

Dear Students,

We are thrilled to be writing with positive updates on changes to operations in medical education in response to federal, state, and local changes in guidance related to COVID. The state of California removed many restrictions related to masking and distancing as of June 15, 2021. In addition, Cal/OSHA made similar changes that apply to employees in the general workplace.

As always, guidance is different for healthcare facilities and other higher-risk areas. These are our new guidelines based on our educational setting, **effective as of July 1, 2021**.

***Classroom-Based Education:***

All activities (e.g., lectures, small groups) may now be held in person, pending instructor and room availability. Additional masking guidance for indoor activities will be provided soon.

***Clinical-Based Education:***

All educational activities based in clinical environments will adhere to the guidance of the institution at which they are based. This will typically require surgical masks for all who are fully vaccinated and N-95 masks for those who are not fully vaccinated, and daily symptom screening for all regardless of vaccination status. Physical distancing and/or room density restrictions may vary according to certain sites.

***Clinical Simulation-Based Education:***

To the extent possible, simulation-based activities will require the same precautions used in clinical care at the host institution. This is to prepare students to care for patients under conditions like those encountered in clinical environments in which they will be working.

***Extra-Curricular Classroom-Based Activities:***

All activities are permitted in person. These include didactic, social, and skill-based activities. Please note that if patient simulation is involved, guidance may be different (e.g., requiring masks) as above in “Clinical Simulation-Based Education.” In addition, food may be served without restriction.

***Extra-Curricular Clinical-Based Activities:***

As soon as density restrictions in the clinical environment are relaxed, all extra-curricular clinical-based activities (e.g., shadowing, free clinics) will no longer be restricted. Students should follow the guidance of the hosting institution for clinical activities (see above under “Clinical-Based Education”). Please be aware that some health care settings are still operating under density and/or other restrictions and might not be able to participate in these activities at this time.

As always, we ask that you continue to stay vigilant to changing guidance; while the pandemic has abated significantly in the Bay Area, there are still other areas of the country and globe where the data are not as reassuring. As we have all experienced, recommendations are subject to change.

For now, we hope that everyone will use the guidance here and given by our federal/state/local officials to re-engage with others and participate in activities that many of us have wanted to for so long. It is time to – safely – reap the rewards of the diligence you have all shown in complying with the precautions and coping with the disruptions due to this pandemic.

With thanks for your patience through all of this,

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