



## OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

August 26, 2021

Dear LACCD Colleagues:

Welcome to the start the new 2021-2022 academic year at LACCD. We care about you, and know that your health and safety remain our top priorities.

On Monday, August 30, classes resume at all nine colleges, with about 75% of classes remaining online or in hybrid form and 25% in-person at the colleges onsite. The ongoing impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic are still here and have caused catastrophic consequences on human life, on the economy and our society, and on our colleges. The pandemic has fueled significant higher education enrollment decreases across the nation, in California and at LACCD.

Since the pandemic was declared in March 2020, we have seen the terrible [spread](#) of COVID-19 and its variants cause nearly 38 million cases and almost 630,000 deaths in the U.S. alone. Locally, Los Angeles County has passed the grim milestone of more than 25,000 deaths during the past 18 months. Throughout this health crisis, the District has maintained regular, direct contact with officials from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and that information is shared with you through the District's Emergency Operations Center via Safety Advisories and other email communications posted [online](#).

### **IMPORTANT CHANGES**

On August 4, the Board of Trustees approved two new Board Policies regarding masking indoors and proof of vaccination or a current negative COVID-19 test in order to access our colleges and facilities. The masking policy aligns the District with prevailing Public Health Orders. It is effective and enforceable now. You can read online more about both policies at [BP 2800 \(masking\)](#) and [BP 2900 \(vaccinations\)](#). This policy conversation with the Board is fluid and will adjust to address this dynamic, ever-changing environment.

The process for verifying vaccinations or a current COVID-19 test are being finalized now and will be available soon. As part of these plans, we are actively working with a provider to schedule free COVID-19 testing throughout the District for all employees and students. Also, now that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration ([FDA](#)) [has approved](#) full, regular use of the Pfizer vaccine, you can expect that a variety of steps will happen quickly to further mandate vaccines locally and throughout the country.

### **CLEAN AND HEALTHY WORK AND LEARN ENVIRONMENTS**

In addition, the District has been aggressively cleaning and upgrading our facilities to give you strong assurance that you are returning to clean and safe indoor spaces for our District employees, students and visitors. These steps include:

- Frequent cleaning of all restrooms, classrooms, offices and all indoor spaces, in many cases using electrostatic sprayers for sanitizing high-use, high-touch areas
- Hiring additional custodial team members to increase our cleaning and maintenance capacities
- Upgrading the HVAC systems with the best available MERV-style air filters, ultraviolet lighting for disinfecting and improved air flow by bringing in outdoor fresh air into the systems
- Installing more hand disinfectant stations, plus the distribution of free respirators and masks
- Securing new supplies of thousands of additional respirators and masks for distribution at the colleges
- Continuing to pursue contact tracing and notifications for all COVID-19 cases reported to us by employees and students.

**STAY THE COURSE**

The District and the colleges are doing their part, but we only be fully successful with your support and cooperation. The science is very clear: vaccinations and testing are the ticket out of this pandemic. Add to that winning formula our institutional resolve and vigilance, and our progress towards a “post-pandemic” environment continues. I urge all who are not vaccinated to do so immediately and to get any recommended booster shot just as soon as you are eligible. The District continues to offer paid time off for you to get vaccinated.

Please remember that we must all continue to wear masks indoors at this time; frequently wash our hands and do the daily symptom self-check whenever you intend to be in-person at one of the colleges or at District facilities. The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged us all, for sure, but significant progress has been made. By working together, we can make our colleges and District facilities safe and healthy work and learning environments.

I wish you continued health, strength and every success for the new academic year.

With my deepest admiration and respect,

In unity and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Francisco C. Rodriguez', with a stylized, looping flourish.

Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D.  
Chancellor  
Los Angeles Community College District