

Comprehensive Health and Safety Plan Summary of Plan Revisions

UPDATED - August 7, 2020



**University of
Alabama System**

Individually Distinct. Altogether Stronger.

Message from Chancellor Finis St. John IV



Our System is extremely fortunate that some of the best doctors, scientists, and researchers in the world work on our campuses at The University of Alabama, The University of Alabama at Birmingham, The University of Alabama in Huntsville, and at our UAB Health System. We have drawn on that expertise to devise this comprehensive health and safety plan to make our campuses as safe as possible in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is now incumbent on all of us – students, faculty, and staff – to do our part to achieve a safe return to campus and complete a safe and successful academic year.

Thank you to the hundreds of dedicated professionals who have contributed to this important endeavor.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized first name and a last name that appears to be 'St. John'.

Finis St. John IV, Chancellor
The University of Alabama System

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Introduction

Chancellor Finis E. St. John IV established a System-wide Task Force to respond to the SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 (“COVID-19”) pandemic. The goal was to make the UA System campuses the safest universities in America. Members of the UA System Comprehensive Health and Safety Task Force, along with working groups on our campuses, have worked tirelessly to develop and update our plans for all UA System students, faculty, and staff.

The health and safety of our UA System campuses is our top priority. UA System employees and students, regardless of their personal opinions, must recognize their obligation to themselves, their peers, and the surrounding community to strictly abide by all health and safety requirements. Compliance is critical to ensure a safe return and safe operations in the coming weeks.

Failure to comply with all COVID-19 related policies and requirements will result in swift and meaningful enforcement measures. To mitigate the risk of exposure and spread of COVID-19 on our campuses, all students, faculty, and staff must strictly adhere to state and local health ordinances, and all System and campus guidelines.

These guidelines will be continuously reviewed and updated as circumstances surrounding COVID-19 evolve. Campus policies must remain consistent with this Plan and current health guidance.

The existing requirements of the UA System Comprehensive Health and Safety Plan and Return to Campus Plans are modified as set out in these revisions. All other provisions not modified by this summary remain in effect. These revisions are endorsed by the UA System’s Comprehensive Health and Safety Task Force and supported by the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees.

Anyone concerned that a member of the UA System community is violating these health and safety requirements may report their concerns anonymously through the UA System Hotline. The Hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-866-362-9476 or visiting [online](#).

***FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE DIRECTIVES WILL RESULT
IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION, INCLUDING
DENIED ACCESS TO CAMPUS AND SANCTIONS***

Updated Health & Safety Requirements

The following provisions of the UA System Comprehensive Health and Safety plan have been revised. Mandatory requirements for UA System employees and students are identified and must be satisfied before entering campus, and in order to maintain the privilege of continued campus access.

Faculty, staff, or students remaining in a fully remote status do not have to complete entry requirements at this time. However, *any* faculty, staff, or student coming to campus for any reason or at any time, must first comply with the following requirements.

1. Training (Required for Entry)

All UA System faculty, staff, and students must participate in an online educational module on COVID-19, its prevention, and the [Guide Safe™](#) (formerly Stay Safe Together™) platform. The training must be completed **BEFORE** returning to a UA System campus or the System Office. All employees and students already on campus must complete the training as directed by their Department of Human Resources or Office of Student Life.

2. Healthcheck (Required for Entry / On-going Compliance)

All UA System employees and students must enroll and begin participation in the [Guide Safe™ Healthcheck](#) seven (7) days before returning to campus. All UA System employees and students already on campus must register upon completion of the required training. Participation in Healthcheck is encouraged, but not required, for employees working remotely.

After enrolling, all employees and students must log-in and complete a daily Healthcheck. Upon completion of each Healthcheck, participants will access a clearance screen and be able to download their [Guide Safe™ Event Passport](#). The Passport function will be used to verify whether employees and students have clearance to access campus that day. Faculty are required to verify all students who are present for in-person instruction have a current Event Passport.

Visitors will be required to complete a Healthcheck before arriving on campus. Visitors are strongly encouraged to notify the campus directly or through Healthcheck if they receive a positive COVID-19 test, if they are considered a close contact of someone who tested positive, or develop symptoms associated with COVID-19. Please review the **Visitor Policies** for additional details.

3. Testing

Student Entry Testing (Required for Entry)

All students **MUST** participate in entry testing before returning to campus. Testing services will be coordinated through the [Guide Safe™](#) platform. UA System campuses must communicate clearly and repeatedly with their students regarding mandatory testing requirements and the registration process.

