



Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology
Covid-19
Health and Safety Preparedness Plan

Academic Year 2021-2022

Updated 9/9/2021

I. INTRODUCTION – THADDEUS STEVENS COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY OVERVIEW

Founded in 1905 by bequest from the will of Thaddeus Stevens, US Congressman, Pennsylvania attorney, and abolitionist, Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology continues to provide no cost education to under-resourced students, and is traditionally one of the lowest priced institutions in Pennsylvania for those who pay tuition. The College has one of the highest job placement rates in the state with an overall placement of 99% for the Class of 2020.

Its mission is two-fold. First, to provide the opportunity for individuals who are underrepresented and under-resourced to change the circumstances of their lives by obtaining a college degree resulting in an in-demand career at a family-sustaining wage in one or two years, to break the cycle of poverty many of our students have experienced, and to give back to the communities in which they live. Second, to support the critical technical, manufacturing and construction workforce needs in Pennsylvania.

While the mission of the College has not changed since its inception, the trajectory of student success continues to arc upwards. The result is an ever-increasing demand for an education at Thaddeus Stevens College by students and an equally urgent demand by industry to hire the College's graduates.

The Impact of COVID19 on Thaddeus Stevens College

The realization of a highly infectious COVID-19 outbreak at Thaddeus Stevens College would be detrimental to the entire Lancaster community, especially to our student population, their families, and our employees. Thaddeus Stevens College provides housing as part of our mission, so this Health and Safety Plan gives considerable weight to the safety of communal living for our students. In addition, with our focus on technical and trade majors, time in shops and labs is foundational to student learning and mastery of skills.

This plan emphasizes prevention and mitigation across the campus community, putting the health and safety of our campus community, and rigorous instructional programming, at the center of the plan.

Notable in our decision making for fall 2021 is an assumption that the college will operate with a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated students, faculty and staff. The plan is informed by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Guidelines for Institutions of Higher Education Where not Everyone is Fully Vaccinated](#). The College will follow these guidelines as a minimum,

but may exceed these guidelines where the college deems it to be in the best interest of the health and safety of our campus community. The plan also aligns with guidance from the PA Department of Health (DOH) and national and state legal mandates.

This plan outlines Thaddeus Stevens College's strategy in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from the COVID19 pandemic in a collective, community approach. It serves as the guide for the operations across all College locations, and the expansion of in-person learning at Thaddeus Stevens College.

This is a living document, based on local, state and federal guidelines and pandemic conditions that will continue to develop and change over time.

Purpose of Health and Safety/Preparedness Reopening Plan

The intent of this Health and Safety Plan is to provide guidelines for the 2021-2022 academic year at Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology. The plan will achieve the following goals:

- Maximize the protection of our students, faculty, staff and the community at large, while minimizing educational and social disruption;
- Enable Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology to continue to provide services as normally and effectively as possible with minimal academic disruptions;
- Align strategies with the CDC, the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Department of Education's direction and guidance. This plan coordinates with federal, state, and local agencies;
- Continue the essential core operations of Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology in the event of increased staff/student absences and/or isolation or quarantine due to exposure to coronavirus, the virus that causes COVID-19;
- Establish and maintain a coordinated command system to enable effective, timely, and sensitive decision making regarding continuity of student learning needs to remain the core value and focal point;
- Develop a communications process to ensure that students, faculty, and staff receive timely and accurate information related to the College's COVID-19 strategies, including mitigation, self-care, and continuity of education;
- Prepare and provide resources for mental health/crisis service needs of faculty, staff, students and families.

Assumptions

While the course of the COVID-19 pandemic remains somewhat unpredictable with the introduction of new variants, and advances in science related to diagnosis, treatment and prevention, we believe that there are some likely realities that our students, faculty, staff, and their families can anticipate. Some of those will help our plans to operate this fall, while others may make it more challenging and constrain our efforts. It is important, as we plan, for everyone to work from same foundation about what we assume to be likely so we can focus most of our effort on those circumstances, while still ensuring that we plan for the various “what if” scenarios.

