

SUNY COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY SURVEILLANCE TESTING PLAN

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Since the onset of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, the State University of New York College of Optometry implemented and has maintained a comprehensive and aggressive screening, testing, case management and contact tracing program consistent with the guidance of the CDC, NYSDOH, SUNY System and executive orders issued by Governor Cuomo.

Our COVID-protection program for the College community is based on: (1) Social Distancing; (2) Aggressive Sanitization; (3) Appropriate PPE; and (4) Testing and Surveillance.

Plans for additional surveillance testing take into account heavy mitigation measures and the unique character of the College population and the physical characteristics of the College. Noteworthy points include:

- The campus is contained in one 298,000 sq. ft. building in Midtown Manhattan. There is one primary entrance.
- The College has no housing. All students commute and come from the five boroughs and beyond.
- There are no food services available on campus.
- In-person events are currently not permitted on campus. All student activities are conducted virtually.
- The College's Article 28 health care facility (The University Eye Center - UEC) occupies five floors of the building, serving approximately 70,000 patient visits per year.
- The facility houses SUNY System Administration Offices on the 18th floor (e.g., NYC Welcome Center, Charter Schools, Enrollment Office, & U-wide Benefits).
- The College has a student body of 405 doctoral-professional/graduate students, with 65 of those on 3-month externships (clinical field placements) during any given semester. There are no undergraduate students. There are also 17 in-house residents and 333 employees.
- Given our location in the heart of New York City, SARS-CoV-2 testing (i.e., rapid, PCR and antibody) is readily available at numerous sites within close proximity to the College.
- Testing arrangements: Ezra Medical Center, a clinical affiliate in Brooklyn, is providing same-day, time-certain appointments to the College for 15-minute rapid testing at no charge. Downstate Medical Center is providing PCR testing with 24-48 hr. reporting as needed.
- We have also now acquired two DB Veritor Rapid Testers and will begin on-site use in early October.

Prior to entering the building, **every** person (i.e., employees, students, patients, visitors) must answer a series of questions, undergo thermal screening and agree to wear an acceptable face covering for the duration of their stay within the building.

Any student or employee who has symptoms, a fever, or is considered to have been exposed to the virus (including travel from restricted states) is not allowed access to the building pending test results. Our

COVID Coordinator (an RN) or the Chief Medical Officer interviews each of these individuals and provides guidance regarding testing, quarantining, isolation and/or follow-up medical care.

In addition, all appropriate PPE, infection control measures, mask-wearing requirements, social distancing, frequent disinfection and deep cleaning of common areas, and other protective measures are employed and strictly enforced throughout the campus. The University Eye Center complies with all additional federal CDC and New York State Department of Health requirements for health care facilities.

As a direct result of measures taken to date, there has been one positive case on campus since late April. Due to timely and thorough internal contact tracing, this positive case did not result in any secondary cases on campus.

Despite this high level of success, the College's administrative team fully appreciates the risks associated with pre- and asymptomatic cases and the need to be proactive by means of a sound surveillance program.

In formulating the College's Plan for surveillance testing, in addition to the measures noted above, other factors considered include:

- All lectures are remote for the fall semester; students are only required to be on campus two to three days a week for labs or clinical field assignments.
- There are typically no more than 100 to 120 students assigned to on-campus learning on any given day.
- The size of in-person teaching labs was reduced from a maximum of 28 to 14, in order to maximize social distancing. Each group of 14 remains together for all of their in-person assignments, allowing for quick assessment of possible educationally-linked exposure.
- The majority of our employees continue to telecommute at least on a part-time basis each week thereby reducing the population density on campus at any point in time.
- We have no residential housing.
- Wastewater: Our restrooms are shared between students, employees and the patients cared for on the floors occupied by the University Eye Center; this effectively eliminates wastewater testing from being considered as a viable option for purpose of surveillance. Wastewater from the 2nd floor and up also feeds directly into the NYC sewer system with no intermediate storage.

The following sections detailing the "Surveillance Testing Plan" and "Key Testing Triggers" will be added to the College's *"Campus Ramp-Up Plan"*, Section III.c (pg. 9) – On Campus Risk Mitigation: Testing. It will also be inserted into Appendix 1: *"Reopening New York – Checklist for Higher Education Institution Reopening Plans"* in the appropriate spot. (Note - The Campus Ramp-Up Plan is currently undergoing a complete review and updating of the information.)

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- Students have been assigned to one of 24 "educational sections" (8 per class year, each section has a maximum of 14 students) based on their laboratory or clinical placement. To decrease density at the College, the various sections have staggered schedules and are assigned to be on campus different times and days of the week.

- Commencing Monday, September 21st, the College will start pool testing 5-6 randomly selected educational sections each week using the SUNY Upstate Medical University COVID-19 Testing Program (70-80 students per week).
- As each student is only on campus a couple of days a week, testing days will be switched each week in an effort to make testing equally accessible to all students.
- If a pool test returns positive results, PCR testing of the individual samples will be conducted using the SUNY Upstate Medical University COVID-19 Testing Program.
- All actions to mitigate the risk of spreading the infection (i.e., quarantine, isolation, disinfection of affected spaces, contact tracing, following appropriate return-to-campus guidelines, etc.) will immediately be taken by the COVID Coordinator.
- If the campus experiences a total of 20 positive cases within a 2-week period of time, pool testing will be performed on the entire campus community. This represents significantly less than the 5% trigger (35) for educational closure as mandated by the Governor.
- With the agreement between SUNY System and the unions to begin mandatory testing of employees, we will begin to phase-in testing of our staff and faculty in October and will test at a rate similar to that of our students.

Key Testing Triggers:

1. Faculty, staff, students, and visitors on College business, coming from restricted states will abide by the requirements of the current travel advisory policy: Rapid testing with a negative result and no symptoms before allowing entry. This can now be done on campus.
2. Failed daily entry screening: If indicated, send home and require an antigen test (rapid or PCR). Quarantine at home until providing a negative test result and resolution of symptoms before allowing return to campus. This testing may be done on campus or in a location close to where the individual lives.
3. Students, faculty, and staff exposed to confirmed or suspected cases: Rapid test. If negative, allow to work with appropriate PPE and precautionary measures (e.g., temperature checks every 12 hours, monitoring for symptoms, social distancing, etc.).
4. Two or more individuals positive from a defined group (e.g., lab section/educational unit, clinic, floor, social cluster determined by contact tracing): Rapid test all members of group and monitor for symptoms. Proper guidance will be provided and actions taken based on test results.
5. 20 positive cases within 2 weeks: Pool test 100% of the community in groups for return.
6. >35 (5%) positive cases within 2 weeks: Close all non-essential in-person activities at College for two weeks and pool test community in groups prior to their return.

We are confident that this plan will allow us to carefully monitor the community, isolate cases, and contain outbreaks.