- Students Using a Private Provider or Who Have Previously Tested Positive for COVID-19: Students who elect to test with their private provider or who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 within the past (12) weeks must use their campus immunization portal to upload their verifiable results. All documentation must be uploaded before arriving on campus.
- Out-of-State Students: The campuses are working with Guide Safe™ to provide out-of-state students a mail-in testing option. Out-of-state students must test and have received a negative result before returning to campus. Students who are unable to test using the mail-in option or their private provider may test at a [local testing site in Alabama](#).
- In-State Students: In-state students who do not test with a private provider or have not previously received a positive result for COVID-19 must test at one of the [testing locations in Alabama](#) before returning to campus. Guide Safe™ (formerly Stay Safe Together™) will send all UA System students an email with instructions on registering for testing at a local test site.

Testing for Faculty/Staff Transitioning From Remote Work (Required for Entry)

UA, UAH, and System Office employees transitioning back to work from a remote status will be tested for COVID-19 before arriving on campus or at the System Office. UAB has already communicated its testing procedures to its employees who are transitioning back. Any UA System employee already on campus must be accounted for in their campus's sentinel process. UA System Office employees located on UA System campuses will be tested in the sentinel process for the campus on which they are located.

Student-Athletes, Coaches, Athletic Staff, and Clinical Students and Instructors (Required)

UA System campuses will develop protocols to regularly test all students and employees participating in intercollegiate athletics and in clinical programs. These protocols will be outside of sentinel testing, and must comply with all NCAA and host site requirements. At a minimum, all staff and students actively engaging in intercollegiate workouts or competitions, whether formally or informally, or participating in clinical activities must be tested at least one time per week.

Sentinel Testing (Voluntary/Required for Select Groups)

Weekly sentinel testing will be coordinated through Guide Safe™ and supplemented by our campuses. Sentinel testing, which will target a randomized sample of 4-5% of the general campus population (collecting no less than 2.5% of the sample), will be used to signal trends, identify outbreaks, and monitor the prevalence of COVID-19 on UA System campuses.

Sentinel testing is voluntary for most of the campus community, but is **REQUIRED** for students:

- Living in on-campus residential housing (including Greek housing)
- Participating in intramural club sports
- In registered student organizations that hold in-person meetings with ten (10) or more people.

Cluster Testing (Voluntary)

UA System campuses will immediately respond to any suspected increase in COVID-19 exposures in a specific campus location or an identified group of individuals (a “cluster”). Clusters will be identified by increases in reported positive tests or COVID-related symptoms, as identified by campus healthcare professionals reviewing Healthcheck and other campus metrics.

4. Isolation, Quarantine, and Campus Notifications

Isolation and Quarantine (Required)

The Health subcommittee will provide campus health officers with regular updates on quarantine and isolation guidelines based on changing guidance from Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH). UA System campuses have protocols in place to contact campus members who report a COVID-positive test or multiple COVID-related symptoms through Healthcheck.

COVID-positive tests, suspected close contacts, or an increase in COVID-related symptoms **MUST BE** reported in Healthcheck. Compliance with quarantine and isolation requirements issued by ADPH, local health departments, or campus officials, includes any requirement for on-campus residents to relocate from their residence to dedicated isolation and quarantine space on campus.

Exposure Notification App (Voluntary)

The UA System strongly encourages voluntary and anonymous participation in the [Guide Safe™ Exposure Notification](#) application, which notifies participants having close contact with a person reporting a positive COVID-19 test in the prior fourteen (14) days.

Campus Exposure Notification (Required)

There will be documented cases of COVID-19 on UA System campuses. Prompt notification enables a proactive response to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Individuals must report COVID-positive test results and suspected exposures. Each campus will then provide direct notification to members of the campus community of their potential exposure. The campus exposure notification ***DOES NOT REPLACE*** contact tracing measures employed by the state and local health departments.

5. Updates to General Campus Safety Measures

On-campus Instruction (Required)

Each campus will resume in-person classes according to their academic calendar, and will now end in-person instruction before Thanksgiving break. Each campus will eliminate all scheduled breaks in instruction before Thanksgiving, outside of any nationally recognized holiday. Additional instruction occurring after Thanksgiving break must be delivered remotely.

Instruction will be delivered through a combination of in-person and remote methods (hybrid delivery). The number of students allowed to be present for in-person instruction is limited by the physical distancing requirements that can be accommodated by a particular space.

All courses will have a remote component to ensure academic continuity for students learning remotely or who are complying with mandatory quarantine or isolation requirements.

Face Coverings (Required)

In addition to state and local health mandates, face coverings ***MUST*** be worn on UA System campuses and in all university owned-facilities. This applies to indoor and outdoor academic or social events sponsored by the university or university-affiliated organization. The term “face coverings” includes masks, cloth coverings over a person’s mouth and nose, and, in some cases, face shields.

