MARCHING FORWARD - SIENA COLLEGE PLAN FOR THE SPRING 2022 SEMESTER
SIENA COLLEGE
LOUDONVILLE, NY
MARCHING FORWARD FOR THE SPRING 2022 SEMESTER
UPDATED: JANUARY 20, 2022

More than 99 percent of Siena students, faculty, and staff received their COVID vaccine in 2021, which registers Siena among the most immunized institutions in higher education. As a vaccinated community, the College enjoyed a safe and successful fall 2021 semester, highlighted by the return of active hands-on learning, in-person theater, sporting events, and countless academic and social experiences. In many ways, campus life felt pre-pandemic, but the emergence of the omicron variant presents familiar challenges and risks. In the face of this lingering threat, we know the Siena approach works. The College will continue to prioritize the physical and mental health of its community by leaning into proven strategies and adapting policies and protocols as necessary, and as outlined in our Marching Forward Spring 2022 Plan, to assure a flourishing spring semester for all Saints.

We know that immunization provided by the COVID vaccine is our best defense against the virus, though exhaustive studies have proven its protection wanes over time. Therefore, to sustain the integrity of our collective immunity, the College has required every student to receive a vaccine booster upon eligibility. Information related to booster expectations and availability is included in this plan, as well as details specific to re-entry testing for students, contact tracing, visitor information, and more.

The omicron variant, while more transmissible, is generally far less severe than the still-present delta variant and may expedite the virus’ arc toward endemic status. We are far nearer the end of the pandemic than the beginning, and for the fully vaccinated, the risks have been tremendously mitigated. But, until the risks are nearly extinguished, Siena will continue to evolve its COVID response and amend its policies as necessary for the good of the Siena community.

CENTRAL POINT OF CONTACT

The College has a designated Ops Team to manage compliance with all aspects related to Marching Forward. You can reach the Ops Center at ops@siena.edu or 518-782-5600. Due to the evolving nature of the regulatory landscape and the College’s own response to changes within the climate, this plan may be modified at any time. The College’s Coronavirus Ops Team meets daily to track internal and external COVID trends and developments. The Ops Team also coordinates with the local Department of Health and monitors CDC guidance as well as the emerging science to propose policy for the safety and wellbeing of the Siena community. Any changes/updates to this plan will be noted on the College’s Marching Forward website, Siena.edu/Marching-Forward. The Marching Forward webpage features additional resources including FAQs and a link to the Spring 2022 COVID Dashboard.

INCLUDED IN MARCHING FORWARD SPRING 2022

A. Vaccination/Booster Requirements
B. Testing
C. Face Covering Policy
D. Academic Instruction
E. Isolation and Quarantine
F. Contact Tracing
G. Travel
H. Extracurricular Activities
I. Visitors
J. Campus Access
A. VACCINATION/BOOSTER REQUIREMENTS

STUDENTS

All students are required to be fully vaccinated and receive the COVID vaccine booster once eligible. Students are expected to acquire the booster shot upon eligibility (all adults who fully completed the initial Pfizer or Moderna vaccine series five months ago or received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine two months ago are eligible). For students who become eligible throughout the spring, the College will host a series of 10 on-campus booster clinics. Students may also secure their booster at local pharmacies, among other locations, or schedule through the State’s AM I Eligible tool at https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/.

Once boosted, students must upload an image of their updated COVID Vaccination Record Card or documentation of their booster to their student health portal at siena.edu/healthportal.

On-Campus Booster Clinics for Students:
January 27, February 3, February 10, February 17, February 24, March 10, March 31, April 7, April 21, May 5

Only students with College-approved religious or medical exemptions are excluded from the booster requirement. Exempt students must test weekly and wear masks indoors at all times (except when eating or drinking or alone in their own residence).

