

Undergraduate Health and Hygiene Policy for the 2020–21 Academic Year

Policy

Students who return to campus during the 2020–21 academic year agree to abide by and participate in the [Caltech Community Commitment](#) that recognizes the risks of COVID-19, and the responsibility of each member of the Caltech community to follow practices that protect the health and well-being of all of its members. All students who return to campus, whether to live in undergraduate residences or to participate in instruction, research, or other activities, must familiarize themselves with the current status of our [phased return to on-campus activities](#), and continue to monitor updates and changes to campus health guidelines that can be found at [Caltech's Response to COVID-19 website](#). Questions about undergraduate residential or social event policies should be directed to the [Office of Residential Experience \(ORE\)](#). All other campus policy questions should be directed to the undergraduate deans.

Caltech has also devised the following rules and directives for the benefit of the Caltech community:

All Undergraduate Students

Consistent with the Community Commitment, all enrolled undergraduate students are expected to comply with the following public health and Institute guidelines:

- Maintain a minimum of 6 feet (2 meters) physical distancing from others.
- Wear face coverings inside of campus buildings and outside when it is difficult to maintain a minimum of 6-ft physical distancing. It is strongly recommended that students also wear face coverings when inside of suite and apartment common spaces, when feasible.
- Participate in daily health monitoring, including temperature checks, consistent with any directives or programs established for students in residence. This may involve the use of Kinsa thermometers and smartphone applications that enable students to easily track symptoms and report illness. The Institute will provide tools to help students document changes to their health and students will be required to utilize these tools. For example, students will need to complete a daily health attestation and location log in the Caltech COVID-19 Reporting application within [access.caltech](#).
- Immediately report any symptoms of illness to [Student Wellness Services](#).
- Engage in contact tracing efforts, including the provision of an accurate accounting of all contacts with individuals on and off campus.
- Cooperate with directives to isolate and quarantine as required in the case of illness or exposure. For example, students living in undergraduate residences will be relocated to appropriate isolation and quarantine spaces.
- Engage in personal hygiene practices such as frequent handwashing, use of hand sanitizer when handwashing is not possible, and covering sneezes or coughs with tissues that are immediately discarded in a trash can.

- Frequently sanitize high-touch surfaces such as bathroom fixtures, light switches, door knobs, appliances, and other items.
- Comply with Caltech immunization requirements, including verification of seasonal flu vaccine when it becomes available. Exemption can only be arranged under [Caltech's Vaccine Exemption Policy](#).
- Student card access to campus facilities will be limited. Students are prohibited from using their card to let anyone else into a campus facility.
- Students may only participate in study sessions or collaborative work if (a) public health orders allow for this; (b) study sessions and collaborative work are conducted with physical distancing, face coverings, and appropriate hygiene practices; and (c) if such sessions or collaborative work is held outside of residential facilities. Students who are members of the same designated student affairs cohort are exempted from this restriction.
- Comply with all public health directives and associated guidelines and expectations from the Institute.

In accessing campus facilities other than their residences, students must comply with all current campus protocols for the return to research and instruction. This includes guidelines for physical distancing, hygiene, and face coverings. Within campus facilities, students must comply with posted directions about hygiene; building entry and egress; movement through hallways, stairs, and elevators; and access to classrooms, laboratories, offices, and other spaces.

Students who are on a leave of absence or otherwise not currently enrolled are not permitted to access any campus facilities for any reason, without the express permission of the undergraduate deans.

Students Living in Caltech Residences:

Since congregate living spaces pose particular risks, Student Affairs has established the following expectations for undergraduate students living in Caltech residences.

- Only students living on campus will be permitted in campus residential facilities.
- Residential students are prohibited from receiving outside visitors, including other Caltech students who are not living on campus.
- Students are only permitted to enter the residence to which they are assigned. Students with residential card access are prohibited from using their card to let anyone else into their residence.
- The ORE will develop student cohorts or households within the residences and will create policies for interactions within and among rooms, suites, and alleys. All residential students must adhere to this guidance.
- Residential kitchens will be closed for the fall term. Kitchen closures will be evaluated in subsequent terms based on current public health conditions.
- Access to residential common areas, including lounges, will be by reservation only. Students accessing these spaces will be expected to use them in a manner that is consistent with current cohort and physical distancing guidelines, and to follow posted cleaning procedures before and after use.

- Once on campus and in residence, students are expected to stay in the local Pasadena area throughout the term. If a residential student has reason to leave the area, they should contact the undergraduate deans. Any residential student who needs to leave the area during a term will be expected to remain away from campus for the remainder of that term and complete their coursework through online instruction.
- Residential students should take appropriate precautions when leaving campus to conduct business or obtain services within the local community (shopping, exercising, and other related activities), following public health guidelines in all interactions. Residential students who attend social events off campus that are not conducted in accordance with physical distancing and public health guidelines will be expected to leave campus for the remainder of the term.

Students Residing in the Pasadena Area

Undergraduate students who have arranged to live near campus are permitted to access campus facilities for authorized activities in ways that, at all times, respect the health and safety of the entire community. The following guidelines must be followed:

- In accessing campus facilities, students must comply with all current campus protocols for the return to research and instruction.
- While on campus, students are required to follow current public health and Caltech directives for physical distancing, hygiene, and face coverings.
- Students who reside off campus are prohibited from entering the campus undergraduate residences.
- Students who reside off campus must take public health guidelines seriously in their interactions with residential students. Hosting off-campus social gatherings that involve non-household members poses unacceptable risks for all members of the campus community. If public health orders eventually allow social gatherings involving non-household members, students who host social events off campus must conduct them in accordance with physical distancing and public health guidelines. Reports of irresponsible student hosts will be referred to the undergraduate deans for potential disciplinary action.

Campus Policies on Student Gatherings and Activities

All students living on campus should familiarize themselves with the current [Resident Guide and Housing Policies Handbook](#). Compliance with these policies will be particularly important in the coming academic year. The following new policies will be in effect through fall term, and will be revised or extended through subsequent terms based on public health conditions:

- All in-person social gatherings are currently prohibited per public health orders. If conditions permit, ORE will organize small social events that are consistent with public health guidelines and Institute policies.
- Alcohol consumption in group or social residential settings is prohibited.

Many residential student programs will continue online for fall term and this approach will be evaluated in subsequent terms.

Food Service

Caltech Dining Services will serve residential students and the campus community in ways that are consistent with campus policy and public health guidelines. Students must adhere to posted protocols for meals and food consumption; these will emphasize takeaway service and include the following guidelines:

- Students entering dining facilities must wear a face covering over their mouth and nose.
- Students must use designated dining facilities and procure meals during pre-determined times.
- Group meals are prohibited in residential facilities.
- Outdoor dining spaces will require a 6-foot physical distancing.
- Students must follow all instructions from Dining Services staff.

Policy Enforcement

The primary approach to violations of COVID-19 related campus and residential policies will be educational. Students who carelessly or mistakenly violate policies and guidelines in ways that put other students and the community at risk will be encouraged to understand more fully the importance of the current rigorous policies and guidelines.

However, deliberate and reckless violations of health and hygiene policies, or repeated carelessness with respect to such policies, will not be tolerated. The health and safety of the Caltech community depends on the actions of each individual member, and students whose actions demonstrate that they do not appreciate this cannot continue to be members of the campus community. The sanction for students living on campus who deliberately or repeatedly violate these policies will be the loss of residential status and access to campus facilities; students living off campus will lose access to campus facilities. These students will be expected to continue their education online in subsequent terms of the 2020–21 academic year. The undergraduate deans' office will determine whether policy violations have occurred and administer sanctions.