

Employee Return to Campus Update

8/6/20

Dear Colleagues,

I am excited to welcome our community back to campus this fall. In this email, you will find details about our return. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and new state guidelines related to health and safety, our experience this fall will be different, but we are making every effort to keep the campus as safe as possible for in-person learning and on-campus living.

Trailblazer Agreement

As a member of our community, we expect you to do your part to ensure your continued health and safety, as well as the health and safety of those around you. To this end, all community members are asked to abide by the health and safety guidelines MCLA has developed.

These guidelines include:

- Wear a face covering in public when outside your own office, including in instructional settings, in campus buildings, on campus grounds, and other public areas or as directed by the college or local/state health authorities. This is especially important when unable to maintain proper social distancing;
- Monitor your own health daily and stay home when ill or running a fever;
- Wash your hands frequently or use hand sanitizer when washing is not possible;
- Cooperate with and respond to any requests from contact tracers to help control the spread of the virus.

Each employee will receive a “welcome back” kit with a mask and cleaning supplies for their work space. Please refer to the MCLA Workplace Return Guide for employees for additional information ([Workplace Return Guide](#))

Training Requirements

All faculty and staff are expected to complete training on social distancing and hygiene protocols, which is provided through Dynamic Forms ([Return to Work Training](#)). We strongly encourage and expect that as a foundation to maintain as safe as possible conditions for our campus community that you will complete this training no later than September 1.

Travel Advisory Reminder

Governor Baker signed an Executive Order on July 24, 2020, effective August 1, 2020, replacing the previous Travel Advisory. The Order will require a 14-day quarantine of travelers coming into Massachusetts unless otherwise exempt. There are a number of exemptions, including:

- The person is coming from a low risk state [currently the New England states (except for Rhode Island), New York, New Jersey and Hawaii] aside from transitory travel (i.e. going

through Massachusetts on route to another destination), **and** has not been present in any high-risk state during the last 14 days;

- The person can produce documented proof of a negative COVID-19 test result within the past 72 hours prior to coming into Massachusetts.

The state has asked employers to “strongly discourage their employees from taking leisure travel to destinations not included on the list of COVID-19 lower-risk states.”

Testing and Contact Tracing

MCLA has engaged with the Broad Institute for a comprehensive campus testing plan coordinated by our Health Services office. All resident students will be tested upon arrival and once a week for the first month of attendance. After that, we will switch to surveillance testing with 20-25% of our resident students tested on a randomized schedule. Information will be communicated with students in regard to specific time and other details.

Commuter students will also be tested through Health Services. These testing guidelines will follow MA DPH recommendations for symptomatic and asymptomatic complaints. Individuals will be triaged and referred to on or off-campus testing, as deemed medically necessary. Health Services will indicate specific days and times for commuter testing as the semester gets underway.

Voluntary testing will be made available for faculty and staff who are physically present on campus for the cost of \$25 and Health Services will be releasing specific days and times for employee testing as the semester begins. MCLA will cover the cost of employee testing for those whom a test is deemed necessary through contact tracing practices.

In addition to coordination with the appropriate local public health officials, MCLA is utilizing the Guardian platform to assist in necessary contact tracing measures. Guardian is a case management system that MCLA uses for a multitude of purposes. This software has the capability for MCLA to log and track individuals related to COVID-19 who are confirmed positive, possibly exposed, and also those that may need to self-isolate/quarantine, following established tracing protocols.

We will closely monitor for positive test results and we will regularly review the number of confirmed cases for safety purposes, while following all necessary privacy restrictions, as determined by the Department of Public Health. Monitoring rates of positive infections will inform our decision-making process regarding the continued safety of our campus community.

Employees who exhibit symptoms should not report to work and should contact their primary care physician and the Berkshire Health Systems (BHS) COVID-19 hotline for guidance and testing. BHS’s toll-free hotline for questions regarding the novel coronavirus is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. seven days a week at 855-262-5465. Employees should contact their supervisor to notify them that they will not report to work, and to receive guidance regarding their return.

Campus Cleaning and Sanitization

MCLA will follow CDC, MA Department of Public Health, and DCAMM guidelines regarding cleaning and sanitization. Work has been done to ensure that all cleaning chemicals are approved to disinfect and stop the spread of COVID -19 (per EPA/CDC recommendations).

