



THIEL

C O L L E G E

COVID-19 Campus Health & Safety Plan

August 13, 2021

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Thiel College COVID-19 Taskforce/Pandemic Team was developed under the College’s Emergency Management Plan, and is composed of administrators, faculty and staff. The Taskforce was charged in 2020 with developing a plan to safely reopen and operate the campus once the College received authorization from Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf.

The 2020-2021 Thiel College COVID-19 Campus Health & Safety Plan (archived on the College’s website) was instrumental in enabling Thiel to successfully operate for the entire academic year with in-person instruction and activities, something fewer than 30% of colleges and universities across the country were able to do. The following plan is intended to represent updated policies and practices based on current trends and guidance related to the pandemic.

Taskforce Coordinators & Team:

Chris Cianci, Director of Campus Health Services, serves as the primary contact for the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Individual(s)	Stakeholder Group Represented	Taskforce Roles and Responsibilities
Mike McKinney	Student Life	Co-Coordinator – Plan Development and Response Team
Jennifer Clark	Human Resources	Co-Coordinator – Plan Development and Response Team
Liz Frombgen	Academic Affairs	Leader of Academic Response – Plan Development and Response Team
Amy Schafer	Athletics	Leader of Athletics Response – Plan Development and Response Team
Richard Orr	Communications & Marketing	Leader of Communications & Signage – Plan Development and Response Team
Dennis Bish	Public Safety	Plan Development and Response Team
Anthony Jones	Diversity & Inclusion	Plan Development and Response Team
Bob Phillips	Residence Life	Plan Development and Response Team
Laura Pickens	Faculty	Plan Development and Response Team
Andy Houpt	Facilities	Plan Development and Response Team
Kim Scobbie-Byler	Housekeeping	Plan Development and Response Team
Monica Adametz	Special Events	Plan Development and Response Team
Patty Alfredo	Health Services	Plan Development and Response Team
Chris Cianci	Health Services	Plan Development and Response Team

Utilizing resources from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH), Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), American College Health Association (ACHA), National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and based on the successful results of our 2020-21 plan, the College has organized the 2021-2022 plan into five guiding categories.

Organizational Categories for the Thiel College 2021-22 Campus Health & Safety Plan

- Category One: COVID-19 Vaccines
- Category Two: Student Requirements Prior to Move-In or In-Person Activities
- Category Three: Monitoring Health Conditions to Detect Infection
- Category Four: Containment Plans to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 when Detected
- Category Five: Transition Plans in the Event the Campus must Close Facilities

In developing these plans, the College recognizes that the nature of this pandemic is highly unpredictable. Once implemented, a resurgence could occur at any time and Thiel must be prepared to respond accordingly. As a result, College leadership is prepared for several scenarios regarding campus operations and this plan includes a transition component should we have to close facilities and move to online instruction.

Included with our descriptions and outlines of the five categories is additional information about athletics and COVID-19 testing. The guidelines are intended to help readers gain a better understanding of what to expect going into the 2021-22 academic year, and to assist in personal planning and preparations.

Finally, the plan has been created based on current information and/or projections being made by external authorities. The plan is a living document and is certain to be altered as this pandemic continues to unfold. The taskforce and College leadership will continue to closely monitor the situation and work to ensure we are making the best decisions possible in support of the safety and success of the Thiel College community, and our surrounding communities.

COVID-19 VACCINES

The College encourages all students and employees to consult with their medical providers about the safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccines. Vaccines are readily available in this region and the College along with the Pennsylvania departments of Health and Education, the CDC, and the NCAA strongly recommend, that students, faculty, and staff take advantage of the protection provided by the vaccines, both to one's self and to the health of others. Certain policies and procedures in this plan are based on whether or not an individual is vaccinated, with additional requirements in-place for those who are unvaccinated.

