



College Brief

NO. 35 November 20, 2020
FROM: Louis J. Petrizzo, Interim President
SUBJECT: SUNY Suffolk to Commence Mandatory COVID-19 Testing for All On-campus Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

SUNY Suffolk to Begin Mandatory Pooled Saliva Testing for all On-Campus Faculty, Staff and Administrators

Effective Monday, November 23, 2020

As we continue to see a spike in the number of COVID-19 cases, the College has worked with its collective bargaining unit leadership to reach a Memorandum of Agreement to extend our mandatory pooled saliva testing effort to all on-campus faculty, staff and administrators. We agree that this effort will help detect COVID-19 cases and will assist in limiting the spread. This new requirement ensures that all on-campus employees will be tested regularly during each semester, which will assist public health officials in identifying, tracing, and containing the virus. It will also help to ensure the health of our community.

All on-campus employees will be required to participate in the College's COVID-19 pooled saliva testing beginning the week of November 23rd and continuing until further notice. **All on-campus employees are required to complete one test prior to December 18, 2020. All on-campus employees are strongly urged to complete one test either next week or the week immediately following Thanksgiving, particularly if you plan to travel or visit individuals outside your household over the Thanksgiving break, and to complete another test during the weeks of December 7 or December 14, if feasible.** Going forward, a schedule for employee testing after January 1, 2021, will be made available. The College's testing plan will require all on-campus SUNY Suffolk employees to be tested no less than three times during each semester, subject to change based on SUNY requirements and the parameters of the College's SUNY-approved testing plan. Employees will be required to coordinate their testing schedule with their

immediate supervisor, and testing is expected to take place on work time and only on the days you are scheduled to be on site.

The testing schedule in place until December 18, 2020 is as follows:

Campus	Date	Time	Testing Location
Grant	11/30/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Captree Commons Cafeteria
Grant	11/30/2020	4:30 PM – 8:00 PM	Captree Commons Cafeteria
Grant	12/1/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Captree Commons Cafeteria
Grant	12/2/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Captree Commons Cafeteria
Grant	12/2/2020	4:30 PM – 8:00 PM	Captree Commons Cafeteria
Grant	12/16/2020	9:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Captree Commons Cafeteria
Culinary	11/23/2020	9:00 AM – 1:45 PM	Multipurpose Room
Culinary	11/24/2020	9:00 AM – 1:45 PM	Multipurpose Room
Eastern	11/30/2020	9:00 AM – 1:45 PM	Peconic Cafe
Eastern	12/1/2020	9:00 AM – 1:45 PM	Peconic Cafe
Eastern	12/8/2020	9:00 AM – 1:45 PM	Peconic Cafe
Eastern	12/9/2020	9:00 AM – 1:45 PM	Peconic Cafe
Ammerman	11/23/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	11/30/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/1/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/2/2020	9:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/2/2020	4:00 PM – 8:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/5/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/7/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/8/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/9/2020	9:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/12/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/14/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/15/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/16/2020	12:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Babylon Student Center
Ammerman	12/18/2020	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Babylon Student Center

SUNY's pooled saliva testing approach enables us to collect individual cheek swab samples from small groups of between 6-12 people, and to perform a screening analysis of the group with just one test. The 6-12 individual samples are combined into one batch, which is sent to SUNY Upstate Medical where it is tested for SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Important Steps Before Testing

- Two days before being tested, all test participants will need to register at the SUNY website that has been established for this purpose. As part of the registration, each registrant will establish a private password, provide demographic information, contact

information, and health insurance information. It is necessary to gather health insurance information so that if a test group pool comes back as COVID-19 positive, SUNY Upstate Medical will be able to proceed with testing the individual saliva swabs that were collected, enabling those in the cohort to receive individual results within a few days.

Important Steps The Day of Testing

- Do not eat or drink anything, including chewing gum, mints or lozenges, within 30 minutes of reporting to the saliva testing collection site.
- Abstain from smoking, vaping, or using smokeless tobacco products for 30 minutes prior to the test.
- Do not brush your teeth or use mouthwash within three hours of reporting to the saliva testing collection site.

The Testing Process

The testing process will work as follows:

1. Every participant will need to pre-register for testing at the following SUNY link: <http://register.suny-covid.com> two days before their scheduled test. Step 1 of the registration form must be completed before arriving for the test. The remaining portion of the registration will be completed at the test location, including registering the specific test kit.
2. Every participant can only be tested in one pooled group.
3. Individuals administer the test to themselves, swabbing their cheeks for 10 or 15 seconds, and providing the saliva samples to a healthcare representative at the testing collection site.
4. On each of our three campuses, the pooled testing operations will be coordinated by the College-wide Associate Dean of the School of Nursing, thereby ensuring that procedures and protocols are properly followed, staff is properly trained, and privacy and confidentiality are maintained.
5. The 6-12 individual samples will be combined into one batch that will be sent to SUNY Upstate Medical where it is tested for SARS-CoV-2 virus.
6. A negative test for the pool means that all 6-12 people in the pool sample are presumed at the time to be coronavirus-free. Participants who test “negative” will not be contacted further.
7. A positive test for the pool would mean each individual saliva sample within the pool will be further tested to pinpoint exact positive case(s) from the pool. The same saliva sample submitted for the pool will now be immediately tested individually. This greatly improves testing capacity and result turnaround time, which is crucial to tracking and isolating the virus. Individual employees who test positive, will be contacted by Human Resources regarding follow-up and next steps. Follow-up testing will include individual PCR testing or reflex testing. Upon guidance from the Suffolk County Department of Health, the College will refer those who test positive, for appropriate follow-up care and next steps.

Testing Q & A

QUESTION #1 How does mandatory testing help?

- A. The College continues to following strict enforcement of safety protocols to minimize exposure (e.g. wearing a face covering/mask at all times while on campus; practicing proper hand hygiene; physical distancing; routine health screening and symptom monitoring), and collection of case-count statistics to support data-based decisions that will help contain the spread of the virus when it does appear. These efforts help confirm that our safety protocols are working effectively.

QUESTION #2 Why are we using group saliva (pooling) testing?

- A. Pooling is utilized in areas where the number of positive tests is expected to be low. This testing is less expensive and less invasive. This test will allow us to provide sensitive, accurate, and rapid feedback about the presence of COVID-19 in saliva samples from the limited number of individuals on campus.

QUESTION #3 Will faculty and staff be charged for the saliva test or any follow-up testing that will be necessary after a positive result?

- A. Faculty and staff will not be charged for the saliva pool test. Subsequent follow-up testing (individual PCR testing or reflex testing) will be processed through the employee's health insurance.

Please note that as the pandemic continues to evolve, the content in this communication remains subject to change as new information, guidance and/or direction is received.