

Garrett College COVID-19 Exposure Action Plan

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to provide a clear process and specific action steps that Garrett College (GC) will follow when the College is made aware of confirmed or possible COVID-19 case(s) from a student, faculty/staff, or member of the community who visited the campus and whose presence might compromise the public health of the College.

Community Coordination:

Garrett College continues to work closely with the Garrett County Health Department to ensure that our response procedures are approved by and coordinated with our public health experts. As conditions change, this document may be modified to ensure that the College remains in compliance with current public health guidance.

COVID-19 Decision-Making Thresholds:

The COVID-19 Leadership Team will carefully monitor infection rates and other appropriate indicators at the College and in our community, in coordination with local public health officials. If decisions are required related to campus closure or other necessary actions, the GC COVID-19 Leadership Team will make a recommendation to the College President for approval and execution.

Compliance with Health and Appropriate Behavior Guidelines:

All students, faculty, staff, and members of the community are required to comply with the College's COVID-19 safety and health policies as outlined in the [Laker Strong: Return to Campus Spring 2022 Plan](#), located on the [College's COVID-19 Resource Page](#). The most critical health and appropriate behavior guidelines to aid in keeping the campus community healthy and safe are outlined below:

Use of Facemasks/Coverings

Effective, Saturday, March 5, 2022, the wearing of [CDC-recommended face masks or face coverings](#) **is optional, with the following two exceptions:**

1. Individual credit and noncredit faculty members may still require masks to be worn in their classes through the end of the spring 2022 semester.
2. Individual faculty and staff members may still require masks for people entering their private offices through the end of the spring 2022 semester.

Additionally, face masks/coverings may be required in clinical settings, at Athletic events in accordance with NJCAA Region XX guidelines, or for individuals in isolation and/or quarantine.

When required, face masks/coverings should be [properly worn](#), meaning they should cover your nose and mouth, be secured under your chin, and fit snugly against the sides of your face. Face masks/coverings should not be placed around your neck or up on your forehead. Don't touch the mask, and, if you do, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer to disinfect.

Symptom Monitoring

Symptom monitoring is a critical mitigation technique to reduce the likelihood of virus spread. Before coming to campus each day, all students, employees, and visitors should review the questions below:

If you answer “yes” to any of the questions listed below, you must refrain from coming to campus or entering campus facilities.

1. Are experiencing any of the following symptoms: Fever (100.4 or higher), chills, sore throat, cough, congestion, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, unexplained fatigue, muscle pain, headache, unexplained diarrhea, nausea/vomiting, new loss of taste or smell, or other flu-like symptoms.
2. Knowingly had close contact, without the use of appropriate PPE, with someone who is currently sick with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case (Close contact is defined as ‘contact within 6 feet of an infected person for 15 or more cumulative minutes over a 24-hour period with or without a mask’).
3. Received notification from public health officials (state or local) that you:
 - a. Tested positive for COVID-19.
 - b. Are awaiting COVID-19 test results.
 - c. Are a close contact to a positive COVID-19 case.

For questions about symptoms, testing, reporting, or risk of COVID-19, contact the Office of Equity and Compliance at 301-387-3037 or by emailing equitycompliance@garrettcollege.edu.

Reporting on Others

If you have a legitimate concern that another individual on campus has tested positive and not reported, has had close contact with an individual exposed, or has been exposed, please contact the Office of Equity and Compliance (equitycompliance@garrettcollege.edu or 301-387-3037) for additional steps that should be taken. Individuals can also report anonymously using the [“Reasonable Concern” reporting form](#).

Ongoing Monitoring

GC will continue to follow policies, requirements, and guidance from local and state governmental and public health authorities. However, as this plan indicates, the College will adopt a higher level of protective measures as necessary. Further, College leadership will monitor key indicators—such as state and local testing positivity rates, capacity of local hospitals, number of active cases in the GC community, etc.—as we continually evaluate and update all COVID-19 policies.

Key Definitions:

Quarantining is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent the spread of the virus that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without presenting symptoms. Individuals may be required to quarantine when they have been exposed (less than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) to a person with an active case of COVID-19, and while they await virus test results, depending upon vaccination status or prior COVID infection.

Isolation is used to separate people who have symptoms of COVID-19 and/or those with positive test results from people who are not infected. Individuals will be isolated when they have a positive test result.

Reporting Mechanisms

Reporting is Required

Each individual with a positive COVID-19 case is required to notify the College of their positive test result by calling 301-387-3037 or emailing equitycompliance@garrettcollege.edu. The Office of Equity and Compliance is the designated office handling reports of confirmed or possible COVID-19 case from a student, faculty/staff, or member of the community who visited the campus, whose presence might compromise the public health of the College. Positive, close contacts, and exposed individuals are encouraged to use email as the initial point of contact. The Office of Equity and Compliance is the Primary Contact and should be informed first. Secondary contacts have been provided below only if the Primary Contact is unavailable or unresponsive (e.g., illness, off, or inaccessible via email or phone).

