



Mask/PPE, physical distancing, and food/beverage allowances for mandatory and optional educational activities in the JABSOM MD and 'Imi Ho'ōla Program

July 30, 2021 (Tier 5)

Changes since July 24, 2021 are highlighted below

Aloha everyone. For more than two weeks, we have seen triple digit cases which include mild SARS-CoV-2 infections in those fully vaccinated. Emerging evidence about the Delta variant shows that an unvaccinated infected person can carry 1000 times more virus than the original SARS-CoV-2 strain. Additionally, we know the Delta is about 225% more easily transmissible by those unvaccinated. We also now know that once a fully vaccinated individual gets infected with the Delta variant, they can transmit it as well as an unvaccinated person. Since March 2021, JABSOM has required COVID-19 vaccination of all students in the 'Imi Ho'ōla and MD programs and those groups are 100% fully vaccinated. More than 95% of faculty and staff who come into regular contact with those students are fully vaccinated. However, because the cases are rising exponentially, we are making some safety updates.

Effective Monday, July 26, 2021, we reverted to 100% mask-wearing indoors (unless you are working in isolation or more than 6 feet apart from others), even if the entire group is fully vaccinated. Additionally, any food consumed indoors should be at your desk/personal space, outdoors, or in the café where there is more physical distancing. **Please do NOT consume food during PBL tutorials, small meeting rooms or in breakrooms unless you are the only person in the room.** Please do not reconfigure/move tables and chairs in the café. We will reassess this policy monthly.

Effective Monday, August 2, 2021,

- Café seating will be significantly reduced (again). You are encouraged to only take out food and eat it outside or in an individual setting.
- You should maintain a 6 feet physical distance between each person (regardless of vaccination status) when eating or drinking.
- 'Imi Ho'ōla and MD program learners, faculty, and staff should wear surgical masks or KN95s in group learning settings.
- POST-EXPOSURE TESTING: Medical students and clinician faculty will require day 5 post-exposure testing even if you are fully vaccinated (see below)
- TRAVEL: Medical students and clinician faculty will be required to have a negative RT-PCR test within 72 hours prior to arrival in Hawai'i from a domestic (not interisland) or international location AND will also need to test again on day 5 after arrival. This is required regardless of vaccination status and is consistent with the Queen's Health Systems travel policy (see below)

The following are updates to requirements for [masks](#), use of eye protection, physical distancing, and allowance of food during approved educational events in the **MD program and 'Imi Ho'ōla program** only. MD Program course and curricular component directors will inform the affected faculty, students, and staff to ensure common understanding and compliance. **Clerkship directors**

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and coordinators will notify all preceptor sites. JABSOM faculty and staff will also periodically remind the students about distancing and check for mask-wearing (especially during breaks).

[UH Interim COVID-19 Guidelines](#) apply, which includes 3 feet physical distancing indoors and universal masking, regardless of vaccination status, unless you are in a private office, working in isolation or more than 6 feet from others. UH as a whole is an [Institute of Higher Education \(IHE\) where not everyone is fully vaccinated](#). All of these guidelines are fluid as the prevalence of COVID-19 and vaccination rates continue to evolve. ****As stated above, if you are eating or drinking with another person(s), there must be 6 feet physical distancing between everyone.**

Also note that unvaccinated students in health professional programs may have restrictions or may not participate in required classes, rotations, or practicums where the site requires COVID-19 vaccination for the safety of patients, other staff, and the public. Missing required coursework would impede the attainment of their degree or certification. For any unvaccinated medical students, we will require weekly antigen testing. The frequency may change if the prevalence of COVID-19 / Delta variant continues to increase.

[Situational awareness and context for decision-making](#)

Risks: The number of laboratory-confirmed COVID cases are steadily increasing, with the more contagious Delta variant (and P.1) currently comprising about 55% (increased from 40% 3 weeks ago) of the circulating [variants](#) in Hawai'i. Thus far, rising case counts and [clusters](#) in overwhelmingly in unvaccinated individuals are due to large social gatherings, inconsistent mask use indoors (especially in social gatherings, places of worship), and in Hawai'i residents returning home from mainland travel. The great majority of hospitalized patients are unvaccinated.

Mitigating factors: High vaccination rates, high adherence to mask-wearing, physical distancing, and conducting activities outdoors or in well-ventilated areas are the best way to stay safe. In Spring 2021, JABSOM required vaccination for all medical students. All medical students and 'Imi students are [fully vaccinated](#), along with more than 95% of core faculty in OME & clinical departments and OME staff who support the MD educational programs are fully vaccinated. A recent UH system-wide survey of UH/RCUH/UH Foundation employees and staff, with an approximately 60% response rate, showed >96% already vaccinated on the Mānoa campus. Because many of our `ohana are health professionals, in health care settings and/or who work with highly vulnerable populations, we are adopting a higher safety standard. There remain specific situations that continue to require eye protection (i.e., any experience with patients (i.e., HOME, clinical sites).

