effective method to prevent transmission after exposure to a COVID-19 case and should be recommended in situations where any risk of transmission cannot be tolerated.
- Quarantine may end 10 days after last exposure to the positive case if no symptoms have been reported throughout the quarantine period and additional criteria below are met. These criteria may be used to end quarantine without testing, but testing should be highly encouraged before ending quarantine early.
 - No clinical evidence of COVID-19 has been elicited by daily symptom monitoring during the entirety of quarantine – and –
 - Daily symptom monitoring continues through day 14 – and –
 - Persons are counseled regarding the need to adhere strictly to all recommended strategies to mitigate spread (social distancing, hand hygiene, etc.) through day 14. They should be advised that if they develop any symptoms, they should immediately self-isolate, contact their healthcare provider, and seek retesting.
- Quarantine may end after day 7 if the individual has a negative COVID-19 test (either polymerase chain (PCR) or antigen test) result collected **no sooner than day 5** and additional criteria listed below is met. If their result is returned earlier than day 7, they must continue to quarantine and monitor for symptoms until completing the full 7-day quarantine. If you choose the 7-day quarantine option, please submit test results to covid@coastal.edu.
 - No clinical evidence of COVID-19 has been elicited by daily symptom monitoring during the entirety of quarantine – and –
 - Daily symptom monitoring continues through day 14 – and –

- Persons are counseled regarding the need to adhere strictly to all recommended strategies to mitigate spread (social distancing, hand hygiene, etc.) through day 14. They should be advised that if they develop any symptoms, they should immediately self-isolate, contact their healthcare provider, and seek retesting.

During quarantine, individuals should:

- Self-monitor daily for symptoms. - Watch for fever (100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath, or [other symptoms](#) of COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away from all other individuals, especially people who are at [higher risk](#) of getting very sick from COVID-19.

Failure to follow quarantine protocols endangers the health and safety of the community. Students who fail to quarantine after potential exposure may be held accountable via the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

4.4.4 Isolation

Isolation is used to separate people infected with the virus (those who are sick with COVID-19 and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected. Generally, the isolation period for COVID-19 continues until each and all of these conditions are met:

- Your symptoms have resolved.
- At least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.
- You have had no fever for at least 24 hours and have not used fever-reducing medication during that time.

If you had no symptoms but tested positive for COVID-19, you must isolate until 10 days have passed since the day of the COVID-19 test.

Students, faculty, and staff who are COVID-19 positive should stay home or in their residence, except to get medical care, and isolate according to these CDC guidelines:

- Monitor your symptoms. If you have an [emergency warning sign](#) (including trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately.
- Stay in a separate room from other household members, if possible.
- Use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- Avoid contact with other members of the household and pets.
- Don't share personal household items, like cups, towels, and utensils.
- Wear a cloth face covering when around other people, if you are able to.

Any current student who tests positive for COVID-19 will be offered case management services in support of their health, emotional well-being, and academics.

Failure to follow isolation protocols endangers the health and safety of the community. Students who fail to isolate after a positive test may be held accountable via the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

4.4.5 Quarantine and Isolation Operations for Resident Students

The University has developed a [Quarantine and Isolation Guide](#) that details the procedures implemented when a resident student is directed to quarantine or tests positive for COVID-19 and is required to isolate.

COVID-19 Call Center staff will perform the intake process for resident students placed in quarantine or isolation on campus. The process includes questions about prescription medication refills, dietary restrictions or preferences, food and medication allergies, and the need for additional personal care items. The information gathered will provide campus partners important information to support the student for the duration of their quarantine or isolation.

Residents assigned to spaces with private bedrooms can isolate in place.

The University has set aside a number of spaces for residents required to relocate to isolate and recover from illness.

The University will provide the following services to resident students in quarantine or isolation:

- Students should expect contact via phone from COVID Call Center staff for contact tracing purposes and remote monitoring of symptoms. If symptoms change, the student should contact Student Health Services.
- Meals and essential supplies will be delivered to the exterior door for pick-up; and
- Trash will be collected during each food delivery. Residents should wait to place bagged trash outside their exterior door until staff confirm the timing of the food delivery and trash pick-up.
- Laundry service is available by request.

If it is in the best interest of the resident to quarantine away from campus or with a parent, they may do so and return to University Housing when quarantine or isolation has been concluded. Residents who select this option will need to remain in contact with the University's Student Health Services and provide all necessary information before returning to their housing assignment.