All Reports of Exposure:

Primary Contact: Shelley Menear, Director of Equity and Compliance
Email: equitycompliance@garrettcollege.edu; Phone: 301-387-3037

Faculty/Staff Exposure:

Secondary Contact: Janis Bush, Director of Human Resources
Email: Janis.bush@garrettcollege.edu; Phone: 301-387-3049

Student Exposure

Secondary Contact: Robert JR Kerns, Dean of Student Affairs
Email: robert.kerns@garrettcollege.edu; Phone: 301-387-3049

Student-Athletes

Secondary Contact: Elizabeth Show, Interim Operations Athletic Director
Email: elizabeth.show@garrettcollege.edu ; Phone: 301-387-3053

Communication with Garrett County Health Department and External Media Communication

Secondary Contact: Stacy Holler, Director of Marketing and Creative Services
Email: stacy.holler@garrettcollege.edu; Phone: 301-387-3045

If you choose not to report your positive test results, the Maryland Department of Health or Garrett County Health Department may report this to the College on your behalf following a consultation.

Students

Students are encouraged to contact their faculty members to inform them that they will not be attending class in person. If a student's classes are entirely online, then they do not need to disclose their status to their faculty if they are well enough to participate virtually. Should a student be symptomatic, they should work with their faculty to determine the best means to make-up any missed work.

If a student reports they are isolating or quarantining to a faculty or staff member, the employee should maintain the student's privacy and only divulge the information to the Office of Equity and Compliance.

A college official will then follow up with the student on campus guidelines, resources, and protocols to be cleared to return to campus. The College official, in accordance with FERPA guidelines, will follow up with the individual who reported the concern to advise them of how the situation is being handled.

Employees

Employees should contact their supervisors to inform them that they will not be able to come to campus, and determine if any work can be completed from home or if sick and safe leave will be taken to cover the isolation or quarantine period.

Decision Tree Guidelines

Outbreak

Defined as an increase, often sudden, in the number of cases of a disease in the local community or on campus above what is normally expected in that population in that area.

GC Actions/Considerations

1. Work closely with local health department public health professionals to identify and implement next steps.

Affected Person Actions (required)

1. Follow guidance from local health department public health professionals.

Positive Test

Campus person (student, employee, third-party) has tested positive for COVID-19.

GC Actions/Considerations

1. Comply with public health agency directives.
2. Gather basic information about affected person's activities on campus.
3. Close any impacted areas, if applicable, until next steps are determined.
4. Deep cleaning at affected locations.
5. Issue Clery warning to impacted persons/groups.
6. Determine instructional implications (online, change location, temporary cancellation, etc.).
7. Specific actions as directed by Leadership Team.
8. Media statement prepared.
9. HIPAA/FERPA compliance.

Affected Person Actions (required)

1. Isolation for a minimum of 10 days.
2. Comply with public health agency directives.
3. Contact GC official to ensure appropriate actions taken prior to returning to a College location.

Close Contact with an Individual Who Tested Positive

Reporting individual has been identified by public health professional as having been in close contact with someone who has tested positive (e.g., household member and/or roommate, proximity at less than 6 feet for 15 or more cumulative minutes).

GC Actions/Considerations

1. Comply with public health agency directives.
2. Gather basic information about person's activities on campus.
3. Close any impacted areas, if applicable, until next steps are determined.
4. Deep cleaning at affected locations.
5. Issue Clery warning to indicated persons/groups.
6. Determine instructional implications (online, change location, temporary cancellation, etc.).
7. Specific actions as directed by Leadership Team
8. HIPAA/FERPA compliance.

Affected Person Actions (required)

1. Quarantine, if required depending upon vaccination status or prior infection, for a minimum of 7-10 days.
2. Comply with public health agency directives.
3. Contact GC official prior to returning to a College location.

Exposure to an Individual Who Tested Positive

We realize that there are multiple variables related to risk. GC will evaluate the variables unique to the affected person's circumstances to guide decisions about its response to the exposure. These variables include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Crowd size
- b. Masking (yes/no)
- c. Distance (less than 6 feet)
- d. Time (greater than 15 minutes)
- e. Indoors/outdoors (size of space)
- f. Timing of interaction with affected person(s)
- g. Ventilation
- h. Type of class/interaction (lecture/lab/clinical/group work)
- i. Visit to a "hot spot"
- j. Other

High Exposure:

Campus person has not tested positive or been identified as a close contact by a public health official at this time; however, the person has been in proximity with someone who has tested positive/close contact or has engaged in a very high-risk activity(ies). Variables for consideration are provided above and will be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

GC Actions

Required:

1. Gather basic information about person's activities on campus.
2. Notify Leadership Team.
3. Close and deep clean any impacted areas until next steps are determined.
4. Notification of possible exposure.
5. General reminder to campus about high-risk behaviors.

6. Determine instructional implications (online, change location, temporary cancellation, etc.).

Other GC Actions/Considerations:

1. Specific actions as directed by Leadership Team.
2. HIPAA/FERPA compliance

Affected Person Actions:

Required:

1. Monitor symptoms.
2. Follow directive of GC COVID-19 Leadership Team.
3. Contact Primary Care Provider or Health Department for testing recommendation.
4. If symptoms develop, isolate until test results provided.
5. If positive results, contact GC point of contact.