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS PRIOR TO MOVE-IN / IN-PERSON ACTIVITIES

Based on the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine, external guidance, and current trends associated with the pandemic, the College will organize student move-ins similar to pre-pandemic operations. Students will receive information about their move-in date based on their class level or involvement in fall camps and/or other activities requiring them to move-in prior to August 21 (new student move-in) or 22 (returning student move-in). Parents and family members will be allowed to accompany their students during the move-in process.

Requirements for Vaccinated Students: Prior to your scheduled start date you should submit your vaccination records to Campus Health Services to be included in your confidential medical records. Vaccine records can be submitted by email to health_services@thiel.edu, by fax at 724-589-2875, or via [survey link](#). You will also need to read and sign an acknowledgement form with information about campus health and safety policies and the risks associated with in-person activities during a pandemic. The acknowledgement form will be sent via email ahead of your start date and/or can be signed and submitted upon arrival to campus.

Requirements for Students Who are Unvaccinated or Partially Vaccinated: All students (i.e., residential, commuter, and graduate) who are not fully vaccinated for COVID-19, will need to submit proof of a negative COVID-19 test (specimen collected within 72-hours of arriving to campus), and participate in regular surveillance testing throughout the semester and year. You will also need to read and sign an acknowledgement of our campus health and safety policies and the risks associated with in-person activities during a pandemic. The acknowledgement form will be sent via email ahead of your start date and/or can be signed and submitted upon arrival to campus.

Please Note: Surveillance testing for students who are not fully vaccinated may begin upon arrive to campus and before moving into campus housing and/or beginning other activities.

MONITORING HEALTH CONDITIONS TO DETECT INFECTION

This component of our plan has been developed with the goal of monitoring the health of our employees and students, and to detect possible COVID-19 infections. This section includes mitigation strategies related to health screening, surveillance testing, face coverings, physical distancing, and hygiene and sanitation.

The policies and practices listed in this section will inform the operations for most campus departments, student activities, and services (e.g., housing, dining, student activities and events, student organizations, and service departments). These policies, practices, and requirements may change based on circumstances related to the pandemic.

Monitoring and Detection Efforts

Self-Monitor Daily for Symptoms. All employees, students and visitors are encouraged to self-monitor for [symptoms of COVID-19](#) before coming to campus or attending practice or class.

- Employees experiencing symptoms should stay home and contact their healthcare provider, Human Resources (jclark@thiel.edu/X2858), and supervisor.
- Students experiencing any symptoms, should stay home or in their campus housing and contact the Campus Health Center (health_services@thiel.edu/724-589-2195) for a phone screening or triage.

Surveillance Testing for Unvaccinated Students. All unvaccinated students will be required to participate in regular surveillance testing for COVID-19. This will include testing upon arrival to campus for the start of each term, and regular testing (i.e., once a week or once every two weeks) throughout the semester. Testing will be billed to students' insurance when applicable, and in cases where insurance does not cover the test, the cost will be added to the student's College account.

Testing for Symptomatic Students. All symptomatic students (vaccinate or unvaccinated) may be required to have a COVID-19 test through Campus Health Services. If a student's insurance does not cover a COVID-19 test ordered and conducted by Campus Health Services because the student is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, the College will cover the cost of that test.

Masks/Face Coverings. During the transition of undergraduates back to campus and the start of the fall semester, the following temporary and universal mask/face covering policy will be in effect. The policy will be revisited for possible adjustment beginning September 15 based on the campus vaccination level and local infection rates at that time.

- **Indoors:** Regardless of vaccination status, face coverings are required when indoors, unless you are in your enclosed residence hall room or apartment or in an enclosed private office.
- **Outdoors:** Individuals who are not fully vaccinated and/or those who are or reside with someone who is immunocompromised, should wear a face covering when outdoors and unable to maintain physical distancing. All are welcome and encouraged to wear a face covering outdoors based on their own comfort levels and needs.

Physical Distancing. Physical distancing (maintaining 6-ft. of distance from others) is also strongly encouraged for those who are unvaccinated, at increased risk for severe illness, and/or prefer to have the added protection. The College is not requiring physical distancing at this time, but may need to adjust health and safety protocols should we experience high levels of COVID-19 on-campus or in the surrounding region, and/or if mandated by local, state, or federal authorities.

