

## **Participation in the Penn Cares or COVID SAFE Spring Testing Program**

### Guidelines and FAQs for the Perelman School of Medicine

#### **Introduction:**

The Perelman School of Medicine's (PSOM) COVID SAFE and the University's Penn Cares Testing Program support our campus-wide testing capacity and enhance our ability to assess COVID-19 prevalence in the University community.

#### **Criteria for PSOM**

For our PSOM community, we are offering two testing platforms, [PSOM COVID SAFE](#) or Penn Cares, for those who meet the criteria following. We ask that you choose only one testing platform to ensure that we continue to allocate resources judiciously, and **you must indicate your preference through [Knowledgelink](#)** by selecting the statement which best describes your Spring COVID-19 Testing Criteria status.

While most of the University guidelines are applicable to PSOM (see appendix for more information), there are a few testing requirements that are unique to PSOM personnel and apply as follows for required weekly testing:

- All PSOM staff, postdocs, and research associates who meet the policy criteria of regularly coming to campus 4 (four) hours or more per week;
- All PSOM faculty and emeritus faculty who are regularly coming to campus 4 (four) hours or more per week in a non-clinical setting;
- All PSOM medical and graduate students who are regularly coming to campus each week.

On campus does not include CHOP, VA facilities, or clinical settings for PSOM faculty.

Individuals already enrolled in PSOM COVID SAFE testing may continue weekly testing under the COVID SAFE platform, or switch to Penn Cares, if they meet the above criteria. Furthermore, MD students in clinical rotations (2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> yr. students) have the option to enroll in COVID SAFE or Penn Cares.

All must go to the [Knowledgelink](#) site to select your current spring status, but only those who meet the above criteria should enroll in one of the two testing platforms.

**Submission of Knowledgelink questions and enrollment in Penn Cares (as applicable) must be completed by January 18.**

Additional information on the Penn Cares process and program is available below and on the [Penn COVID-19 Response](#) website.

## FAQs

Q: May I still sign up for COVID SAFE?

A: Yes! PSOM is offering surveillance testing through COVID SAFE to any member of our PSOM community who would like to be tested. For more information and to sign-up for a testing time, please visit <https://app.waytohealth.org/covidsafe/enroll>.

Q: Should students coming to campus and who are in CHOP or Wistar labs (and following those institutions' testing protocols) enroll in Penn Cares testing, even if they are not entering PSOM/Penn buildings?

A: If these students are following other institutions' testing (i.e. CHOP) and are not entering University/PSOM facilities for the four (4) hour criteria per week, they do not need to sign up for University or PSOM testing.

Q: For Penn Cares, what happens if you are not on campus for a certain week—do participants need to come in just for the test?

A: If one is not on campus for a specific week, you will not need to come in for a test (we continue to emphasize working remotely whenever possible). If enrolled in Penn Cares, you will receive a red PennOpen Pass if you miss a test, but you can easily correct that red pass by rescheduling your next test. The pass will then turn to green within 24 hours from when you reschedule.

Q: What is the rule for PSOM faculty in a clinical setting?

A: If PSOM faculty are 100% in a clinical setting, please follow the UPHS guidelines (and thus click the first option in the Knowledglink survey). PSOM faculty 100% in clinical setting are welcome to enroll in COVID SAFE.

Q: I am a PSOM Masters student and a faculty member at another School. I am currently enrolled in COVID SAFE; however, as I understand it, I should be enrolled in Penn Cares testing this spring as a non-PSOM faculty member. Is my understanding accurate?

A: In your Masters role, if you are not coming to campus regularly (i.e. weekly), you should select option 1 on the Knowledglink site. In your non-PSOM School role, you should follow your School guidelines/direction.

If you meet the Penn Cares criteria for your non-PSOM School, you should enroll in Penn Cares and un-enroll from COVID SAFE (which you can do by emailing: [COVIDSAFE@pennmedicine.upenn.edu](mailto:COVIDSAFE@pennmedicine.upenn.edu)). If you do not meet the non-PSOM School criteria, it is appropriate to remain in COVID SAFE.

**Q:** What about individuals who qualify and received the COVID-19 vaccine? Do they need to enroll in the Penn Cares testing program?

**A:** Yes. We are requiring continued screening testing for University members who have been vaccinated against COVID-19 and meet the testing criteria. While vaccines protect individuals from developing serious illness, it remains unknown whether vaccination will prevent them from transmitting the virus should they be exposed. Please continue to use PennOpen Pass, which remains an important tool in protecting the entire community. In the coming days and weeks, please pause, read, and respond to survey questions carefully.

Appendix:

### **Who Must Test**

Twice per week:

1. Undergraduates students living on or off campus in the Philadelphia area will be tested on preassigned day pairs.
2. Faculty, postdocs, staff, and graduate students who live on campus will be tested on selected day pairs (Monday & Thursday, Tuesday & Friday, Wednesday & Saturday) of their choosing.

Once per week:

1. Graduate students who come to campus each week.
2. Faculty, emeritus faculty and other retirees, postdocs, academic affiliates, and staff who are on campus for four or more hours each week throughout the semester.

These criteria have been established based on federal, state and local guidelines as well as in consultation with public health experts. They are subject to change.

### **Gateway Testing and the Quiet Period**

Gateway testing, or day of arrival testing, is required of undergraduate students only. This testing establishes the baseline prevalence of COVID-19. On the day of their arrival, students who are on-campus residents must drop off their belongings and report directly to a testing site. They must then return to their College House and quarantine until they receive their test results. Undergraduate students who live off campus also must perform a gateway test as soon as they arrive, and no later than January 18.

From January 6 to 31, the University will observe a Quiet Period during which there will be no planned group activities or large gatherings. The goal is to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread in these first weeks together.

### **Use of PennOpen Pass**

Not everyone will return to campus or Philadelphia for the spring semester. For those who will continue to work remotely and do not fit the criteria to be on campus, the University still strongly encourages enrollment in [PennOpen Pass](#). A Green Pass is required to enter University or Penn Medicine buildings or board Penn Transit, even for those who only occasionally make campus visits. Reporting symptoms or exposure in PennOpen Pass also expedites access to the clinical guidance of Penn Medicine clinicians, and diagnostic testing if necessary.

**For More Information**

More information on the process and the program is available on the [Penn COVID-19 Response](#) website.