

February 1, 2022


## Spring '22 Update re. Public Health Guidance on Vaccinations & Boosters/SMC Requirements, Masking & More.

Dear SMC Student:

Welcome to Santa Monica College! And if you are a returning student, welcome back! Thank you for choosing SMC. With this decision, you are joining a community dedicated to your academic and career goals.


Spring 2022 semester is just around the corner. Your safety and wellbeing are SMC's #1 priority. To ensure that we lead the way forward together *safely*, please read this update that highlights **new & most current public health guidelines regarding boosters & vaccinations, new mask guidelines, plus support services, an important transportation update, a new way to get financial aid funds delivered to you, and more.**

### New and Most Current Public Health Guidelines

**New Public Health Guidance on Boosters \*Now Required\* & More:** The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has provided  new guidance for institutions for higher education like SMC, redefining what it means to be *fully vaccinated*. This means that SMC's requirements around vaccinations and boosters must also follow suit:

- Individuals who are “fully vaccinated” are now considered to be individuals who are fully vaccinated *and* have their booster shots, if they are eligible. Individuals who are eligible and due for their booster (more than 6 months past the second dose for Moderna or Pfizer or more than 2 months past for Johnson & Johnson) are considered **not fully vaccinated**.
- As a result of this change, **students are now required to submit their vaccine booster (if eligible) by March 15**. Going forward, students will not be able to register **for on-ground classes** in summer 2022 intersession and subsequent future semesters without submitting their booster (if eligible). Students who are not yet due for their booster (less than 6 months since the second dose for Moderna or Pfizer and less than 2 months for J & J) should submit their booster as soon as they receive it. **Please monitor your SMC student email—information will be sent shortly on how to submit proof of boosters.** View CDC guidance on choosing booster shots.
- Students who are *past due* for their boosters, but not yet able to get their boosters are required to test weekly for COVID-19 and report any positive test results to **healthcenter@smc.edu**.
- Testing is available on campus (run by Curative within Parking Lot 5 on Pearl) but you are not required to use testing facilities here on campus; rapid PCR testing, with results available within 40 minutes to 2 hours, is now offered on-site (Book rapid PCR at Curative Lot 5 ). In addition, walk-up appointments during open hours for SMC staff and students are available for standard PCR testing, which provides test results generally

within about 48 hours (Book standard PCR at Curative Lot 5 ); bring your college ID. Again, you do not have to test on campus; please **go here** for a list of on- and off-campus testing resources.

- The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health also issued updated guidance around isolation and quarantine. The new guidance states if you have a close contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19, that you get tested right away, then again at 5 days after exposure. You should  quarantine for 5-10 days if you are not up to date with your vaccine boosters or are unvaccinated. You can end your quarantine on day 6 if you test negative following 5 days of quarantine. If you do not test, you should quarantine for a minimum of 10 days. Exposed persons who were previously infected with COVID-19 within the past 90 days should test using an **antigen test**.

## Spring Classes and Student Support Services

**Spring 2022 Classes & Services, a General Update:** While Santa Monica College had initially planned on offering more on-ground classes in Spring 2022 than in Fall 2021, the college has scaled back on-ground offerings in order to keep the footprint on all our campuses *minimal* with a focus on your health & safety. Only 20 percent of total class sections on offer—roughly 500 classes—will be on ground. SMC Emeritus classes previously planned for an on-ground format in Spring 2022 are also being pivoted to an online format, to keep our older adult student population safe.

### ***Student Support Services.***

- For the remainder of the Winter 2022 term, **the following support services will continue to be offered on-ground.**
  - Auxiliary Services
  - Campus Police
  - The Cashiers Office
  - The Campus Bookstore
  - DSPS On-Ground Accommodations
  - The Bodega Food Pantry
  - The Library
  - The Student Health Center

Please note that the following information is subject to change from week to week—SMC's Emergency Operations Team and college leadership meet regularly, and changes in public health trends/guidelines may result in this information being updated as well. **Starting Monday, February 14 (Spring 2022 semester), Core services such as Admissions and Records, DSPS, Financial Aid, Counseling, International Education, and Welcome Center will offer limited on-ground services.**

Please monitor the Hours of Operation website for hours and up-to-date information on which additional student support services areas will be on-ground for Spring. Employees who are working out of their offices will continue to do so per their current schedule.

**Surgical Masks & KN95 masks Now Available in Classrooms.** Each SMC classroom will now have a supply of surgical masks and/or KN95 masks. **Please take a mask if you need it, but please, please do not take extras—remember these masks are for all your fellow Corsairs who need one, too.** Wear your mask properly whenever in a classroom/in an indoor setting and outdoors whenever you cannot social distance or if you find yourself in a crowded situation. **SMC students are required to wear at least a surgical mask. Watch:** [Know How to Wear Your Face Mask Correctly](#) .

