

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH
Acting Commissioner



Ned Lamont
Governor
Susan Bysiewicz
Lt. Governor

November 19, 2020

College Communities,

This has been an academic year like no other. Your campus administrators, faculty and staff have done a remarkable job of keeping our colleges and universities operating at a very high level during the most difficult of circumstances. While the year of instruction may have been unique, with a blend of in-person and remote learning, simply having our campuses open has led to the familiarity of atmosphere and energy you came to expect when you began your higher education experiences.

Much credit is also due to you, the students. In the face of an unprecedented year, you have taken incredible strides to slow the spread of COVID-19. While there has been a surge of cases in Connecticut and nationwide, we have seen encouraging results going back to the beginning of the school year.

Now that many of you are returning home for an extended part of the Winter, we at the state level, are asking you to take these critical steps to keep you and your loved ones safe.

- It is very important for you to quarantine away from your family for 14 days before mingling or socializing with family members in their home environment. The quarantine could be at college before leaving, or once they arrive home.
- You should seek testing before leaving college or immediately on arriving home, and then again at about Day 7 of your quarantine if at all possible. You should complete the 14-day quarantine even if the tests are negative.
- If you have family members at high risk of complications from COVID-19 infection (over age 60 or with chronic medical conditions), you should consider completing your quarantine somewhere other than with those high-risk family members.
- It is important that those of you returning home from college not attend large social gatherings or reunions, which will pose a high risk for spreading COVID-19
- Check travel restrictions for your destination before you go.



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- Always wear a mask in public settings and on [public transportation](#). If you are infected with COVID-19, have symptoms, or are within a mandatory quarantine period due to close contact with a known case, you should avoid public transportation if at all possible.
- Get your [flu shot](#) before you travel
- [Stay at least 6 feet apart](#) from anyone who is not in your household
- Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your mask, eyes, nose, and mouth
- Bring extra supplies, such as masks and hand sanitizer

Some of these steps may sound simple, and others may appear onerous, but these are the kinds of steps which, if taken altogether and seriously, it will lead to the best possible outcomes. It could mean a safe return to campaign later in the Winter, and it will mean years of festive, meaningful, and memorable holiday gatherings for you and your families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Deidre S. Gifford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH
Acting Commissioner