



**McCormick**  
Theological Seminary

**COVID-19 Policy and  
Return to Campus Guidebook**

**McCormick Theological Seminary (MTS) COVID-19  
Policy and Return to Campus Guidebook**

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## ***Introduction***

McCormick Theological Seminary (“Seminary”) returns to campus Fall 2021 with an abiding spirit of neighborly love, radical hospitality and an ongoing commitment to provide a transformative educational experience. The step to resume limited in-person instruction, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, marks a major milestone in our common life. To meet this major milestone requires great responsibility for the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff. Therefore, in close collaboration with The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC), we will implement various health precautions, policies and protocols to build a collaborative campus culture focused on shared responsibility for health and safety as an expression of neighborly love.

Please read carefully the policies contained in this guidebook. All students, faculty and staff are expected to fully comply with the precautions, policies, and protocols outlined in this document. As we have all learned during the pandemic, conditions and government protocols and mandates can change quickly. Therefore, while we have compiled these policies with the expectation that they will be in place for the 2021-22 academic year, please be advised that these policies are subject to change. We will continue to monitor local, state, and federal directives and guidelines and announce changes to these policies as needed. As we have from the start of the pandemic, we will continue to focus on the health and safety of our community while providing as much stability and continuity as possible.

Thank you in advance for your attention and compliance to our community guidelines. As an expression of neighborly love, together we can reduce the risk of viral transmission by remaining mindful of the safety protocols outlined in this guide.

### **Vaccination Policy**

McCormick has strongly and regularly encouraged the community to get vaccinated since vaccines were first authorized for emergency use. On August 23, 2021, the Pfizer/BionNTech vaccine was fully approved by the FDA and it is expected that the Moderna and Johnson and Johnson vaccines will receive their full approvals before year-end. Three days later, Governor Pritzker announced new vaccine requirements for faculty, staff, and students in Illinois. The Governor’s order stated in part:

*Teachers and staff at pre-k-12 schools as well as personnel and students at higher education institutions are required to receive the vaccine. Workers and students in applicable settings must receive the first dose of a two-dose vaccination series or a single-dose vaccination by September 5, 2021. Second doses of the vaccine must be received by 30 days after the first dose.*

*Workers who do not receive the vaccine or those who opt out for medical reasons or based on a sincerely held religious belief must follow a routine testing schedule to detect cases early and prevent further spread. Testing will be required a minimum of once per week in schools and healthcare facilities. The frequency of testing may be required to increase in the event of positive cases.*

Therefore, to comply with the Governor’s order in August, effective Monday, September 13, 2021, McCormick Theological Seminary will require all students, faculty, and staff, whether they will be on campus or not, to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

### **Vaccination Policy Update (January 10, 2022)**

The FDA further authorized booster shots for adults of the Pfizer/BionNTech and Moderna vaccines on November 22, 2021. Additionally, the emergence of the Omicron variant in November 2021 further emphasizes the importance of vaccination, boosters, and prevention efforts needed to protect against COVID-19. As of January 5, 2022, The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that people remain up to date with their vaccines which includes booster doses at regular intervals. Therefore, effective immediately, McCormick Theological Seminary will require all students, faculty, and staff, whether they will be on campus or not, to be up to date with their vaccines. As of Monday, January 10, 2022, up to date means you must be fully vaccinated and received a booster dose at the regular intervals:

<b>You are fully vaccinated if you received:</b>	<b>When to Get a Booster Dose:</b>
Pfizer-BioNTech (2-dose series)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At least 5 months after completing your two (2) dose COVID-19 vaccination series</li></ul>
Moderna (2-dose series)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At least 6 months after completing your two (2) shot COVID-19 vaccination series</li></ul>
Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen (single dose)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• At least 2 months after receiving your J&amp;J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccination</li></ul>

To establish that a member of the Seminary community has received a vaccination, they must present written evidence of immunization (i.e. vaccination card) from the designated vaccination site or from another authorized healthcare provider:

- **Faculty and Staff:** Please submit online to Ashley Woodfaulk at <https://bit.ly/covidupdate-faculty-staff>.
- **Students:** Please submit online to Chandra Barnett-Wade at <https://bit.ly/covidupdate-students>. If students encounter any difficulties, please contact The Office of Student Services (formerly the Office of Student Academics) at [osa@mccormick.edu](mailto:osa@mccormick.edu) with the subject line “Issues with Immunization Verification”.

