

Meredith students, faculty, and staff,

Earlier this week, I announced a requirement for COVID-19 entrance testing prior to returning to campus after the holiday break. I'm writing to follow up with additional information about why we are implementing this requirement and to provide more details about how to fulfill the requirement.

Why is this testing required?

Our entrance testing plan for the Spring 2021 semester is guided by state and federal recommendations, the scientific and clinical expertise of healthcare providers and higher education organizations, and valuable lessons learned during this ongoing pandemic. According to the National Institute for Health (NIH), testing is one of the best strategies for interrupting the spread of COVID-19, as it helps identify asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic individuals and alert them to the need to isolate before unknowingly spreading the virus to others.

As we return to campus, we want to have as much assurance and confidence as possible that we all return in good health. We have seen increasing upticks in cases at the end of the fall semester and are concerned that the extended winter break may have created opportunities for more exposure. As always, we base our recommendations and mandates on the best evidence and advice we have to create a safe, positive experience for our Meredith community.

Where to Complete Testing

You may test at a site of your choosing. Testing costs are paid at 100% by Blue Cross Blue Shield North Carolina, CIGNA, and most other insurance carriers. There are also many free testing sites available where tests are administered without any out-of-pocket costs. A list of currently available [North Carolina State Testing Locations](#) can be found on the NC DHHS website.

Students from outside of NC who need assistance locating a testing site can contact healthcenter@meredith.edu before December 18, 2020, or after January 4, 2021.

Where to Submit Results

Our technology services team is working on a secure, HIPAA (federally and legally) approved electronic submission system. We expect to deploy this system by December 30 and will be sending you more information on the submission process. To protect your own privacy, please do **not** submit notices of test results directly to your supervisors, professors, or other campus personnel.

Thank you in advance for complying with this requirement. Your cooperation will help ensure a healthier and safer start to the Spring semester for all. [Additional instructions](#) about this requirement are available on the Staying Strong site.

Stay well,
Jo Allen, '80
President

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