## **SMC is *Truly* Here for You: A Reminder of Support Beyond the Classroom**

When we say, “Santa Monica College is here for you,” we mean it! These past couple years have been difficult; please know that SMC is here to support you in every way possible. Make note of—and *use!*—the following services, they are just for you:

- **The Center for Wellness & Wellbeing:** Short-term **free** counseling and confidential therapy is available via phone or video-chat: call **310-434-4503** or email [cww@smc.edu](mailto:cww@smc.edu) to set up an appointment. SMC can help you manage stress or anxiety. You are not alone—we will get through whatever lies ahead together!
- **Free Emotional Support Hotline + Free Virtual Healthcare:** Call the 24/7 emotional support hotline at **1-800-691-6003**. Services are free and *completely* confidential. For more resources, check out the Center for Wellness & Wellbeing's webpage. You can *also* access free virtual, confidential healthcare with a nurse or nurse practitioner in Student Health Services! Email [healthcenter@smc.edu](mailto:healthcenter@smc.edu) or call 310-434-4262 to schedule a same day appointment for immunizations (not COVID-19 vaccines, however; for information on COVID-19 vaccines, go to this [LA County Public Health webpage](#) ).
- **Mobile vaccine clinics** are also **periodically available on main campus! Get free vaccinations & boosters at the Core Performance Courtyard, view details for the next clinic on Feb. 10. 2022.**

- The Bodega, SMC's first centralized food pantry, is open on **Wednesdays from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.**. Bodega neighbors the main cafeteria on the east side (by the science building). Any currently enrolled student is welcome to come by during operating hours and receive non-perishable food items, fresh produce, and toiletries. This replaces the Pop-Up Drive-Thru Food Pantry SMC launched during the pandemic. For information on other food security resources, go to the Food Security website.
- **Free Chromebook Lending Program:** SMC continues its free technology-lending program. If you are in need of a Chromebook, please contact your instructor or an SMC counselor.
- **Free Student Wi-Fi at Bundy:** SMC continues to extend the services of a free Wi-Fi area at the SMC Bundy Campus East Parking Lot, available Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. (available all semester to enrolled students, except official holidays). In addition, to find free Wi-Fi service close to you in Los Angeles County, check out this **online WiFi Locator Tool** .
- **The Largest Student Support Network in California:** SMC has the most extensive one-on-one student support network of any California community college. This past year, we have been especially grateful for the highly skilled 170+ career and academic counselors (including psychologists) who are supporting our amazing instructors in ensuring that **SMC helps you stay on track to reach your academic/career goals**. Connect with a counselor. And be sure to take advantage of the many events and workshops taking place online.

## **Faster Financial Aid Distribution & Free County-Wide Bus and Light Rail**

**New, fast way to get your financial aid arrives at SMC!** CARES funds, and all financial aid and tuition refunds will now be distributed through SMC's **new BankMobile system**. Look for an email you should have received from BankMobile to set up the way you want to receive your funds – either to a new BankMobile Vibe account, directly to your existing bank account, or via check. Follow the directions in the email. It's fast and easy! Your funds will arrive quickly. Please take a moment to visit Corsair Connect at [www.smc.edu/cc](http://www.smc.edu/cc) to verify and update (if needed) your home mailing address.

**IMPORTANT: Ride seven transit systems all over L.A. for just \$22.50 per semester. An exciting update—**SMC students who pay their Student Benefits fee of \$22.50 can now ride and transfer between several transit systems throughout Los Angeles thanks to a Metro pilot program called **GoPass**, which works on BBB, Metro, Culver City Bus, LADOT Dash, Norwalk Transit, Montebello Bus, City of Commerce, and a growing list of other transit agencies.

Steps to get the GoPass:

(1) First, pay your \$22.50 Student Benefits fee at Corsair Connect .

(2) Get your TAP card or app ready:

- Use a virtual TAP card on your phone in the TAP App, Apple Wallet, or Google Wallet. (Requires \$1 to be held in stored value)
- Use a TAP card you already own (except a reduced-fare College/ Vocational TAP card).
- Don't own a TAP card or smartphone? Pick one up from the Cashier's Office or request it be mailed to the address we have on file. Just email your student ID # to [Transportation@smc.edu](mailto:Transportation@smc.edu). (The blank TAP card will need to be registered before it can be used to ride for free).

(3) Get your Eligibility Code by going to the **Enrollment** tab on [www.smc.edu/cc](http://www.smc.edu/cc) . Find the code under the **Metro/BBB TAP Card** menu option.

(4) Enter the code in Metro's portal: [www.taptogo.net/gopass](http://www.taptogo.net/gopass) , along with the 20-digit number found on the bottom right of the back of the TAP card (or in your virtual app). Your card will be ready to use within an hour.