Members of the Seminary community who will be on campus for any reason at any time during the Fall 2021 semester and beyond need to submit their updated vaccination records by:

Fall 2021 Semester	Monday, September 13, 2021
J-Term 2022	Friday, January 14, 2022
<b>Spring 2022 Semester</b>	<b>Monday, January 31, 2022</b>

***For Those Who Are NOT Vaccinated: Mandatory 3 Day Testing Policy***

If you are not vaccinated because of a sincerely-held religious belief, a documented medical condition, or other reason and plan to be on campus for any reason at any time, you are required to present verifiable written evidence of negative COVID-19 test results from a test performed by an authorized healthcare provider within 72 hours of your visit to campus:

- **Faculty and Staff:** Please submit online to Ashley Woodfaulk at <https://bit.ly/covidupdate-faculty-staff>.
- **Students:** Please submit online to Chandra Barnett-Wade at <https://bit.ly/covidupdate-students>. If students encounter any difficulties, please contact The Office of Student Services (formerly the Office of Student Academics) at [osa@mccormick.edu](mailto:osa@mccormick.edu) with the subject line “Issues with Testing Verification.”

***Privacy Matters***

All information received will be handled with all state and federal privacy laws, including, without limitation, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Additionally, please keep in mind that there are significant privacy concerns about asking individuals for their vaccination status on an ad hoc basis. Faculty, staff, and students should refrain from asking individuals about their vaccination status. Therefore, concerns about a faculty or staff member’s vaccination status should be directed to Ashley Woodfaulk. Concerns about a student’s vaccination status should be directed to Chandra Barnett-Wade.

***Reopening Campus***

The Seminary will officially open for the Fall 2021 semester on Tuesday, September 7, 2021.

***Entering and Exiting the Building/Campus***

Entry to the Seminary building will be monitored and regulated. Campus access is limited to the MTS students, faculty, staff, field studies supervisors and visiting faculty, researchers, or guest lecturers of MTS and LSTC only. At this time, no other visitors will be allowed beyond the area in the main lobby front desk. To the extent there is a specific need for a visitor or guest to access the building beyond the main lobby, such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Faculty requests should be directed to Dean Steed Davidson, staff requests to either President David Crawford or Ashley Woodfaulk, and student requests to Assistant Dean David Watkins.

All people entering must follow 4 steps at entry and exit:

1. Verify that you are COVID-19 symptom free.
2. Wear a mask/face covering.
3. Sign in providing your name, destination, and time of entry.
4. Sign out and provide time of exit.

All entry and exit records will be kept by the MTS Facilities Management Office for use in tracing process by MTS and Chicago Department of Public Health, if necessary. Also, please note, MTS will not be hosting any outside events for the foreseeable future. Lastly, violation of these guidelines may result in revocation of building access privileges.

### *While on Campus: Masks, Social Distancing, Hygiene, Cleaning & Remaining Vigilant*

The following measures outlined below will help us achieve our goal of providing a safe environment for our entire campus community. Please remember that we are still in a dynamic COVID-19 environment. These required protocols could change as the public health situation evolves.

#### **Masks/Face Covering**

As of Friday, August 20, 2021, The Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) has established a face mask mandate for all indoor public settings. All individuals aged 2 and over, regardless of their vaccination status, will be required to wear a mask in public settings. The mandate can be referenced [here](#). Therefore, masks/face coverings that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by any person at all times in all indoor spaces while on the MTS/LSTC campus with the following exceptions:

1. Private Spaces – An individual may remove their face covering if they are in a private room/office alone with the door closed.
2. Eating/Drinking - A fully vaccinated individual may remove their face coverings to eat or drink. An unvaccinated individual, who has tested negative for COVID-19, may remove their face coverings to eat or drink so long as they maintain six feet of social distance from others.

#### *Masks/Face Covering Update (January 24, 2022):*

The Seminary recommends masks that have two or more layers and fit snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps. If available, the Seminary recommends using close-fitting masks such as KN95 or surgical masks. Although the use of cloth masks meets the Seminary's requirements, we do not recommend single-layer cloth masks, particularly those that let light shine through.

#### *Masks/Face Covering Update (February 28, 2022):*

Effective February 28, 2022, the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) has repealed indoor mask mandates in public places referenced [here](#).

