Spring 2022 Return to Campus FAQs
SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

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RETURN-TO-CAMPUS TESTING
Per a SUNY mandate, all students must participate in testing upon return for the spring semester (regardless of vaccination status). SUNY campuses have been directed to develop their own plans for testing requirements. The following section addresses the ESF-specific requirements for return-to-campus testing.

What factors contributed to the development of ESF’s “return-to-campus” testing plan?
Some of the factors we considered in the development of our return-to-campus testing plan included:

- The requirements of the SUNY COVID-19 Guidance for the Spring 2022 Semester, both in its written form and after direct consultation with System Administration
- The often-limited public availability of test sites and test kits
- The variation in accuracy and reliability of different test results
- Our experience with receipt of test documentation that was not taken within the required time period or was missing needed content such as name, date, type of test, result, etc.
- The difficulty in receiving, reviewing, and approving ~2,500 tests within the specified timeframe
- Recognition that not all students arrive to campus the first week and we want to avoid late arrivals from being shut off in Blackboard
- Our confidence in the highly sensitive SU test (which is now considered a diagnostic test) with a quick turnaround rate

Do students have to participate in on-campus return-to-campus testing?
Yes, testing and a negative result from a test performed at the Syracuse University testing site are required for returning students. Tests must be performed and a negative result produced within 72 hours of arrival on campus.

Will ESF offer on-site testing upon return to campus in January?
Testing is available at SU for all asymptomatic members of the ESF community. Visit the SU website for the most current information.
What if I need a test, but have symptoms?
For the safety of others, do not go to the SU testing center if you have symptoms.

Students who believe they may have been exposed or who are experiencing COVID-like symptoms should stay home, report their symptoms and exposure, and call Crouse Medical Practice at 315-766-1628 for medical evaluation/diagnostic COVID testing.

Faculty and staff experiencing COVID-like symptoms should stay home and call their primary care provider.

Can I use a home test to return to campus?
No, you must provide a negative result from a test performed at the SU testing site, produced within 72 hours of arrival to campus. Testing is available at SU for all asymptomatic members of the ESF community. Visit the SU website for the most current information.

What happens if my test is positive? Will ESF have a place for me to isolate?
The isolation requirement for those who test positive for COVID remains unchanged from last year. If you test positive, regardless of your vaccination status, a legal order from the Onondaga County Health Department directs that you isolate for a period up to day 10. Similar to last year, ESF is fully prepared to provide isolation housing for students who live on campus, and for those who cannot safely isolate in their off-campus apartments. If needed, transportation can be provided to Shapero Hall at Onondaga Community College, the location of isolation housing.

Does everyone have to get tested, regardless of their vaccination/booster status?
Yes. Testing is one of the most effective COVID mitigation tools we have at our disposal. Given the sharp increase in COVID cases, and the rapid spread of the Omicron variant, ESF requires everyone to be tested within 72 hours of arrival to campus, regardless of vaccination and booster status, to promote a safe return to campus.

Can I get tested before I return to campus?
No. ESF’s policy is that testing and a negative result from a test performed at the SU testing site are required.

When do I need to get tested?
Returning students will need to show a negative test performed at the SU testing site within 72 hours of arrival on campus.

COVID-19 BOOSTER SHOTS
Do I need to get a booster shot?
Yes, effective Jan. 15, COVID-19 vaccine boosters are required for all SUNY students to engage in in-person activities sponsored by ESF, including classes, labs, extracurricular activities, and sports once you become eligible.

When do I need to get my booster shot?
People who received their COVID-19 vaccine can generally get their booster five to six months after their second dose or two months after the Johnson and Johnson vaccine.

SU requires eligible individuals to receive a booster shot by Jan. 24. For individuals who are not yet eligible to receive a booster by Jan. 24, you will be required to receive a booster shot within 30 days of becoming eligible.

I recently tested positive for COVID and I can’t get the booster shot—what should I do? You can request a temporary medical accommodation from Student Affairs. Please email covidsa@esf.edu or call (315)470-6660 for more information.

SURVEILLANCE TESTING
Why are you requiring testing for vaccinated (or boosted) students? Testing is one of the most effective COVID mitigation tools we have at our disposal. Given the sharp increase in COVID cases, and the rapid spread of the Omicron variant—even among vaccinated and boosted people—we are requiring all students to be tested within 72 hours of arrival on campus, regardless of vaccination and booster status, to promote a safe return to campus.

Are faculty and staff required to test to return to campus, too? Management Confidential staff are required to test prior to the start of the Spring semester. UUP staff and CSEA represented staff are not required to test at this time.

