



**DIRECTIVE: JOB CORPS PROGRAM INSTRUCTION NOTICE NO. 21-07**

**TO:** ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF  
ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF  
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS  
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS  
ALL FOREST SERVICE JOB CORPS CENTERS  
ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS  
ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS  
ALL CENTER USERS

**FROM:** RACHEL TORRES  
National Director  
Office of Job Corps

**SUBJECT:** Required Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Testing for All Students  
Returning from Winter Break

1. **Purpose.** To provide Job Corps centers with guidance on COVID-19 testing requirements for all students returning to center from Winter Break, and to remind centers of existing protocols and guidance to mitigate and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

2. **Background.**

Job Corps' goal is to create and foster a healthy learning environment for students and staff by taking preventative measures to minimize the risk of COVID-19 outbreaks across campuses. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance has continued to evolve as we learn more about COVID-19 and as the COVID-19 pandemic has changed as a result of new variants of the virus. The World Health Organization (WHO) Director General recently noted that the Omicron variant is spreading at a rate unlike any of the previous variants.<sup>1</sup> Job Corps remains committed to providing the safest learning environment possible during the COVID-19 pandemic, and must rapidly adapt and respond to the changing conditions. Multiple policy guidance has been issued as we learn more about the impact of COVID-19, and we've consistently focused our collective efforts on reducing and mitigating COVID-19 transmission risk on Job Corps campuses.<sup>2</sup>

Job Corps has considered multiple factors in the development of policy guidance including: 1) community threat level transmission, 2) COVID-19 vaccination rate/coverage among students

<sup>1</sup> Chicago 5 News, Omicron Severity, Symptoms, Risk of Breakthrough Cases: What We Know So Far, available at <https://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/omicron-severity-symptoms-risk-of-breakthroughs-cases-what-we-know-so-far/2708290/>.

<sup>2</sup> Office of Job Corps [Program Instruction Notice 20-08 Center Resumption of Operations Checklist](#)

and staff, 3) centers' capacity to implement COVID-19 screening protocols and safety procedures, and 4) medical information and scientific trends regarding COVID-19. In light of the high number of COVID-19 cases following students' return from Thanksgiving break, the number of breakthrough cases among students and staff, and the high rate of transmission of the Omicron variant, the Office of Job Corps is requiring all center operators to test students returning from break—regardless of vaccination status.

3. Action.

a) Planning for Gradual Return

- i. Centers must accommodate students who wish to remain on center during the winter break or return early from break.
- ii. Consistent with Job Corps' Policy and Requirements Handbook, Exhibit 6-2, Student Allowance and Allotment System, winter break leave days are unpaid days. Any student remaining at center during winter break is in unpaid administrative leave.
- iii. Centers must ***gradually return*** students to campus in groups/reasonably sized cohorts. The size of each group/cohort is based on physical distancing, transportation availability and vehicle occupancy guidelines, and other center specific conditions. The number of groups and number of students in each returning group must be reasonable in comparison to the center operator's capacity to manage the influx of returning students.

b) COVID-19 Testing Upon Return to Center:

- i. All students (vaccinated and unvaccinated) must receive a COVID-19 test immediately upon their initial return to center.
- ii. Centers should follow JCDC Notice 21-086 Modified Testing Protocol. Rural centers equipped with more rapid ID NOW tests may use them for any COVID-19 required testing. *Recommended* – vaccinated students may receive the Antigen/Rapid tests and unvaccinated students may receive the RT-PCR tests.
- iii. Centers must follow guidance in the COVID-19 Medical, Mental Health, Trainee Employee Assistance Program (TEAP), and Oral Health Protocols if students test positive for COVID-19.

c) For students who are not fully vaccinated or are partially vaccinated as outlined in PIN 21-02, centers must also:<sup>3</sup>

- i. Ensure student masking at all times while on center, except when eating, sleeping, or alone in dormitory rooms, unless the student has a reasonable accommodation.
- ii. Quarantine for seven days even if a returning student receives a negative COVID-19 test result upon arrival.
- iii. Provide follow-up COVID-19 testing on day five to seven after beginning entrance quarantine.
- iv. After completing quarantine, test for COVID-19 once per week and ensure students continue to follow social distancing and masking requirements.
- v. Quarantine 14 days after students' close contact exposure with someone determined to be infected.
- vi. Maintain students' quarantine for seven days following leave/PTO, with

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<sup>3</sup> Office of Job Corps Program Instruction Notice 21-02 Revised Quarantine Requirements

testing on day five to seven after return.

- vii. Monitor the status of state quarantine requirements for out-of-state travel and other conditions and immediately report any changes to the appropriate Job Corps Regional Director.

d) Vaccination Education and Assistance

- i. Center operators must inform and educate students about vaccination.<sup>4</sup>
- ii. Center operators must follow PIN 20-21, and support students in their efforts to get vaccinated.<sup>5</sup>
- iii. All students with disabilities must be provided the opportunity to request and receive reasonable accommodation in accordance with Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and their implementing regulations. Guidelines for providing reasonable accommodation are outlined in Form 2-03, Definitions, and Documentation Requirements Related to Reasonable Accommodations for Applicants and Students with Disabilities, and on the Job Corps Disability website.

- 4. Expiration Date. Effective immediately until rescinded or superseded.
- 5. Inquiries. Questions about this policy should be directed to the appropriate Job Corps Regional Director.

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<sup>4</sup> CDC Vaccine Recipient Education, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/hcp/index.html> (last accessed on December 17, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> Office of Job Corps Program Instruction Notice 20-21 Job Corps Center Protocols for COVID-19 Vaccinations