COVID-19 Procedures for Students

SHSST is committed to the physical well-being of all its community members and the educational progress of its students amid the Covid-19 pandemic. To this end, SHSST has developed a four-phase operational plan for responding to the possible trajectories of the Covid-19 pandemic. Please see SHSST's Covid-19 Response Operations Plan for details.

In order to respond to incidents of Covid-19 exposure or illness, SHSST has developed this policy and will follow the Public Health Recommendations for Community-Related Exposure issued by the CDC as well as any state or local health requirements. Since the procedures mandated by the CDC and state or local health departments may change, students should also work directly with the Academic Administrative Assistant when deciding how to respond to a Covid-19 illness, direct contact with a known or suspected Covid-19 ill person, or increased risk through exposure to other people. SHSST will maintain transparent communication with members of the school community about any policy changes.

What are SHSST'S General Expectations of Students in the Covid-19 environment?

- Students are expected to follow all protocols corresponding to the current Phase of Operations in SHSST's Covid-19 Response Operations Plan.
- Students are expected to self-monitor for Covid-19 symptoms and get tested if they are exposed or have symptoms.
- Students are expected to work with the Academic Administrative Assistant if they have any questions or concerns about SHSST's response to Covid-19.

What can Students Expect from SHSST in the COVID-19 environment?

- If SHSST receives information that someone in the SHSST community has Covid-19, SHSST will notify anyone who may have been exposed.
- SHSST will maintain the confidentiality of an ill student as required by federal and state regulations (e.g., FERPA).
- Notification to SHSST that a student has a positive test or symptoms of Covid-19 will not jeopardize student status.
- SHSST will follow student handbook policies related to absences for Covid-19.

What should a Student do if exposed to Covid-19 or has symptoms?

- The student should isolate. Commuting students should notify the Academic Assistant; residential students should notify the VP of Formation. Test as soon as possible.
- Follow the current CDC guidance, listed below.

Current CDC Guidance if you are exposed to Covid-19 or have symptoms (https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/p0811-Covid-guidance.html, Accessed 8/14/22, Verbatim):

- *Recommending that instead of quarantining if you were exposed to Covid-19, you wear a high-quality mask for 10 days and get tested on day 5.*

- *Reiterating that regardless of vaccination status, you should isolate from others when you have Covid-19.*
  - *You should also isolate if you are sick and suspect that you have Covid-19 but do not yet have test results.*
    - *If your results are positive, follow CDC's full isolation recommendations.*
    - *If your results are negative, you can end your isolation.*
- *Recommending that if you test positive for Covid-19, you stay home for at least 5 days and isolate from others in your home. You are likely most infectious during these first 5 days. Wear a high-quality mask when you must be around others at home and in public.*
    - *If after 5 days you are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medication, and your symptoms are improving, or you never had symptoms, you may end isolation after day 5.*
    - *Regardless of when you end isolation, avoid being around people who are more likely to get very sick from Covid-19 until at least day 11.*
    - *You should wear a high-quality mask through day 10.*
- *Recommending that if you had moderate illness (if you experienced shortness of breath or had difficulty breathing) you need to isolate through day 10.*
- *Recommending that if you had severe illness or have a weakened immune system, consult your doctor before ending isolation.*
- *If you are unsure if your symptoms are moderate or severe or if you have a weakened immune system, talk to your doctor for further guidance.*
- *Clarifying that after you have ended isolation, if your Covid-19 symptoms worsen, restart your isolation at day 0. Talk to a healthcare provider if you have questions about your symptoms or when to end isolation.*

What steps will SHSST Take if a Member of the SHSST Community Is Diagnosed with Covid-19?

- If a member of the SHSST community is diagnosed with Covid-19, then the institutional practices recommended by the CDC will be followed.
- SHSST will determine which students, faculty or staff may have been exposed to the virus and will inform them of possible exposure, while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

What If a Student Needs Learning Accommodations Because of Covid-19?

SHSST relies on the CDC and the ADA to determine qualifying reasons for a reasonable accommodation. The following procedures delineate the process by which reasonable accommodations will be made for the student impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

For those students who isolate yet are still healthy enough to continue engaging and completing coursework, the following procedures will be followed.

