

**From:** [Office of the Chancellor](#)  
**Subject:** Spring Break and testing  
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## **A Message From the Special Assistant to the Chancellor for Public Health**

February 26, 2021

Dear Spartan Community,

Today, our United States flag flies at half-staff in memory of the more than 500,000 lives lost to the COVID-19 pandemic. Let us also acknowledge the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, and how we can all work individually and collectively toward more equitable health outcomes in our society.

Though rates of COVID-19 on national and state levels are decreasing with vaccinations, there is still a high incidence of COVID-19 in almost every county in South Carolina, and we must stay vigilant to prevent illnesses and deaths. This week, ten cases of COVID-19 were reported to Health Services, and all cases were isolated, traced, and contacts quarantined.

Please read the following important information to help keep our community safe, especially in the upcoming month.

- Recent antibody testing shows that most individuals tested DO NOT have antibodies. This includes some individuals with past cases. If you have already had COVID-19, especially if it was mild, and in 2020, you are **NOT** protected against getting it or spreading it this spring.
- Remember the 3 Ws: **Wash** your hands, **Wear** a facemask, **Watch** your distance (stay 6 feet apart).
- Get tested: If you haven't tested since winter break, or even if you have, it's time to do it again. Students and faculty have an academic spring break from March 7-14. All are advised to test before and after break, and there will be prizes for students at these events.
  - Testing before break: Monday, March 1, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Spartan Recreation Center
  - Testing after break: Monday, March 15, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Spartan Recreation Center

- Bring your student ID or driver's license, FREE results within 24 - 48 hours

The safest guidance over break is to not travel and avoid all increased risks. If you are considering travel, please review the CDC Travel Alert [here](#). Risks can be increased by car travel as well, with the potential for new exposures, and contagious variants are present in South Carolina. If you have increased exposures over break, here are tips to make them lower risk:

- Do you need to carpool with someone to go home?
  - Remember to wear a mask in the car, and put windows down if feasible. If you stop on the way, avoid indoor dining, and sanitize your hands after stops and before eating.
- Are you working more hours, or do you work with the public in an area of higher exposure?
  - Wear 2 masks, maintain distance on lunch breaks, and maintain distance at your workstation. Handle your mask carefully, and wash your hands and face well after your shift.
- Are you trying to go home to visit any friends or family you haven't seen lately?
  - Maintain precautions of masks and distancing when visiting, and meet outside if you can.
- If you are sick, or someone you are around is sick, stay away from others, get tested again, and call for guidance.

Health Services is here to educate, to help, to prevent, and to protect. Take advantage of what campus has to offer and come get tested, call with questions, and reach out for help if you get sick by calling 864-503-5191.

Sincerely,



Mary D. Bucher, MS, APRN, FNP  
Special Assistant to the Chancellor for Public Health