



SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES ON-CAMPUS STUDENTS
Spring semester 2021 Return Testing · Requirements and Options

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Messiah University has prepared this resource for on-campus graduate students to outline COVID-19 testing expectations and options prior to their return to campus in January 2021.

Note: this document only outlines the pre-arrival *testing* requirements. [Click here to view a comprehensive list of action steps on-campus graduate students must take before returning to campus in January.](#)

PRIOR TO PHYSICALLY RETURNING TO CAMPUS IN JANUARY 2021:

What is Messiah requiring students to do?

All on-campus graduate students **must be tested for COVID-19, and provide Messiah with documentation of a *negative* PCR COVID-19 test** prior to physically returning to the Winding Hill or Grantham campus.

Do I need to take a PCR test? Can I take another type of COVID-19 test?

To ensure consistent accuracy, students must take a PCR test for COVID-19. Antigen tests and antibody tests will not be accepted.

Will Messiah be verifying that students have submitted test results?

Yes, the Engle Center will be confirming that results have been provided, and students will not be permitted to arrive on campus without a verified test submission.

When do I need to take and submit the test? Is there a specific window of time?

Yes, there are important time windows in which the test must be taken and submitted. *The test must be taken within 7 days of your arrival on campus and results must be provided to the University at least one day in advance of your arrival on campus.*

[See next page for specific testing/submission dates by program/cohort]

Testing timeline for graduate students returning January 2021:

Program/Cohort	Start date of window in which you can take your PCR test	Negative PCR test submission deadline	First day of in-person instruction at Winding Hill or Grantham campus
*Dietetic Interns	Dec. 28	Jan. 3	Jan. 4
*DPT Class of 2023	Dec. 28	Jan. 3	Jan. 4
DPT Class of 2022	Jan. 4	Jan. 10	Jan. 11
MOT Class of 2021 and 2022	Jan. 5	Jan. 11	Jan. 12
Higher Ed	Jan. 18	Jan. 24	Jan. 25

**These programs/cohorts have a particularly tight turnaround time for their testing and will need to quickly identify and select a testing method below that will allow them to meet their Jan. 3 submission deadline.*

How can I secure a COVID-19 PCR test to take?

1. Community-based testing

Messiah University is not requiring a specific provider for PCR testing. You are welcome to secure a PCR test from a provider that best suits your schedule, cost/insurance needs, local pharmacy or personal preference. We realize that asymptomatic testing is more readily available in some areas than others. These options are regionally based and regulated by state and local governments. **Note:** *Many testing locations require advanced appointments for asymptomatic testing, and require several days for the return of test results, so please plan accordingly based on your campus return date. It is also very important when securing testing to ask to receive a written copy of your test result (can be hard copy or email) that will include your name and the date of the test.*

Provided below is a link from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to assist you in finding testing sites available in your state/region:

<https://www.hhs.gov/coronavirus/community-based-testing-sites/index.html>

Note: Some HHS sites provide asymptomatic testing at no cost. It is important to research the specifics of the testing that is available in your specific region/state to determine what best meets your needs.

2. At-home testing coordinated by Messiah University and 1health

In recognition of the increasing difficulty of securing asymptomatic testing in some areas of the U.S., Messiah is making an at-home and at-cost testing option available to students, in partnership with a national lab testing company called 1health. Students may use the 1health/Messiah website to purchase a test kit to be sent directly to their homes. 1health uses a saliva PCR test, which

requires no medical supervision/assistance. Students mail the completed test kit directly to 1health; and within 72 hours both the student and Messiah University will receive the test result directly, securely and confidentially. The cost for this testing method ranges from \$100-\$125 depending on the shipping method selected. While it is not currently submitable to insurance, you can use HSA and flex dollars to pay for it.

[Visit the 1health-Messiah University partner website to order your at-home test kit.](#)

Important reminder: You must plan your timeframe so that your test is ordered (including shipping time), completed and results able to be provided to Messiah *at least one day in advance of your campus return*. Use the maximum estimated test result return time for your planning purposes, i.e., 72 hours. *You must also be sure to take your test within the window of 7 days prior to your physical return to campus.*

Am I responsible to pay for my pre-arrival COVID-19 PCR test?

Yes, students are responsible for the cost of pre-arrival testing options that require payment.

Note: there are HHS testing sites that offer free asymptomatic testing. You can research options and availability in your state on the [HHS community-based testing website](#).

How do I provide documentation of my test result to Messiah?

1health at-home PCR test: If you choose to use the 1health at-home test that Messiah is making available, your test result will automatically and securely be submitted to Messiah University at the same time that it is emailed to you. *If you use this testing method, you will not have an extra step to submit your test result to the University.* 1health will securely confirm your result with Messiah at the same time that they email it to you.