- After the student has informed the Academic Administrative Assistant that s/he is in Covid-19 isolation, the Academic Administrative Assistant will inform the Rector, Vice Rector, and Chief Academic Officer.
- The Chief Academic Officer will then contact the student to assess the situation and develop an academic plan for supporting the student during quarantine.
- Typically, the following steps will then be implemented:

1. a) The Chief Academic Officer will contact the faculty teaching the isolated student to inform them of the student's situation and the anticipated plan for supporting the student's academic progress.
2. b) If the student is a seminarian, the Rector will contact the sponsor regarding the situation and plan.
3. c) The Chief Academic Officer will contact the IT Department, who will ascertain and coordinate the most appropriate means for providing the student with remote access to class sessions.
   i. The typical means will be through Zoom via "Conferences" in Populi. If necessary, other means include the appointment of a classmate to use a Smartphone or laptop to "remote in" the isolated student for class sessions via FaceTime, Skype, or similar videoconferencing software.
   ii. If necessary, the means of remote attendance could only be through audio (e.g., cell phone).
   iii. If the student is a residential seminarian, the IT Department will contact the Vice Rector to see if any remote attendance support is needed for formation classes, sacramental practica, spiritual direction, etc.
   d) On a weekly basis, the Chief Academic Officer will contact the student to check in on academic progress and ascertain if further support structures need to be established. Likewise, the Chief Academic Officer will weekly contact the faculty teaching the isolated student to ensure that the process is going smoothly and address any issues.

Once the student returns from isolation, these structures are obviously ended, though it might be deemed appropriate to provide some ongoing support. This might be particularly the case for Covid-19 infected students who are no longer infectious yet are still suffering from health or physical consequences of the disease.

ECSP Students

If the student is enrolled full-time in ECSP, then the procedures delineated above will be followed with the exception that communication will start with the International Student Services Specialist instead.

Covid-Infected Students: The severity of symptoms can vary widely among those infected by Covid-19. Thus, some students might continue to progress with their studies in the manner outlined above. However, if the symptoms are such that ongoing progress is impossible, inadvisable or limited, then SHSST will make all reasonable efforts to ensure completion of the semester's coursework. The extent and nature of these efforts will vary in relation to each specific case. The relevant procedures in the School Handbook regarding student health situations will be followed in such cases.

Formation Accommodations:
In addition to implementing the above Learning Accommodation procedures, the following steps will be taken to relation to the residential seminarian's formation program:

1. The Vice Rector will inform the seminarian's Formation Advisor, who will contact the student to assess the situation and develop a formation plan for supporting the student during quarantine. The Formation Advisor will then update the Vice Rector and Rector on the situation and plan.

2. The Vice Rector will contact the relevant formation faculty (e.g., class moderators, pastoral placement supervisors, sacramental practicum instructors, spiritual directors, etc.).

3. The IT Department will coordinate any needed technological services in conversation with the Vice Rector (see 3.b. under Learning Accommodations).

How Will In-House Students with Covid-19 Be Handled?

All of the applicable procedures outlined above will be implemented for residential students (including residential ECSP students). SHSST will follow the guidance provided by the CDC as part of the Shared or Congregate Housing Recommendations and also expects all residents to consult the Shared or Congregate Housing Recommendations to take actions to protect themselves and others.

In addition, in-house student infections, contacts or those exposed to COVID-19 will follow the procedures delineated below:

- Upon entering isolation, students will be provided with information from the CDC on how to care for themselves and when to seek medical attention; SHSST will also consult with Nurse Mary Balistreri as necessary.
- The only persons allowed into the student's room are caregivers or health officials designated by the Rector. Whenever another person is in the isolated student's room, all persons (including the isolated person) will wear masks, and other appropriate protective wear.
- Meals will be directly brought to the student's room and placed outside the door for the student to access after the delivery person departs. Upon finishing his meal, the student will place his tray outside his door and inform the delivery person that it is ready for pick up.
- The student will not leave this room for any reason other than to access off-campus health services.