



Fall 2021 COVID-19 Policies
Finlandia University

Since the pandemic began, Finlandia University has worked closely with the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department and relied upon the guidance of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the CDC to carry out its primary mission of educating students in a healthy and safe manner. Through effective planning, Finlandia succeeded in providing safely-distanced in-person instruction and serving students on campus for the 2020-2021 academic year. We will continue to offer a safe face-to-face learning experience in the coming academic year.

Finlandia University is committed to meeting the goal of having 70% of our campus community vaccinated. Once we reach a 70% Finlandia community-wide vaccination rate, the following may occur, pending advice from local health professionals.

- Reaching the 70% goal in the residence hall means reinstating visitation policies and opening lounges.
- In athletics, reaching the 70% goal at the team level means maskless practices and travel.
- Once 70% of the student body has reported vaccines, a \$2,000 cash prize drawing will occur.

VACCINES

We *strongly encourage* students to get vaccinated and will continue to do so. While these vaccines are safe and effective, it is an individual decision to receive one and will not be required to be a part of our campus community.

Although Finlandia University will not require a COVID-19 vaccination for students for the fall semester, Finlandia University *strongly encourages* everyone to get vaccinated as soon as possible. The extent to which Finlandia can provide a full, normal fall experience is dependent on the information we have regarding vaccination status of the campus community over the next few months.

Vaccinations and On-Campus Students

Students residing in Finlandia Hall are required to submit their vaccine status to the Office of Residential Life before 4:00pm on August 27th. Failure to meet this requirement may result in classes being dropped. Non-vaccinated students who reside on campus will be required to submit to weekly COVID-19 surveillance tests, which may be at the student's own expense, but not to exceed \$400/semester. A rapid COVID-19 test will be administered upon arrival, and prior to move in, for all unvaccinated residential students. Unvaccinated students may also choose to present a negative test result upon arrival (note: the test must have been administered no more than 72 hours prior to arrival).

The percentage of residential students who are vaccinated will have a bearing on policies related to residence hall visitation and access to common lounges for the academic year. If the reported vaccination rate of residential students is 70% or greater, and local health officials advise it is safe to do so, visitation will be restored and lounges will be opened.

We all yearn for a return to normal. Our campus community can accelerate our path to normal by getting vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible. There are many compelling reasons to go ahead and get vaccinated now:

- The [American College Health Association](#) urges college students to schedule their COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible and not to delay.
- Protection from COVID for you, your family and friends.
- No more weekly testing for student athletes or residential students.
- No quarantine if exposed.
- Optional masks.
- Help allow a normal fall with more in-person events and traditions.
- Protection from severe illness and hospitalization.

Members of the Finlandia community are invited to an on-campus vaccine clinic on August 26th, 1-4pm.

TESTING

Unvaccinated students who reside on campus will be required to submit to weekly COVID-19 testing, which may be at the student's own expense. Students with an approved exemption will still need to be tested weekly but will not be charged for their surveillance tests.

- **[Medical Exemption](#)**: Non-vaccinated residential students may be exempt from being charged for weekly surveillance testing if a duly licensed healthcare provider certifies in writing that the student has a medical contraindication to the COVID-19 vaccine.
- **[Religious Exemption](#)**: Non-vaccinated residential students who hold genuine and sincere religious beliefs that are contrary to COVID-19 vaccination may petition for exemption from being charged for weekly surveillance testing.

Unvaccinated residential students must present a negative COVID-19 test result to move into Finlandia Hall. Any student who is unable to present proof of vaccination prior to or upon arrival will be considered unvaccinated. These students may either:

- Take an antigen (rapid) COVID-19 test upon their arrival to Finlandia Hall and prior to move in.
- Present a negative antigen or PCR test result upon arrival. Negative test result cannot be older than 72 hours.

MASKING

In order to ensure our best possible start to living and learning together this coming academic year, Finlandia is requiring that all vaccinated and unvaccinated faculty, staff, students and visitors wear masks in campus buildings through August 29. This three-week period allows time needed to more precisely determine the threat level on campus and, if needed, close any gap remaining to meet our goal of a campus-wide 70% vaccination rate. As of August 4, about 30% of our campus community has a confirmed COVID-19 vaccination, including 65% of residential students and 81% of faculty.

