

Dear Yote Community,

This update marks the third consecutive week with very few known cases of COVID-19 at the College of Idaho. At the time of this writing, only a single active diagnosis exists, and that person is recovering in isolation off campus.

As has been the case since September 16th, Idaho continues to operate under [Crisis Standards of Care](#), and the Treasure Valley remains especially active with over 115,000 cases recorded to date. Some preliminary indications suggest that we have reached peak in the outbreak: The [daily 7-day moving average incidence rate](#), a key pandemic metric, has dropped 46% in the past month. Still, all the usual COVID precautions are warranted until authorities confirm this is not a temporary decline and we can be certain that infection rates have dropped to safe levels. In the meantime, masking, vaccinations, and all the other precautions outlined in the [Fall 2021 Re-Opening Plan](#) remain our best protection against infection.

A few specific observations:

- **Testing:** The College has provided a new weekly COVID testing option for students through the Campus Wellness Center, and results are typically provided in 36-48 hours.
- **Masking:** Mask compliance continues to improve, but reports are submitted routinely regarding pockets of noncompliance as well. Such concerns have been voiced regarding some key locations on campus, including workout facilities. Please be aware of these concerns and keep others safe by wearing your mask. Apart from the health issues, failure to comply forces community members to police the regulations, creates discomfort among bystanders, and adds needless stress to our community at a time when we have quite enough of that already.
- **Masking, Part 2:** We are glad to see many students and employees utilizing the paper masks provided by the College. These are intended for instances when cloth masks have been left behind or forgotten, and they serve that purpose effectively. Keep in mind that they are fairly durable and can be used for more than a single pass-through or class session. Good data on the period of time these disposable masks can be worn vary, but the CDC generally recommends discarding at the end of a work day or when the mask becomes soiled or difficult to breathe through.
- **Reporting:** Finally, as always, If you are experiencing [symptoms](#), please [report](#), so that we can provide support and take appropriate preventative measures.

That's all the news for now. In light of the fact that classes do not meet and community engagement will be sharply reduced during fall break, this update will be suspended until everyone returns after vacation.

We wish everyone a safe and restful fall break.

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