



3101 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104

MEMORANDUM

TO: FRES Staff

FROM: Anne Papageorge, Senior Vice President

DATE: April 1, 2022

RE: Public Health Updates

We wanted to provide some quick public health updates for the campus community.

- *COVID on campus:* While COVID is not done with us yet, our experience continues to improve. We are not seeing positivity across the entire community like we did in December – February. Through our contact tracing activities, we are continuing to see positivity that results from specific events and large social gatherings of students. While the positivity rate will look high, it is largely because our denominator continues to decrease with the reductions in testing volume.
- *Masking in the work place is welcomed and encouraged for anyone who feels it is in their best interest.* In addition to the requirement of masking in classrooms and other specific settings, we continue to encourage both individuals and departments to welcome masking for those who make the personal decision to utilize a well-fitting mask whether in certain areas or in all their campus based activities. We are making the transition to personal decisions, rather than the broad institutional requirements that have been in place. Not everyone has the same lived experiences and masking is a personal decision that we will always welcome.
- *Hand washing and staying home when sick are two very important public health interventions that continue to reduce the risk of illness in the work place.* There are other viruses that circulate this time of year and we would strongly encourage those that can to stay home if they feel unwell, to do so, even if it isn't COVID. Hand washing and use of hand sanitizer further adds a level of protection. With reduced mask use, hands are closer to one's mouth and face which is another way germs spread, especially those that cause stomach bugs.
- *COVID Booster Compliance – Faculty, Staff, Post-docs and Others:* Overall, 79% of faculty, staff, post-docs and others have reported their booster information. Some sub-populations are over 90%, others could continue to make some progress. Compliance with the twice weekly testing is quite low.

Thank you for your cooperation and ongoing support. We have come so far, and we will continue to work to meet the diverse needs of our expansive population of people, all of whom make Penn so special.