

# COVID-19 POLICIES FOR BEREA COLLEGE EMPLOYEES

## REVISED JUNE 14, 2022

Berea College has returned to full on-campus operations with certain limitations and restrictions.

The cooperation of Berea's students, faculty, and staff in vaccination, masking, social distancing, and other risk-mitigation efforts continues to have a very significant impact on protecting the health and wellness of the campus community. Because the efficacy of the vaccines is very high and a growing majority of Bereans are vaccinated, it is believed that the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to vaccinated individuals remains relatively low for most campus activities where a high percentage of participants are vaccinated. Still, as the COVID-19 virus continues to mutate into variants, caution is encouraged.

**Unvaccinated employees, in particular, are advised of the highly contagious nature of recent COVID-19 variants and warned that they may be exposed to or infected by the virus by working on the College campus or other locations. Interactions with and exposure to other employees, students, or third parties, including children and other unvaccinated persons, may result in infection, personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and even death.**

Since the College cannot assure the campus that all work environments will be free from risk of infection from COVID-19, the Administrative Committee has adopted the following health and safety policies for Berea College employees relating to the risks of COVID-19. **This announcement supersedes all previous employee policies relating to COVID-19.**

All employees are required to follow these updated COVID-19 mitigation policies until the College determines they are no longer necessary.

### COVID-19 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

#### Guiding Principles

Because Berea is a residential learning community, where students and others live, work, and learn together, often in close collaboration with faculty and staff, the College has adopted policies that in some instances are more conservative than state and federal guidance. These include the following:

- Students are required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Exemptions are permitted only for medical reasons and sincerely held religious beliefs in accord with the College policy.
- Employees working in the Child Development Lab (CDL) were to receive their first COVID-19 vaccine prior to October 15, 2021, and were **required** to be fully vaccinated by December 1, 2021. Those employees hired in the CDL since December 1, 2021, are required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and all recommended boosters as a condition of employment.
- While not a requirement, the College **strongly encourages** all other employees who are able to do so to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and booster(s).
- Regardless of vaccination status, all members of the community are required to follow the College's reporting instructions if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (see below).

## **POLICIES FOR REPORTING TO WORK**

### **Daily Health Assessments**

- By reporting to work, employees certify that they are fit for work and do not have an elevated temperature or symptoms associated with COVID-19.

### **Symptomatic Employees**

- Regardless of vaccination status, employees should report their condition to the College at HealthyatWork@berea.edu if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- In the above symptomatic circumstances, employees should:
  - Isolate at home and not report to work;
  - Immediately notify their supervisor and the Human Resources Department at HealthyatWork@berea.edu;
  - Get tested for COVID-19;
  - Monitor their symptoms and call a doctor or use telemedicine if symptoms persist.

### **Quarantine Protocols**

- The College is following the quarantine protocols recommended by the Kentucky Department of Health. Information on the protocols can be found here: <https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19>.
- Regular paid sick or vacation leave will be used to cover the time off, as with any other illness, unless a temporary work-from-home accommodation is approved by the employee's supervisor.
- Vaccinated and unvaccinated employees may return to work when they have completed the recommended quarantine protocols from the Kentucky Department of Health.
- By reporting to work, employees certify that they are fit for duty and do not have an elevated temperature or symptoms of COVID-19.

### **Employees Exposed to Someone with Confirmed COVID-19**

- When positive test results emerge, the College will engage in contact tracing to determine the close contacts of infected individuals.
- Regular paid sick or vacation leave will be used to cover COVID-19-related time off, as with any other illness, unless a temporary work-from-home accommodation is approved.
- An employee who is identified as a close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 is expected to follow the protocols recommended by the Kentucky Department of Health: <https://govstatus.egov.com/ky-healthcare-guidance>.

## **WORKPLACE POLICIES**

### **COVID-19 Testing**

Any employees experiencing COVID-19 symptoms are expected to get tested before returning to work. Positive tests will result in required isolation as described in the previous section. Guidance for testing following personal or work travel is provided in the "Travel" section below.

### **Masks or Facial Coverings**

Vaccinated and unvaccinated employees **are not required to** wear masks in public campus indoor settings at this time, but anyone may choose to do so. Instructors, Labor Supervisors, or the responsible person of an area has discretion to require masking for teaching, learning, and labor department spaces.