As determined by the Dean of Students (or designee), a student who is non-compliant with the College’s requirements for the COVID vaccination and booster (within 14 days of eligibility) or required surveillance testing is jeopardizing their welfare, the welfare of the Siena community and the welfare of others. As such, the student may be administratively withdrawn (with registration and housing terminated) from the College and required to leave the campus permanently. The expectation is that all students fulfill the COVID requirements as a condition of attendance at Siena College.

EMPLOYEES: FACULTY, STAFF, AND ADMINISTRATORS

Once boosted, all Siena employees are expected to upload an image of their updated NYS Excelsior Pass Plus or COVID Vaccination Record Card to Human Resources using this secure file submission: siena.edu/boosterupload. All employees are required to be vaccinated for COVID unless otherwise approved by the College for a religious or medical exemption.

For more information, please review the COVID Vaccination Policy and the COVID Surveillance Testing Policy found on the College’s Policies webpage (siena.edu/policies).

Siena College faculty, administrators, and staff are encouraged to receive the COVID vaccination booster during their regularly scheduled work hours. In accordance with New York State law, employees are eligible for a sufficient period of paid leave time, not to exceed four hours per vaccine injection, to receive the COVID vaccination, including the COVID booster. Non-exempt employees who cannot take paid time off to receive the COVID vaccination or booster during their regularly scheduled work hours should contact the Human Resources Office regarding compensation for their time spent receiving the COVID vaccination or booster outside of their regularly scheduled work hours. Please refer to the COVID Vaccine Leave Policy for additional information.
B. TESTING

PRE-ARRIVAL TESTING

The College required all students to take a PCR COVID test 5-7 days (ideally five) before returning to campus at the start of the spring semester. PCR tests are available at most pharmacies, among other locations. Students have also been encouraged to visit coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-testing to conveniently find a testing site in their area.

WASTEWATER TESTING

The College will conduct weekly wastewater testing in three campus locations to measure for the presence of the virus on campus. The results will be posted to the College’s Daily Digest as well as the Spring 2022 COVID Dashboard. Trends reflecting an increase or decrease in any detected levels of the virus will be included in the weekly reports. In consultation with the wastewater testing field team, wastewater surveillance results will not be used to make operational decisions related to the College’s COVID protocols.

SURVEILLANCE TESTING

The College will conduct weekly mandatory testing of unvaccinated community members, approved with official College exemption, at their own expense ($20 per test).

RAPID/DIAGNOSTIC TESTING

Rapid test clinics for asymptomatic students will be held weekly or as demand warrants and require pre-registration. Health Services will offer diagnostic testing for all students who present symptoms.

C. FACE COVERING POLICY

For fully vaccinated community members and visitors, masking is welcomed and encouraged for anyone desiring additional COVID protection, though it is not required. Anyone who would prefer to wear a mask in any setting is welcome to do so. Vaccinated community members should evaluate their personal comfort level based on individual circumstances. For optimal defense, consider a filtering facepiece respirator, such as a N95 disposable mask designed for personal use. Respirators have better filtration and can provide a higher level of protection than cloth masks.

Students and employees who are not vaccinated are required to wear masks inside campus buildings, except when alone in a private office, in a personal residence room, or when eating and drinking. In some situations, vaccinated students may be required to mask (e.g., in a classroom or lab setting where the faculty has requested all participants, regardless of vaccination status, to mask).

All community members and visitors should have a mask and proof of vaccination on their person at all times.
D. ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION

The vast majority of courses will be taught in person with no special accommodations made to facilitate remote learning. All courses designated as in person (including the in person component to hybrid courses) will require students to be present in the classroom without an exception.

Any student required to isolate or quarantine in accordance with the directives of Siena College Health Services or the Albany County Health Department will be placed on medical leave and instructed to make arrangements at their professors’ discretion for the completion of their course work. It is expected that faculty will be understanding and accommodating in these circumstances. There is no remote learning option available and any arrangements need to be made between the student, faculty, and Office of Student Academic Success and Engagement.

E. ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE

Isolation and quarantine guidance changes frequently. The College will follow current Department of Health regulations and update the Marching Forward plan as policies evolve.

