



May 31, 2023

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| DIRECTIVE: | JOB CORPS PROGRAM INSTRUCTION NOTICE NO. 22-17 |
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TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: RACHEL TORRES
National Director
Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Ending of COVID-19 State of Emergency and Updating Job Corps Procedures

1. **Purpose.** To inform the Job Corps community of the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) and the updated Job Corps policies and procedures to handle COVID-19 cases on centers.
2. **Background.** On May 11, 2023, the federal government lifted the COVID-19 PHE, more than three years after it began. While COVID-19 still poses a health risk, especially for higher-risk individuals, tools to mitigate the effects of the virus including vaccines, tests, and treatments are broadly available; and the nationwide healthcare system is better able to respond to a surge in cases.¹

Nationwide, ending the PHE will change COVID-19 data reporting and may affect costs associated with vaccinations, testing, and treatment. Most significantly for Job Corps, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will cease reporting COVID-19 infection data and updating weekly data sources including Community Transmission Levels. Job Corps has used these data sources for mask-wearing requirements and center operation guidance.

Job Corps COVID-19 policies have mirrored CDC guidance since the beginning of the pandemic. As the impact of COVID-19 has lessened, the CDC has continued to change guidance on recommended COVID-19 mitigation measures. This Notice and additional supporting

¹ US Department of Health and Human Services (2023). Fact Sheet: End of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. Available at: <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2023/05/09/fact-sheet-end-of-the-covid-19-public-health-emergency.html>

materials provide updated guidance on COVID-19 prevention, reporting requirements, and other COVID-19-related procedures for Job Corps centers based on the updated CDC guidance.

3. Action. Job Corps centers must take the following actions:

Pandemic Planning

- Pursuant to Job Corps Policy and Requirements Handbook Chapter 5, Section 5.1, R18, a(1), Centers have an existing requirement to complete an Emergency Action Plan (EAP), including planning for medical emergencies. Centers must include pandemic and infectious disease planning within the Emergency Action Plan.
- The infectious disease and medical emergency components of the Emergency Action Plan must be submitted within 2 weeks of release of this Program Instruction Notice (PIN). The entire EAP will be added to Exhibit 5-2 and the list of Annual Plans to be submitted within 90 days of award and annually on the contract anniversary date.

Mask Wearing

- When COVID-19 hospitalization admission levels are high in the county where the center is located, as designated in CDC's COVID-19 by County, all people on Job Corps centers must wear high-quality masks or respirators while indoors, except when in a dormitory room.
- During on-center COVID-19 outbreaks, mask-wearing will be advised by Regional Offices, in consultation with Job Corps Health Support Contractor, on a case-by-case basis. The Center Director will make the final implementation decision.
- Centers must follow Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic guidelines to determine mask-wearing in the Health and Wellness Center.
- Outside of the circumstances outlined elsewhere in this document (e.g., center outbreaks, confirmed COVID-19, exposure to COVID-19), mask-wearing is at the discretion of each individual.

Exposure to COVID-19

- All staff and students must follow the guidance outlined in What to Do If You Were Exposed to COVID-19.
- Students who are identified as COVID-19 close contacts must be tested as soon as the exposure is identified.

Isolation for those with COVID-19

- Centers must follow Isolation and Precautions for People with COVID-19 for all confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases.

Reporting, Contact Tracing, and Outbreak Response

- Centers must report COVID-19 cases in the Significant Reporting System in line with guidance released from the Office of Job Corps.
- Centers must identify and notify close contacts of individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19.
- Centers must consult with the Regional Office when COVID-19 transmission occurs on center.

Social/Physical Distancing

- Centers must accommodate students who request physical distance as space allows in classrooms and other common areas.

COVID-19 Testing

- Centers must follow the testing guidance outlined in COVID-19 Testing: What You Need to Know.
- Centers must continue to complete Testing Supply Surveys to support inventory monitoring.

Vaccinations

- Job Corps center operators must continue promoting and supporting access to COVID-19 vaccination based on CDC guidance on COVID-19 vaccinations, similar to the handling of seasonal influenza vaccination.
- Center operators must ensure students' vaccination records are obtained and maintained consistent with existing Job Corps policies, including PRH Chapter 2, Section 2.3, R13 Professional Standards of Care, and federal laws regarding the release, storage, and handling of healthcare information.

Physical Property

- Centers must follow CDC's When and How to Clean and Disinfect a Facility.
- Centers should provide signage reminding students of general health guidelines to minimize the spread of illness.

Leave Status

- Students may use "Not Present for Duty – Administrative Leave With Pay" as outlined in PRH Exhibit 6-1 for COVID-19-related absences.

PIN Rescissions: PIN 21-12 is no longer in effect.

In the event of evolving CDC guidance for COVID-19 or any other Department of Labor relevant guidance, Job Corps will implement changes as soon as operationally feasible.

Overview of Significant Discontinued COVID-19 Job Corps Requirements:

- COVID-19 Center Plans. Centers must maintain the Emergency Action Plan, with an infectious disease component.
- *Student COVID-19 Vaccine Certification, Authorizations, and Acknowledgements and Testing Consent*, and COVID-19 vaccination entry into CIS.
- Masking based on CDC's COVID-19 Community Levels.
- Department of Labor's COVID-19 Masking Website.
- COVID-19 testing to release a student from isolation.
- CA-1/CA-2 reporting for COVID-19 cases.

4. Resources:

- Fact Sheet: End of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency
- CDC COVID-19 Site

5. Effective Date. Effective immediately until rescinded or superseded.

6. Inquiries. Inquiries about this Information Notice should be directed to Lesley Nesmith at Nesmith.Lesley@dol.gov.

7. Attachments:

- *PIN 22-17 Attachment A. Job Aid Ending of COVID-19 State of Emergency*