This plan is based on the following assumptions:

- 1. The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 will remain a factor in academic year 2021-2022, within our campus communities, locally, across the Commonwealth of PA, throughout the United States and globally. Its pattern of spread may change, and new variants are expected to present, resulting in localized hotspots.** Coronavirus will be present in our community and across the Commonwealth this summer, continuing throughout academic year 2021-2022. Thaddeus Stevens College serves residents of Pennsylvania only (with the exception of US veterans from across the country). The size and localization of a COVID-19 outbreak will be impacted by factors including vaccination rates, prevalence of virus variants, access to testing, effective contact tracing, and adherence to CDC and DOH guidelines, especially as they relate to Institutions of Higher Education. The College is committed to closely monitoring the spread of the virus, and adjusting its approach to operations based on fact and science.
- 2. This plan prioritizes the health and safety of Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology students, staff and faculty. This plan assumes that all laboratories and shops will be fully open and in-person on campus. General Education courses will remain virtual at this time. The campus will remain closed to outside groups and events with exceptions to support the business operations of the college, including recruitment, advancement, and career services.** All visitors must follow mitigation guidelines, including symptom screening, masking, and social distancing, regardless of vaccine status.
- 3. Vaccines are strongly encouraged for students, faculty and staff of Thaddeus Stevens College for academic year 2021-2022.** The college believes that a highly vaccinated campus is the best opportunity to return to a “normal” campus

experience. This plan will include a focus on education, on-site vaccine clinics, and mitigation measures to limit the spread of coronavirus within the campus community, and maximize in-person learning for all students.

- 4. Robust mitigation efforts will continue as specified in the plan. These mitigation efforts and guidelines will be specified in this Health & Safety Plan, and will evolve throughout the academic year as pandemic conditions and CDC guidance evolves.** Coronavirus is still spreading throughout communities across the country. Most estimates have placed a “herd immunity” threshold at 60 – 70 percent of the population gaining immunity, generally achievable only with high vaccination rates. As of June 29, 2021, only 51 percent of the population of Lancaster County is vaccinated. Reaching a herd-immunity threshold looks unlikely because of factors such as vaccine hesitancy, the emergence of new variants, and the delayed arrival of vaccinations for children. Therefore, there is still a risk in our community that people will get infected, individuals will be hospitalized, and preventable COVID-19 deaths will continue. Therefore, masking, social distancing, surface cleaning, and other mitigation efforts including mandatory random testing, daily symptom checking, contact tracing, and quarantine are needed to slow potential spread within our campus community.

II. THADDEUS STEVENS COLLEGE HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM

The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology Health and Safety team provides executive leadership to develop and implement a plan to operate Thaddeus Stevens College under anticipated continuing COVID-19 pandemic conditions for Academic Year 2021-2022. This plan will prioritize the health & safety of students, faculty, staff and the community, and will support the mission of the College, addressing equitable access to all qualified students. The Executive Team will reach consensus, and will be the decision making team for a final plan to present to the President of the College for resourcing and final approval.

III. FALL 2021 COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN

The health and well-being of our community is our priority and the standards we are putting in place should be read carefully and followed by all on campus. The following outlines the health and safety measures, protocols and policies for fall 2021. Information will be added and updated throughout the fall semester as the pandemic continues to evolve and new guidance is received.

Education and Awareness

Education and Training:

The success of the College's plan for fall 2021 during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic depends on the behavior of every member of the Thaddeus Stevens College community, including students, faculty, staff, and contractors. Understanding how coronavirus spreads, and why learning about and adhering to prevention strategies, including early recognition of symptoms, is of utmost importance.

Educational sessions will be led by Thaddeus Stevens College Health Services. Information is based on the latest guidance provided by the Department of Health, the CDC, and the PA Department of Education.

The education plan for fall 2021 includes:

A COVID-19 training presentation will be developed by Health Services and will be customized for students, faculty, and staff.

Faculty: Training sessions for faculty will be scheduled by Academic Affairs, and will be presented in conjunction with Thaddeus Stevens College Health Services prior to the start of the fall 2021 semester.

Students: On the first day of classes, technical faculty will review the COVID-19 education presentation with the students.

