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Update to face mask and physical distancing policy, July 1, 2021

Eastern Michigan University

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New University policy regarding face masks and physical distancing effective 7/6/21

Emailed July 1, 2021

To the campus community:

In light of the State of Michigan's recent actions removing statewide COVID-19 restrictions, the University is updating its policy regarding face masks and physical distancing both indoors and outdoors **effective Tuesday, July 6, 2021**. The new policy (which is outlined below) incorporates the latest guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Michigan, and the U.S Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA).

Broadly speaking, the updated policy allows individuals to be:

- maskless indoors (with some exceptions) **if they are vaccinated and self-report their vaccination information to the University; and**
- maskless outdoors (regardless of the size of the gathering and regardless of vaccination status),

A notable exception is that face masks and physical distancing will continue to be required in classrooms when class is in session for the summer semesters. Decisions about classroom policies for the fall semester will be communicated in the coming weeks.

The new policy outlined below was vetted by the University's Safe Return Steering Committee, and is designed to balance health and safety with the phased return to more traditional operations. Similar policies are being implemented at other Michigan universities. No one is required to receive a COVID-19 vaccination (except as mandated for certain program placements, etc.), but individuals who do not receive a vaccination, or who choose not to report their vaccination to the University, must continue to wear face masks and engage in physical distancing in most indoor settings.

Policy (effective Tuesday, July 6, 2021):

Indoors: Everyone (faculty, staff, students, and visitors) on University property is required to wear a face mask that covers both the nose and mouth and engage in physical distancing of six feet while indoors on campus or other University properties **unless any of the following exceptions apply to you:**

- You are fully vaccinated and have reported your vaccinated status to the University through EMU's [COVID Vax Certification system](#). *(An individual is generally considered "fully vaccinated" two (2) weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer (BioNTech) or Moderna vaccines, or two (2) weeks after a single-dose vaccine such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine).* You only need to report and certify your vaccination status through this system one time. Information will be confidentially and securely stored, separate from an employee's personnel file and student records, and accessible only by authorized individuals.
- You have a disability-based University accommodation related to wearing a mask or vaccination (employees requesting an accommodation should contact hr_benefits@emich.edu and students requesting an accommodation should contact drc@emich.edu).
- You have a University accommodation regarding a sincerely held religious belief related to vaccination (employees requesting an accommodation should contact hr_benefits@emich.edu

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- You are alone in a private office with the door closed, living space, private motor vehicle, or other isolated space.
- You are eating, drinking, or swimming.
- Removal of a mask is necessary for physical examination of your mouth, nose, or throat by a medical professional.
- Your event has been approved for a special exemption. Requests to consider exemptions may be made online through the Office of Conference & Event Services (CES) (book_emu@emich.edu).

Please note that during the summer semesters face masks must be worn, and six feet of physical distancing continues to be required, for all individuals in classrooms when class is in session regardless of vaccination status. Decisions about classroom policies for the fall semester will be finalized and communicated in the coming weeks.

Certain offices (e.g., health care providers) may continue to require individuals to wear face masks and engage in physical distancing regardless of vaccination status where such precautions are consistent with public health policy and institutional safeguards. Those decisions will be communicated by area managers to the impacted employees.

Employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. Students who violate this policy may be subject to the University's Code of Community Responsibility.

Outdoors: Individuals in outdoor spaces on University property are generally not required to wear face masks or engage in physical distancing regardless of their vaccination status or the size of the gathering. It may be necessary in a few specific functional areas to continue to wear a mask while outside due to public health and safety risks for exposure. In those situations, you will be directly informed of the need to wear a mask.