IMPORTANT: Fall Semester Entry Testing and Vaccination Information

Sent July 30, 2021 to all active Graduate School students

We look forward to welcoming you to campus soon for the start of the fall semester. We are writing today to outline what you can expect related to COVID-19 entry testing and other testing protocols this semester. If you are an active student on campus in summer semester I and II 2021, you received a message earlier this week that contained some of the information described in more detail below.

Entry Testing
All Duke students must complete an entry test for COVID-19 prior to the Fall 2021 semester. Entry testing will be by appointment only through August 23 (with walk-in testing available after that day); all students should sign up for an entry testing slot, which you can do here. (If you are able, please sign up for a timeslot the week of August 9. We anticipate the week of August 16 to be our busiest.). Completion of entry testing is necessary to activate a student’s Duke Card to gain access to campus facilities.

Entry testing will be available in Penn Pavilion on West Campus, most Mondays through Fridays in August between 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. EST. Shortly before your test date, you will be emailed a parking pass for the Card Lot, which you can use while you are being tested in Penn Pavilion. Per the recent university announcement, please bring a mask to your entry test.

You will only be notified of your test result if you test positive for COVID-19. Put another way, no news is good news.

Once you have completed your entry test, you will enter Duke’s surveillance testing program for the remainder of the fall semester.

Vaccinations
If you have not yet received your COVID-19 vaccination or do not have an approved medical or religious exemption, you’ll be directed to check in with Student Health.

Students have until Monday, August 23 to complete the university’s vaccination requirement. Failure to do so may result in the revocation of your campus access. More information about the vaccination requirement and how to update your vaccination status can be found at the Duke COVID vaccine website.

Surveillance Testing
After entry testing is complete, all students will participate in Duke’s surveillance testing program this fall, which helps us monitor any transmission of the virus within the Duke community. The frequency of how often you’re called in for testing will depend on a number of factors, including your vaccination status and whether you’ve been potentially exposed to the virus. Most graduate and professional students can expect to be called for surveillance testing once per week. Students who have approved medical or religious exemptions can expect to be tested more frequently.
Once the majority of students has completed fall entry testing, the surveillance testing schedule will settle into a routine pattern, with graduate student testing occurring once per week, usually on Wednesdays. For the first few weeks of the semester, however, all students may be required to complete more than one surveillance test and/or may be called to report for testing on a different weekday (M-F).

Like entry testing, you’ll only be notified of your result if you test positive for COVID-19. If you don’t hear anything, that means your test was negative.

You can find more information on surveillance testing, including hours and locations, on the Duke United website. If you have additional questions, please contact grad-surveillance-testing@duke.edu.

Get your Mobile DukeCard

If you’re new to campus, your first DukeCard will be on your iPhone or Android device. First, please visit the DukeCard website for photo specs and instructions to upload your photo online. Due to the current global chip shortage, we are asking students to “go mobile” if possible unless a physical card is needed. Once your photo has been approved and you have completed entry testing, as outlined above, you can add your DukeCard to your iPhone or Android device. Detailed instructions are available on the mobile DukeCard site.

If you need a physical DukeCard in addition to the mobile DukeCard, you can visit the DukeCard office to obtain one. Instructions for setting up an appointment can be found on the DukeCard appointment site.

Please note: Students who are a part of the Schools of Medicine and Nursing OR need access to Duke Health buildings, including those with labs, should follow the instructions given to them by their departments to obtain a DukeCard for access to those buildings.

As a reminder, all plans, processes, and guidelines—including testing processes, masking, and other protocols—remain subject to change based on the continually evolving pandemic landscape. Be sure to check out Duke’s COVID-19 website for information and updates. Thank you for your continued partnership in helping keep the Duke and Durham communities safer. We look forward to seeing you on campus this fall.

All the best,
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