Resident Students: Residential Life will present a training module specific to students who will be living on campus. This session will be held via zoom the first all residential students are moved in to their dorms.

Department-specific education and training will also be conducted on an ongoing basis as needed. Custodial staff will be trained on cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting, and ventilation protocols specific to COVID-19 in addition to normal cleaning protocols. Staff will be trained by supervisors according to CDC recommended policies and best practices.

Awareness:

In addition to initial education and training that will be provided to students, faculty, and staff at the start of the fall 2021 semester, the College will implement a comprehensive ongoing awareness campaign to reinforce our health and safety strategies for COVID-19 across the College communities.

Campus signage and safety markers will be installed to remind students, faculty and staff to social distance while on campus and to practice good personal hygiene habits such as frequent hand washing, coughing or sneezing into elbows instead of hands, and hand sanitizing. Faculty, residential life and all members of the College community will reinforce these measures as the

best way to limit transmission of the virus and stay on campus in labs, shops, and on-campus housing for the semester. Education will also be provided on an ongoing basis educating students, faculty, and staff about the facts and benefits of the COVID-19 vaccine.



Safeguards, Protocols, & Mitigation

Labs/Shops: For the safety and well-being of our faculty and students, classrooms and other spaces on campus have been reconfigured to provide appropriate social distances within these spaces. This mitigation refers to a review by Marotta/Main Architects, and Academic Affairs in conjunction with faculty. Labs, shops and offices have been assessed for capacity based on each room's square footage and a 6' perimeter, to the greatest extent possible, between each student, and between faculty and students, in order to meet recommended safe distancing guidelines.

Each instructor may identify expanded protocols or guidelines specific to their lab or shop that exceed the basic guidelines set for the College. Students are expected to abide by these procedures to ensure a safe and sanitary work environment.

Expanded In-person Model: The model for fall 2021 expands the on-campus experience by providing for in-person learning for all labs and shops (on campus). General Education classes will remain virtual. Student activities and clubs will resume in person, and athletics will resume.

Social distancing signage and markers will be in place throughout campus buildings as appropriate.

Custodial and Sanitation: Following the summer recess, custodial services and will conduct a deep cleaning of campus offices, dormitories, classrooms, and labs, including common areas, stairwells, showers, restrooms, and other spaces. All campus vehicles are cleaned and disinfected.

The College has developed protocols to clean and disinfect throughout each day, including more frequent cleaning and disinfecting of high-traffic areas and high-touch surfaces as indicated by the CDC.

Custodial staff will be trained on cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting, and ventilation protocols a needed. Staff will be trained by supervisors and/or vendors following CDC recommended policies and best practices.

Water and Ventilation: Water and ventilations systems will be closely monitored and regulated by facility maintenance in accordance with DOH and related regulatory guidelines.

Common Areas: Common spaces for students will be open in dorms and other locations throughout the campus with limited capacity to support social distancing. Supplies will be available for students to wipe down high-touch surfaces in common areas following each use.

Travel: As of March 1, 2021 the PA Department of Health Travel Restrictions are no longer in effect for out of state travel. Travelers should still practice appropriate public health measures to slow the spread of COVID-19 such as masking, physical distancing, and hand hygiene. Additional guidelines for public transportation and international travel may still be in place.

Dining: Dining Services will be provided by Omni Dining Services, LLC. Omni is committed to offering high-quality dining services with a priority focus on health and safety. Grab and go meals will be available at all three dining facilities. Social distancing will be required at all dining locations.

Limited seating will be available at the Jones Cafeteria (including outdoor seating in a tent) and at the Orange Street Café. Seating will ensure social distancing. Throughout campus additional outdoor seating will be made available. Staff will disinfect and sanitize tables and chairs in the Jones Dining room and will monitor dining facilities to support adherence of all health and safety protocols. Grab and Go brunch and dinner will be available at the Jones Dining Hall on the main campus and at the Orange Street Café on the weekends.

Fall Athletics: All fall athletics will resume for fall 2021. Details regarding mitigation for athletes will be communicated to Thaddeus Stevens College athletes, including COVID-19 testing two times each week while the sport is in season. Policies of opposing colleges may impact the College's ability to travel or compete at away venues.