ISOLATION

Any community member who tests positive for COVID will be required to isolate at home for at least five days, where day zero is the day of symptom onset or, if asymptomatic, the day of the positive test. The positive test result is reportable to the Albany County Health Department and the individual may be contact traced by the residing county health department at their discretion. Isolation ends after five full days if fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication and other symptoms have improved. If a fever persists, continue to isolate until the fever has resolved for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications. A well-fitting mask must be worn around others for five additional days (day six through 10).

The College will have designated isolation space available if isolating at home is not possible or practicable, as determined on a case-by-case basis by the Dean of Students (or designee).

QUARANTINE

A ‘close contact’ is defined as anyone who has been in contact with a positive individual for more than 10 minutes and within six feet regardless of masking.

If fully vaccinated and boosted, fully vaccinated and not yet eligible for the booster, or had COVID within the past 90 days, no quarantine is required.

If not fully vaccinated or booster eligible and not yet boosted, a five-day quarantine is required off campus. The date of last contact (exposure) is considered day zero.

Any person who is exposed to a person who is COVID positive, regardless of vaccine/booster status, must wear a mask for 10 days when around others. The date of last contact (exposure) is considered day zero. Also, get tested at least five days after you last had close contact with COVID, even if asymptomatic. If the test is positive or COVID symptoms develop, isolate from others and follow the information in the isolation section (above). Anyone who had COVID within the past 90 days does not need to get tested after close contact.
F. CONTACT TRACING

Regardless of your vaccination/booster status, anyone experiencing COVID symptoms should be evaluated. Students with COVID symptoms should contact Health Services for diagnosis. All positive COVID test results are reportable to the County Health Department, which coordinates with Siena College Health Services and the Division of Student Life (for students) or Human Resources and the Ops Center team (for employees), and will perform a contact tracing investigation. Please note: vaccinated individuals may be contact traced and are expected to participate in the process. However, as noted above, asymptomatic vaccinated and boosted individuals (if booster eligible), while not at risk for quarantine, will be expected to mask around others for 10 days.

STUDENTS

All faculty are expected to upload seating charts for each course and keep an attendance log (along with notations if students deviate from the seating chart). Health Services will utilize this information when initiating contact tracing.

Siena College Health Services is responsible for contact tracing efforts and monitoring of positive COVID cases for students as needed. As part of communication and education, the campus community will be informed that if they receive a call from “NYS Contact Tracing” (518- 387-9993), they should answer the phone. Should a student test positive for COVID, the student will be expected to participate in contact tracing by providing a list of recent close and proximate contacts as required by the Albany County Department of Health to Siena’s Director of Health Services or designee during regular business hours or by the Office of Student Life after regular business hours.

EMPLOYEES

All employees must self-monitor for symptoms of COVID prior to arrival and while on campus. Any new or emerging symptom should be reported to their supervisor and Cynthia King-Leroy, Asst. VP of Human Resources, at king-leroy@siena.edu or 518-786-5081. If symptomatic, an employee should not be on campus and should contact their health care provider for assessment and testing.

Should an employee test positive for COVID, the employee will be expected to participate in contact tracing by providing a list of recent close and proximate contacts as required by the Albany County Department of Health in coordination with Siena’s Director of Health Services and/or the Office of Human Resources and the Siena College Ops Center. An employee who tests positive must immediately contact Cynthia King-Leroy, Asst. Vice President of Human Resources, at king-leroy@siena.edu or 518-786-5081.
G. TRAVEL

EMPLOYEE DOMESTIC TRAVEL

Faculty, staff, and administrators intending to travel to conferences and other College-sponsored events will need to seek approval from their vice president or dean. The COVID rate should be used to determine if travel to that area will be approved. After approval, employees should still continue to monitor for possible increases in the COVID rate in the area. Travel to hot spots is not recommended. Employees will need to follow any rules/regulations that Siena College institutes regarding quarantine/testing when returning and monitor for symptoms after returning from travel.