During these 3 weeks, outdoor activities and gatherings will be mask optional. Individuals who are in their offices or residence hall rooms alone are not required to mask.

On Friday, August 27th, this 3 week mask policy will be reassessed and further guidance will be provided on Monday, August 30th. This policy may be suspended or reinstated based on the percentage of campus community members vaccinated, the number of new cases on campus, and the level of spread here in Houghton County. Even after the 3-week period, all students may be required to wear masks in rooms where distancing is more difficult. Some professors may have classroom masking policies outlined in their syllabi and some offices may have masking signs posted. We ask all community members to act with care, empathy, and compassion around one another, and to voluntarily mask up whenever in doubt.

The CDC recently revised its guidance on masks, recommending that in regions of “substantial and high” spread everyone, including fully vaccinated people, wear masks indoors. While Houghton County is not currently in the high-spread category, we will be monitoring the statistics closely. As the CDC states, “For now, if you’ve been fully vaccinated: You will still need to follow guidance at your workplace and local businesses.”

If you wish to receive a vaccination, Finlandia is partnering with Upper Great Lakes Family Health to administer the one dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine on Thursday, August 26th from 1-4pm in the Student Health Clinic in Nikander.

Unvaccinated students who do not comply with masking and/or testing requirements will be required to leave campus and withdraw from classes. Remote learning will not be an option for students who are non-compliant for masking and/or testing.

70% VACCINATION GOAL

Residence Hall currently at 64% vaccinated

Faculty currently at 81% vaccinated

For COVID-19, herd immunity is generally accepted as around 70% of a community having immunity to the COVID-19 virus.

Herd immunity provides a way to protect the elderly, children, including newborns, who are not eligible for vaccination, and those who are immunocompromised from contracting COVID-19.

Being close to herd immunity may be sufficient in preventing a significant outbreak, something that could disrupt face-to-face learning and athletic participation.

QUARANTINE

The University is not maintaining on or off-campus COVID-19 quarantine and isolation space this fall. Students who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate off campus for 10 days. These students will be provided with the date and time when they can return to campus.

Unvaccinated students who are identified as a close contact of a student who tests positive will be required to quarantine off campus for up to 14 days. Students returning to campus after a close contact will be tested upon their return and must have a negative test result before returning to the residence hall.

Students who are in quarantine or isolation due to COVID-19 exposure or infection will follow each instructor's attendance and make-up work policies, as is outlined in their class syllabi.

Remote learning will no longer be guaranteed for students in quarantine or isolation unless an exception applies related to a disability.

International students will be required to quarantine for 7 days following their arrival into the United States and must comply with all U.S. travel testing and arrival requirements for their country of origin at the time of travel. However, international students who are fully vaccinated and have their vaccination record on file with the University at the time of arrival will not need to quarantine.

SYMPTOM TRACKING

All faculty, staff, and students must conduct symptom self-monitoring (temperature and other symptom checks) every day that they are present on campus to monitor for COVID-19 symptoms.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, including cough, fever or headache, or significant loss of smell or taste, you are asked to complete the Symptom Tracking Form, email your supervisor or professors, and shelter in place until you have heard from the Student Health Center.

ATHLETICS

During traditional and non-traditional seasons, unvaccinated student athletes will be tested weekly.

Rosters that obtain 70% or higher vaccination rates will not be subject to masking during practices or during team travel.

ACADEMIC ABSENCES

We are also resuming longstanding class attendance and absence policies. Students who are in quarantine or isolation due to COVID-19 exposure or infection will follow pre-pandemic attendance and make-up work policies (whether due to COVID-19, influenza, surgery, or other medical absences students sometimes encounter), as outlined in their course syllabi.

As we pursue a return to fully in-person class experiences, remote learning will no longer be guaranteed for students in quarantine or isolation unless an exception applies due to a disability.

The hybrid learning environment—with some students online and others in person—hinders faculty from providing engaging class sessions.

Where there is a documented medical concern associated with complying with COVID-Safe guidelines, students should reach out to Disability Support Services to explore whether they are eligible for ADA accommodation.