

Kellee Reinhart, Senior Vice-Chancellor for Communications and Community Relations

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Contact: Kellee Reinhart 205-348-5938

UA System Posts First COVID Dashboard of 2021

With the resumption of on-campus instruction, The University of Alabama System has released the first COVID-19 data dashboard for 2021. UA, UAB and UAH ended the delivery of in-person courses for the fall semester on November 20, in keeping with provisions of the UA System Health & Safety Task Force's Comprehensive Plan.

UA System data consistently reflects increases in employee and student positive cases during campus closures, signifying there is greater safety on-campus than in the community. The number of positive cases has dropped significantly since the resumption of on-campus activities. We continue to test all members of the campus community, whether on- or off-campus, who request the procedure.

The detailed report posted today includes cumulative testing numbers for November 20-January 12, and for the week of January 13-21. The dashboard will be updated weekly throughout the semester on the UA System website: <https://uasystem.edu/covid-19>. Accelerated sentinel testing began this week at UA and UAB, with UAH starting next week. The first full week's sentinel test results will be added to the dashboard on January 29.

Key results of this week's dashboard update:

- UAS students living in on-campus housing, including Greek housing, were required to participate in entry testing or present proof of a prior COVID positive test in the last 90 days.
- System-wide, entry testing positivity is around **1%**.

- Of the roughly **11,696 entry tests** administered at UA, UAB and UAH in the last 9 days since the campuses reopened, only **134** were positive.
- Isolation/quarantine housing is at **12%** occupancy as of Thursday, Jan 21. Of the 710 beds reserved for that purpose on the three campuses, more than 624 are **vacant**.

“The front-line health-care providers in our hospitals and clinics as well as the private doctors and nurses serving our students, faculty and staff are doing an extraordinary job in these uncertain times,” UA System Chancellor Finis St. John said. “We are thankful for their tireless commitment to their profession and for helping keep our campuses safe as we get back to the work of educating our 70,000 students.”

Stressing the urgent need for continued vigilance in complying with the guidelines of the UA System Health & Safety Task Force (<https://uasystem.edu/covid-19/plan>), the Chancellor emphasized that COVID-19 testing and safety protocols have kept classrooms, laboratories, residence halls and common areas on the campuses safe.

Record numbers of off-campus positive cases over the holiday break indicate that experts correctly predicted post-Thanksgiving and winter break surges. Recognizing the guidance and expertise of the Health & Safety Task Force, senior leadership and campus incident command teams, the Chancellor said, “The strategy of ending fall semester in-person instruction at Thanksgiving and then delaying the start of spring semester until mid-January has proven to be an effective set of decisions.”