Face coverings are not required:

- In indoor athletic facilities who are actively participating in an approved athletic activity
- While walking or exercising outside while maintaining an acceptable social distance
- When a person is in their own dorm room or suite, or alone in an enclosed office or study room
- In one’s vehicle
- When speaking to a crowd while maintaining a social distance

Physical Distancing (Required)

Physical distancing or social distancing is defined as at least six feet circumferential distance regardless of space size. Plexiglass barriers may be used to separate rows in classrooms. Physical distancing measures are required in all university facilities.

6. Student and Academic Event Limitations

Student Events On- and Off-campus (Required)

All off-campus student events organized by or for a student or a student organization are **STRICTLY PROHIBITED**, absent special approval from the Vice President of Student Life. Regardless of location, large gatherings of any kind organized by or for a student or a student organization are **PROHIBITED**. This includes but is not limited to band parties, swaps, formals, and out-of-town parties. All gatherings are subject to the attendance limitations set out below.

Attendance Limitations for Academic and Student Events (Required)

Unless otherwise dictated by state or local health ordinances, attendance at all on-campus academic and student events is limited to the number of people that can be accommodated when taking into account square footage and physical distancing requirements, and cannot exceed fifty (50) people indoors and one-hundred (100) people outdoors. Academic events are events organized outside of the classroom. Attendance limits for athletic events will be addressed with event-specific plans.

Event Registration (Required)

All academic and student events permitted on campus must comply with state and local health ordinances, and System and campus policies. All events must be registered in accordance with campus registration guidelines, and must include the proposed number of attendees and a plan for maintaining social distancing. Except for seated meals, any food or beverages provided during an event must be provided as individual grab-and-go options. Event organizers must provide attendees with a link to the [Guide Safe™ Healthcheck](#) twenty-four (24) hours before the event, and must use the [Event Passport](#) to facilitate access into the event. A list of all event attendees must be maintained by the department or student organization hosting the event for no less than fourteen (14) days. Any exception to these event limitations must be approved in writing by the Vice President for Student Life or the Provost.

***FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE GUIDELINES WILL RESULT
IN SANCTIONS AGAINST STUDENTS AND STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS***

7. Visitor Policies

Visitors in On-Campus Housing (Required)

Access to on-campus housing is restricted until further notice. Only residents will be allowed access to the living spaces in an on-campus housing facility. This restriction excludes employees, security personnel, and other individuals having an essential reason to access the facility. An “essential reason” will be pre-approved by campus housing or an organization’s house corps. This restriction applies to the living spaces in all on-campus housing facilities. This restriction applies to living spaces in sorority and fraternity houses, but does not prevent general members from accessing the house for meals or organized meetings.

Off-campus Visitors to Campus (Required)

To minimize the risk of COVID-19 being brought to campus, visitor access must be limited. Visitors should be pre-approved and should come to campus or the System Office only by invitation or for specific events. This includes, but is not limited to advisors, vendors, volunteers, and attendees coming to campus for an athletic, fine arts, or other on-campus event.

All visitors must either complete the [Guide Safe™ Healthcheck](#) and [Passport](#) or provide evidence of a recent negative test or other medical clearance. Clearance must be presented when arriving to campus, along with their event ticket when applicable. Visitors should be strongly encouraged to download the [Guide Safe™ Exposure Notification](#) application **BEFORE** coming to campus. UA System campuses must clearly communicate these expectations regarding off-campus visitors to all employees, students, and parents.

8. Compliance, Enforcement, and Campus Command Centers (Required)

The campuses and System Office will emphasize to employees, contractors, advisors, and volunteers that it is their responsibility and obligation to comply with all health and safety requirements. The campuses and System Office should empower their employees to enforce these requirements using established policies and training to promote consistent enforcement.

Human Resources and Student Affairs will reinforce these expectations through frequent communications to employees and students, and each student organization’s officers, advisors, faculty representatives, and members. Student organizations will be held responsible and sanctioned appropriately for failing to enforce campus policies and directives related to COVID-19.

The campuses and the System Office will implement interim policies codifying the requirements of the UA System's Comprehensive Health and Safety Plan and their approved plans. Interim policies will be effective immediately but are subject to revision under Board Rule 108 if they conflict with federal, state, or local ordinances, or the UA System's Comprehensive Health and Safety Plan.

Campus command centers will function as a centralized information resource that monitors ongoing compliance, health clearance, utilization of isolation space, community trends, and the capacity of local healthcare providers. Campus command centers must provide daily monitoring updates to campus leadership, and updates to System leadership no less than twice weekly.

**COMPLIANCE WITH AND ENFORCEMENT OF ALL UA SYSTEM
HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS IS MANDATORY**

[*Click here*](#) for a PDF version of these Plan revisions.



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