Good Hygiene and Increased Sanitation. Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or apply hand sanitizer. Avoid touching nose, mouth and eyes. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow and immediately wash hands or

apply hand sanitizer. Avoid person-to-person contact, including handshaking, when possible. Increase cleaning of high-touch areas.

Recording and Monitoring Workforce Attendance

Supervisors should report to Human Resources any instances of an employee missing work due to health reasons. Human Resources will monitor attendance rates to identify trends that could be associated to a potential COVID-19 infection or outbreak.

It is the responsibility of the employee to stay at home when they have a temperature and/or other COVID-19 or flu symptoms. The employee is also expected to contact their supervisor and report symptoms and absenteeism.

CONTAINMENT PLANS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 ONCE DETECTED

If any student or employee is found to have tested positive for COVID-19 or an unvaccinated student or employee has been in contact with someone that has recently tested positive or is believed to be infected with COVID-19, certain actions will be triggered. The following is a description of isolation, quarantine and contact tracing plans.

Isolation, Quarantine, and “Laying Low”

- **Isolation** – Isolation will be used to separate people infected with the virus (those who are *sick* with COVID-19 and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected. People who are in isolation should stay home or in designated campus housing until [it's safe for them to be around others](#). Students with a home address within 300-miles of campus will be expected to isolate at home, and should plan accordingly. Some designated on-campus isolation housing has been prepared for students with a home address beyond 300-miles from campus.
- **Quarantine** - Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been **exposed to COVID-19** away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home or in designated quarantine housing, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department. Some designated on-campus quarantine housing has been prepared for students with a home address beyond 300-miles from campus. Students with a home address within 300-miles from campus will be expected to quarantine from home, and should plan accordingly.
- **Laying Low** – Laying Low requirements are used for vaccinated individuals who have come into close contact with someone with COVID-19. Those individuals will be required to get tested 3-5 days after the date of their exposure, wear a mask/face covering and limit in-person campus activities for 14 days after their exposure or until they receive a negative test result. Limitation of in-person campus activities will include, but is not limited to, the following practices.

- Avoid eating meals in public settings (e.g., students should pick-up to-go meals from campus dining facilities if they are on a meal plan).
- Limit close contacts to 2-3 individuals.
- Refrain from indoor physical activities in which you are unable to wear a mask or face covering.
- Limit time spent outside of your residence.

Please Note: Thiel will not provide reimbursement for housing or meals for students who need to leave campus for quarantine or isolation.

In the case of an employee, the employee is expected to work with her or his primary care physician to obtain proper guidance and care when testing positive for COVID-19. Employees should report to their supervisor and Human Resources if they have tested positive, and provide care plans they will be implementing (e.g., isolating in a local hospital or orders to self-isolate, etc.). The employee should not report back to work until she or he is medically cleared to return (i.e., a negative COVID-19 test result or doctor's clearance). Approval must be obtained by the Director of Human Resources prior to returning.

The College will report all confirmed cases of COVID-19 on our campus to the Mercer County Health Department and support their efforts to trace contacts and prevent the spread of the virus. The College will assemble and train a group of employees to assist with contact tracing efforts.

Students with a Permanent Address within a Reasonable Distance from Campus

Students with a permanent address within 300-miles from campus will be required to travel home and isolate or quarantine. A positive test for COVID-19 will require medical clearance to return (i.e., a negative COVID-19 test result or doctor's clearance). If an unvaccinated student was identified as having contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or suspected to have COVID-19, the student will be sent home to quarantine. The quarantine period is for at least 10-days without a test, or 7-days if the person is symptom and fever free for 48-hours and receives a negative COVID-19 test result (specimen collected after the fifth day of the quarantine).

Students with a Permanent Address beyond 300-Miles from Campus

Typically, students with a permanent address beyond 300-miles from campus will have the option to complete their quarantine or isolation period in an on-campus facility. However, there may be situations where the College must send students home or off-campus for quarantine or isolation based on space availability or other factors.

