



August 3, 2022

Dear Heidelberg Community,

We want to take this opportunity to thank you for your diligent efforts to keep each other and the campus safe during the years of the COVID-19 pandemic. As we get ready to launch the 2022-23 academic year, Heidelberg University continues to prioritize our campus health and safety protocols so that all students can engage in the academic, co-curricular, and extra-curricular life of the University successfully.

By now, you are likely aware of a surge in COVID-19 cases attributable to the emerging and highly transmissible BA.5 variant – a reminder that COVID is still with us. Just last week, Seneca County’s “community level” was elevated to HIGH. This reflects the very high number of new COVID-19 cases currently occurring locally, in other Ohio counties and regions across the nation. According to local health officials, the percentage of positive COVID tests is at the same level seen last January and February when Seneca County experienced its greatest surge in the entire pandemic. Here is some additional information about [preventing the spread of COVID-19](#) in light of the current community level.

The question on many people’s minds is about masking. Heidelberg’s COVID-19 Planning and Response Team, under the direction of Janelle Baldosser, CNP, Director of the Stoner Health & Counseling Center, is aligned around Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance *which currently recommends wearing a well-fitting mask in public, regardless of vaccination status*. ***For everyone’s clarification, based on this guidance, Heidelberg University is encouraging masking for indoor settings but not requiring masking at this time.***

There are no social distancing requirements at this time. There are no NCAA testing requirements for athletic competition at this time.

Guidance to help stop the spread of COVID-19

- Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines and boosters. Heidelberg continues to maintain its requirement for employees and students to be vaccinated, which means completing the primary series of vaccines, or obtaining a medical or a religious beliefs exemption. Booster shots are encouraged for those who are eligible.
 - [Students: Click here to access the Medical Exemption Form](#)
 - [Employees: Click here to access the Medical Exemption Form](#)
 - [Students and Employees: Click here to access the Religious Beliefs Exemption Form](#)
- Maintain improved ventilation throughout indoor spaces when possible, including utilizing our state-of-the-art air purification units placed in all dorm rooms and throughout the campus.
- Follow CDC recommendations for isolation and quarantine, including getting tested if you have been exposed to or have symptoms of COVID-19. Free home tests are available on campus in Human Resources for employees and in the health center for students.

What to do if you are feeling sick or experiencing symptoms

If you are a student and you are feeling unwell or experiencing possible COVID-19 symptoms, contact Stoner Health & Counseling Center for guidance. If you are an employee and you are feeling unwell or experiencing possible COVID-19 symptoms, contact Human Resources. Heidelberg continues with its current quarantine and isolation procedures.

- If you test positive for COVID, Heidelberg requires a period of 5 days of quarantine from the onset of symptoms for students and employees, per CDC guidelines. The quarantine period is complete if you are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and your symptoms are improving.

- ***Students who test positive are advised to quarantine at home if possible.***

As has been our commitment and practice from the beginning of the pandemic, the COVID-19 Planning and Response Team will continue to closely monitor the current local and campus environment. We will adjust our policies as needed and promptly communicate any changes.

Heidelberg's COVID-19 [webpage](#) is a good resource with additional details about our health and safety protocols in the areas of Campus Visitors, Academics, Athletics & Recreation, HYPE Career Ready®, Campus Dining, Residence Life, Campus Buildings, general Health & Safety campus guidelines and Contact Information.

Best wishes to each of you for a healthy, safe and productive Fall Semester.

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