

## MEMO

To: SJU Community

From: Peter Meehan, President and Vice Chancellor  
Carol Ann MacGregor, Vice President Academic and Dean  
Mike Gourlay, Executive Director, Finance and Administration

Date: January 10, 2022

Subject: January Update – Campus Response Team

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Happy New Year and our best wishes for the best possible start to the winter term!

We are all being inundated with pandemic messages from a variety of sources. The University of Waterloo has recently sent a number of helpful memos. Please continue to use the [SJU FAQ summary](#) online to keep current on the most recent information related to our university and its operations. The following is a brief overview of some new items from the most recent January 7, 2022 edition:

### **MASKS THAT MEET PHAC RECOMMENDATIONS**

To increase the protective factor of face coverings against the highly transmissible Omicron variant, all employees and students are reminded to wear a mask that meets the [Public Health Agency of Canada's \(PHAC\) recommendations](#) in general, non-health care areas. Supervisors should ensure that employees are provided with appropriate face coverings in respect of their work environment.

#### ***Types of Mask***

**Non-medical masks** can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 similar to medical masks if they fit well and have multiple layers, including at least 2 layers of breathable tightly woven fabric, such as cotton and an effective middle filter layer.

**Medical masks** that are certified ASTM Level II provide good protection when worn properly. Medical masks are typically single use and disposable, but may be reused until visibly dirty, damp or damaged.

#### ***Proper Wear***

Masks are worn properly only if they cover the mouth, nose and chin and fit snugly. Make sure your mask fits well by following [PHAC's advice](#), which includes adjusting bands or ear loops and the flexible nosepiece; tying knots in the ear loops and tucking the sides of the mask so that it lies flat; layering a well-fitting non-medical cloth mask over a disposable mask; and keeping facial hair shaved or short, if possible.

#### ***Working On Campus***

KN95 masks are one of the most popular disposable high-filtration masks available. SJU has secured a supply of KN95 masks for employees to use when working on campus. A small

'starter' supply has been left in your mailbox. Additional masks are available by reaching out to [Tracy Macdonald](#).

### **SELF ASSESSMENT AND TESTING**

If you are worried that you may have been exposed or you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 you can [take the self-assessment](#) available on the Government of Ontario website. The self-assessment will tell you whether you need to isolate or seek testing. If your self-assessment indicates that you need to self-isolate or to get tested for COVID-19, please see the [instructions for self-isolation, contact tracing and next steps](#) on the Ontario website.

PCR testing is only available for high-risk individuals who are symptomatic or who are at risk of severe illness from COVID-19. Before seeking out a COVID-19 test, please read the [full list of individuals eligible for a PCR test provided by the Ontario Government](#). The University of Waterloo Health Services COVID-19 Assessment Centre will provide PCR testing for eligible students and employees only, by appointment. Health Services can also help you if you require help assessing your symptoms or planning for isolation, if you believe that you have been exposed to COVID-19.

Please refer to the latest update from the University of Waterloo on [what to do if you think you have COVID](#) for more guidance.

### **VACCINATION APPOINTMENTS AT HEALTH SERVICES**

Getting vaccinated is recommended as the best way to protect yourself against severe disease for those with healthy immune systems. Three doses of COVID-19 vaccine provide more protection from getting and transmitting the Omicron variant than two doses. All Ontarians are eligible for a third booster dose 84 days after their second dose. [Health Services](#) is offering booster doses on campus. To help you find available shots, please use online resources such as [Vaccine Ontario](#) or [Vaccine Hunters](#).

### **STUDENTS LIVING ON CAMPUS**

SJU currently has students living in the Ryan, Siegfried, and Finn residences in single occupancy accommodation. Student Affairs has reinstated a number of protocols restricting indoor dining; limiting common spaces to single occupancy only; and continues to prohibit visitors to residence.

### **STUDENT ADVISING**

All student advising and wellness counselling is taking place online. Please contact John Arnou (upper year advising), Emily Litster (first year advising), and Lindsay Thompson (campus wellness) for further information.

Despite protocols in place, we anticipate that the level of contagion presented by Omicron will still lead to positive COVID cases. Community members have limited access across campus. We continue to treat "symptomatic" students and employees as potentially positive COVID cases. Due to the lack of test availability in the province, we no longer have the capacity to share the [confirmed](#) number of COVID cases on campus. Please be aware of the possibility of exposure to COVID cases, both on campus and off.

We value your feedback shared using our RT system and look forward to providing the next update as new information becomes available. In the interim, stay safe and ensure that you are reaching out for support if you require additional help managing this changing and challenging work environment. A reminder that the following resources are here to help you:

- Department Directors and Chairs
- Director, Human Resources, [Michelle Watson](mailto:michelle.watson@uwaterloo.ca) ([michelle.watson@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:michelle.watson@uwaterloo.ca))
- UW Occupational Health [occupationalhealth@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:occupationalhealth@uwaterloo.ca)
- Mental health resources: <https://uwaterloo.ca/occupational-health/mental-health-resources>
- Please remember that as part of your employee benefit program the Homewood Health Employee and Family Assistance Program is also available ([homeweb.ca](http://homeweb.ca) | 1-800-663-1142), offering:
  - Confidential counselling and coaching services, and immediate crisis support.
  - Online access to resources on topics such as: lifestyle, health and wellness, financial coaching, legal advisory services, childcare, or eldercare support.