

Colleagues,

It is hard to believe that we are closing in on the Thanksgiving holiday. It has been an unusual semester that has called upon our resilience and creativity. Thank you for helping our students, and each other, through this challenging time. The upcoming holiday gives us an opportunity to check in about a few topics of interest. Please read on for details about new Executive Orders, guidance on travel, and employee testing information.

New Executive Orders

This week, Governor Baker issued new Executive Orders regarding face coverings, regulating gatherings and early closing for certain businesses and activities, as well as a Stay-at-Home Advisory.

People are required to wear a mask over their mouth and nose when at indoor and outdoor public locations, and when in a carpool with non-household members. Employees are expected to report to work with an appropriate face covering and to wear it during the workday. The only time an employee does not need to wear their mask is if they are working in their individual office alone. If someone enters their office or if they leave their office, they must wear their mask. An important change resulting from the new Executive Order is that if an employee requests an accommodation so as not to have to wear a mask at work due to a medical condition, they need to provide documentation to me verifying the health condition.

The Stay-at-Home Advisory advises residents to stay home between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. There are some exceptions, including travel to and from work. It also advises residents to avoid gatherings in their homes with anyone outside of their household. If they do have gatherings, the Executive Order addressing that topic limits outdoor gatherings to 25 people, and indoor gatherings to 10 people.

We implore you to follow these Orders and the Advisory to do all we can to keep our campus community as safe as possible.

Travel

Please remember that if you are traveling over the holidays, MCLA adheres to the Commonwealth's guidelines regarding out of state travel. Per the Commonwealth's website, everyone who travels outside of the state and does not travel to a low-risk state (currently Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Washington, California, Hawaii and the District of Columbia) must complete the Massachusetts Travel Form (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order>) prior to arrival back, and quarantine for 14 days or produce a negative test result that has been administered up to 72 hours prior to their arrival in Massachusetts. If people are not tested until they return, while awaiting COVID-19 test results, they must quarantine. Failure to comply may result in a \$500/day fine.

Please also be aware that in light of the increase in COVID-19 cases in Massachusetts, some adjacent states, including Connecticut and Vermont, have implemented travel advisories for Massachusetts residents traveling to those states. I encourage you to check the website for any state that you are planning to travel to so that you understand any obligations they may require

of you. States have made allowances for people who travel over state lines for work, so that should not be an issue.

Also, for general tips on having a safe Thanksgiving holiday, please see the link below to the state's recommendations:

<https://www.mass.gov/news/thanksgiving-during-covid-19>

[Thanksgiving During COVID-19 | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/news/thanksgiving-during-covid-19)

As Massachusetts residents plan for the Thanksgiving holiday, we offer the following considerations to help keep our friends, families, and communities safe during COVID-19. If you host a holiday celebration, keep it small. If you are considering travel, be aware of Massachusetts travel orders. If you participate in a celebration, follow public health guidance.

www.mass.gov

Employee Testing

Please remember that MCLA provides one COVID-19 test per month through November for asymptomatic employees. Testing is by appointment. Employee testing appointments are available through November 19; sign up [here](#) to schedule an appointment. You must bring a picture ID and a [signed consent form](#). Please arrive at Health Services on time for your appointment. Do NOT make or keep an appointment if you are symptomatic or feeling unwell. In that case, please call your primary care physician or Berkshire Health Systems' COVID-19 hotline at 855-262-5465 to schedule a test and inform me that you are being tested.

Employee testing will be suspended when students leave campus at Thanksgiving and will resume when students return to campus for the Spring semester.

If you have additional questions regarding MCLA's testing procedures or response to COVID-19 please visit www.mcla.edu/covid-19. The dashboard can be found on this site. The dashboard reflects all results for MCLA's testing program and is updated weekly.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I wish everyone a safe holiday season.

Thank you,

Barbara Chaput

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