



Jan. 27, 2021

Dear UMB Community,

I hope that you are healthy and safe, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to surge in Maryland. Thankfully, many across the state have started to be vaccinated, and I am encouraged by the great response from the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) to our vaccine priority form. As leaders, we can bring a message of hope to those in our communities by dispelling myths about the COVID-19 vaccines and inviting others to learn more about them.

I want to share a few updates about COVID-19's effect on UMB regarding:

- Telework
- Travel
- Testing
- Support During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Vaccination and Safety Precautions

Telework

For those employees who have been working remotely throughout the pandemic, telework is expected to continue through at least June 1, 2021. UMB is still in a state of *Moderate-Density Operations*, which means a UMB employee whose job can be performed through telework, as determined by the employee's direct supervisor, is required to do so. Some of these employees may return before that date to perform approved on-campus work. Where practical, mandatory teleworkers will be given three weeks' advanced notice of returning to Normal Operations.

No mandatory teleworker should be allowed or required to return to campus unless the appropriate review processes have been completed and required approval has been obtained. As a family-first institution, I also want to remind supervisors to be flexible in giving employees the leeway to schedule around family and caregiver demands.

Travel

UMB continues to strongly limit work-related travel. Starting immediately and through the end of May 2021, no work-related travel is permitted, except in unusual circumstances and with approval of a dean or vice president. An individual's typical work duties do not constitute an unusual circumstance that warrant an exception to the travel prohibition. In addition, an individual's COVID-19 vaccination status may NOT impact whether travel is approved – that is, the fact that someone is fully vaccinated does not authorize them to proceed with travel. An international traveler must fill out the following form for approval: [Essential International Travel Request Process - UMB Center for Global Engagement](#). All travelers are subject to U.S. government, state of Maryland, and UMB COVID-19 testing requirements upon return.

Testing

Students, faculty, and staff are reminded that as of Jan. 10, 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.

In addition, you should expect that UMB will institute an additional testing requirement for students and employees in March around the time of the schools' typical spring breaks. As you may recall, UMB instituted a testing requirement immediately after Labor Day weekend in the fall and after the Christmas/New Year's holiday break, and the March testing requirement likely will look similar. More details will be available in February.

Support During the COVID-19 Pandemic

I am grateful for the flexibility that this community has shown as we make needed adjustments to stay healthy and safe. This has been an extraordinarily difficult time, and UMB has a [variety of resources](#) available to support you, including counselors available if you feel the need to talk. Please contact the [Student Counseling Center](#) or the [Employee Assistance Program](#) to schedule an appointment. Employees needing leave for reasons related to COVID-19 may be entitled to additional leave, including advanced sick leave, consistent with [temporary flexibilities](#) issued by the University System of Maryland and federal law.

Vaccination and Safety Precautions

We continue to see updates to vaccination plans and supplies across the city, state, and country. Expect further guidance in the coming week about how new Maryland Department of Health guidance affects UMB. Although UMB is not in possession of COVID-19 vaccines nor responsible for the allocation of vaccines,

we are ensuring that people *are properly classified* as vaccines become available for our students, faculty, and staff. We want to be prepared if the opportunity becomes available. If you find that you have the opportunity to get the vaccine elsewhere, please do so. The more people who get vaccinated, the safer we will all be and the faster we can be rid of this terrible virus. Once vaccinated, you still must abide by UMB COVID-19 safety protocols and testing requirements.

I also want to thank the UMB employees and students who are assisting with vaccinations at the SMC Campus Center.

UMB has already made an incredibly positive impact on the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. I know that we will not only make it through this, but that UMB will also be a stronger and more resilient community in the years to come.

Stay healthy and safe.

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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