



Nov. 18, 2020

Dear UMB Community,

The pandemic continues to worsen, and as we prepare for the upcoming holidays, I expect the entire University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) community to adhere to the highest standards for COVID-19 safety. To fight this surging pandemic, we must wear masks, wash our hands frequently, avoid gatherings, stay physically distanced, monitor and report symptoms, and work with contact tracers. These individual efforts make a huge difference for the broader community. As Gov. Larry Hogan said at his news conference yesterday, "We are in a war right now, and the virus is winning." Together we can fight back by letting public health priorities be our own priorities right now.

Next week, UMB will close for the Thanksgiving recess Nov. 26-29. Please take seriously the recommendation to keep your Thanksgiving celebration gathering limited to your current COVID-19 pod/bubble. Please review the upcoming letter from UMB/UMMS for more information specific to travel. We *strongly urge* UMB students and employees who will be on campus (UMB-owned and -operated facilities in Baltimore, the Universities at Shady Grove, and Donaldson Brown Riverfront Event Center) between Nov. 30 and Dec. 18 to obtain a COVID-19 diagnostic test within that time period.

I also want to share new guidance for the spring semester regarding testing. As of Jan. 1, 2021, each student, faculty, and staff member approved to be on campus will be required to have a COVID-19 test that was taken within 14 days prior to their first day on campus. The negative COVID-19 test result must be uploaded into SAFE on Campus (or Castle Branch) before arriving on campus.

What we do today will have a lasting impact for tomorrow. Please do everything you can to stay healthy and keep others healthy as well.

- Students or employees who are participating in on-campus activities, please call the [COVID-19 Hotline](tel:800-701-9863) (800-701-9863) if you have symptoms

of COVID-19, have been exposed to the virus, or have a diagnosis of COVID-19.

- Whether on campus or not, for the good of everyone, please be honest with contact tracers if contacted and share all the information requested.
- Please be proactive and download the Maryland Department of Health smartphone app called *MD COVID Alert* and/or enable Exposure Notifications on your phone, and commit to answering if you receive a call from “MD COVID” or 240-466-4488.

This is a difficult season as we talk to loved ones near and far about canceling time-honored traditions, limit the ways we can interact, and see the number of people infected with the virus continue to rise. I also know the frustration you may feel when following best practices for public health but seeing many others who are not. I hope that others will see the example of the UMB community and strive to do the same.

Sincerely,

Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS
President

This note was authorized for distribution to the University of Maryland, Baltimore community by the Office of the President.

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