Quarantine and Isolation Planning

All students should plan ahead for the potential need to quarantine or isolate. Students with a home address within 300-miles from campus should consult with their family about plans for transportation, living quarters, and food in the case they need to leave campus to quarantine or isolate.

All students should have supplies ready to take with them in the case they need to quarantine or isolate. They should also discuss an action plan with supervisors if they have an on-campus or off-campus job, coaches, directors, or advisors if they are involved in co- and extra-curricular activities, and the faculty teaching their courses. It is the

responsibility of the student to communicate their need to quarantine or isolate to those individuals.

Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is a vital step in the overall strategy for controlling COVID-19. The College will assemble a group of trained students, faculty, and staff to serve as contact tracers.

The Mercer County Department of Health is taking the lead on contact tracing for confirmed cases in the county, and the College will have a trained team in place to assist in efforts connected to our campus. Contact tracing done by the College will focus primarily on suspected or pending cases prior to the Health Department's efforts focused on confirmed cases.

All potential contacts of suspected, probable, and confirmed cases should be systematically identified and quarantined based on the quarantine guidelines previously described in this document.

For contact tracing strategies to be successful, we must rely on honesty and cooperation among campus community members. Effective contact tracing will help to ensure the referral of symptomatic contacts to isolation facilities.

TRANSITION PLANS IN THE EVENT THE COLLEGE MUST CLOSE FACILITIES

There are several scenarios that could result in the College having to close facilities before or after in-person operations resume in August. A widespread resurgence of the pandemic could occur, and the state and federal government could order the closure of all higher education institutions in the state. A local spike in cases could occur and lead to the closure of higher education institutions in the county or region. Finally, the College could elect to move to remote instruction based on the spread of infection or volume of individuals in quarantine/isolation circumstances. The following sections outline academic and residential plans should a closure occur, and general operational guidelines while we remain open for face-to-face instruction.

Academic Transition Plans & Guidelines for Instruction

Instructional Format and Modalities

Consistent with our mission and strengths as a residential liberal arts college, Thiel is preparing to offer face-to-face instruction again this year. Given the unpredictable nature of the pandemic, faculty are also preparing all courses for online delivery as well. However, the online instruction will typically only be provided for students who have to be asked to quarantine, isolate, or lay low due to close contact or infection. The following

guidelines and plans will be used to support our efforts and help maintain a safe and engaging academic experience.

- Classes will be offered in-person or face-to-face (with very few exceptions).
- All classes will be designed to be offered in-person and online to accommodate students placed in quarantine and/or the need to pivot to fully online delivery due to the pandemic.
- Attendance policies have been adjusted to support students who are asked to quarantine by Campus Health Services.
- Course contents will be housed on our learning management system Moodle.
- Instructors are not obligated to provide hybrid instruction for students who are in quarantine. However, instructional content will be provided that ensures students are able to meet the learning objectives of the course. For example, the use of recorded videos, assignments based on readings, and other work that can be completed without direct instructor supervision. All instructors are also expected to offer quarantined students the option of talking with them during office hours of by appointment. These sessions may be via Zoom, Microsoft Teams, phone, or email provided the student has the ability to get help if they choose to do so.

Student Health and Class Absenteeism

Given their regular interactions with students, faculty members can play an important role in controlling the spread of COVID-19. Reporting student attendance is an important and necessary strategy for monitoring potential infection and mitigating the spread of the virus. In accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), faculty members will:

- Observe student behavior and refer students who appear to be symptomatic to the campus health center (724-589-2198).
- Monitor student attendance, and report absenteeism of all students daily.
- Allow additional time for students to complete assignments and reschedule tests and quizzes if they are placed in quarantine.

Housing Transition Plans & Operating Guidelines

Given the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine, current guidance, and trends related to the pandemic, the College is able to offer a campus housing experience similar to the experience prior to the pandemic. The following information outlines some guidelines that will be in effect during the 2021-2022 academic year. Guidelines, policies, and practices may change based on the pandemic.

