

## **Meredith College Community Standards Student Reporting Process and Outcomes**

*Updated December 16, 2020*

Meredith continues to follow CDC and governmental recommendations to [help prevent the spread of COVID-19](#). As we navigate the coronavirus pandemic, we are especially sensitive to the health and well-being of all. Meredith College Community Standards (Community Standards) offer an extensive reminder of the courtesies and care we show each other and our expectations for personal responsibility. As always, we are mindful that information and expectations are fluid, based on the best science and guidance we have at any given time; standards may be updated as changes occur. It is the **responsibility of each student to adhere to the currently posted Community Standards to protect Meredith College community members and the community at large**. In addition to the Community Standards that are communicated by the College, students should also be attentive to local and state regulations and ordinances in place to limit the spread of COVID-19.

These Community Standards have been established to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and to promote the health, safety and well-being of Meredith College community members and other communities. We expect that everyone on campus will understand the critical impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, take personal responsibility in following these Community Standards, and encourage others to do so. Our first and preferred approach to assure compliance with these standards will be through education and communication. The College has created a Community Standards Task Force to address serious or repeated violations of the Community Standards. We do so to keep our community safe.

In accordance with the *Meredith College Student Handbook* and Honor Code (<https://www.meredith.edu/dean-of-students/honor-code>), students are expected to abide by College policies and regulations (i.e., the Meredith College Community Standards), and comply with official college instructions given by College officials in the exercise of their official duties during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery. As for violations of the Meredith College Honor Code, failure to adhere to the College's Community Standards and local and state ordinances during the pandemic and recovery may be subject to disciplinary action.

In addressing violations of the Community Standards, a Community Standards Task Force has been established during the COVID-19 pandemic to supplement the work of Honor Council. The Task Force is comprised of the Dean of Students and the Assistant Dean of Students (who serves as adviser to the Association of Meredith Commuters and Honor Council), in consultation, as appropriate, with the President of the Association of Meredith Commuters, Residence Hearings Committee Adviser, the Honor Council Chair and the Residence Housing Association Vice-Chair who serves as the Residence Hearings Committee Chair, and other relevant campus community members. In matters that involve a student enrolled in a graduate or post-baccalaureate program, a graduate program coordinator will also be included in the consultation. The Task Force will emphasize education about community standards and public health practices to contribute to the health and safety of campus. The Task Force may also refer Community

Standards violations to Residence Hearings Committee or Honor Council. Information about how violations are reported and addressed is outlined below. Thank you for contributing in healthy ways to our campus community.

## **Community Standards – On and Off Campus**

### **Face Coverings**

To help keep our community safe, Meredith requires the use of face coverings for all students, faculty, staff, visitors, and vendors/contractors when in common or public areas even when one is the only individual in that area. Studies have shown that wearing a face covering greatly reduces the probability of transmitting the virus that causes COVID-19.

For face coverings to be most effective, they must be used properly. Please review the links that follow to ensure you are using your face covering properly. These links are also available on the campus Staying Strong site:

- World Health Organization - ["Advice for the public: When and how to use masks"](#)
- Center For Disease Control - ["How to Wear Cloth Face Coverings"](#)

### ***Face Covering Requirements and Reminders***

- All students and employees are required to wear face coverings in all areas that are not your own private space, either residence or private office.
- Please also help ensure that guests, visitors, vendors/contractors, or others with whom you are coordinating a campus visit know that they will be required to wear face coverings while on our campus.
- Face coverings are not a replacement for other evidence-based measures such as physical distancing and frequent hand washing practices.
- A limited supply of face coverings is available in the Office of the Dean of Students in the Park Center for students and visitors who do not have access to a face covering. The Meredith College Campus Store also has a low-cost face covering option available for purchase.
- Cloth masks or face coverings should be washed daily. Also, remember to wash hands prior to handling face coverings and avoid touching the front of the mask/face covering when securing it on your face.
- Wash your hands after removing the face mask. When using a mask intermittently in a single day or evening, store it in a paper bag between uses.
- If anyone on campus is not wearing a face covering in a common area, the individual should be reminded to put on a face covering. This reminder may come from anyone on our campus. It's important that we do this for each other to keep our community safe. Requirements to wear face coverings will be enforced for all campus community members.
- Persons taking group photos must wear face coverings **and** practice physical distancing.

### *Exceptions to Wearing Face Coverings*

A face covering is not required in the following circumstances:

- When exercising outdoors **and** physically distanced.
- While actively eating or drinking. Eating or drinking while walking is discouraged, especially indoors.
- In cases where a medical condition prevents an individual from safely wearing a face covering. Students with health concerns that may prevent coverings from being worn should consult with Health Services (healthcenter@meredith.edu or 919-760-8535).
- While alone or with a roommate in campus residence hall rooms and apartments.