Student Clubs, Activities and Recreational Facilities: Student clubs and activities will resume with in-person meetings and events. Information will be provided to students after the start of the semester. The Multipurpose Activity Center will not be open to students during fall 2021, with the exception of members of Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology athletic teams under the direct supervision of their coaches. It is anticipated that the fitness center/track in the MAC will remain closed to students, alumni and guests throughout the fall 2021 semester.

Housing: Students who have confirmed housing for the fall 2021 semester will be notified of their room assignment and move-in details via their Thaddeus Stevens College portal account.

The College is operating under CDC Guidelines for Institutions for Higher Education with a mixed population of vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. Social distancing will be required within the buildings to the greatest extent that is practical.

Students will follow cleaning regulations in dorm restrooms including spray/wipe high touch areas used. Residential Life staff will reinforce the resident's role in maintaining a clean environment in the dorm setting.

Students will need to present a negative COVID-19 test, or have proof of COVID-19 vaccination on file with Health Services, prior to move-in.

Students with housing security or housing safety concerns should contact Residential Life. All resident students must complete an Alternate Housing Form, which will confirm that the student has a transportation and housing option in the case the student needs to quarantine or isolate due to COVID-19.

Guests, including commuter students, are not permitted in the dorms.

Monitoring and Surveillance

To support the goal of opening and operating the College in a close to "normal" operations model, the College has identified a number of monitoring and surveillance strategies for early identification of positive COVID cases and patterns of spread at the College.

Daily Screening: All faculty, staff, students, and contracted services (dining services, security, and shuttle) are required to complete a daily COVID-19 symptom tracker app <https://www.livesafemobile.com/>. The app presents a series of questions about potential contact with anyone who has the virus, as well as any symptoms the individual may have experienced in the past 24 hours.

Students who have passed the initial health screening will show the confirming email to their instructor. Students who show a green check mark on the app will be permitted to enter the classroom.

Students who do not pass the initial health screening will not be permitted to enter the buildings on campus. Students will be referred to Health Services to be assessed, and may be

tested on site. A commuter student will be asked to return home for follow up with Health Services.

Employees, including contracted employees, who do not pass the daily health screening or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 are not be permitted on campus and will be required to quarantine until cleared to return to work by their personal health provider. Faculty should let Academic Affairs and Health Services know if they are symptomatic, quarantined, or in isolation following a close exposure or positive COVID-19 diagnosis. Employees should notify their supervisor regarding return to work.

Surveillance COVID 19 Testing:

The CDC has issued guidelines for Institutions of Higher Education that call for a robust COVID19 surveillance testing strategy.

As part of its surveillance testing strategy, the College requires a negative COVID-19 test result for all students prior to arriving on campus for the fall semester, or to have proof of vaccination on file with Health Services. Students will receive an email with details about the pre-arrival testing protocol. The College offers per-arrival COVID-19 testing on campus, or students may choose to be tested at a valid testing location in their community. Testing timelines depend on the student's arrival date on campus and will be detailed in the pre-arrival testing email. Students who are fully vaccinated for COVID-19, and have submitted proof of vaccine (COVID-19 vaccination card to Health Services do not need to get a pre-arrival COVID-19 test.

Student surveillance COVID-19 testing will continue on a weekly basis. Testing will be universal (all students) for weeks one and two of the fall semester, and will move to random testing when the rates of positive cases decline. The decision to move to random testing will be made by the Health and Safety team, and may also consider the rate of community spread. Students who are fully vaccinated for COVID-19, and have submitted proof of vaccine (COVID-19 vaccination card) to Health Services do not need to participate in ongoing surveillance COVID-19 testing.

The College is contracted with VRL-Eurofins, a third party testing partner, to provide and process surveillance testing.

Health Services: The College's Health Services will be available to students 24/7 through office hours and on call service. On site point-of-service testing will be available and administered based on assessment of the student by the Health Services staff. Advanced testing is available if the test is negative but symptoms indicate the need for further testing.