EMPLOYEE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

All international travel funded by the College must have approval from a Cabinet-level officer with consultation from the Director of the Center for International Programs. Anyone traveling internationally on College business must be fully vaccinated.

All employees returning from any international travel will need to follow CDC guidance which can be found at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/international-travel-during-covid19.html

STUDENT SERVICE TRIPS

Consideration should be given to the COVID rate and vaccination rate in and around the proposed destination, particularly when traveling to vulnerable communities. All trips must be approved by the Risk Officer, Lori Ehrenbseck at lehrensbeck@siena.edu, in consultation with the Ops Center.

With regard to the College’s daily local service programs, please monitor the COVID rate – both at the program site and on campus. You do not want to contract the virus or spread it into the community you are serving.

CLUB TRAVEL/FIELD TRIPS

Student clubs wishing to travel off campus for events, activities, and competitions must obtain prior approval from the Director of Student Activities and Leadership Development (Maggie Cross, mcross@siena.edu) in consultation with the Student Life Compliance Officer (Jeanne Obermayer, obermayer@siena.edu). The COVID rate should be used to determine if travel to that area will be approved. After approval, students should still continue to monitor for possible increases in the COVID rate in the area. Travel to hot spots is not recommended. Students will need to follow any rules and regulations that Siena College institutes regarding quarantine and testing when returning. Masking may be required depending on the circumstances and regulations in place.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation in College-owned vehicles will be allowed, though unvaccinated or booster eligible community members who have not been boosted must wear a mask unless alone inside the vehicle.
H. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Events will follow the regular event approval process, in compliance with current COVID protocols in place. All organizers and participants should keep safety best practices in mind when planning and attending events.

CLUB SPORTS

Siena Participants
• All Siena club sports players must be fully vaccinated and boosted if eligible (and have completed the HIPAA Privacy Authorization) in order to be an approved player.
• As College staff, all club sport coaches must upload proof of their vaccination and are expected to update their vaccination record to include their booster once eligible.
• Players must upload their vaccine card and HIPAA Privacy Authorization through the Student Health Portal.
• Siena Health Services staff will confirm vaccination status before marking a player as “approved” on the Saints Connect club roster.
• Players who have received a medical or religious exemption to the vaccine from Health Services may play provided they wear a mask at all times during all club activities. Such players must upload their HIPAA Privacy Authorization through the Student Health portal and verification of the exemption will be confirmed with Health Services prior to being approved for participation.

Opposing Participants
• Opposing team members must all be vaccinated and must provide documentation prior to the game.
• Siena will provide a list of schools with compliant vaccine policies (green-light schools). No additional documentation is required to play against a green-light school.
• For any non-green-light schools, the team must provide a copy of the school’s vaccine policy, and written confirmation from the school’s club sports coordinator that all players in the game are vaccinated.
• Clubs should prioritize playing against green-light schools in order to streamline the approval process as much as possible.

DIVISION I ATHLETICS

In order for a student athlete to participate in team-related activities (e.g., games, practices, team meetings, team meals, etc.), they must be fully vaccinated and boosted once eligible or have an approved exemption from Siena College. If neither of these conditions exist, the student athlete is prohibited from being a part of their team.

Student athletes and/or staff members who receive an exemption from Siena College must be tested weekly from Siena at their own expense of $20 per test. In addition to the College surveillance testing, the Athletics Department will test three times a week on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.
Student athletes and/or staff members who are unvaccinated with an approved College exemption must remain masked at all times except for when competing in practice or in a game. Masks must be worn when traveling on the team bus, team meetings, locker rooms, etc.

**SIENA’S FITNESS CENTER**

The Marcelle Athletic Complex – which includes the fitness center and the Callanan Field House – is open for use by Siena students and employees only. All other restrictions have been lifted.

