



ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY MID-SOUTH

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February 25, 2022

Dear Greyhound Nation:

It's hard to believe we have now been operating in a global pandemic for two years. As cases declined in late fall, we had hoped to be able to lift our masking requirements when we returned from the winter break. Unfortunately, the Omicron variant had other ideas, causing cases to rise to their highest levels of the pandemic.

That peak has now subsided, and case counts in Crittenden and surrounding counties, as well as on our campus, are much lower. Further, today the CDC announced changes to its masking recommendations to take into account local hospitalizations and hospital capacity, as well as active case counts, greatly reducing the number of areas where indoor masking is currently recommended. With that in mind, ASU Mid-South will be lifting its in-door masking requirements, effective Monday, February 28th.

While this is a step toward normalcy, it is important to remember that the pandemic is not over. Masks are still strongly encouraged in any space where it is impossible to adequately socially distance. In certain personal spaces, such as the personal offices of faculty or staff, individuals may request that you wear one. Please keep in mind that this request may be driven by an underlying health issue that puts that individual or an individual's family member at greater risk. Likewise, I ask that everyone remain respectful and welcoming to individuals who wish to continue wearing masks for personal protection, wherever they are. Some may be wearing a mask because they feel more comfortable doing so, while others may have health conditions which make continued masking important.

While we are changing our mask policy, we are not changing the requirement for individuals who are experiencing symptoms to stay home, get tested, and report positive COVID test outcomes on the [ASU Mid-South COVID-19 Reporting Form](#). If you are unsure of what the COVID-19 symptoms are, you can find them listed on the [Daily Health Screening Questionnaire](#). Monitoring COVID positive cases will be an ongoing part of our campus safety protocol. Further, and perhaps most importantly, the decision to lift our mask requirement at this time does not mean we will not reinstate it, if conditions deteriorate.

I am very proud of how everyone at ASU Mid-South worked hard to protect themselves and each other over the past two years. Keep up the good work, and Go Greyhounds!

Sincerely,

Debra West, Ph.D
Chancellor