

## WashU Med COVID-19 Update

Sept. 23, 2021

Information for School of Medicine faculty, staff and students

### Our numbers

#### COVID-19 hospitalizations

Barnes-Jewish Hospital

59 inpatients confirmed

1 suspected

St. Louis Children's Hospital

9 inpatients confirmed

1 suspected

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#### WashU Med

Active cases

20 employees

0 students

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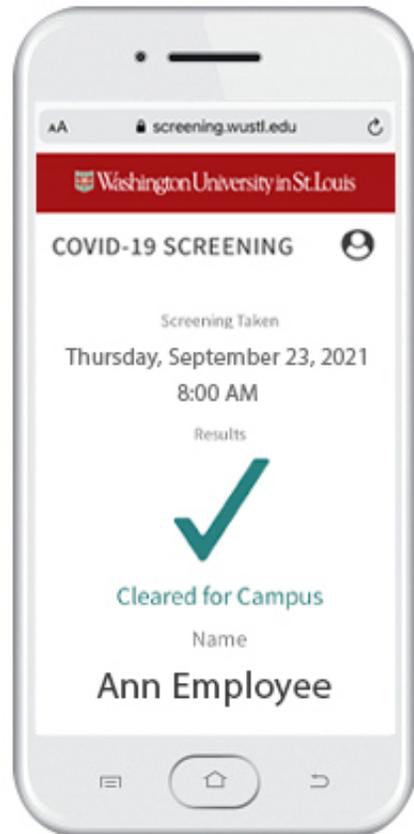
### Key announcements

## In-person employee screening ends Sept. 30, self screening continues

Following the COVID-19 vaccine employee mandate deadline, BJC HealthCare and Washington University will no longer actively screen employees in person at entry points, effective Sept. 30. **However, all employees reporting to campus are required to continue using the [online screening tool](#) to monitor for [COVID-19 symptoms](#) daily before coming to work.**

It remains critically important not to come to work with symptoms. Working while ill puts your colleagues and patients at risk. By reporting to work and/or clocking in, employees are attesting that they do not have COVID-19 symptoms. If you have questions about or need to report possible COVID-19 symptoms, contact the employee COVID-19 Exposure/Illness Hotline at 314-362-5056.

Patients and visitors will continue to undergo in-person screening when entering buildings on the Medical Campus.



## CDC advisory panel endorses booster dose for certain Pfizer vaccine recipients

Today a Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) advisory committee [voted in favor of authorizing booster doses](#) to be administered at least six months after completion of the primary series in individuals:

- 65 years of age and older
- living in long-term care facilities
- 50 through 64 years of age with underlying medical conditions (cancer, stroke, chronic lung disease, chronic kidney disease, type 1 and type 2 diabetes, heart disease, obesity, pregnancy)

The committee also agreed to allow (but did not recommend) boosters for those 18 – 49 years of age with underlying medical conditions that put them at risk of severe illness (as noted above). Boosters extend immunity after the initial shots' potency starts to decrease over time. This guidance is specific to Pfizer vaccine recipients; there are no booster recommendations yet for the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccines.

Boosters are not currently required by WashU Med. Boosters for those who meet the indications above can be scheduled through WashU Occupational Health by emailing [occupationalhealth@wustl.edu](mailto:occupationalhealth@wustl.edu) or by calling 314-362-3528, although short-term scheduling availability may be scarce due to current staffing challenges and our current focus on providing flu shots. You can also obtain a booster at most public clinics or retail pharmacies.

## Weekly testing for vaccine-exempt employees and students effective Sept. 27

WashU Med's vaccine-exempt employees and students will be required to undergo a weekly COVID-19 test effective Sept. 27. This requirement — prompted by [a forthcoming federal mandate](#) — is a change from the previously required testing which was expected to occur every other week. Impacted individuals will receive additional information via email.

## COVID-19 safety procedures apply for all WashU-sponsored events, regardless of location

When planning or attending WashU-sponsored events that take place away from campus, please remember that the university's COVID-19 safety policies apply. University policies supersede venue rules and local city or county ordinances that may in some cases be less restrictive.

For additional details, please visit the [Campus Safety Procedures](#) page on the WashU Med coronavirus website.

If you are planning an event that includes visitors from outside the Medical Campus, please complete the [Events with Visitors Checklist](#).

## Volunteers needed at BJC public vaccination clinics

Thank you to all those who have volunteered at the BJC HealthCare public vaccination clinics. Your efforts have truly made a difference. Volunteers with Epic access are still needed to serve as clinical-staff, schedulers or patient service representatives. Volunteers are most needed at the Clayton Avenue Building on the Medical Campus and at Christian Hospital. [Sign up or learn more](#) about dates, times and locations of open shifts.

## Get exposure alerts on your smartphone with MO/Notify



Washington University is encouraging faculty, students and staff to use MO/Notify, a smartphone system that is being piloted at WashU and can anonymously alert users when they have been near another WashU user who has tested positive for COVID-19. Find easy instructions on [monotify.com](https://monotify.com).

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## Other news

# Shell Café temporarily closing Oct. 1

Due to low volumes, Shell Café will temporarily close effective Friday, Oct. 1, until further notice. All employees at this location will remain employed and will be reassigned to other campus locations. Shell Café seating will remain open at this time to provide respite, break and meal areas for employees. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. Please visit [Kaldi's MCC](#), [Farmstead Café](#) or the [Campus Store](#) for your dining needs while on campus.

## Media coverage

[High staff vaccination rates help nursing homes beat COVID](#) (KMOV News, Sept. 18, 2021)

WashU Med geriatrician David Carr, MD, says the efficacy of vaccines is clear in nursing homes, where vaccinating the majority of staff members drastically reduced caseloads and death rates.

[Podcast: Shutdowns in COVID-19's early days helped St. Louis area avoid thousands of deaths](#) (WashU Med News, Sept. 17, 2021)

Guest Elvin H. Geng, MD, discusses his research showing that public health measures implemented in the St. Louis region helped the area avoid thousands of hospitalizations and deaths early in the pandemic.

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## Resources

- [MO/Notify](#) exposure notifications
- [Online screening tool](#)
- [Screening stations](#)
- Exposure & illness hotline: 314-362-5056
- Work-life support/Employee Assistance Program (24/7): 844-365-4587
- [BJC COVID-19 policies & procedures](#)
- [Washington University Physicians COVID-19 policies & procedures](#)
- [Medical Campus policies & updates](#)

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