

SDCCD Spring Operations Update

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Hello SDCCD Community,

This email provides critical updates to our operations as we prepare for the spring semester.

Below you will find important information regarding:

1. **Remote work assignments through January 28, 2022**
2. **Resuming the phased-in return to onsite activities in February 2022**
3. **Full return to onsite activities in March 2022**
4. **Vaccination status and access to onsite activities for the spring semester**

As announced in Chancellor Turner Cortez's email on January 2, 2022 the District has reverted to primarily remote operations for most employees through January 18, 2022. Over the past three weeks, COVID-19 cases have continued to rise at an alarming rate throughout San Diego County and the state of California. There is positive news, however, as hospitalization and mortality rates are much lower than during previous periods with a large number of individuals contracting the coronavirus. According to data from the California Department of Public Health, the current rate of COVID cases in the county is 187.4 per 100,000 residents, compared to a peak rate of 110 cases per 100,000 residents in January 2021. At this time, the 14 day average number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 is 638, compared to 1,692 average patients hospitalized in January 2021. Most importantly, the current mortality rate is 0.1 per 100,000 residents, compared to 1.3 per 100,000 in January 2021.

The data and research increasingly demonstrate the omicron variant is much more transmissible, including among individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, but the severity of illness is much lower. While this is encouraging, the District continues to pursue a health and safety strategy focused first on preventing any spread of COVID-19 and resuming in-person activities with strong mitigation measures in place. We appreciate the contributions, input, and participation of every District student, employee, and stakeholder in creating a safe and healthy educational environment as we navigate the impacts of the omicron variant.

Remote Work Assignments

With cases continuing to rise and many public health researchers predicting we will continue to experience increasing case rates for the next two to four weeks, **the current remote work operations are extended through January 28, 2022**. This means most District employees will work remotely through the 28th.

- Employees whose job duties must be performed onsite will continue to work onsite, with strict face covering and physical distancing protocols
- Employees can be required to come onsite to perform specific duties which cannot be adequately performed remotely
- Employees required to work onsite will be notified by their supervisor and/or Cabinet-level executive manager
- Fall classes at the College of Continuing Education will continue to meet on campus unless otherwise directed by the appropriate Dean
- Employees working remotely are not required to be tested for COVID-19
- Employees working onsite who are not fully vaccinated are required to be tested each week

- All employees may voluntarily be tested at any District-provided testing location. Please make an appointment prior to arriving to decrease crowding and wait times and to ensure timely results

Procedures for testing are available on the District's employee COVID resources webpage:

<https://www.sdccd.edu/about/departments-and-offices/human-resources/risk-management/covid-employees.aspx>

Resuming Onsite Work and Activities

With the start of spring instruction at the credit colleges **on January 31, 2022, the District will return to the requirement for most employees to work onsite at least three days per week** as was done in November and December 2021. Courses scheduled to be in-person will proceed as planned, based on enrollment. Currently, the majority of enrollments are in online courses, so there will likely be fewer in-person classes than initially planned. All employees working onsite must strictly follow the District's face covering requirements and maintain physical distancing whenever possible. All employees are encouraged to speak with their supervisors and managers regarding their specific schedule and assignment.

Full Return to Onsite Work and Activities

With the rate of COVID-19 cases in our county expected to decline sharply over the month of February, **all employees should plan for a full return to onsite work and activities beginning Monday, February 28th**. Online courses will remain online and are not impacted by the District's return to onsite work and activities. Each College and District Division will plan their full return and specific details will be provided through the appropriate managers and supervisors.

We must all remain flexible to respond to changes in our local public health conditions, so this timeline may be adjusted as necessary to protect our health and safety.

Vaccination Status and Access to Onsite Activities

During the fall semester, the District was able to provide students with exemptions to the vaccination requirement with accommodations which included in-person instruction and services. Due to the much higher rate of COVID transmission occurring in our region, in-person instruction will be limited primarily to students who have been fully vaccinated. Limiting access to our programs is a difficult decision given the open access educational services we are committed to providing our communities. However, the District does not have the physical environment and resources to effectively accommodate in-person instruction for students who have not been vaccinated at this time. A limited number of specific programs and courses, which are primarily outdoors and in large venues, will proceed with limited accommodations. Please speak with your Dean or Vice President of Instruction for further details.

We fully appreciate the complexities created by hybrid operations and changes to months of planning for the spring semester. Thank you for your continued flexibility and participation in planning, adjusting plans, and continuing to serve our communities through multiple modalities. We encourage everyone to get vaccinated and booster doses as soon as you are eligible, continue wearing face coverings in all public settings, maintaining physical distancing whenever possible, and getting tested for COVID whenever you are experiencing symptoms or suspect you have been exposed to the coronavirus.

Thank you,

Greg

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