We continue to strongly encourage vaccination for all members of the JABSOM Ohana. However, not everyone is fully vaccinated. Additionally, many fully vaccinated individuals live with individuals who are at high-risk for getting moderate-severe COVID disease. Therefore, we need

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to continue to reinforce masking and physical distancing in situations where there may be unvaccinated individuals. Please remember that COVID-19 vaccinations are an individual choice for employees and non-medical students. Thus, we should not be asking “why not” or creating situations where people may be made to feel uncomfortable or pressured into disclosing their immunization status, personal circumstances, or why they are wearing a mask.

If you are going to have food (see below), remember to completely clean up after yourselves and wipe down the area with the provided supplies. We all need to continue with good preventive practices, to keep everyone safe regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Omori and Dr. Buenconsejo-Lum.

Please note the [current UH COVID-19 Interim Guidelines](#) allow for 3 feet physical distancing in all indoor educational and office spaces with masks on.

MEB educational spaces

- Larger classrooms, auditorium (301, 304, 314, 315) and PBL rooms: Up to max capacity. However, if the auditorium is available for large lectures, that is preferred to allow for closer to 3 feet spacing.
- Surgical masks (or KN95s) will be required for all group learning activities (indoors or outdoors). Surgical masks will be available in the LRC near the PBL rooms and in the smaller conference rooms on the 3rd floor.

Anatomy Lab

- Surgical mask. Eye protection is required for the student who wears contact lenses. Depending on the community transmission rates in September, eye protection may be required for all students. Other PPE as required by the lab (made available separately to students before MD2 and MD6).

Clinical Skills (Loui lab or elsewhere) and SimTiki

- Surgical mask WITH eye protection (goggles or face shields). Groupings as makes sense for the activity.

Longitudinal Clinical Mentoring, Community Medicine, HOME clinic, and all Clinical Experiences

- Surgical mask & eye protection or other PPE requirements specific to that site.
- If a student is unvaccinated, the site may not accept that student.
- Medical students may see PUI or COVID+ patients while wearing proper PPE and following all facility protocols.

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- As of this moment, if you are wearing proper PPE and exposed to a PUI or COVID+ individual, that is NOT considered an exposure.
- Do not eat in groups or in breakrooms.
- Protocols and restrictions are changing rapidly, so please ask your rotation supervisor or senior/chief resident if you have any questions.

Testing (computer lab or other site)

- Mask for everyone, no eye protection
- Reserve 3 computers as spares/back-up, otherwise to capacity

Food & drink during approved curricular events, including study groups (indoors & outdoors)

- (Indoor) No food in groups, unless physically spaced with 6 feet between everyone (café) or outside.
- Outdoor activities should be physically spaced 6 feet if food is planned.
- Food should be self-contained, individually packaged only. This also applies to snacks made available in the library and in the learning resource area.
- 6 feet physical distancing for all educational events where food is allowed

Outdoor educational activities

- Physically distance as much as possible. Break into smaller groups if more than 75. Masks required if mixed group.

Refer to the [JABSOM COVID-19 Safety, Notification and Return to Work or School protocol](#) for additional information related to travel and post-exposure testing of fully vaccinated medical students or clinician faculty.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

(Optional) Shadowing

- Allowed with approval (see non-credit elective form and separate guidance for shadowing (MS1-MS4)). Mask and PPE requirements specific to that site.

(Optional) Interest groups

- Mask, no eye protection. Max 25 inside, 75 outside and may include faculty or residents/fellows as applicable. No other participants at this time. Utilize as much physical distancing as possible.
- Food is discouraged. If there needs to be food, it should be eaten outside and physically spaced 6 feet apart.

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- Per UH COVID-19 Interim Guidelines, all visitors (and students, employees, or vendors) must complete LumiSight UH (or a paper version), regardless of vaccination status. This required self-check must include contact information should the need arise. Anyone ill needs to stay home. Organizers of group activities should place contact-tracing forms into the shred bin after 14 days.
- Please consult the Office of Student Affairs and the JABSOM Special Events team while planning the event to ensure adherence to safety protocols.

(Optional) Volunteering at mass vaccination PODs

- Requires approval by Dr. Omori and Dr. Buenconsejo-Lum.
- Faculty and student volunteers for mass vaccination PODs should be registered through the [UH Medical Reserve Corps](#) (if you are not already registered through the main Department of Health MRC). This is required even if the POD is not directly operated by the Department of Health. Membership in the MRC provides an additional layer of immunity protection for health care professionals and health professions students as described in Exhibit A of the Governor's [18th Emergency Proclamation](#) related to the COVID-19 emergency.
- Faculty supervision is required for all students serving as vaccinators.
- Masks required. Additional PPE will be required if the students will serve as vaccinators or vaccine preparers.
- Volunteer opportunities for non-vaccinator roles may be offered by the health systems (i.e., by Kaiser) to students whose longitudinal clinical mentor or LIC preceptors volunteer at PODs. All those sites have faculty to serve as supervisors (even if it is not the student's LCM or LIC preceptor). Students may volunteer on their own time, as their schedules allow.
- Vaccine POD activities do not take the place of LCM sessions, LIC clinical experiences, or other required curricular experiences.

(Optional) Other volunteer activities

- Mask, eye protection, and any other PPE or requirements specific to that site.
- All medical student volunteer activities need to be coordinated through the Office of Student Affairs, in accordance with AAMC guidance.