



**USC** University of  
Southern California

***Fall 2021 Guide***  
***Return to Campus Protocols***  
***As of September 8, 2021***



***“This is a defining moment for all of us and for the entire Trojan community. We are looking to the future; it is ours to build and to shape. I cannot wait to see you all in person.”***

***Carol L. Folt, USC President***

[Read President Folt’s full message to the USC community](#)

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## HEALTH AND SAFETY COME FIRST

Protect the well-being of our students, faculty, staff and patients – and be there for our neighbors and local community.

## ADVANCE OUR ACADEMIC MISSION

Ensure the excellence and continuity of our education and research, and commitment to access and equity.

## COMPLIANCE

Commitment to following all local, State and Federal guidelines and public health orders.



## PROTECTING OUR TROJAN COMMUNITY

We would not ask our students, faculty, or staff to return to our campuses if we did not have confidence that we have put the proper protocols and safeguards in place. These measures have been and will continue to be informed by guidance and advice from public health experts, including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, L.A. County Department of Public Health, the state Division of Occupational Safety and Health, and USC's team of medical professionals.

The best protection against COVID-19 is to become fully vaccinated (2 weeks after completing a two-dose series or single-dose vaccine). The majority of our students, faculty and staff have been vaccinated, which has enabled our efforts to resume "mostly normal" in-person activities for the fall semester. If you have not yet been vaccinated, please consider getting vaccinated to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community.

We are also continuing to monitor current conditions and community spread of the virus in coordination with the [Los Angeles County Department of Public Health](#). If public health authorities issue new guidance or order new public safety measures, then we will adjust as required. We have made contingency plans to ensure students are able to maintain their academic progress. The university's leadership will continue to closely follow the situation and provide updates. For the most up-to-date information, please visit:

- USC COVID-19 Resource Center: <https://coronavirus.usc.edu/>
- USC 2021: <https://we-are.usc.edu/>

### Protect Myself

- Self-monitor for any symptoms associated with COVID-19
- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water; if soap is unavailable, use hand sanitizer (60%+ alcohol content)
- Comply with USC's [Vaccination Policy](#); learn about [vaccine effectiveness](#)

### Protect My Peers

- Stay home when sick and contact student health or a physician if necessary.
- Follow current university guidance on masking, distancing, and/or other preventive measures as directed.
- If personal protective equipment (PPE) is assigned, wear as instructed. Take care when putting on and removing PPE to minimize infection.

### Protect My Community

- Keep frequently touched common surfaces clean by using disinfectant wipes.
- Participate in training sessions, and follow instructions for screening, testing, contact tracing or any other measures to contain spread.

- Be mindful of others who may be at a higher risk for contracting the virus.
- Respect neighbors by practicing physical distancing, wearing face coverings, and being aware of noise levels.
- Follow county and city guidelines on public congregating.
- If you test positive for COVID-19, notify the USC COVID-19 hotline: 213-740-6291 or [COVID19@usc.edu](mailto:COVID19@usc.edu).

## **CAMPUS HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

The following protocols and requirements directly apply to the majority of those within the USC community. However, there might be circumstances unique to a specific USC location and/or function, including [Keck Medicine of USC](#), which may require adaptation to the direction provided herein. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to contact their advisor or supervisor if they have questions.

### **Vaccination**

Vaccines are proven to provide safe and effective protection against COVID-19. All students, faculty and staff are required to comply the University's [COVID-19 vaccination policy](#). This includes uploading proof of vaccination (e.g. a copy of their vaccine card) or submitting the appropriate [religious](#) or [medical](#) declination form to the [MySHR](#) portal. All individuals coming to campus must have either provided proof of vaccination or received approval for an exemption. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary actions, and access to campus areas will not be permitted as [Trojan Check](#) will be turned off until compliant.

Those who received their vaccination at USC will have their information automatically uploaded into [MySHR](#). If submitting a religious or medical declination form, please allow up to 14 days for your request to be reviewed.

Students, faculty and staff may receive the COVID-19 vaccine at one of USC's clinics or at a Los Angeles County location:

- University Park Campus: <https://studenthealth.usc.edu/vaccine-clinic>
- Health Sciences Campus: <https://www.keckmedicine.org/coronavirus-vaccine/>
- LA County: <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/coronavirus/vaccine/index.htm>

### **Masks (Facial Coverings) & Physical Distancing**

[All individuals are required to wear a mask indoors regardless of vaccination status](#) in order to help protect ourselves and others from transmission. We are also strongly encouraging the use of facial coverings in outdoor areas. This is consistent with the current [LA County Department of Public Health Public Health Officer Order](#). We are requiring all individuals to wear masks during campus events, both indoor and outdoor, for at least the first two weeks of the fall semester and until further notice.