How is on-going surveillance testing throughout the semester going to work? ESF is still working on a surveillance testing plan and details will be provided soon. The College community will be notified via email. This FAQ document, along with our Spring 2022 Guidance, will be updated accordingly.

CENTENNIAL HALL
When will Centennial Hall Open for the Spring Semester? To coincide with the new academic calendar, Centennial Hall will reopen for returning students on Friday, Jan. 21. New students will move into Centennial Hall on Jan. 20 to allow for participation in orientation activities.

Can I move into Centennial Hall earlier to maintain my previous travel arrangements? No. For health and safety reasons, Centennial Hall will not open for returning students until Jan. 21. Centennial Hall will not have staffing or other services available to accommodate early arrivals. Residents may need to adjust travel arrangements, including plane or train tickets, to coincide with this new schedule. We regret any inconvenience this may cause.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR
Why are we not starting classes online instead of starting the semester later? Because ESF’s relationship with SU is central to our operations and the services that our students enjoy, we have historically aligned our academic calendar with SU’s. Due to our shared course registration system, starting the semester one week later on Jan. 24 is the best option for our students who opt to take courses at SU, as well as for SU students who opt to take courses at ESF.
While both SU and ESF would prefer to stick with the original academic calendar as adopted for the 2021-2022 academic year, given the sharp increase in COVID cases, the rapid spread of the Omicron variant, and warnings from public health officials, delaying the start of the semester is being done to promote a sustainable, in-class experience when the Spring semester begins in January.

**What should I do if the changed semester dates interfere with pre-existing plans?**
The decisions we’re making in real time in order to protect the health and safety of the College community will pose inconveniences for some. We encourage you to communicate with your prospective employers and instructors, and request flexibility with your employment start date and finals schedule. Feel free to share communications you receive from the College to support your request.

**Spring Break is not going to change, right?**
Spring Break is still March 13-20, as originally scheduled. This is a much-needed and deserved break for our students.

**When is graduation going to be held?**
Joint commencement with SU is scheduled for May 15. ESF holds its own commencement ceremony, in addition to the joint commencement with SU, and the date has yet to be determined.

**CAMPUS EVENTS AND GATHERINGS**
**Can we hold in-person events on campus?**
We are asking the College community to evaluate this on a case-by-case basis. If in-person gatherings or meetings are not necessary, use a remote option. If you proceed with gathering, be aware of the risks and ensure you’re following the ESF masking guidelines. We also encourage you to maintain social distancing to further reduce risk.

**GENERAL QUESTIONS**
**Why is everything constantly changing?**
We understand the frustration that frequent changes may cause. Conditions are changing as more knowledge is gained about the virus, its variants, and transmissibility. Protocols will be adjusted as needed to promote a healthy and safe campus environment for students, faculty, and staff. ESF must continue to comply with any additional requirements imposed by regulating entities, including New York state, SUNY, and local health departments.

ESF reserves the right to revise its policies, procedures, and protocols as it deems appropriate to operate its campus. Updated information will be relayed periodically to the ESF campus community using a variety of means, including by email to the address on file and on the ESF COVID Restart page.

**What is the current vaccine and booster policy for COVID-19?**
**Students:** SUNY continues to require all students to provide evidence of vaccination. Pursuant to this policy, students are considered fully vaccinated for the initial course of vaccination: (1) two weeks after receiving the second dose in a two dose COVID-19 vaccine series or (2) two weeks after receiving a single dose COVID-19 vaccine.
For the Spring 2022 semester, New York state requires all students engaging in in-person activities sponsored by ESF to get a booster shot when eligible. "In-person Activities" include classes, labs, extracurricular activities, and sports. Students who recently received their COVID-19 vaccine may be eligible to get their booster five to six months after their second dose or two months after the Johnson and Johnson vaccine.

SU requires eligible individuals to receive a booster shot by Jan. 24. For individuals who are not yet eligible to receive a booster by Jan. 24, you will be required to receive a booster shot within 30 days of becoming eligible. This is in addition to the initial course of vaccination for COVID-19 and a flu shot.

Each student must provide proof of such vaccinations to the Division of Student Affairs.

**Faculty and Staff:** All faculty and staff are encouraged to get vaccinated and receive a booster when eligible. (Management Confidential employees are required to be vaccinated and boosted.) Proof of such vaccination and booster shots may be provided to ESF Human Resources.

SU requires eligible individuals to receive a booster shot by Jan. 24. For individuals who are not yet eligible to receive a booster by Jan. 24, you will be required to receive a booster shot within 30 days of becoming eligible. This is in addition to the initial course of vaccination for COVID-19 and a flu shot.