Other PCR test of your choosing: If you choose an alternate PCR testing method other than 1health, *you will need to upload documentation of your test results into your student health portal:*

How to upload your test results documentation into your student health portal:

- Go to student health portal at <https://messiah.studenthealthportal.com/> (You will be asked to login with your Messiah credentials)
- Click on “MY FORMS” tab
- Click on: COVID test results” form
- Beside “Results”: toggle to your results as indicated on your lab result form
- Beside “Date of Test”: enter the date of the test
- Beside “Covid Lab Image”: click on “Select File” and upload lab result from a saved file (this can be a screen shot of an online test result, a scan or photo of a hard copy document, etc.)
- Click on “Submit”

Important reminder: whichever PCR testing method you choose to use, you must make certain you plan your timeframe so that your test is completed and able to be submitted to Messiah *at least one day in advance of your campus return* (regardless of whether 1health submits it for you, or you upload it to your student health portal yourself.) *If you are uploading your test result yourself, it is extremely helpful if you could do so as soon*

as possible. This will allow for any troubleshooting and follow-up communication from the Engle Center with you if needed.

What if I have already had and recovered from COVID-19? Do I still need to provide a test result?

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 prior to Oct. 15: You must provide documentation of a negative result within the same parameters being asked of all returning on-campus graduate students, i.e., you must take your test within the window of 7 days prior to your physical return to campus. You must also submit your documented result no later than one day in advance of your campus return.

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 from Oct. 16 to the present: You must show proof of your original positive test OR have another test performed showing a negative status. There will be no exceptions. The University's protocol does not accept antibody tests as proof of prior infection.

Those asking for an exemption from testing based on a POSITIVE TEST from Oct.16-present:

- Upload a copy of your original test result to your student health portal (documentation must include your name and the date of your test result). See upload instructions on pg. 3.
- Indicate on the COVID form (on the student health portal) that your result was positive and await communication from an Engle Center staff member.
- In order to be cleared for campus return without a retest, you must be a minimum of 21 days from your ORIGINAL TEST RESULT DATE showing a positive status AND be symptom-free and fever-free.
- In the event that your positive test is within the 21-day window, you could also opt to **repeat your test at least 11 days** from your original test date. A NEGATIVE test on day 11 or later will also clear you.
- In the event of two positive tests, in order to be cleared to come to campus a person must be:
 - At least 21 days from the ORIGINAL positive test date
 - AND be symptom-free and fever-free

WHEN YOU RETURN TO CAMPUS:

Will students be required to participate in additional COVID-19 testing when they return?

Yes, on-campus graduate students should expect to participate in additional testing throughout the spring semester. For instance, within a few days of arriving on campus, all students should expect to undergo an additional COVID-19 PCR test, administered at Winding Hill.

Why is this necessary when students were required to take a COVID-19 test pre-arrival?

Although students are required to provide a negative PCR test prior to campus arrival, it is still possible for students to become positive for COVID-19 between the time of the at-home test and arrival on campus. Given the communal setting of our University—it is critical for Messiah to quickly re-establish a safe and protective campus environment—especially following an extended

break when students are returning from across the U.S. and abroad. In a time when COVID-19 cases are spiking across the country, early population testing allows the University to contain any potential outbreak, and provides our best chance of success for staying open for face-to-face instruction for the semester.

Testing all students within this timeframe also allows Messiah to comply with current directives and guidelines from the Pennsylvania Departments of Health and Education.

Will I have to undergo continued asymptomatic testing throughout the semester?

All students should anticipate a continuation of asymptomatic full population and regular population sampling testing through the spring. [Read the Engle Center's full testing and other health and safety protocols.](#)

Do students need to pay out-of-pocket for required testing throughout the spring semester?

No, once on campus, students do not pay for required testing. Messiah will cover the costs associated with its required asymptomatic testing (full population and sampling) for students during the spring semester.

Is Messiah continuing to offer testing for symptomatic students on campus this spring?

Yes, as in the fall semester, the Engle Center is prepared this spring to administer testing for students who are exhibiting symptoms or have a confirmed or expected exposure to COVID-19 positive individuals. [Read the Engle Center's full testing and other health and safety protocols.](#)

What type of COVID-19 testing will Messiah use this spring?

Messiah uses a combination of various COVID-19 testing methods—including PCR and antigen testing. The testing method depends on the specific circumstances, i.e., individual vs. group testing, symptomatic vs. asymptomatic testing, the individual health needs of the students and the timing involved.