Details for maintaining specific areas:

- Classrooms will be fogged at least twice daily and each classroom will be equipped with bottles of disinfectant and paper towels.
- Bathrooms will be fogged at varying frequencies and at least once daily, and a bottle of ES 64H sanitizer will be in place.
- Offices will be fogged once daily, and a bottle of ES 64H will be available.
- Common areas and elevators will be fogged once daily.
- Residence areas will see a heightened cleaning schedule.

Other efforts are underway to ensure a clean campus, including the installation of 50 additional hand sanitizing stations across campus in high-traffic areas and offices. Additionally, air filters will be changed out in greater frequency as recommended by DCAMM. Facilities staff will operate under modified schedules to allow for increased cleaning needs at various times including late nights and very early mornings. A partnership has been established with external services to provide emergency cleaning needs on campus.

In a number of areas on campus, efforts have been made to de-densify spaces as necessary to aid in cleaning efforts. Classrooms and common areas across campus have had excess furniture beyond what is allowed for safe social distancing removed and signage is being placed across campus to help with traffic flow and social distancing practices.

Student Life/Student Services

A detailed message was sent to all students earlier today and will be housed on our COVID-19 site for reference. What follows is a brief summary:

Residential Life

MCLA has developed a plan for residential living that we believe will provide the safest possible living and learning environment for our students in light of the continuing pandemic. This includes single rooms for all students, with a number of rooms being held for quarantine purposes. In order to minimize the introduction to or spread of COVID within each residence area, student access to each residence area is limited to those who live within that residence area. Residents will not be able to host any guests/visitors, including family members, MCLA commuters, or residents from other residence areas.

Campus Dining Services

MCLA Dining Services, managed by Aramark, is committed to safety first in dining operations. Health and safety protocols exceed the CDC guidelines and are in full compliance with the same state guidelines required of restaurants. In keeping with current guidelines, there will be no self-service and touchless service is being

incorporated in all locations to the greatest extent possible. Additional seating locations will be available due to occupancy limits. All locations will offer a meal equivalency swipe. An online ordering system for students on meal plans is being established, as are separate entrance and exit points, a scheduling plan for Centennial Room dining, and queuing points for all operations.

MCLA Bookstore

The Bookstore encourages students to order books online so that they will be available for easy pickup upon arrival to campus (MCLAshop.com).

Fitness Center

We are excited to announce that the Trailblazer Fitness Center renovation project is finally complete! This new state-of-the-art facility will be open during the fall semester. The space offers new strength and cardio equipment, as well as an indoor walking track. Users will be expected to follow MCLA safety/social distancing guidelines and the Fitness Center will adhere to Massachusetts Phase III standards for fitness facilities.

Library

This fall, Freel Library remains committed to supporting student academic and personal success and well-being while doing our part to keep the MCLA community as safe as possible. There will be some changes from last year. Hours and seating capacity will be reduced. Tables and chairs have been arranged to comply with distancing guidelines and may not be moved. Some areas of the building will be unavailable for use. Other aspects of the library will look familiar. Our rich collections and expert staff are still available to you online and in person. You can still visit the library and use computers, borrow course reserve readings, print, copy, scan, and browse most of the book stacks. A limited number of laptops are available for short-term or semester loan. And you'll find some new services, too. You can now request books in advance and pick them up at the circulation desk. A new book scanner will let you create accessible PDFs from print materials quickly and easily. Please visit the library website for more information and follow the guidance on signage posted throughout the library building. Stay connected with the library on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter at @mclalibrary.

Opening Semester Events

Both Convocation and Opening Breakfast will be virtual this semester, and additional details will be communicated once finalized.

COVID-19 Hotline/Website

Our COVID-19 hotline (413-662-5550, between 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday) will remain in operation for the fall semester and can be utilized for questions or to report cleaning concerns. The COVID-19 website, mcla.edu/covid-19, remains functional and is a comprehensive catalogue of information as well as an archive of all campus communications related to COVID-19.

We will continue to share additional information in the coming weeks. Thank you for the work that happened across all divisions and departments during the summer to ensure a safe as possible return for our community. Again, I sincerely looking forward to seeing you on campus soon.

Jaimie

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