**University Health and Safety Protocols for the Spring 2021 Semester**

**The Pledge**

All students are expected to commit to the following pledge found in the MyMercer student portal:

**I pledge to protect myself** by following recommended safety guidelines for self-care put forth by the University and reporting immediately to the Student Health COVID-19 Hotline (478-301-7425) if I become symptomatic or exposed to COVID-19.

**I pledge to protect others** by wearing a mask, exercising appropriate social distancing, respecting the rights of others, and acting responsibly so that other community members are not put at risk of exposure to COVID-19.

**I pledge to protect the community** by participating in testing and contact tracing, isolating until cleared by Mercer Medicine if I test positive for the coronavirus, and observing all relevant instructional signs and directions posted by the University.

Students are expected to monitor and adhere to all policies and guidelines pertaining to COVID-19 found on the [University’s COVID-19 website](https://www.mercer.edu/coronavirus/).

Violations of these policies may include but are not limited to the following:

* A review of the University’s student code of conduct charges
* Removal of a student from a particular University activity
* A registration hold on a student’s account
* Deactivation of a student’s Bear Card
* Dismissal from class
* A review of the standards of professional conduct penalties (by academic program)

Violations of any policy should be reported immediately to

* the Student Affairs professional in your academic area,
* the Office of Student Affairs (Macon 478-301-2685 or Atlanta 678-547-6823),
* the Director of Regional Academic Center Operations, Mr. Scott Mahone, at 678-547-6551 (for Center students),
* or Mercer Police (Macon 478-301-2970 or Atlanta 678-547-6358).

**What You Need to Know**

In order to promote safe campuses, students and employees are required to follow these COVID-19 mitigation strategies and testing protocols:

* Everyone on campus is required to wear an appropriate face covering in shared indoor settings and outdoor settings when appropriate distancing cannot be maintained outdoors. Indoor settings include classrooms, hallways, lobbies, communal offices, common spaces, public restrooms, meeting rooms, libraries, and other spaces where people tend to gather. Face coverings are also required outdoors when six-foot physical distancing cannot be maintained or during a class or event that is held outdoors or under a tent. Refer to the [University’s policy on face coverings](https://www.mercer.edu/coronavirus/university-covid-19-policies/) for additional information.
* Students are required to space themselves in classrooms with either empty seats between classmates or as arranged if furniture has been removed from the classroom to enable social distancing.
* Students and employees are required to be screened and/or tested for COVID-19 prior to the semester. Students and employees may not attend in-person class, labs, orientations, clinical/field experiences, other on-campus activities, or work on campus without **clearance** from Student Health/Mercer Medicine.
* Students and employees may be tested at the Student Health Center either by choice or on the advice of a physician. If asymptomatic, go to [go.mercer.edu/covidappt](http://go.mercer.edu/covidappt.) to schedule an appointment at the Macon or Atlanta Student Health Center. If symptomatic, call the 24/7 COVID Hotline at **(478) 301-7425** for a testing appointment at the Student Health Center.
* Students and employees are required to participate in surveillance testing at the Student Health Center throughout the Spring 2021 Semester. Exceptions include
  + students who are enrolled in totally online programs,
  + students and employees with University-approved accommodations who are learning/working remotely from home, and
  + students and employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 90 days.
* If a student or employee is [symptomatic of COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html), the symptomatic person **cannot attend** in-person class, labs, orientations, clinical/field experiences, other on-campus activities, or work on campus. The symptomatic person should immediately contact Student Health by calling the 24/7 COVID Hotline at **(478) 301-7425** for a testing appointment. In the case of a symptomatic student, the faculty member is notified that the student is symptomatic and isolating while awaiting test results; the faculty is required to provide academic accommodations during this brief isolation period. The student and faculty are notified of the student’s test result.
* If a student or employee tests at the Student Health Center and is **positive**, a Student Health staff member will call the COVID-positive person from a Mercer phone number with the positive results. With negative results, the person will receive an email to the Mercer email account.
* All students and employees must provide off-campus, **positive** COVID-19 results to Student Health at [mytestreport@mercer.edu](mailto:mytestreport@mercer.edu). In the subject line of the email, type “Macon Test” (for Macon, Savannah, and Columbus students) or type “Atlanta Test” (for Atlanta, Henry, and Douglas students). Employees should type “Employee Test” in the subject line of the email. Be sure to include your full legal name and your MUID in the body of the email.

Students do not submit COVID-19 results directly to faculty, the Dean’s Office, or Student Affairs for COVID-related, excused absences. All COVID-related absences must be processed through Student Health and the Office of the Provost. Faculty are notified of COVID-related student absences.

* Faculty are required to provide academic accommodations to students who are in isolation after either testing positive at the Student Health Center or submitting off-campus, positive test results to Student Health at [mytestreport@mercer.edu](mailto:mytestreport@mercer.edu). Also, if a symptomatic student has been tested and is awaiting results, the student must isolate and be provided academic accommodations during this brief isolation period.
* Students and employees must be cleared from isolation by Student Health before they can return to campus.

The University COVID-19 protocols and other important COVID-19 information can be accessed on the University coronavirus webpage, <https://www.mercer.edu/coronavirus/>. Information is updated as needed.