



Office of the President

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DT: November 11, 2020

TO: UW System Chancellors

FR: Tommy G. Thompson, President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tommy G. Thompson".

RE: Thanksgiving Protocols

The UW System has been prepared for the COVID-19 pandemic as it welcomed students back to its universities in the fall, with a robust testing strategy, mandating masks on its campuses, and instilling a culture of responsibility in its students. These efforts have mitigated the spread so that it has been effectively managed within our campus communities. Thank you all for your tireless leadership to make this happen.

Our responsibility as found in the Wisconsin Idea extends beyond our university community to every Wisconsin resident. This is why we have recently added significant new testing capacity that allows us to be first in the nation to provide surge testing to the broader community using rapid antigen tests. This is a huge undertaking, and people in our communities are incredibly grateful for this free service. It is also providing added capacity for our students and employees.

With that added capacity, and given the troubling surge in cases statewide, the UW System is directing its thirteen universities to take even more aggressive steps with the purpose of limiting movement as we approach the Thanksgiving holiday. All our universities are different, with varying levels of residential, off-campus, and commuter students. One solution will not provide an optimal outcome to protect the health and safety of all Wisconsinites.

Therefore, while most of our universities will be moving to all virtual classes post-Thanksgiving, it is more critical that specific protocols are established to accommodate individual situations.

As a result, and **in addition to the regular testing protocols at our universities now, I hereby direct every Chancellor within the UW System to require:**

1. Any student leaving our campus community for the Thanksgiving holiday with the intent of returning to campus after the Thanksgiving holiday be COVID tested once before they leave campus and tested an additional two times before they return into any classroom or congregated setting. Should they test positive, the protocols related to quarantining and isolation on each campus will still be required to be followed.
2. If these standards cannot be met, students should not be allowed to return into any classroom or congregated setting following the Thanksgiving break.

Finally, we encourage all students, staff and community members to utilize our capacity in testing to protect themselves and their families this holiday season. Our goal is to spread the culture of responsibility, not COVID-19.