Therefore, McCormick Theological Seminary is transitioning to mask optional for much of campus with some mask restrictions. Masks will not be required in most office settings and classrooms. Please note that individual Faculty members may require masks be worn in certain classes.

Although masks are now optional, MTS is encouraging everyone to continue to wear their masks while in close proximity to others, especially in smaller spaces within the Seminary. Please note that masks continue to be a useful tool in the prevention of COVID-19. In settings where masking is optional, it is a choice based on personal assessment of risk when to unmask. Please consider that some in our community may be immuno-compromised or care for others who have similar health conditions that may require masking in their presence. The use of masking is encouraged, supported and should be respected by all members of the MTS community. MTS is simply requesting that each person be kind and take care of one another as we navigate this uncertain space with COVID 19.

MTS continues to promote and facilitate health promoting behaviors such as hand hygiene/respiratory etiquette and will continue to have hand sanitizer and tissue available in common areas throughout the building. Please be aware that government and public health guidelines/restrictions, best practices, and McCormick policies regarding COVID-19 and masking are subject to change as new information becomes available.

## **Social Distancing**

In alignment with the City of Chicago's guidance, the Seminary is adopting the following distance guidance:

1. **Outdoors** – Social distancing restrictions, including capacity and density restrictions, are no longer in effect for outdoor spaces.
2. **Indoors** – Social/Physical distancing is recommended and spaces will be marked in a manner to promote this practice. Furnishings in all MTS classrooms and meeting rooms will be set for physical distancing of 6 feet. Capacity limits will be established, maintained, and communicated by MTS Facilities Management.
3. **Dining** – Unvaccinated individuals should maintain at least 6 feet distance while eating or drinking indoors; distancing restrictions are no longer in effect for vaccinated individuals while eating or drinking indoors. Refer to [CDC guidelines](#) for more specific information and [food safety](#).
4. **Moving and Gathering** – Members of the Seminary community are encouraged to move with purpose in common and congregate areas with large groups of people. Masks are required in all common areas and hallways.

## **Hygiene**

MTS continues to promote and facilitate health promoting behaviors such as [hand hygiene](#) and [respiratory etiquette](#). The Seminary will continue to have hand sanitizer and tissue available in common areas throughout the building.

## **Cleaning: Offices and Classrooms**

MTS cleaning company's teams will continue to clean and sanitize offices, classrooms and public spaces on their regular schedule based on CDC guidelines for disinfection and Occupational and Environmental Safety Office (OESO) protocols.

## Remaining Vigilant

You should continue to be aware of the [symptoms of COVID-19](#). MTS continues to encourage students, faculty, and staff to perform daily health screenings for infectious illnesses, including COVID-19. **By signing in at the MTS main entrance you are reporting that you are symptom free at that time.** Anyone who feels sick should stay home and not come to campus. Additionally, if you start experiencing symptoms while on campus, please go home immediately so you do not put others at risk of infection. Please use the [COVID-19 self-checker](#) to determine whether to medical care.

## *Experiencing Symptoms, COVID-19 Exposure and Testing*

If you have been exposed to Covid-19, and/or are experiencing symptoms, you must be [tested](#). You can contact the City of Chicago Department of Public Health for testing locations. Additionally, you must stay at home to [self-quarantine](#). Faculty and staff, you must inform your supervisor that you are unable to work on campus because you are following COVID-19 safety protocols. You do not need to tell your supervisor whether or not you are experiencing symptoms. Similarly, students, you must inform your professor or site supervisor that you are unable to come to campus or field education site because you are following COVID-19 safety protocols. You do not need to tell your professor or site supervisor whether or not you are experiencing symptoms.

## *COVID-19 Diagnosis*

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, you must self-isolate. Additionally, you are strongly encouraged to complete the COVID-19 Self Reporting Form and follow the following guidelines:

- Faculty and Staff: Please submit online to Ashley Woodfaulk at <https://bit.ly/covidupdate-faculty-staff>.
- Students: Please submit online to Chandra Barnett-Wade at <https://bit.ly/covidupdate-students>. If students encounter any difficulties, please contact The Office of Student Services (formerly the Office of Student Academics) at [osa@mccormick.edu](mailto:osa@mccormick.edu) with the subject line "Self-Isolation Protocol".

