



March 2, 2022

Dear UMB Community,

I'm very excited to share that Baltimore City is at the low COVID-19 community level according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) new **community level guidance**. COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths continue to drop across the United States and Maryland. In fact, Maryland has one of the lowest COVID-19 case rates in the country, and Mayor Brandon Scott removed the city of Baltimore's indoor mask mandate as of March 1. We expect our partners at the University of Maryland Medical Center will change their mask policies soon as well.

Given this positive public health news, as of March 3, UMB is making masks optional for individuals in most University spaces. However, masks will be required in the following indoor locations:

- Patient care and clinical areas including patient waiting areas and lobbies.
 - Patient care personal protective equipment protocols that require higher levels of protection must be followed.
- In-person health care simulation labs.
- UMB public transportation (UMB *shuttle* or Safe Ride).

In locations where universal mask wearing is required, students, faculty, and staff should wear a medical-grade mask. Those looking for more personal protection may use a KN95 or equivalent.

I want to emphasize that anyone who is more comfortable wearing a mask is absolutely welcome to do so, and UMB supports your individual decision to wear or not wear a mask. UMB will not tolerate any harassment or intimidation when it comes to an individual's choice about masks. A **recent CDC study** showed that wearing an N95 or KN95 provides an excellent level of protection even if people around you are unmasked.

I'm also lifting restrictions about providing food at events and meetings and removing the need to have dean or vice president approval to host an event.

As always, please do not come to campus if you are feeling sick. Stay home and get better!

I'm encouraged by this change to our mask policy and look forward to seeing your smiling faces around campus.

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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