

Dear School of Medicine Community,

As we enter a third year of the pandemic, we are facing a rapid rise of new COVID-19 cases due to the highly transmissible Omicron variant.

In response to this surge, UCSF has issued new policies and procedures that require immediate action. Please take a few minutes to read the important updates below.

Please continue to take all the public health precautions necessary to protect against COVID-19: get booster shots, wear masks, get tested as needed, and isolate for at least 5 days after testing positive for COVID-19. Note that new public health guidance for returning to on-site work after a COVID-19 diagnosis will be implemented next week to meet critical staffing needs.

Please also join the COVID-19 Response Town Hall today at [4 p.m. via Zoom](#), which will cover important UCSF policy updates as well as:

- George Rutherford, Professor, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, and Acting Director, Institute for Global Health Sciences, who will give an update on the global pandemic; and
- Peter Chin-Hong, Professor, Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases, and Associate Dean, Regional Campuses, who will talk about the surge of Omicron cases.

Sincerely,

Talmadge E. King, Jr., MD
Dean, School of Medicine

Automated Return-to-Campus Clearance After High-Risk Exposures

UCSF is implementing guidance from the California Department of Public Health for employees and learners returning to work or campus following high-risk exposure to COVID-19. Here's what you should know:

- The [UCSF Daily Health Screener](#) will allow vaccinated employees and learners who have had a high-risk exposure to attest to eligibility criteria and a daily COVID-19 testing protocol to continue to work onsite through an automated self-clearance process from the COVID Response Team.
- Detailed instructions on further testing and other requirements are being sent to those who will return to work or study onsite.

UCSF Sets January 31st Deadline for Booster Shots

UCSF has set a deadline for all eligible members of the UCSF community to get booster shots by January 31, 2022.

Here's what you should know:

- Eligible employees who do not meet the January 31, 2022, deadline will be

subject to progressive corrective action up to and including dismissal from employment, pursuant to policy and collective bargaining agreements.

- Those eligible for booster shots are:
 - 6 months post their second shot of Moderna
 - 5 months post their second shot of Pfizer
 - 2 months post their single shot of Johnson & Johnson
- Following a positive COVID-19 test, individuals should get a booster shot after they have completed their required isolation period and their symptoms have resolved.
- Being fully vaccinated means receiving the primary series of vaccinations (Moderna, Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson) and a third dose or booster shot to ensure maximum protection against infection.
- UCSF continues to offer all employees and learners appointments and the ability to walk in to get their initial vaccinations and booster shots at various campus sites. To find out how to get a booster shot at UCSF, [please visit the coronavirus vaccine information page](#).
- Booster shots are widely available through vaccination clinics, health care providers, Safeway stores and neighborhood pharmacies.
- Schedule an appointment through [MyChart](#) or call (415) 476-3307 in San Francisco or (510) 428-3885 ext. 5793# in Oakland. Booster shots also are available at the [UCSF Fresno COVID-19 Equity Project](#).
- Californians can visit the [My Turn website](#) or call (833) 422-4255 to make an appointment or find a nearby vaccine location.
- Those who get a booster at a location outside UCSF, should upload a copy of that record to [the Occupational Health Services portal](#) (UCSF MyAccess is required.) Those who cannot connect to VPN should send the document to VaccineResponsibleOffice@ucsf.edu.
- BCH Oakland employees should upload booster documentation to eh-dept@ucsf.edu.

Mandatory COVID-19 Testing

UCSF continues to offer free COVID-19 testing for employees and learners as noted on the [coronavirus website](#). Recently, UCSF has instituted new testing policies.

Here are the highlights:

- The California Department of Public Health issued a testing mandate for non-boosted employees and learners working onsite:
 - Effective immediately, the CDPH requires all on-site workers not vaccinated with a booster to be tested on-site for COVID-19 twice a week.
 - In any given week, tests should be taken no more than 4 days apart.
- Post-holiday testing for on-site employees and learners and out-of-state travelers:
 - **On-site workers/learners:** UCSF strongly recommends that employees and learners and out-of-state travelers working on campus take two COVID-19 tests a few days apart upon returning to work after January 1, 2022. This policy will be in place until January 15, 2022. The [UCSF Daily Health Screener](#) will provide instructions on when and how to get tested when reporting to work.
 - **Out-of-state travelers:** Must take two COVID-19 tests, the first of which should be within 24 hours of entering UCSF facilities for on-site work. This policy will remain in effect until further notice. The [UCSF](#)

[Daily Health Screener](#) will provide instructions on when and how to get tested when reporting to work.

