



Hello Campus Community --

We are excited to kick off the fall semester and the first week of classes next week! As we make our final preparations, we want to share the latest health and safety updates and review some important reminders.

#### Temporary Masking

As we begin the fall semester with the highest number of in-person classes since the pandemic began, **CSUSM is reinstating a temporary masking requirement in instructional spaces starting on Monday, Aug. 29 through end of day on Friday, Sept. 9.** Instructional spaces include classrooms, lecture halls, instructional labs and library classrooms. During this two-week period, masking will be optional in general library spaces. Masking is still required in medical settings in California, which includes Student Health and Counseling Services. Masks remain recommended in all indoor campus spaces.

The decision to require masking for two weeks is to prevent a start-of-the-semester surge as we bring students back into full classroom environments. Please note that free surgical and KN95 masks are available to all members of our campus community. [Several pickup locations](#) are available across campus. N95 masks are also available following training and a proper fitting.

#### Reporting and Testing

Please be aware that all positive cases within our campus community should be reported through the [online form to our COVID Case Management Team](#). This helps our team provide follow-up resources for individuals who test positive, share timely exposure notifications, update dashboards, and reduce the spread of COVID-19 within our campus community. If you have questions about COVID protocols or need public health advice, you are encouraged to email the CCMT at [covidcasereporting@csusm.edu](mailto:covidcasereporting@csusm.edu).

Free PCR testing continues to be available on campus through the [county-operated COVID testing clinic](#) in Lower Lot B off Craven Road. The walk-up clinic is open seven days a week for all members of our campus community, as well as the public. Results are often available within 24 hours.

Rapid antigen testing kits will be available on campus starting Monday, Aug. 29. Students can request tests through [Student Health & Counseling Services](#), and employees can request tests through the [Covered Cougar Distribution Center](#). All individuals are encouraged to order a third round of [free at-home tests through the U.S. Postal Service](#). When possible, employees are encouraged first to request at-home tests from their insurance provider, helping ensure that the campus supply of testing kits is readily available to our students.

We will continue to update the [COVID-19 dashboard](#) to keep our campus community informed of current cases. Additional helpful links, including access to [past communications](#) and [current exposure protocols](#), can be found on the [CSUSM as One resource website](#).

#### Vaccinations and Exemptions

While mandated surveillance testing is no longer required for individuals with medical or religious exemptions, all students and employees must meet the requirements of the [CSU COVID-19 vaccination policy](#) to study or work at any of the 23 campuses in the CSU system, including CSUSM. This policy requires all individuals to provide their vaccination and booster record to the university or have an approved medical or religious exemption on file. An incomplete record is a code of conduct violation and subject to disciplinary action, which will jeopardize an individual's ability to study or work at CSUSM.

#### Additional COVID-19 Prevention Efforts

The university has taken specific measures to improve the air quality and flow in all campus buildings, as well as ongoing monitoring and weekly filter checks. All HVAC filters have been upgraded to meet the highest filtration efficiency possible for pandemic-level targets. HVAC systems also are pulling maximum outside air into the vents, and operating hours have been extended to better flush systems before and after occupancy.

#### Understanding Monkeypox

Earlier this month, Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency in response to the growing case rate of monkeypox in California. While cases are still somewhat rare (with less than 200 known cases in the county), it is important to know the symptoms, mitigate your risks and stay informed.

[Monkeypox](#) spreads primarily through direct contact between people with infectious sores, scabs or bodily fluids. Monkeypox symptoms might start with symptoms like the flu, such as fever, low energy, swollen lymph nodes and general body aches. Within one to three days after the appearance of fever, a person can develop a rash or sores. They can look like pimples or blisters and be painful and itchy.

According to the CDC, preventing the spread of monkeypox is similar to the mitigating practices of COVID-19, including practicing good hand hygiene, avoiding close contact with people with symptoms of sores and rashes, isolating and covering rashes if infected, and avoiding contact with infected materials contaminated with the virus.

A monkeypox vaccine and treatment options do exist, although availability of the vaccine has been limited. CSUSM has applied to become a CDC-approved clinical investigation site for monkeypox, which would allow Student Health & Counseling Services to perform on-site testing and provide treatment options. We hope to share more details soon.

If you are experiencing symptoms and suspect it might be monkeypox, students should contact [Student Health & Counseling Services](#) at 760-750-4915, and employees should contact their health-care provider.

#### Caring for Each Other

Remember, if you're not feeling well, stay home and test. Report any positive cases and help prevent further spread. Continue to monitor your health and mitigate risks through your daily actions and personal health decisions. Together, we'll continue to navigate any new complexities we face. On behalf of our campus community, thank you for prioritizing your health and wellness, and for considering the safety and needs of others.

If you have any questions or need help navigating health resources on campus, our team is here to help at [csusmasone@csusm.edu](mailto:csusmasone@csusm.edu). We are so honored to be part of this great community with you, and look forward to an exciting start of the fall semester!