**At least six feet of physical distance should be maintained at all times, even during the circumstances listed above when a face covering isn't required. Individuals should carry a face covering with them at all times while on campus in case unexpected situations arise when six feet of physical distance cannot be maintained.**

Additional resources about masks and face coverings: [CDC How to Wear Cloth Face Coverings](#), [WHO's Advice for the public: When and how to use masks](#), [About Cloth Face Coverings](#), [Wearing Cloth Face Coverings](#), [Washing Cloth Face Coverings](#), and [Making Cloth Face Coverings](#)

### *Physical Distancing*

- Students and employees should avoid close personal contact and maintain a minimum distance of six feet apart at all times.
- Campus community members should remain mindful of physical distancing and follow occupancy requirements in small spaces such as elevators, stairwells, and restrooms.
- Faculty and staff with individual offices should consider working with office doors closed.
- Eat in locations that allow for physical distancing such as outside, in a private room or office with the door closed.
- When in-person meetings are necessary, maintain a minimum of six feet apart and consider the use of outdoor meeting spaces.

### *Hygiene*

- Engage in frequent hand-washing for at least 20 seconds each time.
- Use hand sanitizers and wipes frequently.
- Wiping commonly touched surfaces before and after use is recommended.
- Use disposable tissues to cover your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing.

### **Additional resources on hygiene:**

- [Cleaning and Disinfecting](#)
- [Safe & Effective Disinfectant Use](#)

- Safely Using Hand Sanitizer

**Expectations for Campus Common Areas, Classrooms, Meeting Rooms, Restrooms and Elevators**

- Follow all campus and community standards and requirements (i.e. expectations for face coverings, physical distancing etc.).
- Adhere to the posted limits on the number of people permitted in campus common areas (such as lobbies and lounge areas) classrooms, meeting rooms, restrooms, and elevators.

**Residence Life Requirements and Expectations for the Residence Halls and Oaks Apartments**

Requirements are designed to keep the community safe, therefore **they are not optional. Everyone who lives on campus must adhere to all requirements.**

While living on campus, you and your classmates are **required** to do the following:

- Follow all campus and community standards.
- **Get a flu shot** unless an exemption is already on file with the college.
- **Follow all campus requirements for COVID-19 testing.**
- Observe limited occupancies in common spaces in the residence halls and Oaks apartments. Adhere to the posted limits on the number of people permitted in community areas such as laundry rooms, parlors, elevators and residence hall kitchens.
- **Limit of one guest per resident per visit** in a resident's room; note that **the visitor can only be another Meredith resident student.**
- Meredith commuter students and off-campus visitors are not permitted in the residence halls or Oaks apartments until further notice.
- Overnight stays in residence hall rooms and Oaks apartments by other residential students (not assigned to the residential room or apartment), commuter students, or other individuals are not permitted until further notice.
- If you are symptomatic or knowingly come into contact with an individual who is COVID positive, you may be relocated temporarily to an isolation space.
- You could be relocated in order to clean, disinfect, or otherwise treat an area in which you live.
- One campus residence hall will be used for isolation/quarantine. Students who need to quarantine or isolate, as determined by Student Health Services, will be temporarily assigned rooms in this residence hall. These rooms are furnished with a microfridge, linens, soap, tissues, and towels. Meals will be dropped off to these rooms each day. Additional instructions will be provided to students needing this service.
- Contract tracers will notify students if they need to be tested or if there is a need to quarantine or isolate.

*Other Expectations:*

- Limit your interactions off campus unless for work or essential business. Remember to follow CDC and other guidance for wearing face coverings and physical distancing, along with frequent hand washing.
- Limit off campus travel to only essential travel, not for social reasons or tourism.

**Off-Campus Expectations for Meredith Students**

- Meredith College students are required to adhere to the College's Community Standards and mandates from the State of North Carolina both on campus and off.
- It is the responsibility of all students, including those who live off-campus, to adhere to the currently posted Community Standards to protect Meredith College community members and the community at large.
- **In addition to the Community Standards that are communicated by the College, students should also be attentive to local and state regulations and ordinances in place to limit the spread of COVID-19.**
- **Follow all campus requirements for COVID-19 testing if planning to come to campus.**
- Off-campus students are required to comply fully with the restrictions on gatherings and requirements for face coverings and physical distancing put in place by the Governor, the College, and public health authorities. Failure to do so can result in disciplinary action.
- Current guidance from the State of North Carolina at <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/> includes a limit on gatherings indoors and outdoors. Individuals or organizations found in violation of the state's limit on and off campus are subject to disciplinary action. This includes both hosts and all attendees of gatherings.
- These Community Standards have been established to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and to promote the health, safety and well-being of Meredith College community members.

**Reporting Process and Outcomes**

**Violations in the Residence Halls and Oaks Apartments**

Violations of Meredith College Community Standards (Community Standards) in the residence halls or Oaks apartments should be reported to the Resident Assistant (RA) on duty or Community Assistant (CA) on duty by using the number provided to residents by the Residence Life Staff. The report should include a description of what occurred, who was involved, and the location of the incident. Any violation of the Meredith College Community Standards should be reported in a timely manner, and as close to the time of the incident as possible.