Steps to Return to Onsite Work Following COVID-19 Symptoms

Please see the steps below to ensure that you don't experience delays in returning to work onsite after experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

1. Complete Daily Health Screener to report symptoms (including allergies), provide "preferred phone number," and receive a "Not Cleared to Work" screen

- This will send a message to the COVID Response Team, which will call you to complete an interview in 1 to 2 days.

2. Get Tested for COVID-19. Instructions in the Daily Health screener gives options (use link at bottom of "Not Cleared" screen.)

- For mild or moderate symptoms, get a Color test for a 24- to 48-hour turnaround
- Get UCSF clinical lab test for the fastest, less than a 24-hour turnaround
- Get a local test, and send results to COVIDOHSMZ@ucsf.edu.
- Regardless of your where test is completed, the COVID Response Team clearance is required before returning to onsite work.

3. Repeat the Daily Health Screener when you have received a negative COVID test result, and your symptoms/illness have improved and you are ready to return to work

- The Daily Health Screener will provide the return-to-work clearance.
- Benioff Children's Hospital (BCH) Oakland employees will be notified through BCH Oakland Employee Health department.

Personal Protective Equipment for Health Care Workers

Effective yesterday, January 6, 2022, UCSF Health has updated Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidelines in the inpatient and outpatient settings for health care personnel. Please note that this guidance has been revised from the preliminary guidance presented at the Manager Forum on January 3, 2022.

Here's what health care workers should know:

- Health care personnel are required to wear eye protection for direct patient care
- Health care personnel are strongly recommended to wear an N-95 mask for all direct patient care
- PPE re-use and extended use will be reinstated as noted in [this document](#)
- Health care personnel are required to wear an N95 mask that they have been fit-tested to wear (or PAPR) for Novel Respiratory (in addition to eye protection, gloves, and gown) and Airborne Isolation
- Employees and learners can use an N95 if preferred.

About N95 Masks

- N95 masks will be distributed on the units, clinics, and other care areas. They will not be distributed at the entrances.
- With a tighter fit around the face, N95s may offer better source control, reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Source control refers to the use of a mouth/nose covering to contain respiratory secretions.
- An N95 mask enhances protection when in close contact with a patient, caretaker, or employee who has COVID-19 that is not yet diagnosed.

Traveling Internationally or Domestically Requires Two-Step Testing

UCSF updated its policy regarding internal and domestic travel as posted on [the coronavirus website](#).

Here are the highlights:

- Regardless of vaccination status, all individuals returning to onsite work or study within 10 days following international or domestic (interstate) travel are required to take and submit an approved COVID-19 test within 24 hours of entering a UCSF facility (before or during first day onsite).
- A second COVID-19 test is required 3 to 5 days following the first UCSF test.
- As the pandemic continues to evolve, UCSF will update its travel guidance in accordance with the latest public health orders. This guidance is effective until further notice.

UCSF Revises Events and Meetings Guidelines

UCSF updated its guidance for meetings.

Here are the highlights that apply to all UCSF-sponsored events both onsite and offsite:

- Indoor meetings are now limited to 100 people until further notice.
- A 50 percent capacity restriction applies to indoor meetings.
- Food and drinks are not allowed.
- All attendees must wear face coverings.
- Non-sponsored UCSF events are expected to adhere to local jurisdictions' public health orders.

For general information about UCSF's COVID-19 recovery efforts, please visit the [UCSF COVID-19 website](#). For questions related to recovery efforts, please contact [UCSF Emergency Management](#).

You can also sign up to receive text alerts about the latest COVID-19 news by texting "UCSF" to 333 111.

Visit our website

