

AU's COVID-19 Testing Procedure

Frequent testing will be an essential piece of protecting the health and safety of our campus and broader community from the spread of COVID-19. Evidence has mounted in favor of frequent testing as part of an integrated approach to controlling the virus on college campuses, along with hygiene and physical distancing practices, contact tracing, and containment measures.

As we work to ramp up on-campus activities safely during spring semester 2021, American University will require regular COVID-19 (PCR) screening for students, faculty and staff with a presence on campus. We will integrate testing into a comprehensive approach based on current scientific evidence and designed to identify asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic students and employees and mitigate health risks to our community.

This test will be provided free of charge. The mandatory requirements of the testing plan, and how it applies to different members of our community, are in the Health and Safety Directives: Mandatory COVID-19 Testing and summarized below.

WHO TESTS AND WHEN

American University students, staff, faculty and contract workers with a presence on campus must participate in regular testing to screen for COVID-19. How frequently you are tested will depend on how often you are present on campus. Below are the categories and frequencies of testing.

STUDENTS

Testing Locations

- Asymptomatic students can receive a test at the Student Health Center's designated test site at Constitution Hall (see schedule, at www.american.edu/ocl/healthcenter/covid-19-help-information.cfm).
- Students who are experiencing symptoms should make an appointment at the Student Health Center by calling 202-885-3380 or scheduling online through the Health Portal (AU login required).
- Students with confirmed exposure will receive information from their Covid Care Coordinator.

Students can also test through your health provider, or at local testing sites in Washington, DC; Maryland; or Virginia.

Testing Schedule

Students with symptoms or known exposure

- Test: Immediately
- More information: Quarantine while awaiting your results. If you learn of your exposure in a call from the Covid Care Coordinator, you will receive instructions on follow-up at that time. Please Self-Report symptoms or positive test results and you will receive follow-up. Please see Health and Safety Directive: Requirements Following COVID-19 Exposure, Positive Test, or Suspected Infection.

Residential students

- Test: Twice a week, at least 48-72 hours apart
- You are Category 1. This includes students living in Emergency/Critical Needs housing and students participating in the Mid-Semester Residential Experience.

Off-campus students, on campus weekly

- Test: Once a week
- You are Category 2. This includes students coming to campus one day or more a week to attend in-person classes, work in research laboratories, or engage in on-campus employment.

Off-campus students, on campus less than weekly

- Test: On the same day that you come to campus; your presence on campus will then be authorized for seven days.
- You are Category 3. This includes students living in the DC metro area who occasionally access the campus to utilize study space or athletics facilities.

Athletes

- Test: Based on NCAA requirements
- Student athletes are Category 4. Specifics will be shared with athletes according to their particular circumstances (competing or training, any heightened requirements by leagues, etc.)

FACULTY AND STAFF

Testing Locations

- Asymptomatic faculty and staff can receive a test at University Club (see schedule), or via their health provider or local testing sites in Washington, DC; Maryland; or Virginia.
- AU does not provide testing on campus for symptomatic or exposed faculty or staff. If you have symptoms or have known exposure, you must be tested through your health provider or local testing sites.

Testing Schedule

Faculty or Staff with Symptoms or Known Exposure

- Test: Immediately
- Do not come to campus. Isolate (if positive) or quarantine (if exposed), following CDC guidelines and the guidance of your health provider, and if applicable, your AU Covid Care Coordinator.

Please see Health and Safety Directive: Requirements Following Covid-19 Exposure, Positive Test, or Suspected Infection.

Campus Presence, Residential

- Test: Twice a week, at least 48-72 hours apart
- You are Category 1. This includes staff living in University-controlled housing, as well as their domestic partners.

Campus Presence, Weekly

- Test: Once a week
- You are Category 2. This includes anyone on campus one or more days per week, such as faculty members conducting in-person classes or working in on-campus laboratories, or staff or contractors performing work in residence halls, classrooms, labs or offices.

Campus Presence, Less Than Weekly

- Test: On the same day that the initial physical presence occurs; your presence will then be authorized for seven days.
- You are Category 3. This includes any faculty or staff with an occasional need to be on campus, such as periodically using research facilities or offices on a non-weekly basis.

About the Test

What: Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) saliva test, which tests for active infection

Who: All students (asymptomatic and symptomatic); asymptomatic faculty and staff. **AU does not provide testing for faculty/staff with symptoms.**

How to prepare: You cannot have anything to eat, drink, or chew 60 minutes prior to testing. This includes brushing your teeth, chewing gum, taking medications, smoking or vaping.

Step to take before (or at) your first visit: As part of the test (and to receive results from the lab, which is an outside provider), you will need to register an account. Therefore:

- You will need access to a smart phone or tablet. If you don't have one, there will be a device to use at the test site.
- If you are certain you will test **before mid-February**, you may register at www.vaulthealth.com/covid.
- If you will test for the first time **after mid-February**, there will be a new provider and hence a new link. There will also be an app to download.

How/when you will receive results from AU-provided testing: They will be emailed by the provider to the address you've registered; results should come within 72 hours (and, after mid-February, within 24 hours). Please monitor your email.

Vaccination Information

The COVID-19 vaccines are being distributed in different formats across different jurisdictions. States and localities established their own criteria, eligibility categories, and timelines. We recommend you sign up for vaccination updates from the health departments in your local community—DC, Maryland, Virginia.

American University will not administer vaccines at this time. You should follow guidance from your local health department and/or health care provider about obtaining the vaccine when you become eligible. After you have been vaccinated, you still need to follow AU's COVID-19 testing protocols.

Some state eligibility criteria are based on occupation and definitions of essential workers. Human Resources is working on a process for those employees who may need employment verification to qualify in certain categories. If you have specific questions about employment verification, please contact employeerelations@american.edu.