



Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science

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11/19/2021—COVID-19 CAMPUS UPDATE

Dear PIMS Community,

Here is the COVID-19 report for the week ending November 19, 2021

QUICK TAKE

Two positive cases were once again reported over the past week. Contact tracing shows that both individuals reported their results upon testing. One individual tested on their own accord at the beginning of the week due to experiencing some symptoms. The other individual was discovered by the Curative testing—so this process is working, but your continued cooperation is appreciated. The timing is still inconclusive on the infection date/s.

The most recent data in Allegheny County continues to show an uptick in case count with a 7-day moving average PCR Positivity rate of 8.4%. Our positivity rate for the week ending was again, an acceptable 1.6% so considering the rise in the County, staying stable on campus is encouraging. As always, if positivity rates at the school would exceed the optimal level proposed by the CDC (>5%) for a week, this situation at the Institute would be re-evaluated.

Testing continues courtesy of Curative (<https://curative.com/>) at our new property on Wednesdays as usual. This testing site is provided as a courtesy to those who might otherwise not be able to access a convenient testing site; yet you can get a PCR TEST anywhere as long as unvaccinated individuals report results each week to the Dean. Please note, if you are unvaccinated, you cannot be admitted to the building without following the mandatory testing protocols. If a vaccinated person is feeling ill or believes they may have been exposed, it is worthwhile they would be tested and send the results to the Dean.

COVID CASE REPORTING FOR THE WEEK:

Week ending:	# Of New Cases Confirmed	Date of confirmed test results	Positivity Rate (out of 125 people who are on ground—students, faculty, and staff)
October 22, 2021	1	10/21/21	>1%
October 29, 2021	0	10/25/21	0
November 5, 2021	0	-	0
November 12, 2021	2	11/11/21	1.6%
November 19, 2021	2	11/16/21, 11/18/21	1.6%

VACCINATION AND BOOSTER RATES

The vaccination rates are stable:

- Students: 82% which is unchanged from last week
- Faculty and Staff: 100% (cannot get any better than that statistic)

This week for the booster rates:

- Students on campus:
 - 110 report weekly
 - Enough data has been reported that we can statistically quantify full vaccination and booster shot in students—this number is up to 2.7% of the entire student body (vaccinated and unvaccinated).
 - This number represents 3.3% of the student population fully vaccinated
 - Note to all: Please continue to report this information with proof to Mr. Kevin Drobish. He is keeping the numbers on this information.

- Faculty and Staff on campus:
 - 15 faculty and staff members report to the campus weekly
 - The PIMS faculty and staff continues to “take the shot” with 11 of 15 or 74% are now fully vaccinated and have received the booster shot. The goal is 100% but this was a whopping 24% increase from last week.

Check out <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html> for information on booster shots. If you wish to get a booster shot, the major pharmacies make it easy to book your appointment in advance through the websites, but some will accommodate walk in appointments so finding a shot is not difficult if you want it. The PIMS administration encourages you to talk with your healthcare professional about being vaccinated (if you are not) as well as getting the booster shot. If you are medically cleared and have no religious exemptions, the PIMS administration strongly encourages everyone to receive the vaccine and/or the booster (when eligible).

OTHER INFO:

With two positive cases the positivity rate at the school continues to be quite acceptable at 1.6%, which does not indicate community spread within our campus, however, increasing 7-day rates in Allegheny County does indeed suggest a level of community spread. Please continue to keep the administration informed should you feel sick or your vaccination/booster status changes—to date everyone has been doing an outstanding job in this regard.

Please also note that we are in constant contact with Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) who is acting on behalf of all to provide relevant and timely data to guide our policies and protocols. That said, they have issued strong language regarding contact tracing and the transmission of COVID-19. Their data indicates the primary events for transmission are: family parties, weddings, funerals, and other social gatherings; while that is positive news for our school community, please be aware of this particularly during this upcoming Holiday season. In fact, ACHD has indicated an expected rise due to a proliferation of these events over the next few weeks, so please consider mitigation strategies.

In closing, we would like to thank every PIMS community member who has been vaccinated, received a booster, or continues to willingly provide test results each week as well as everyone who wears a mask and practices other mitigation strategies in order to minimize the risk of variants further spreading. We wish everyone a healthy, safe, and meaningful Thanksgiving, however, you choose to enjoy the holiday.

Sincerely

Dr. Barry T. Lease, Program Director/COO