Other Actions/Considerations:

1. Quarantine, if required depending on vaccination status or prior infection, for a minimum of 7-10 days.
2. Comply with public health agency directives.
3. Contact the GC point of contact prior to returning to a College location.

Medium Exposure:

Campus person has not tested positive or been identified as a close contact by a public health official at this time; however, the person has been in proximity with someone who has tested positive/close contact or has engaged in a medium high-risk activity(ies). Variables for consideration are provided above and will be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

GC Actions:

Required:

1. Gather basic information about person's activities on campus.
2. Notify Leadership Team.
3. Close and deep clean any impacted areas until next steps determined.
4. General reminder to campus about high risk behaviors.

Other Actions/Considerations:

1. Determine instructional implications (online, change location, temporary cancellation, etc.).
2. Specific actions as directed by Leadership Team.
3. HIPAA/FERPA compliance.

Affected Person Actions:

Required:

1. Monitor symptoms.
2. Follow directive of GC COVID-19 Leadership Team.
3. Contact Primary Care Provider or Health Department for testing recommendation.
4. If symptoms develop, isolate until test results provided.
5. If positive results, contact GC point of contact.

Other Actions/Considerations:

1. Quarantine, if required depending upon vaccination status or prior infection, for a minimum of 7-10 days.
2. Comply with public health agency directives.
3. Contact the GC point of contact prior to returning to a College location.

Low Exposure:

Campus person has not tested positive or been identified as a close contact by a public health official at this time; however, the person has been in proximity with someone who has tested positive/close contact or has engaged in a low-risk activity(ies). Variables for consideration are provided above and will be analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

GC Actions:

Required:

1. Gather basic information about person's activities on campus.
2. Notify Leadership Team.
3. Extra sanitizing at affected locations.
4. General reminder to campus about high-risk behaviors.

Other Actions/Considerations:

1. Close and deep clean any impacted areas until next steps are determined.
2. Determine instructional implications (online, change location, temporary cancellation, etc.).
3. Specific actions as directed by Leadership Team.
4. HIPAA/FERPA compliance

Affected Person Actions:

Required:

1. Monitor symptoms.
2. Follow directives of GC COVID-19 Leadership Team.
3. Contact Primary Care Provider or Health Department for testing recommendation.
4. If symptoms develop, isolate until test results provided.
5. If positive results, contact GC point of contact.

Other Actions/Considerations:

1. Quarantine, if required depending upon vaccination status or prior infection, for a minimum of 7-10 days.
2. Comply with public health agency directives.
3. Contact the GC point of contact prior to returning to a College location.

Record Keeping/Tracking

Reports will be filed electronically. Garrett College will preserve any written communications to the affected person, GCHD, Clery notifications, media, etc.

Communications Protocols

Garrett College will use official college email addresses for all formal communications. General college COVID-related updates are available on the College's COVID-19 Resource page, located at <https://www.garrettcollege.edu/corona-virus.php>. Additionally, starting in the Fall 2021 semester, the College will send a weekly update to students and employee's emails, and posted to the COVID Resource page under "Campus Communications".

Other Important Reminders

A suspected case or notice of a positive COVID-19 is serious and calls for action. At the same time, there are some additional privacy matters that are important to keep in mind.

Health Status is a Private Matter

Each individual's health status is a private matter, and no one should publicly declare someone as sick. In the event others need to be notified of a suspected or positive COVID-19 test result, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) or Garrett County Health Department (GCHD) will provide guidance on how to do that. Do not notify classes, office colleagues, student clubs, teams, etc. of positive cases unless with specific guidance.

The College will work closely with the Garrett County Health Department on contact tracing and communications for close contacts. Notifications will only be sent if a positive case or close contact was on campus and posed an exposure risk. The notification will be directed to instructors, classmates, staff, or others determined as close contacts who are at risk of exposure.

The College will update cases numbers on the College's COVID-19 Resource page, located at <https://www.garrettcollege.edu/corona-virus.php>.

Do Not Require Doctor's Notes

Current MDH recommendations include self-quarantining if you have contact with a COVID-19 positive person. With the fluidity of the health of our community and the demands on healthcare providers, students and employees may not have doctor's notes to share. For the Spring 2022 semester, please extend some grace to students and colleagues who report being COVID-19 positive. This is also true if someone has close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

Isolation and/or Quarantine Accommodations

Students living in housing should contact Residence Life (rezlife@garrettcollege.edu or 301-387-3163) to arrange accommodations for isolation and/or quarantine. Isolation rooms will be available for students who have tested positive for COVID-19. Quarantine rooms will be available for students who have been notified that they were in contact with a COVID-19 positive person. Residential students are encouraged not to go home if they have been ordered to isolate or quarantine for the fear of spreading the virus to others. Should a residential student wish to go home to isolate/quarantine, they should speak with others in their household before doing so.