- For problems registering your card, call 866.TAP-TOGO
- Details and updates at [smc.edu/transportation](http://smc.edu/transportation)
- Questions? Contact [Transportation@smc.edu](mailto:Transportation@smc.edu)
- Check the Metro website [metro.net/about/fsi](http://metro.net/about/fsi) for updates on transit partners.

~

Stay healthy, safe, and *stay the course!* Throughout the Spring semester, SMC will offer a wide range of events, workshops, and ways for you to connect with other students, faculty, and staff across the Corsair family. The college also offers you networking opportunities, the means to build meaningful connections with fellow students as well as to discover or grow your own leadership potential. You can do this by getting involved with student government at Santa Monica College. Here, you will find the world, and there are so many ways for you to meet like-minded students and discover new things about yourself.

With you as part of the SMC family, I am confident and hopeful for a brighter, better, more promising future.

Wishing you all the best,



Kathryn E. Jeffery, Ph.D.


Superintendent/President

## President Kathryn Jeffery's Message to SMC Employees Regarding Updated Public Health Guidance on Vaccinations & Boosters, and General Spring 2022 Update

February 1, 2022

Dear SMC Colleagues:

Spring 2022 semester is just around the corner, and with hopeful optimism I sincerely look forward to reconnecting with students and colleagues. This communication summarizes important, **updated** public health guidance on vaccinations and boosters (and SMC's necessary response) plus a recap of updated masking, isolation, and quarantine guidance; a recap of classes and services *currently* slated to be on-ground vs. online; and a few other relevant updates.


**New Public Health Guidance on Boosters \*Now Required\* & More:** The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has provided  new guidance for institutions of higher education like SMC, redefining what it means to be *fully vaccinated*. This means that the College's requirements around vaccinations and boosters must also follow suit:

- Individuals who are “fully vaccinated” are now considered to be individuals who are fully vaccinated *and* have their booster shots, if they are eligible. Individuals who are eligible and due for their booster (more than 6 months past the second dose for Moderna or Pfizer or more than 2 months past for Johnson & Johnson) are considered **not fully vaccinated**. View CDC guidance on choosing booster shots.
- **How/When to Submit Proof of Booster. The deadline for SMC employees to submit proof of boosters is Friday, April 15.** The Human Resources Department is working with MIS to develop a self-service portal, *exclusively for employees* to submit proof of boosters. We anticipate that this portal will be available and ready for use **by Tuesday, Feb. 15. Please be on the lookout for an email that will be sent direct to your SMC email from HRVaccines@smc.edu** (not via Bulletins); this email will contain a live link to the portal and further instructions. The HR team is diligently working to make this process as smooth as possible, your patience in the interim is greatly appreciated!

**P.S.:** A communication is going out separately to students regarding the booster requirement, and the **deadline for students to submit proof—if they are eligible for the booster—is March 15**. The process for students is slightly different, and is headed by SMC's Health Services Department, in collaboration with other departments.

- Employees who are *past due* for their boosters, but have not gotten them, will be required to test *weekly* for COVID-19 and report any positive test results to HRVaccines@smc.edu Testing is available on campus (run by Curative within Parking Lot 5 on Pearl) but you are not required to use testing facilities here on campus.

Rapid PCR testing, with results available within 40 minutes to 2 hours, is now offered on-site (Book rapid PCR at Curative Lot 5 ). In addition, walk-up appointments during open hours for SMC staff and students are available for standard PCR testing, with test results generally provided within about 48 hours (Book standard PCR at Curative Lot 5 ); bring your college ID. Please go here for a **list of on- and off-campus testing resources**.


- The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health also issued updated guidance around isolation and quarantine. The new guidance states that if you have a close contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19, that you get tested right away, then again at 5 days after exposure. You should  quarantine for 5-10 days if you are not up to date with your vaccine boosters or are unvaccinated. You can end your quarantine on day 6 if you test negative following 5 days of quarantine. If you do not test, you should quarantine for a minimum of 10 days. Exposed persons who were previously infected with COVID-19 within the past 90 days should test using an **antigen test**.
- **Mobile vaccine clinics** are also **periodically available on main campus! Get free vaccinations & boosters at the Core Performance Courtyard, view details for the next clinic on Feb. 10, 2022.** These clinics are scheduled to be **held every other Thursday** through March 2022. Updated information is disseminated on these vax clinics via Bulletins, please monitor your email for more details in the days ahead!


