**Tuesday, April 6, 2021**

**News for Faculty and Instructors: Penn State and COVID-19**

This twice-weekly email is designed to provide faculty and instructors with Penn State’s pandemic-related news and updates during the Spring 2021 semester. Watch for these emails on Tuesdays and Fridays, with additional “special editions” delivered periodically. Previous faculty news digests are [archived here](https://vpfa.psu.edu/academicaffairs/penn-state-pandemic-news-digest-archive/). For current faculty guidance, resources, FAQ documents, and more visit the [“Back to State Info for Faculty”](https://www.vpfa.psu.edu/back-to-state-fall-2020-resources/) webpage.

**QUESTION FROM FACULTY**

**Q: *When am I eligible to get a vaccine?***

**A:** Pennsylvania is currently in Phase 1B of the vaccine rollout. Those in 1B include faculty and staff members who are in contact with students as a condition of their employment and both undergraduate and graduate students who are in contact with other students while providing instructional, health-related or other services (including residence life) on behalf of the University. Phase 1C, which opens April 12, includes essential workers in a variety of sectors, including transportation, food service, finance, IT, energy, and public health. On April 19, all individuals 16 and older will be eligible. More information is available on [Penn State’s vaccine page](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/vaccine-information/) and on the [Pennsylvania Department of Health website](https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Vaccine/Pages/Vaccine.aspx).

**LATEST NEWS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACULTY**

* Penn State’s [COVID-19 Dashboard](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/covid-19-dashboard/) shows ongoing results for all COVID-19 tests administered on campus since December 19, 2020, for faculty, staff, and students.
* A team including researchers from Penn State has found that approximately [40,000 children in the U.S. may have lost a parent to COVID-19](https://news.psu.edu/story/653069/2021/04/05/research/nearly-40000-kids-who-lost-parent-covid-19-need-immediate-support) since February 2020.
* Information about the third and final Wellness Day is available at [wellnessdays.psu.edu](https://wellnessdays.psu.edu/). [Programming on April 7 will focus on physical and environmental wellness](https://news.psu.edu/story/653392/2021/04/01/campus-life/april-7-wellness-day-information-now-available-online).

**WEBINARS**

* **Wellness through Zoom Games and Improv:** Wednesday, April 7, [9:00-10:00 a.m.](https://keepteaching.psu.edu/webinars/wellness-through-zoom-games-and-improv-3/)

**KEY REMINDERS FOR FACULTY**

* [Penn State is strongly encouraging all students, faculty, and staff to sign up to get a vaccine as soon as they are eligible to receive one](https://news.psu.edu/story/653458/2021/04/01/campus-life/students-employees-encouraged-get-vaccinated-soon-they-are). Phase 2, which extends vaccine eligibility to all Pennsylvanians age 16 or older, will begin on April 19.
* President Eric Barron and guests [answered an array of questions from Penn State faculty and staff during a livestream about the University’s response to the coronavirus](https://news.psu.edu/story/653350/2021/03/31/administration/barron-guests-answer-employee-pandemic-questions-during), employees returning to work on campus, health and safety of the community, and others topics related to the pandemic.
* Physicians at Penn State Health urge people to [continue to wear a mask and follow other COVID mitigation guidelines](https://news.psu.edu/story/653353/2021/04/01/medical-minute-proceed-caution-even-after-vaccination), even if they have been vaccinated.
* [Spring 2021 Holiday/Special Events Testing Schedule](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/testing-support/)
	+ Saturday, April 17: no testing at Pegula Ice Arena or Beaver Stadium (Hintz Family Alumni Center and 101 N. Atherton St. open as usual for walk-up and random testing, respectively); testing at the Commonwealth Campuses remains unchanged.
	+ Friday, May 7: no random testing (all campuses); one walk-up testing site open (Pegula Ice Arena).
	+ Saturday, May 8: no random testing (all campuses); no walk-up testing.
* Walk-up COVID-19 testing hours at the University Park campus will continue as follows:
	+ Walk-up testing at the Hintz Family Alumni Center will be available Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
	+ Testing availability will change on the dates listed above. More information is available [here](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/testing-support/).

This walk-up testing is available to employees who are in the Return to Work database at University Park. Employees in that database also continue to have the option to do the opt-in mail kit testing.

* [Faculty can still submit questions](https://news.psu.edu/story/628322/2020/08/13/academics/penn-state-faculty-can-still-submit-questions-about-return) related to Penn State’s COVID response. Questions may be submitted [here](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdocs.google.com%2Fforms%2Fd%2Fe%2F1FAIpQLSdLJXKUWNxbcqBGf_NJ7x0734cy_GId-aIoiCNYpWPjXAEGsw%2Fviewform&data=02%7C01%7Cagc105%40psu.edu%7C8f277042fb7643a099cd08d86193f571%7C7cf48d453ddb4389a9c1c115526eb52e%7C0%7C0%7C637366635386023185&sdata=4wZ4CcAqoTh1WtIYTtTFGrM%2FfDae7jJurTnlT5C22KQ%3D&reserved=0).

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**To obtain comprehensive, updated information at any time, please review:**

* The University’s comprehensive resources on its [“Back to State” page](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/back-to-state) and [updated FAQs](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/faq/topic/latest-updates) regarding **on-campus work and learning**
* Penn State’s [“Keep Teaching”](https://keepteaching.psu.edu/) and [“Keep Learning”](https://keeplearning.psu.edu/) websites, including many [Spring 2021 instruction-related FAQs](https://keepteaching.psu.edu/frequently-asked-questions/)
* Penn State’s [COVID-19 dashboard](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/covid-19-dashboard)
* Previous issues of this [Digest](https://www.vpfa.psu.edu/penn-state-pandemic-news-digest-archive/)
* The online archive of [video messages](https://www.vpfa.psu.edu/video-messages-fall-2020-preparations/) from Penn State leaders and experts
* The [Office of Human Resources COVID-19 information site](https://hr.psu.edu/covid-19-coronavirus) and [“Return to Work on Campus”](https://sites.psu.edu/returntowork/) resource site
* The [“University Measures” webpage](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/university-measures/), which summarizes steps Penn State is taking in response to COVID-19
* The University’s [health information page focused on personal safety practices](https://virusinfo.psu.edu/stay-well) for individuals at all campuses
* A robust, updated[list of contacts and resources](https://sites.psu.edu/virusinfo/contacts-and-resources-for-penn-staters/)for the University community
* The Social Science Research Institute [website featuring pandemic-related insights from University experts](https://covid-19.ssri.psu.edu/) and other resources