

# Monday Message

Aug. 30, 2021



## President's Message

Dear all,

As we launch week two I want to thank all who have worked so tirelessly to prepare, publicize and operationalize our various and numerous COVID-19 safety protocols and surveillance testing processes. To Sr. VP Hanson and the coronavirus tactical group, along with the various staff and faculty helping with vaccine verification, Vault test kit distribution and collection, the Friday Vault testing supervised sessions, and responding to COVID-19 reporting line calls, on behalf of all of us, thank you. You and your good work are truly appreciated.

In more good news, it appears we are hovering around 67% in terms of benefitted employee vaccination rate. This is a strong start and now that the Pfizer/BioNtech vaccine has received full FDA approval it is my hope the rate can and will continue to climb. I presume you are reading the paper, watching the news, perhaps clicking in to your NPR news app, and are aware that the delta variant is dominant in our state and region. As a result hospital facilities and public health agencies are maxing out in terms of care capacities. This is a problem not only for COVID-19 case care, but potentially restricts medical care availability for non-COVID-19 related emergencies and procedures.

We have had a fair number of people indicate they wish to opt-out of surveillance testing based on religious or qualified medical exemptions. To be clear:

- Yes, individuals who are fully vaccinated may opt-out of testing.
- Yes, individuals who are currently asymptomatic and have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 3 months prior to a given testing date qualify for a medical exemption (providing they present lab documentation noting the positive test results of a PCR test).
  - There may be other documentable medical exemptions that can be considered. In terms of medical exemptions, documentation from a medical provider establishing a medical need for exemption from our surveillance testing will be required.
- In terms of religious exemptions, criteria and protocols associated with opting out of vaccination based on sincerely held religious beliefs are typically verified by documentation including such things as (a) past documentation of medical or immunization history – which tends to show whether or not an individual has acted in a manner consistent or inconsistent with their religious belief in the past; (b) written religious materials describing the religious belief or practice, and/or (c) written statements or other documents from third parties, such as religious leaders, practitioners, or others with whom the individual has discussed his/her beliefs or who have observed the individual's past adherence. Similar documentation will be required to support requests for religious exemptions from surveillance testing.

With the above in mind, we will be reviewing the requests for exemption from our surveillance testing protocols and will contact individuals whose submitted materials do not qualify for exemption. Submission of additional support documentation, as described above, may be submitted for request reconsideration.

Cynthia Pemberton, Ed.D.  
President

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## Events

- **Aug. 31 – Tuesday at Two** – President Pemberton’s Tuesdays at Two continue through Zoom (<https://lcsc.zoom.us/j/861031866>). All are welcome to join the conversation.
  - **Sept. 3 – Vaccination Clinic** – Idaho Public Health will hold a vaccination clinic from 1:30-3:30 p.m. in Activity Center West, Room 122 ([register](#)).
  - **Sept. 7-30 – Multicultural Awareness Month Events** – Visit [www.lcsc.edu/multicultural-awareness](http://www.lcsc.edu/multicultural-awareness).
  - **Sept. 10 & 17 – Vaccination Clinic** – The CHAS portable vaccination clinic will be at the fountain area from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (no registration required).
  - **Sept. 21-25 – LC State Homecoming** – Details to come.
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## Announcements