The MAC will operate under the following hours:

Monday - Friday: 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Saturday - Sunday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**I. VISITORS**

Effective December 13, all campus visitors, age five and above, must be vaccinated or will otherwise be prohibited from entering any campus building. This policy assures alignment with Governor Kathy Hochul’s mask mandate announced on December 10. As a vaccinated community, Siena College is exempt from indoor masking requirements, though masks are always welcomed. However, to comply with the governor’s order, ALL visitors, age five and above, must be vaccinated (and able to provide proof of vaccination) in order to enter a campus building.

**GENERAL GUIDELINES AND DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

All campus visitors must be registered in advance via the Visitor Registration Form (guests of faculty, staff and administrators) or the Parent/Guardian/Guest Visit Request Form (guests of students).

In order to limit campus density and possible exposure, visitors (including alumni, community members, vendors, siblings and extended family members, friends, etc.) will be restricted from utilizing campus spaces when students, faculty, and staff are present unless they are guests who have been registered to be on campus through the College’s Visitor Registration process.

Visitors are expected to abide by all College health and safety protocols and anyone hosting a visitor is responsible for making sure the visitors do comply.

**VISITORS TO OFFICES/DEPARTMENTS**

The following is a list of required and recommended guidelines that are the responsibility of the host department/student:

1. Must confirm that the guest is vaccinated.
2. Must utilize a registration process and must be submitted in advance of the visit. A daily list of registered guests is sent to Public Safety.
3. Must communicate to registered visitors in advance of the event the College’s policies and procedures regarding safe participation in a Siena community event.
4. Must require any individual who screens positive for COVID exposure or symptoms to depart campus immediately. Host office must immediately notify Siena College Ops Center (ops@siena.edu) about the case. If notified later that any visitor has tested positive for COVID after being on campus within the last five days, hosting offices must notify ops@siena.edu.
5. Must instruct all visitors to campus to arrive via the main gate on Route 9 and check in at the Welcome Booth unless directed elsewhere by the hosting department.
6. Must collect a list of all who attended the event, noting vaccination (including booster) status for contact tracing purposes, and keep that list on file for a period of two months.
7. Must ensure that arrangements for sanitization are made with Facilities Management and depending on the scope of the event, specific arrangements for covering the costs of the sanitization may need to be made.
8. Must take responsibility for any unregistered visitors who were unable to register prior to their visit. The department should ensure that proof of vaccination is provided. All unregistered visitors must come through the main entrance or report to public safety.

**VISITORS OF STUDENTS**

Students may request authorized access for up to two vaccinated visitors per day by completing the Parent/Guardian/Guest Visit Request Form. Request forms must be submitted at least 72 hours in advance of the requested visit. All parents/guardians/visitors are required to depart campus by 9:00 p.m. Students may not host any visitors overnight.

Parents/guardians/visitors of students will be permitted to visit campus as long as they are registered by their student 72 hours in advance, provide proof of vaccination, satisfy all College visit guidelines and while on campus adhere to campus COVID policies and procedures. Proof of vaccination must be uploaded prior to the arrival on campus and all guests should have proof with them while on campus. All visitors are required to show proof of vaccination if asked by a College official.

Requests are reviewed/approved by the Student Life Compliance Officer once proof of vaccination is uploaded. If approved, the parent/guardian/visitor and student will both receive confirmation emails.

All visitors to campus must arrive via the main gate on Route 9 and check in at the Welcome Booth.
J. CAMPUS ACCESS

GATES

Campus gates will be open from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. weekdays and from 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on weekends, with a few exceptions. The front gate will stay open 24/7, and the Welcome Booth will be staffed around the clock. The gates off Fiddlers Lane (Middlefield and St. Francis) will close at 6:00 p.m. on Fridays and remain closed until Monday morning in accordance with a town agreement.

LARGE GATHERING GUIDANCE

While individual visitors may be welcomed to campus pursuant to the College’s Visitors Policy, no events this spring will be permitted to offer an open invitation to the public without prior approval from the College’s Risk Officer, Lori Ehrensbeck at lehrensbeck@siena.edu. Event organizers will be responsible for registering visitors, assigning seats, and assisting Health Services with any contact tracing.