

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

January 11, 2021

Dear Iowa State Community,

We want to share some important updates about the spring semester at ISU. We had a successful fall, but the COVID-19 pandemic remains a dynamic situation. With your help and commitment, we can get off to a strong start and avoid a spike in cases. If you have any questions about this information, please email COVID-19@iastate.edu.

Spring Testing Program. Iowa State is continuing its robust on-campus testing program to quickly identify symptomatic and close contact cases, providing results within 24-48 hours. This allows us to identify positive individuals, facilitate isolation, and quickly initiate case investigation and contact tracing.

- Testing resumed today at Johnny's in Hilton Coliseum. Students, faculty, and staff experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or who have had close contact with a known positive case should make an [appointment online](#).

Residence Hall and Sorority and Fraternity Testing. Our Department of Statistics has developed a statistically designed risk-based sampling strategy required for students who live in residence halls or are members of sororities and fraternities. Through this strategy, 5,000 students will be selected to test, beginning this week through January 29. Additional details on this testing requirement will be communicated directly to these students.

All students who are new to living in Department of Residence housing this spring must provide proof of a COVID-19 test prior to receiving their keys and moving in. Please see the [Thielen Student Health Center website](#) for more information.

Asymptomatic Surveillance Testing. Additional asymptomatic surveillance testing will begin in early February and continue throughout the spring semester based on campus trends and needs. Additionally, a testing opportunity in partnership with Corteva was made available to the ISU and Ames communities last Friday, and about 940 people participated.

Test Results and Information. Campus testing results are updated three times a week on ISU's [Public Health Data page](#). Results of the Corteva testing opportunity will also be posted there. Cooperation with our contact tracing and case investigation processes is expected of all members of the ISU community. For more information about testing, case investigation, contact tracing, quarantine, and isolation, visit the [COVID-19 Personal Health page](#).

On-Campus Vaccinations. Iowa State received its first distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine in late December. The university is following the [Iowa Department of Public Health vaccination strategy](#), and we have distributed all of the initial doses allocated as part of this plan. We ask for your patience as we await further information and direction about subsequent phases in vaccine distributions. Please understand it will likely be several months before the vaccine is widely available to the general public.

- We'll discuss the COVID-19 vaccine during a **virtual Town Hall**, 2-3 p.m., Friday, January 15, through [Webex events](#). The Town Hall will also be recorded and available for later viewing on ISU's [COVID-19 Updates and Resources page](#).

Cyclones Care Behaviors. While news of the vaccine is encouraging, we must continue to be diligent in following the [Cyclones Care behaviors](#). COVID-19 is still present in our community. That's why face coverings over your mouth and nose continue to be required on campus, as well as physical distancing, frequent hand washing, and staying home when you're sick. The public health team has created a [helpful guide](#) with tips for safely returning to campus.

We know how important social interaction is to our health and wellness. Our fall data was clear – transmission primarily occurred in social situations where mitigation practices were not followed. Don't risk it! While you may not get seriously ill from COVID-19, you could unintentionally pass the virus to your friends, family, classmates, or colleagues.

Please remain vigilant with healthy habits and show respect and care for each other. Let our [Principles of Community](#) and Cyclones Care behaviors guide us in having a great spring semester.

Sincerely,

Erin Baldwin

*Associate Vice President for Student Health and Wellness
and Director of Thielen Student Health Center*

Kristen Obbink

COVID-19 Public Health Coordinator