Individual Responsibility: All students, faculty, and staff should self-assess their medical condition daily, looking for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. If an individual becomes ill or tests positive for COVID-19, they must self-report immediately to the College Health Services, and take precautions to isolate, seek immediate medical treatment and/or testing.

Face masks: Universal masking is required for all students, faculty, and staff (including contractors), regardless of vaccination status across all campus locations.

The mask is not meant as a substitute for social distancing. Face shields and gaiters are not an acceptable substitute for a facemask.

Contact Tracing

Thaddeus Stevens College will maintain a daily record of all faculty, students, and staff who are on campus each day to allow for prompt notification to all individual in the event of a potential exposure to COVID-19. In the event of a positive COVID-19 test result on campus, Health Services will immediately notify the Pennsylvania Department of Education to begin contact tracing.

Important components of this process on the College campus include:

Tracking access to campus – Faculty will maintain strict attendance records and will enter those records into the College’s Jenzabar system. This information will be used in the case of a positive virus case to support the DOH efforts to identify individuals who may be at risk of exposure. All College faculty and staff are required to complete a daily tracker web form, which will include a daily log of visitors, including contracted workers, who are physically on site, including date, time and location.

All members of the College community are required to comply with tracing efforts. Tracing provides information to ensure that members of the community are made aware of potential interaction when someone is confirmed positive with the virus. Students must provide information necessary for contact tracing when requested.

Containment: Isolation and Quarantine

An individual who tests positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate at home or at another off-campus location for 14 days.

If an individual tests positive for COVID-19 and has been in shop, lab, or in-person class, or in campus housing, students and faculty/staff who have had close contact with that individual up to two days prior to the start of symptoms will be required to quarantine at home or at another off-campus location for 14 days.

For purposes of this Health & Safety Plan, “close contact” is considered to be students/employees who are in the same lab/shop/classroom and/or students who share a dorm floor/unit.

Per CDC guidelines, faculty, staff and students who are fully vaccinated, and have proof of vaccination on file with Health Services in the case of a student, or Human Resources in the case of faculty or staff, do not need to quarantine after a close exposure. Students who are fully vaccinated may remain on campus, in their labs and shops, and may remain in campus housing.

However, per CDC guidelines, individuals who are vaccinated and have had a close exposure to someone who has tests positive for COVID-19, will be required to be tested for COVID-19 three to five days following the exposure. Health Services will inform those individuals who will need to test, and can perform the test on campus.

*For this Health & Safety plan, a student is considered fully vaccinated if they have proof of vaccine on file with Health Services; faculty/staff are considered fully vaccinated if they have proof of vaccine on file with Human Resources.

Quarantine helps prevent the spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling sick or exhibiting symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department. Residential students who have been exposed and directed to quarantine will be required to quarantine at home or another offcampus location.

Detailed information about quarantine is available on the College's COVID-19 page.

The College may, at its discretion, make an assumption that an individual is a presumptive positive case based on the circumstances including symptoms and close exposure to a positive COVID-19 while the individual is awaiting test results. In this case, Health Services may direct students, faculty and staff who may have been exposed to this individual to quarantine until the College is informed of the test results.

Isolation is indicated for individuals who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and need to isolate from others to protect them from possible infection. Students who have tested positive for COVID-19 will need to isolate at home or another off-campus location.

Continuity of Instruction: The College takes its responsibility for continuing to provide instruction to all of its students very seriously. Faculty will be prepared to provide virtual/distance learning in situations where students are required to quarantine due to exposure to a positive individual, or who are on isolation due to a positive COVID-19 test. Students who provide proof of vaccination will not be required to quarantine, and will continue with in-person shop/lab instruction.

Communications

COVID-19 Campus Communications: A dedicated web page on the College website - stevenscollege.edu - includes updates to address COVID-19 throughout the Campus community. Please visit our website frequently to learn more. You may also email your questions to info@stevenscollege.edu. You should expect to receive email notifications and should be checking regularly. As always, our knowledge and understanding of the COVID-19 virus will continue to evolve, and our policies and plans will be updated as more information becomes available.