We assure you that any health information you share with us will be kept in strict confidence. You are free, though, to select on the form to have your name and diagnosis shared with the community should you be interested in receiving support from the community. For purposes of contact tracing we may need to indicate your diagnosis to persons in your contact list. Contact tracing involves identifying people who have come into close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19. The definition for close contact is changing based on different variants of the virus, so we will follow the CDC's guidelines appropriate to the variant.



***Isolation and Quarantine (updated January 10, 2022)***

In accordance with the new CDC guidelines released Monday, December 27, 2021, students, faculty, or staff must follow the following protocols:

<b>If You Test Positive for COVID-19 (Isolate)</b>	
<b>Vaccination Status</b>	<b>Isolation Protocol</b>
Everyone, regardless of vaccination status.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stay home for 5 days.</li><li>• If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your house.</li><li>• Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.</li><li>• If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever resolves.</li></ul>

<b>If You Were Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 (Quarantine)</b>	
<b>Vaccination Status</b>	<b>Isolation Protocol</b>
If you:  Have been boosted  OR Completed the 2 dose series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months  OR Completed the single dose series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wear a mask around others for 10 days.</li><li>• Test on day 5, if possible.</li><li>• If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home.</li></ul>

<b>If You Were Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 (Quarantine)</b>	
<b>Vaccination Status</b>	<b>Isolation Protocol</b>
If you:  Completed the 2 dose series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and are not boosted  OR Completed the 1 dose series of J&J over 2 months ago and are not boosted  OR Are unvaccinated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stay home for 5 days. After that continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.</li><li>• If you can't quarantine you must wear a mask for 10 days.</li><li>• Test on day 5 if possible.</li><li>• If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home</li></ul>

During this period, students should work with the [Office of Student Services](#) (formally the Office of Student Academics) for any assistance they may need negotiating with faculty to ensure continuity of their academic work. Please click [here](#) for other CDC guidance around quarantine and self-isolation.

***Return to Campus after COVID-19 Diagnosis***

Faculty, staff, and students are responsible for notifying the Seminary in the event they experience symptoms or receive a positive diagnosis. Additionally, faculty, staff, and students agree to provide

accurate and honest information. As such, any member of our Seminary community can return to campus when their healthcare provider advises they are safe to do so. There is no documentation required to return.

#### ***Non Retaliation***

McCormick Theological Seminary prohibits any form of discipline, reprisal, intimidation, or retaliation for good faith reporting a violation of this policy or any other health and safety concern. If you believe that a required COVID-19 safety policy or practice is not being followed, you should report the incident to your supervisor, professor, and/or Dean.

#### ***Non-Compliance or Intentional Misrepresentation***

Intentional misrepresentation by a student, member of the staff, or faculty in connection with these policies, including, without limitation, forged or illicitly obtained proof of vaccination, and/or proof of a negative COVID-19 test result, will be cause for disciplinary action which may include suspension, expulsion, termination, or dismissal.

#### ***Safety Practices***

Government and public health guidelines and restrictions and business and industry best practices regarding COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines are changing rapidly as new information becomes available, further research is conducted, and additional vaccines are approved and distributed. Therefore, McCormick Theological Seminary reserves the right to modify this policy at any time in its sole discretion to adapt to changing circumstances and needs, consistent with its commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy workplace and living and learning environment.

### ***Acknowledgement***

I have been provided McCormick Theological Seminary's COVID-19 Policy and Return to Campus Guidebook. I agree to abide by the contents herein. I recognize these measures are intended to protect me and others from the risk of exposure to COVID-19 on campus, as well as anyone I may have contact with. I understand that I am responsible for notifying the Seminary in the event I experience symptoms or received a positive diagnosis and agree to provide accurate and honest information.

Please electronically sign by typing your name into the box below, save and upload:

- Faculty and Staff: Please submit online to Ashley Woodfaulk at <https://bit.ly/covidupdate-faculty-staff>.
- Students: Please submit online to Chandra Barnett-Wade at <https://bit.ly/covidupdate-students>. If students encounter any difficulties, please contact The Office of Student Services (formerly the Office of Student Academics) at [osa@mccormick.edu](mailto:osa@mccormick.edu) with the subject line "COVID-19 Policy Acknowledgement."

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Signature

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Date