Students, faculty and staff may request a N95 mask via [USC Environmental Health & Safety](#) (please complete and submit the online form).

Mixing households, unmasked social mingling, attending large gatherings and events, and travel increases risk of transmission. It is not advisable to participate in these activities if you are not fully vaccinated (two weeks past the second dose of a two-dose series, or a single dose of Johnson & Johnson/Janssen).

Eating with others presents a high risk of exposure between individuals, as doing so involves removal of facial coverings and easier spread of respiratory droplets. Please stay a minimum of 6 feet apart from others when eating, preferably outdoors, and put your facial covering back on when finished dining.

Unvaccinated individuals are expected to keep a minimum distance of 6 feet between themselves and other individuals. This includes whenever facial coverings are removed (e.g. while actively eating or drinking). We encourage all individuals to keep a safe distance between themselves and others whenever possible.

### **COVID-19 Testing**

All USC students will be required to arrange for COVID-19 testing within 3 days of arrival to Los Angeles. The first test must be completed by August 22 or Trojan Check will be non-compliant and students will not be allowed entry into campus areas.

**Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students, faculty, and staff** are required to complete ongoing testing (twice weekly testing for undergraduates and once weekly testing for graduate students and employees).

Additionally, due to the rise in COVID-19 infections in fully vaccinated individuals, **fully vaccinated students are also required to participate in weekly testing until further notice**. We will reevaluate this policy based on COVID-19 case levels in the community.

The USC [Pop Testing](#) program is available for students, faculty, and university staff at no cost; please schedule through [MySHR](#). Employees returning for in-person work may also test if they are re-joining campus after summer travel or other potential exposure.

### **Symptoms & Self-Screening**

Students, faculty and staff need to be aware of [COVID-19 symptoms](#), and are required to complete a daily self-screening via [Trojan Check](#) before coming onto campus or leaving their on-campus residence.

COVID-19 symptoms may be very mild, especially if you are fully vaccinated. If you are experiencing symptoms, please [get tested](#) and stay home – do not go to work, attend class or any other activity.

If you test positive for COVID-19, notify the USC COVID-19 hotline: 213-740-6291 or [COVID19@usc.edu](mailto:COVID19@usc.edu).

### **Contact Tracing & Notifications**

The University has established a working protocol for contact tracing and notifications of positive cases on the USC campuses; this process is a partnership between several offices and departments (Student Health, Environmental Health and Safety, General Counsel, Risk Management, Student Affairs, Human Resources) in cooperation with supervisors, administrative managers, HR partners, and other leaders of working units at USC.

As positive cases on campus are reported, the contact tracing team at USC Student Health reaches out to the effected positive individual. These reports come from lab results through USC Student Health's Pop Testing or PCR testing programs, or may be reported in through the COVID-19 hotline, 213-740-6291 (if tested through an outside service).

From there, we have a notifications working group comprised of medical providers, environmental health and safety experts, legal counsel, and human resources, that reviews positive cases on a daily basis. They determine when notifications to the community are require depending on the risk level, and the mode of communication (phone, secure message, and/or email).

Contact tracing information is used for the sole purpose of protecting community health. A person's activities are not shared with student conduct staff or others in the University, and names of individuals are not shared when notifying those who may have been exposed.

### **Health Hygiene and Safety Training**

All students, faculty and staff are required to complete the appropriate [Health, Hygiene, and Safety training](#) via [Trojan Learn](#). Training content will be updated over time and as conditions evolve. Employees will be notified when they need to take additional trainings.

### **Campus Access & Daily Trojan Check**

Employees, students, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, are required to complete a daily [Trojan Check](#) prior to entering campus. This ensures that individuals entering campus areas are compliant with their daily symptom attestation and other university requirements, including vaccination policy and trainings. All individuals will need to show proof of completed Trojan Check (online or via mobile phone app) at one of the campus entry points at our University Park Campus and other specific areas, including fitness centers, student housing, and other buildings on both campuses.