**New Masking Guidelines, a Recap:** On Jan. 7, 2022, LA County Public Health issued new requirements for employers to provide a well-fitted medical grade mask, surgical mask or higher-level respirator (N95 or KN95) to all employees while indoors at the worksite. On January 12, 2022, you received a bulletin from Director of Safety & Risk Management Daniel Phillips informing you of the new guidelines and related processes/information, as SMC has implemented these new guidelines. I am recapping a few relevant points from that information here, along with some additional updates:



- All employees working indoors **must** wear a surgical mask, KN95s, or N95s, when around others; **Cloth masks are no longer acceptable for indoor activities.**
- Surgical masks, KN95, or N95 masks must be worn at all times indoors unless you are working in a room alone with the door closed.
- You are encouraged to eat outside—enjoy our abundant, quintessential Southern California sunshine!—but you should *definitely* keep a distance at least 6 feet from others if not (that is, if you have to eat your lunch at the desk or in a common area).
- Your department should have received an initial supply of surgical masks, KN95 masks and N95 masks. If for some reason you did not, please contact Daniel Phillips at Phillips\_Daniel@smc.edu.

Those who wish to use an N95 mask **are required** to take the following steps before using an N95 mask (Employees who wish to use surgical masks or KN95 masks do not need to follow this process and can use those products without taking additional steps):

- Read the CDC training documents on how to properly wear an N95 mask. Put on and Check Disposable Respirator
- Read and sign the Voluntary Use Agreement.  Information for Voluntary Respirator Use
- Submit the signed Voluntary Use Agreement to [ariass\\_glaury@smc.edu](mailto:ariass_glaury@smc.edu) in Risk Management

To replenish your initial supply of masks, departments need to follow the Adobe Sign PPE ordering form instructions attached.  Instructions for Ordering PPE and Sanitizer . If you have any questions or concerns don't hesitate to contact Daniel Phillips, Director of Risk Management, at [phillips\\_daniel@smc.edu](mailto:phillips_daniel@smc.edu). Please note that KN95s and surgical masks are also being made available in all SMC classrooms so that our students have a choice of using either a surgical mask or a KN95.

**Spring 2022: A (Slightly) Scaled Back On-Ground Presence:** Though the College initially planned on increasing the number of on-ground class sections in Spring 2022 (compared to Fall 2021, that is, when SMC offered around 300 classes on-ground) to roughly 900 on-ground sections, given the uncertainty around the Omicron variant during the college planning process, as well as rapidly changing public health guidance around vaccination and testing, **SMC is scaling back the number of planned on-ground sections for Spring 2022 to 500 classes, which comprises roughly 20 percent of the total class offerings for the semester.** While we had hoped to substantially increase the on-ground presence, this cautious path forward is in keeping with an institutional priority on the health and wellbeing of the college community while also ensuring the least disruption to students given the difficulty of pivoting classes from an on-ground setting to the virtual, remote format.

Emeritus Spring classes previously planned for an on-ground format will pivot to an online setting for the health and safety of our older adult student population who are at increased risk for Covid-19. This will keep the campus footprint minimal in Spring 2022, and we are constantly monitoring public health trends and guidance to ensure that we are meeting students' needs in the most helpful way possible, while keeping the college community safe.

**Student Services.** Please note that the following information is subject to change from week to week—SMC's Emergency Operations Team and college leadership meet regularly, and changes in public health trends/guidelines may result in this information being updated as well:

- For the remainder of the Winter 2022 term, **the following support services will continue to be offered on-ground.**
- Auxiliary Services

- Campus Police
- The Cashiers Office
- The Campus Bookstore
- DSPS On-Ground Accommodations
- The Bodega Food Pantry
- The Library
- The Student Health Center

**Starting Monday, February 14th (Spring 2022 semester), Core services such as Admissions and Records, DSPS, Financial Aid, Counseling, International Education, and Welcome Center will offer limited on-ground services.**

Please monitor the **Hours of Operations webpage**, for hours and up-to-date information on which additional student support services areas will be on-ground for Spring. Employees who are working out of their offices will continue to do so per their current schedule.

**Mark Your Calendars! Spring 2022 Flex Day:** And last but not the least, mark your calendar yes, it is almost that time again!—for Spring 2022 Professional Development Day, coming Tuesday, March 15. The all-day online program will bring together practical professional development opportunities, including student-centered workshops, self-care sessions, distance education workshops and a discussion about the future direction of professional development at SMC. Stay tuned for more details, or visit the Professional Development Committee website. *(Picture features Math professor and Professional Development Committee member Brian Rodas at a past Flex Day event).*



~

From the early stages of the pandemic, constituent group leaders and colleagues representing key operational and administrative areas were invited to participate in vital conversations along with Senior Staff and the SMC Emergency Operations Team. As we continue to chart a way forward together in what will assuredly be a new landscape, thank you to everyone—the Board of Trustees, faculty, classified educators, administrators, managers, and student leaders—who contributed to the process and informed decision-making.

And as I sign off on this memo, I am confident in our capacity to remain focused on safely moving forward to a brighter, better future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathryn E. Jeffery". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Kathryn E. Jeffery, Ph.D.

Superintendent/President