Students residing in campus housing will be held to the same policies outlined in the *Monitoring and Detection* section of this plan. The table below serves as a quick reference guide based on whether the resident is vaccinated or unvaccinated.

Population	Self-Monitor for Symptoms	Surveillance Testing	Symptomatic Testing	Masks	Physical Distancing
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Vaccinated	R	NN	R	NN	NN
Unvaccinated	R	R	R	E	E
Partially Vaccinated	R	R	R	E	E

R = Requirement

E = Encouraged

NN = Not Necessary Based on Current Guidance

Student Safety Plans

All residential students should develop a “Safety Plan” with your family prior to arriving to campus. The safety plan should include preparations for the possibility that the student will need to quarantine, isolate, or quickly leave campus due to the necessity to close housing facilities. Student and families are encouraged to consider the following questions when creating your plan:

- Where the student will go if they must leave campus suddenly?
- What transportation options exist for the student?
- How quickly can a student get to their designated location given their transportation options?
- Are there plans in place at your designated location should the student need to quarantine or isolate?
- Is emergency contact information up-to-date in the student’s campus records?
- Does the student have access to dependable internet should they have to relocate?
- How will family members at home be protected if the student tests positive for COVID-19 and/or is determined to have been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19?

Students with a home address fewer than 300-miles from campus will be required to quarantine and isolate at home.

Supplemental Student Handbook Policies and Housing Contracts

Students returning to campus must take the necessary steps as determined by Thiel College and state and local government and health officials to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. This guidance will be provided to students and families prior to their arrival on campus. Students will be required to sign a Housing Contract Addendum and will be subject to supplemental Student Handbook Policies outlining safety standards necessary to help reduce infection and spread of COVID-19.

Only residential students who have successfully completed the requirements found in the *Student Requirements Prior to Move-In / In-Person Activities* section of this document will be allowed to move-into campus housing. In addition to those requirements, residential students must have current health history, immunization records, COVID-19 screening, and emergency contact information up-to-date with Campus Health Services. Regular housing application cancellation and refund policies may also be modified to provide for increased flexibility as a result of the pandemic.

THIEL COLLEGE ATHLETICS

Based on the [NCAA's Resocialization of College Sports](#) guidance, and in collaboration with other member institutions of the Presidents Athletic Conference (PAC), the College is developing a plan to resume intercollegiate athletics. The plan will involve regular surveillance testing of unvaccinated student-athletes, quarantine and isolation policies, and health and safety measures specific to athletics.

Spectators will be expected to follow current policies for campus guests.

COVID-19 TESTING

The College is requiring all students (i.e., residential, commuter, and graduate) who are not fully vaccinated to submit proof of a negative COVID-19 test (specimen collected within 72-hours of arriving to campus) prior to moving-into campus housing and/or in-person campus activities (e.g., classes, athletics, and performing arts), and participate in regular surveillance testing throughout the semester and year. They will also need to read and sign an acknowledgement of our campus health and safety policies and the risks associated with in-person activities during a pandemic. The acknowledgement form will be sent via email ahead of your start date and/or can be signed and submitted upon arrival to campus.

Surveillance Testing for Unvaccinated Students. All unvaccinated students will be required to participate in regular surveillance testing for COVID-19. This will include testing upon arrival to campus for the start of each term, and regular testing (i.e., once a week or once every two weeks) throughout the semester.

Billing for Testing. Testing will be billed to students' insurance when applicable, and in cases where insurance does not cover the cost of the test, the cost will be added to the student's College account.

The College will cover the cost of any COVID-19 test ordered and conducted by Campus Health Services because the student is exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms (if the student's insurance does not already cover that expense).

Testing for Symptomatic Students. All symptomatic students (vaccinated or unvaccinated) may be required to have a COVID-19 test through Campus Health Services and/or provide proof of tests results conducted off-campus.