

SPELMAN FALL 2023 COVID-19 RESIDENTIAL ISOLATION IN PLACE PROTOCOL

Dear Spelman Students,

Beginning May 11, 2023, the Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) has announced that it will end the Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) for COVID-19. Subsequently, HHS will transition COVID-19 response from a pandemic emergency to an endemic phase. This shift is based on current COVID-19 data that shows that daily COVID-19 cases are down 92%, new COVID-19 hospitalizations are down 80% and COVID-19 related deaths have declined by over 80%.

Therefore, thanks to COVID-19 vaccination, higher population-level immunity, and low rates of community transmission within the Atlanta University Center Consortium (AUCC) and surrounding Atlanta metropolitan areas, **Spelman will transition to the AUCC COVID-19 Residential Isolation in Place protocol beginning in Fall 2023.** It is important to note that our AUCC partner institutions at Clark Atlanta University and Morehouse College adopted this protocol in August 2022.

According to Kara Garretson, the AUCC Infection Control Sr. Epidemiologist *“with access to COVID-19 testing, treatment and our AUCC community’s high vaccination rates– the majority of our COVID-positive campus community experienced either no symptoms or mild symptoms that resolved quickly. As such, our campuses can begin shifting our approach to the pandemic by implementing the isolation in place model. **The isolation in place model is currently used by many colleges and universities across the country and endorsed by the American College Health Association (ACHA) as an alternative isolation accommodation for congregate housing settings.** Since reopening our campuses in Spring 2021, our protocols have been informed by guidance from public health agencies, data, and experts in an effort to provide a safe community for our students, faculty, and staff – the AUCC is confident we will continue to do so.”*

Under this protocol, when unable to isolate off campus, a residential student who tests positive for COVID-19 will isolate in their own room/suite (even though their roommate(s) may be negative for COVID-19).

When a student tests positive, it is the student’s responsibility to contact Student Health Services and follow the isolation protocol to receive an excused absence. **A residential student can choose to isolate off campus (when possible) at their own expense or follow the isolation in place protocol.** A member of the Student Health Services staff will monitor students while they are in isolation and all students must be cleared by Student Health Services before they can return to normal campus activities.

As we transition to isolation in place for residential students in the fall semester, all students are encouraged to have conversations with their parents and roommates to discuss a plan in the event of a positive COVID-19 test. Please take the time to carefully review the Residential Isolation in Place Protocol below, it contains important instructions in the event of a positive COVID-19 test for both the student and roommate.

We thank you for your continuing support as we remain fluid in managing COVID-19 on campus.

Kind Regards,

Yemi Brown, PharmD
Manager, COVID-19 Operations

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COVID-19 POSITIVE RESIDENTIAL STUDENT

Follow the Isolation Protocol

- Notify Student Health Services at 404-270-5249.
- Isolate for a minimum of five (5) days.
- If fever free for at least 24 hours and symptoms have improved, take a rapid antigen COVID-19 test on day six (6).
- If test results are negative, submit proof of negative results to Student Health Services.
- If test results are positive, continue to isolate for 10 days or until a negative rapid antigen COVID-19 test result is received, submit proof of negative test results as noted above.

Stay in your room

- During this period, it is important that you do not leave your room except for an emergency or essential need: bathing, to get medical care or to retrieve a meal from the cafeteria.
- When leaving your room, wear a KN95 mask while you are out and return to your room as quickly as possible.
- If you are isolating in a shared suite, you should remain in your room unless you need to use the suite bathroom and be sure to wear a KN95 mask when you do.
- Use hand sanitizer often.
- Wipe down your personal space as often as possible.

Take care of yourself

- Get plenty of rest and stay hydrated.
- Monitor your symptoms. Symptoms of COVID-19 include, but are not limited to: fever, congestion, sore throat, new or worsening cough, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath or loss of taste or smell.
- Call Student Health Services at 404-270-5249 if you are concerned about any of your symptoms. If symptoms occur after clinic hours students should contact Public Safety at 404-525-6401.

Help Protect Others

- You and your roommate(s) should not invite visitors to your room/suite until your isolation period is over and you are cleared by Student Health Services.
- Wear a KN95 mask when you are around other people, including when in your room/suite.
- Do not share personal household items, like cups, towels, and utensils.
- Take steps to increase ventilation in your room by periodically opening a window (if it is possible to do so).

Meals

On campus meal retrieval: You can go to the dining hall masked using a KN95 mask to pick up a meal. Recommended times for meal retrieval are: 8 to 9am (breakfast), 11am to 12pm (lunch), 5 to 6pm (dinner). Return directly to your room and eat in your room.

Precautions During Isolation

- If you have a roommate, remain masked using a KN95 mask at all times (except while eating, sleeping or bathing).
- If you are sharing a bathroom, use this space at a separate time than others in your suite. Wipe down surfaces in this area after use with sanitizer.

- For those using communal baths on a residential hall floor, try to limit your time there to when others are not using this space, and remain masked except for showering or oral hygiene. Wipe down surfaces in this area after use with sanitizer.
- Until cleared from isolation do not go to class or participate in in-person activities except for meal retrieval, emergencies, or an essential need (bathing).
- Avoid sharing household items such as dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other similar items with roommates.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE ROOMMATE(S) OF STUDENTS ISOLATING IN PLACE

We understand you may have questions about living with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. It is important to remember that residential students who become sick with many different illnesses, such as the flu, a cold, or a stomach virus, usually remain in shared rooms/suites with their roommates while recovering. Today, thanks to effective vaccines/boosters and higher population-level immunity, we are well-positioned to use an isolate-in-place protocol for residential students.

What you need to do if exposed to COVID-19 (Roommate)

If you were exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19, here are the steps you should take regardless of your vaccination status:

- Take a rapid antigen COVID-19 test on day one (1) and day five (5) following your exposure.
- If you test positive or experience symptoms consistent with COVID-19, you must follow the isolation protocol and contact Student Health Services at 404-270-5249.
- Continue normal activity if COVID-19 negative.
- Wear a KN95 mask for ten (10) days from the date of exposure.
- If you have any questions regarding COVID-19 exposure contact COVID-19 Operations at 404-270-5407.

Roommate Exposure Guidance

In addition to following the exposure guidance above, if your roommate tests positive for COVID-19 and is under an isolation in place protocol, here are additional steps you should take:

- Wear a KN95 mask when in your room except while eating, sleeping or in the shower.
- Use hand sanitizer often.
- Wipe down your personal space as often as possible.
- Avoid sharing household items such as dishes, cups, and utensils.
- Take steps to increase ventilation in your room by periodically opening a window (if it is possible to do so).
- Do not invite visitors in your room until your roommate has ended isolation in place.
- Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms and contact Student Health Services if you test positive or experience COVID-19 symptoms.
- You are expected to take these precautions for 10 full days, regardless of whether you have symptoms of COVID-19.
- If you develop symptoms at any time, contact Student Health Services for evaluation and testing.
- For 10 days, wear a KN95 mask anytime you are around others, including in your residence hall room, on-campus, and in public.