After receiving notice of the violation, the RA or CA on duty will investigate the situation. The RA or CA may solicit the assistance of the RA or CA on the floor in which the incident occurred, or the Residence Director (RD) if in the residence halls or Apartment Manager (AM) if in the Oaks apartments. The RD or AM can also be contacted by the RA or CA on duty if there are any

questions involving how to handle the violation or additional backup and support in resolving the incident is needed.

During the investigation of the incident, if the RA or CA on duty finds a student in violation of the Community Standards, they will inform the student of the violation and request that the student comply with the Community Standards. At the conclusion of the incident, the RA or CA on duty will also submit an incident report (using the current template for incident reports occurring in the residence halls or Oaks apartments). The RA on duty should submit/email the incident report to the [MCRAonduty@gmail.com](mailto:MCRAonduty@gmail.com) and the RD of the residence hall in which the incident occurred. The CA on duty should submit/email the incident report to the AM. In the event that the violation was observed by an RD or the AM, the RD or AM involved in the incident will complete an incident report and keep it on file with their student records.

### **Reporting Process for Violations in the Residence Halls**

After a report is filed for a violation of the Meredith College Community Standards (Community Standards) in the residence halls, the Residence Director (RD) on the Residence Life Critical Response Team and the RD in the residence hall in which the incident occurred will review the incident report and determine whether an Educational Warning for the violation should suffice or if it should be referred to the Community Standards Task Force. If the RD of the residence hall in which the incident has occurred determines that the incident will not be referred to the Community Standards Task Force, then violations will be addressed by the RD in the residence hall in which the incident occurred. A student who wishes to appeal the RD's decision may contact the Director of Residence Life.

### **Reporting Process for Violations in the Oaks Apartments**

After a report is filed for a violation of the Meredith College Community Standards (Community Standards) in the Oaks Apartments, the Apartment Manager (AM) will review the incident report and determine whether an Educational Warning for the violation should suffice, or if it should be referred to the Community Standards Task Force. If the AM determines that the incident will not be referred to the Community Standards Task Force, then violations will be addressed by the AM. A student who wishes to appeal the Apartment Manager's decision may contact the Director of Residence Life.

### **Violations Occurring on Campus Grounds or in Campus Common Areas, Classrooms, and Meeting Rooms**

Violations of Meredith College Community Standards should be submitted in writing and directed to the Office of the Dean of Students via email at [deanofstudents@meredith.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@meredith.edu) with the subject line: Community Standards Violation. The report should include a date of the incident, description of what occurred, who was involved, and the location of the incident. Any violation of the Meredith College Community Standards should be reported in a timely manner, and as close to the time of the incident as possible.

After the Office of the Dean of Students receives notice of the violation, the incident will be referred to the Community Standards Task Force. The Community Standards Task Force will determine if an Educational Warning will be issued or if the Task Force will consider other sanctions. The Task Force may also consider a referral to the Residence Hearings Committee or Honor Council.

### **Violations Occurring Off-Campus**

Students who are off campus and violate Meredith College Community Standards and/or local and state ordinances and regulations may be subject to the student disciplinary process and sanctions through the Community Standards Task Force. Reports of violations may be submitted to the Office of the Dean of Students, deanofstudents@meredith.edu

### **Sanctioning Guidelines**

First violation of the Meredith College Community Standards or ordinances/regulations: student may be issued an Educational Warning which consists of formal written notification that the student has violated the Meredith College Community Standards and advises that repetition will result in a more severe sanction and referral to the Meredith College Community Standards Task Force. This notification will be sent to the student's Meredith College email address and include the violation and a reminder of the significance of abiding by the Meredith College Community Standards, along with educational information from relevant sources related to reducing the spread of COVID-19. A record of the warning is kept on file with the Community Standards Task Force. If a reported violation is considered, even as a first violation, to be serious or egregious, the violation may be referred directly to the Community Standards Task Force.

Second violation of the Meredith College Community Standards and/or ordinances and regulations: student will be referred to the Meredith College Community Standards Task Force. The Community Standards Task Force will determine the appropriate sanction for the violation of the Meredith College Community Standards. Conduct outcomes may include any sanctions outlined in the *Meredith College Student Handbook* and Honor Code.

**If a first violation is serious or if violations are repeated**, the student may be subject to immediate referral to the Community Standards Task Force and more severe sanctions. Severe sanctions may include partial or full removal from classes, on-campus living, educational activities, campus events, traditions, club/organization leadership position, socials, or from campus itself. Sanctions may also include emergency removal or suspension from campus while a student is going through a Task Force or Honor Council process.

### **Appeal Process**

A student may appeal Meredith College Community Standards Task Force action to the Vice President for College Programs. To do so, the student must email a written notice of their appeal to the Dean of Students within 24 hours of receiving notification of action from the Meredith College Community Standards Task Force. The appeal must state clearly the reason for the appeal. The Dean of Students will then present the appeal accompanied with relevant documents

to the Vice President for College Programs for her review and decision. The Vice President may also consult with other campus administrators as needed to consider the appeal. The appeal decision typically will be communicated to the student within ten days. The decision of the Vice President is final.