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# New measures for fall return to campus

**University of Alberta, University of Calgary, and University of Lethbridge to include rapid testing or vaccination, and masks as part of back-to-school plans**

Alberta's three research-intensive universities have established new protocols as part of a joint back to campus strategy for this fall.

Operating with the shared goal of offering a safe teaching, learning, living, working, and research environment, our universities are committed to welcoming back to campus as many students, faculty, and staff as possible. To maximize safety for in-person teaching and learning, new policies are being implemented across all three institutions for this September.

The University of Alberta, University of Calgary and University of Lethbridge are taking evidence-based approaches that are best suited to the campus context to protect the health and safety of our communities.

As always, we recognize that we remain in a rapidly changing environment. We will continue to monitor developments and adjust and modify these measures as necessary, with these policies being formally reviewed at the end of the term.

## **Rapid testing and vaccination**

Starting September 1, the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, and the University of Lethbridge will require all those coming to campus to undergo regular rapid testing. Those who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are exempt from this requirement.

Students, faculty, and staff who are not fully vaccinated, and those who would prefer not to disclose their vaccine status, will need to regularly complete a rapid screening test and receive a negative result before they participate in in-person activities.

Any individual who cannot be tested or vaccinated based on medical or other protected grounds recognized by the Alberta Human Rights Act can request an accommodation.

The research is clear. Vaccinations are highly effective against all known variants, especially for preventing severe disease. Vaccine clinics are being planned for campuses. Everyone is urged to become fully vaccinated as soon as possible if they want to be able to attend campus without having to complete ongoing rapid testing throughout the term.

Vaccines are the best way to protect us all.

## **Face masks on campus**

To promote a healthy and safe learning, working, and living environment, non-medical face masks must now be worn in all public indoor areas on University of Alberta, University of Calgary, and University of Lethbridge campuses where physical distancing is not possible.

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and the U.S. Centre for Disease Control (CDC) both formally recommend mask use indoors. Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. Deena Hinshaw also recommends mask usage to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Masks are not necessary to be worn on campus under the following circumstances:

- Working alone in private offices
- Working outdoors and there is a minimum of 2 metres between people
- Meeting indoors and there is a minimum of 2 metres between people
- Working alone in a shared space
- Working in a cubicle with plexiglass, wall, or other approved barrier between people and when not providing services to anyone
- In a classroom where there is a minimum of 2 metres between instructor or among students

## **Staying home when sick**

The University of Alberta, University of Calgary, and University of Lethbridge will continue to require those with COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test to self-isolate. Under provincial guidelines, anyone who has any of the following COVID-19 symptoms is required to isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms, or until they receive a negative COVID-19 test result.

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Sore throat (adults only)
- Runny nose (adults only)

Staying home and taking care of yourself when sick is important for your health and reduces exposure to others.

## **Safe return to campus**

The above measures are part of a coordinated approach among the University of Alberta, University of Calgary, and University of Lethbridge and reflect each institution's accountability to ensure a safe return for students, faculty, and staff this fall. Each university will release additional details on how these measures will be delivered on their campuses in the coming days. These measures build upon measures already announced.

These have been extraordinary times as we have wrestled with the impact of COVID-19 on our lives. That's why we have come together to create a common strategy across our institutions that ensures

health and wellbeing. This pandemic has reaffirmed the importance of working together to keep everyone safe.

The situation with COVID-19 continues to evolve. Leadership teams within all three universities are working closely with the Government of Alberta to provide rapid tests, vaccination clinics and vaccine incentives. We are committed to working together on evidence-driven measures to protect our campus communities.

*“A safe return to campus in the fall remains our top priority, and in a rapidly changing situation, we recognize the urgent need for additional measures within our campus communities. I am pleased to cooperate with the University of Calgary and the University of Lethbridge on these policies—our shared commitment is to our students, faculty and staff and to put in place the precautions necessary to ensure a safe environment for in-person teaching and learning.”*

Bill Flanagan,  
President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Alberta

*“These expanded measures are a direct response to shifting COVID-19 conditions. Our health, law and public policy experts have been tracking the rise of cases and emergence of the Delta variant, providing us with data-driven approaches. By working together with Alberta’s other research-intensive universities, we will continue to monitor and take the measures necessary to keep our community safe.”*

Ed McCauley,  
President and Vice Chancellor, University of Calgary

*“As we finalize our plans for the Fall 2021 semester, the health and safety of our campus communities remains paramount. Implementing these measures at Alberta’s research universities allows us to collectively return to in-person formats that minimizes the risk for our students, faculty, staff and external partners as well as the risk of having to pivot away from the face-to-face environment we have been waiting for.”*

Mike Mahon,  
President and Vice Chancellor, University of Lethbridge