- Faculty and Labor Supervisors are encouraged to consider the health situation of their students when determining masking requirements for their course or department.
- Employees, students, and visitors are required to mask when entering an office, labor, or learning space where masking is still requested by those who oversee such spaces. Please note that an indoor masking requirement may be reinstated at any time should the number of cases on campus or in the area warrant an adjustment.

### **Workplace Meetings and Gatherings**

- In-person, virtual, or hybrid (in-person and virtual) meetings and gatherings are permitted.
- At the current time, in-person meeting participants are not required to mask in public indoor settings.

## **RELATED POLICIES**

### **COVID-19 Dependent-Care Policy**

If an employee's child is excluded from regular care or schooling for COVID-19-related reasons, employees must communicate with their supervisor to determine what arrangements can be made in relation to altered hours or remote work that may allow the employee to continue working and avoid taking sick or vacation leave. Please refer to the [Adjustable Work Policy](#) for guidance on short-term adjustments and the Temporary Work/Life Balance Program.

### **Campus Activities and Events**

Certain campus activities and events, particularly those involving indoor venues that are focused on the student experience at Berea, may be restricted to only campus community members (e.g., students and employees). These may include campus dining venues, indoor exercise spaces, certain athletic competitions, convocations, and other events. Announcements concerning these restrictions will be made through the office or area hosting the event.

### **Travel**

- All employees are permitted to engage in College-sponsored travel for work, as approved in advance by their supervisor.
- **Employees are encouraged to receive a negative COVID-19 test before returning to campus after overnight travel or attendance at large gatherings.** It is preferred that employees obtain a rapid (antigen) test through White House Clinic or another provider, but home tests are allowed in the case of inconvenience or privacy concerns. It is expected that employees report positive test outcomes to HR and follow the required quarantine guidelines as described in the Quarantine Protocols section above. It is also prudent for employees who test negative to retest two days following the first test, but this additional safety measure is not required unless symptoms occur.
- Students participating in any College-sponsored travel must receive a negative COVID-19 rapid or antigen test before resuming activities on campus, and that result must be

documented with Student Life. **The faculty or staff sponsor of student travel is responsible for ensuring that students are tested.**

- People traveling internationally should consult health and other advisories from the Centers for Disease Control and Preventions and the Department of State and obtain approval from the Administrative Committee member of their division.

### **Paid Leave**

COVID-19-related paid leave was eliminated on June 30, 2021. Regular sick and vacation leave will be used if time off is needed for COVID-19-related illness, unless an accommodation is approved.

### **Accommodation Requests**

Reasonable accommodations for employees relating to COVID-19 may be available as provided by law and according to the short-term adjustments and the Temporary Work/Life Balance Program outlined in the Adjustable Work Policy. Exemptions or accommodations may not be possible in all instances, particularly where this would pose an undue hardship on College operations or particular programs. The College reserves the right to make temporary adjustments to employee work assignments, when necessary, to promote the health of the campus community during the COVID-19 health emergency.

### **Confidentiality**

Any medical information employees share with their supervisor or Human Resources will be kept confidential with the exception that, for the purposes of enhancing workplace safety, supervisors will be informed which of their direct reports have not confirmed vaccination. Supervisors are required to handle such information confidentially. Employees may be notified of their potential exposure to someone who is confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19; however, whenever possible, reasonable efforts will be made to protect the identity of the individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. Non-management employees should not inquire of co-workers as to their vaccination status.

### **Compliance; Risk of Illness**

Compliance with these policies does not remove all risk of illness from COVID-19, nor does it make it inherently safe to return to campus or other work locations.

**Employees are responsible for their own decisions with respect to COVID-19 vaccination, and employees assume the risk of not being vaccinated or others being unvaccinated. The College disclaims any responsibility for illness, death, or lost work relating to COVID-19.**

Failure to comply with the College's COVID-19 health and safety policies could endanger co-workers, students, and the public and may result in discipline, up to and including proceedings for termination.

### **Other Protective Measures**

As a private employer, the College reserves the right to institute other protective measures, including mandatory vaccination requirements, for all employees at any time in response to COVID-19.

**Questions**

The College's COVID-19 policies may be updated as conditions change. Any questions or concerns should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

For Reference

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>