The University's COVID-19 policies and requirements are in place for the health, safety, and wellbeing of our students, faculty, staff, and surrounding campus communities. Those failing to comply university policies and/or [Trojan Check](#) will not be allowed to enter campus areas.

We recommend that you log on to [Trojan Check](#) prior to your arrival on campus to see if you have any incomplete safety compliance requirements, including meeting the COVID-19 vaccine requirement.

### **Campus Buildings & Facilities**

Throughout the pandemic, USC has maintained water and air distribution systems and implemented necessary cleaning procedures to ensure building and classroom readiness. We are in step with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), and state, county and local authorities.

We created a [building readiness dashboard](#) showing campus buildings meeting or exceeding minimum requirements for safe occupancy. Additionally, we have implemented various other facility modifications, including the installation of touchless bathroom fixtures, touch-free hand sanitizer stations, and signage to promote adherence to COVID-19 safety protocols.

### **ACADEMICS**

The fall semester begins [August 23, 2021](#), and we are resuming our in-person academic mission. Students, faculty, and staff are required to wear masks indoors, including classrooms. We also have installed outdoor canopies across the University Park Campus to allow for additional study areas and other activities.

### **CAMPUS HOUSING & DINING**

Campus housing and dining operations are resuming regular operations for the fall semester. All individuals must wear a mask when inside residence halls and indoor dining venues. Shared spaces will be configured as to allow for physical distancing as needed, and outdoor dining options will be available in certain locations. For additional information, please visit [USC Housing](#) and [USC Hospitality](#).

### **Isolation / Quarantine Space**

Individuals who test positive, regardless of vaccination status, must isolate for 10 days or until they show no symptoms, whichever is longer.

Unvaccinated individuals exposed to an individual testing positive must quarantine for 14 days; they may be released



sooner if showing no symptoms. Vaccinated individuals who do not have symptoms are strongly recommended to test 3-5 days after exposure, but are not required to quarantine. Vaccinated individuals are strongly recommended to test but are not required to quarantine if they do not have any symptoms, but should follow the university's modified quarantine process. See [here](#) for details.

We are continuing to reserve rooms in the [USC Hotel](#) for use as quarantine space for students who test positive and/or have been exposed to COVID-19. In certain instances, we expect that students will be permitted to self-isolate in their assigned rooms whether on or off campus. We also have contingency plans in place to access additional quarantine space if needed.

We will provide accommodations for those students who are required to isolate / quarantine to ensure academic progress can continue while away from in-person instruction.

If you test positive for COVID-19 or have questions regarding isolation / quarantine protocols, please contact the USC COVID-19 hotline: 213-740-6291 or [COVID19@usc.edu](mailto:COVID19@usc.edu).

## **FITNESS CENTERS & RECREATIONAL SPORTS**

Select indoor and outdoor recreation facilities are open and available for students, faculty and staff use. Masks are required in all indoor areas consistent with current university policy and public health guidance. Please visit [USC Recreational Sports](#) for additional information.

## **CAMPUS EVENTS**

We will continue to follow State and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and CDC guidance for events and gatherings. At this time, events and other gatherings are generally permitted both on and off campus. All events are required to perform attendee health screenings for all attendees. In some cases, attendees may be required to verify vaccination or negative test result within 72 hours of the event start. All event attendees, regardless of vaccination status, are required to wear a mask until further notice. Please see [here](#) for additional details and updated information.

## **VISITORS**

Visitors to campus are expected to follow City and County of Los Angeles public health guidance, and to abide by university requirements, including [Trojan Check](#). This is important to help us ensure a safe campus environment for all.

## **TRAVEL**

University-sponsored travel is permitted in compliance with current [travel guidance](#). Non-essential travel is discouraged for all unvaccinated individuals.

## RESOURCES & CONTACTS:

USC 2021: <https://we-are.usc.edu/>

COVID-19 Resource Center: <https://coronavirus.usc.edu/>

COVID-19 Dashboard: <https://coronavirus.usc.edu/dashboard/>

Trojan Check (secure sign-on): <https://trojancheck.usc.edu/>

MySHR login (secure sign-on): <https://eshc-pncw.usc.edu/home.aspx>

COVID-19 Hotline:

Phone: 213-740-6291

Email: [covid19@usc.edu](mailto:covid19@usc.edu)

Student Health Center:

Phone: 213-740-9355 (WELL)

Email: [studenthealth@usc.edu](mailto:studenthealth@usc.edu)

Website: <https://studenthealth.usc.edu/>