![University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science logo]

August 2, 2021

Weekly Testing Guidance for Unvaccinated Employees and FAQs

In order to mitigate the spread of the highly contagious Delta variant, UMCES will require weekly testing for employees who have not been vaccinated.

Beginning August 9, a negative test result must be submitted to hr@umces.edu by Monday morning each week before coming to campus, regardless of exemption status. Employees may continue to use regular work hours to get tested, and if a fee is required, it will be reimbursed through your unit business office.

Testing is not required if fully vaccinated and proof of vaccination has been provided to hr@umces.edu.

For the health and safety of our community, vaccinations are mandatory for all faculty, students, and staff returning to campus this fall. Vaccinations are likely to slow the spread of all the variants and reduce the odds that new, even more dangerous variants emerge.

Exemptions to the vaccination requirement are for religious or medical reasons only. The exemption forms are available on the UMCES COVID-19 web page. Those who received exemption from vaccination must still meet the weekly testing requirement before coming to campus.

All those who are unvaccinated must continue to wear masks indoors at UMCES campuses, and those who are vaccinated should feel comfortable if they choose to mask, as well. Individuals who require an additional level of accommodation on campus should contact your unit director or Human Resources.

FAQs

What if I've been vaccinated?
Testing is not required if you have been fully vaccinated and proof of vaccination has been provided to hr@umces.edu.

Where can I get tested?
Individual campus units will provide guidance on testing within their community.

When should I get tested?
Unvaccinated employees must submit a negative test result to hr@umces.edu by Monday morning each week before coming to campus, beginning August 9.

Does it matter what kind of test I get?
No, any test offered by a testing facility is acceptable.

Do I need to get tested if I have an exemption from the COVID vaccination?
Yes.

What if I don't get tested?
If you are unvaccinated and do not get a weekly test, you may not come to campus until you report a negative test result. You must take annual leave if you are scheduled to be on campus.

I've already had COVID. Aren't I immune? Do I still need to get tested?
According to the CDC, we do not yet know how much protection (immunity) antibodies to the virus might provide against getting infected again. Therefore, weekly testing for unvaccinated employees is required to protect the health of our community.

What if I am charged for a test?
UMCES recognizes that different sites charge different amounts that depend on the circumstances of the test and the insurance coverage you carry. UMCES is committed to fully reimbursing staff for costs of meeting the testing requirement in a timely fashion.

What if I am denied a test at a testing site based on employer requirements?
UMCES encourages you to be up front and honest about why you are requesting a test. If you are denied a test, please seek alternative testing sites or consult your home laboratory who may be able to advise of sites that will accept employer-mandated testing as a reason for testing.

What should I do if I test positive?
If your test result is positive, do not come to campus. Notify your supervisor. You should contact your healthcare provider, who will provide care guidance. You must stay away from campus at least 14 days and you have received medical clearance.

What if I've had close contact with someone who is positive?
People who have had close contact with someone with confirmed COVID-19 should do one of the following:

If you're **vaccinated**, stay home until you received a negative test result and monitor your health carefully.

If you're **unvaccinated,** get tested, stay away from campus for 14 days, and monitor your health carefully.

What if I've been on vacation for more than a week?
For those who are unvaccinated, you must submit a negative test result before returning to campus.