- **Coronavirus Updates & Risk Level:** For the latest coronavirus updates and information visit [www.lcsc.edu/coronavirus](http://www.lcsc.edu/coronavirus). In accordance with its [Operational Levels Matrix](#), LC State’s current risk level is: Moderate.
  - **Cases Update:** Currently there are **15** active cases and **one** student in isolation in campus housing.
  - **Reporting Line:** If someone believes they were exposed to someone with an active case of COVID-19 or believes they are infected themselves, they should contact the campus COVID-19 Reporting Line at 208-792-2002 for guidance.
  - **Vaccine Availability:** To schedule an appointment with Public Health - Idaho North Central District visit [www.idahoprepmo.com](http://www.idahoprepmo.com) or call 208-799-3100.
  - **LC State Protocols:** The [Fall 2021 Outlook](#) is now available.
  - **Vaccination Challenge:** LC State is proud to partner with the White House and colleges and universities across Idaho and the country to support the [COVID-19 College Vaccination Challenge](#). The Challenge invites colleges/universities to make sure members of their campus communities know where to go to get a vaccine; and to lead and pave the way by helping to make vaccination options and opportunities readily available (e.g., our spring vaccine clinics, coordinated in partnership with Public Health, and scheduled in time for vaccination to be complete prior to the end of school, as well as soon to be announced fall on-campus vaccine clinics, are an example of our efforts to help put the pandemic in the past).
  - **Questions & Answers:**
    - **Q:** What is the campus COVID-19 reporting line?
    - **A:** If people have symptoms of illness, believe they have been exposed to COVID-19, or are confirmed to be infected with COVID-19, they should not come to campus and, instead, call 208-792-2002 for further assistance. Campus employees will be referred to Human Resource Services and students will be given guidance based on the information they share.
    - **Q:** If a student needs to quarantine or isolate, how will faculty be notified?
    - **A:** When a report of student illness or exposure to COVID-19 is collected by the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, the student’s schedule is shared with the Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs who, in turn, will notify faculty

members. Students are also encouraged to notify their faculty members directly to obtain instructions for keeping up with class requirements.

- **Q:** Where can people obtain one of the Vault test kits we are using for our surveillance testing strategy?
  - **A:** The test kits are located at [several locations across campus](#). Details are provided on the [Coronavirus Resource Page](#).
  
  - **Q:** Can people opt out of surveillance testing?
  - **A:** YES! If people show proof of vaccination or submit a qualified exemption, they may opt out of testing. There are several campus locations at which people may present evidence of their vaccination status or submit an exemption request.
  
  - **Q:** If I am vaccinated or have otherwise opted out of testing, may I use one of the Vault test kits anyway?
  - **A:** YES! The test kits are available at no charge for people who may need or wish to be tested.
  
  - **Q:** Are faculty permitted to enforce the current face covering requirement?
  - **A:** YES! The current face covering protocol states that face coverings will be worn indoors regardless of vaccination status. If people forgot to bring a face covering with them, they may obtain one at several campus locations. The current face covering requirement will be in place at least until Sept.17.
  
  - **Q:** Can employees or students obtain an exemption for the face covering requirement?
  - **A:** Under certain rare and specific circumstances, accommodations may be made. These include using alternative face coverings. Students should be referred to Accessibility Services and employees should consult with Human Resource Services for more information.
- **Google Drive Update:** On Sept. 13, Google Drive will apply a security update to some shared files to make them more secure.
    - This update will change the links used for some files, and may lead to new access requests for the impacted files. Access to these files won't change for people who have already viewed them. [Read how to see your impacted files.](#)
    - After the update is applied, you can avoid new access requests by distributing the updated link. Follow instructions on how to create an updated link in the [Drive documentation](#).
  
  - **Mental Health Resource:** A reminder that there's a new mental health resource available for all LC State students, faculty and staff. Therapy Assisted Online (TAO) includes over 150 brief, effective, self-help educational sessions covering over 50 common topics and skills related to mental health, wellness, and substance use issues. TAO includes interactive sessions, mindfulness exercises and practice tools all aimed at helping you achieve your goals. [Learn more and register for an account online.](#) Contact the Student Counseling Center at [counseling@lcsc.edu](mailto:counseling@lcsc.edu) or 208-792-2211 if you have questions.
  
  - **All-Campus Meeting:** Watch the recording here: <https://youtu.be/rSnIMmA6mcQ>. We apologize for the technical difficulties and poor sound quality. The slides (with speaker notes) are available on the intranet.
  
  - **News Releases:** Want to receive LC State press releases in your inbox? Simply send an email with "Add me" as the subject line to [news@lcsc.edu](mailto:news@lcsc.edu).

- **Campus Song for the Week:** [Heart of Gold](#) by Neil Young.
- **HR Updates:**
  - New Hire paperwork for new IH employees **must** be completed online as HR will not be accepting hard copies. Please have all new IH employees complete their paperwork using the link found on this page: [www.lcsc.edu/hr/forms](http://www.lcsc.edu/hr/forms)
  - [SafeColleges Trainings](#) must be completed by Oct. 1. [Training Day Video](#).

