

# Suffolk County Community College

## College Brief

NO. 52            January 11, 2022

TO:                The College Community

FROM:            Dr. Edward Bonahue  
                      President

SUBJECT:        Plans for the Spring Semester

As we look to the start of the spring semester, I write to brief you on the plans currently in place. Over the past two weeks, Governor Kathy Hochul announced a number of new mandates in response to the Omicron surge, which were followed by updated guidance from SUNY and other agencies. Through the work of the Safe Start Task Force and many offices on campus, SUNY Suffolk is currently working to implement and integrate these mandates into college operations. Let me also take this opportunity to thank the members of the Safe Start Task Force—together with all the employees who have continued to work over the holidays—for their continued dedication and commitment to the college. Thanks to their efforts, our current COVID-related policies and procedures include the following:

- (1) **Student vaccination requirement:** In alignment with the SUNY Student Vaccine Policy, all current students coming to campus for classes, activities or services must be vaccinated for COVID-19.
- (2) **Student booster requirement:** As soon as they are eligible, students are required to present evidence of a COVID-19 vaccine booster during the spring 2022 semester. Details regarding student eligibility to receive the booster will be communicated directly to students and made available on the website.
- (3) **Return-to-campus proof of negative test:** In addition to required vaccination and booster, students will be required to complete PCR testing at a campus location during the first two weeks of classes, which will provide a baseline measure for ensuring public health. (Students with an approved medical or religious exemption will still be required to present a negative test and undergo regular testing in accordance with college policy).
- (4) **Surveillance testing:** For the spring semester, all college employees and on-campus students will be required to participate in surveillance testing twice per month, regardless of vaccination status, in accordance with the plan being developed by the Safe Start Task Force. The college will be expanding its testing schedule to meet the increased demand for testing.
- (5) **Faculty and staff vaccination:** Please know that the governor’s mandate that all SUNY faculty and staff be vaccinated only applies to state-operated campuses and does not apply to community college employees at this time. However, as the best measures for ensuring your health and safety, vaccination and getting a booster are strongly recommended for everyone.

- (6) **Mask policy:** While compliance with our universal mask policy on campus has been very high, the governor's extension of it to all public indoor spaces in the state will strengthen our on-campus compliance.

The Safe Start Task Force has worked tirelessly to implement these requirements, and to do everything possible to maintain public health and safety on campus.

With priority placed on meeting student needs and expectations for the spring semester, SUNY Suffolk will maintain our spring opening as scheduled, on January 24, and will offer the combination of on-campus and remote classes as currently scheduled. With just under two weeks before the start of the semester, the college continues to advertise and appeal to students to complete registration and enrollment activities during the weeks leading up to the start of the semester.

We will continue to update the community as further details within each of these categories are determined.