

The logo for UA Cossatot is a large, light gray circular emblem. Inside the circle, there is a stylized white silhouette of a pine tree with five distinct horizontal branches. The text is centered over the tree.

**UA Cossatot:
UPDATED
COVID-19 Plan**

(Effective May 17, 2021)

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Purpose and Introduction

The purpose of this **UPDATED** institutional plan is to prepare UA Cossatot’s staff, students, and community for a return to a traditional campus environment at all UA Cossatot campuses.

The following conditions will continue to guide this and any future COVID-19 plans at UA Cossatot:

- The number and rate of positive COVID-19 cases in our local communities.
- The testing, quarantine, isolation capabilities, and exposure protocols in place at our college.
- Procedures that ensure the college continues to have adequate PPE and cleaning services available at each campus.
- Guidance from the University of Arkansas System, local and state health entities, and the Arkansas Governor’s Office.

This plan and its sections is a fluid response to the COVID-19 epidemic and may be changed based on the prevailing or impending health conditions locally, statewide, and regionally.

Disclaimer

Because our knowledge and understanding of COVID-19 is evolving, UA Cossatot will continue to monitor COVID-19 trends locally, statewide, and regionally to update guidance as circumstances warrant. These policies and procedures do not ensure safety or protection from COVID-19.

Contact Tracing and Testing

UA Cossatot will continue to utilize its partnership with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) to provide contact tracing for COVID-19 infected employees and students. UA Cossatot will refer students and employees who do not have access to COVID-19 testing, or do not know where to be tested to the local Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) Units in Sevier, Howard, Little River, and Pike counties.

Health and Safety

- **UNIVERSAL MASK WEARING IS NO LONGER REQUIRED BUT STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES, AND VISITORS WHO PREFER WEARING A MASK ARE ENCOURAGED TO DO SO.**

UA COSSATOT WILL CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE THE FOLLOWING:

- Social distancing of 6 feet for employees and students in all indoor and outdoor settings.
- Strict self-reporting of symptoms.
- Frequent hand washing and posted reminders to do so.
- Frequent disinfecting of used classrooms and common spaces.
- Discourage sharing items such as pens, staplers, etc.

General Workplace Guidelines

Daily Attendance Protocols for All Employees

Symptom Monitoring

In this **UPDATED** plan, UA Cossatot will continue to insist that staff reports to their supervisor any COVID-19 related symptoms listed below prior to reporting to work. Staff must be free of ANY symptoms potentially related to COVID-19, or have had clearance by a medical professional or test result to be eligible to return to work.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher)
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Runny nose with new sinus congestion
- Muscle aches
- Fatigue
- Sore throat
- Headache
- New gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms
- New loss of taste or smell

Positive COVID-19 Cases

Staff who test positive for COVID-19 must isolate at home until cleared to return to work by the ADH. Moreover, staff who have had ADH-documented close contact (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, are required to quarantine for seven (7) days from the exposure date prior to returning to work or provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test.

**If someone has exposure to COVID-19, and have been fully vaccinated, they do not have to quarantine.*

Student COVID-19 Cases

All students will receive information detailing how UA Cossatot will handle the testing and tracing of COVID-19 cases, as well as and resources they need to be successful and remain as safe as possible during the fall semester.

Individual Department Plans

All departments will return to normal operations (while still abiding by the conditions listed in the first sections of this UPDATED plan) on May 17, 2021. If there is another COVID-19 outbreak, departments may initiate the department plans used during the 20-21 academic year.

College Venue Plan

This **UPDATED** plan allows the full reopening of all UA Cossatot venues. The college will encourage all visitors to follow the Health and Safety guidelines listed above.

Communications Plan

The College Relations Department will continue to address the need for public awareness of the COVID-19 situation in the communities we serve, while educating those communities, as well as college staff and students, of college efforts to make its learning environment as safe as possible. For marketing and outreach we will use social, digital, and traditional media methods to stress the importance of the CDC's recommendations regarding hygiene and social distancing. The College Relations Department will also inform the public of any alterations of UAC services caused by changes in the COVID-19 spread in the area. Our College Relations team will meet every two weeks to address those changes. All communications will abide by HIPAA standards.

Special Notes

Regarding COVID-19 Reporting By Employees

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 should contact Human Resources, Ashley Aylett as the institutional contact tracer, and their immediate supervisor, follow their physician's directives for home quarantine or hospitalized care, and report back to work only after the ADH has sent a letter of clearance to return to work.

The office of Human Resources will confirm receipt of the clearance to return to work and will retain this letter in the employee's personnel file.

Regarding COVID-19 Employee Benefits

Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

On December 31, 2020, the additional leave programs provided in the federal Family First Coronavirus Recovery Act (FFCRA) ended.

In support of employees in the continuing COVID-19 pandemic period, effective January 1, 2021, the University will extend the opportunity for up to 80 total combined hours of paid leave for employees affected by COVID-19. The leave program is not a continuation of the FFCRA leave.

For such paid leave to be granted, the following requirements must be met:

- The employee must not have previously used 80 hours of COVID-19 leave as was provided by the federal Family First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA).
- Due to Coronavirus the employee is subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine order.
- The employee has been directed by the Department of Health or other health authority to quarantine due to Coronavirus.
- Due to Coronavirus the employee is subject to extended campus return-to-work guidelines (up to 14 days rather than the seven and ten day options provided by the AR Department of Health).
- The employee is experiencing Coronavirus symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis.
- The employee must provide care for their dependent child whose school or daycare is closed due to COVID-19.
- The employee must be unable to work from home due to illness or have a job in which working from home is not possible.
- The employee must provide (within a reasonable time established by the campus) appropriate physician, school, Department of Health or equivalent documentation supporting the leave utilization.

Employees who used a portion of the available FFCRA 80 hours in 2020 may use the remainder as COVID-19 leave in 2021 but in no case may use a combined total of more than 80 hours.

Including leave previously used under FFCRA, COVID-19 leave is limited to no more than total of 80 hours for any combination of quarantine, illness or child care leave eligibility.

The 80-hour maximum will be prorated for less than full-time employees.

Regarding Employee Child Care

If childcare availability is limited and/or K-12 schools are closed, departments are encouraged to work with faculty, staff and students to provide flexible scheduling as duties permit.

Regarding Travel

UA Cossatot employees may now travel on behalf of the college.

