



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
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January 4, 2021

To: College and University Students in Philadelphia
Subject: Stop the Spread of COVID-19 on Your Campus

Dear Student:

As you return for the spring semester, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health remains concerned about the spread of COVID-19. I want to emphasize how important it is that you avoid becoming exposed to or exposing others to the virus.

This past fall, the pandemic surged in Philadelphia. Daily case counts reached an all-time high in November 2020. This increase in case counts was followed by increases in the **number of people newly hospitalized for COVID-19**, and increases in **deaths from COVID-19**.

The good news is that since the announcement of our *Safer at Home* restrictions in Philadelphia in mid-November, we did not see the increase in case rates that was seen in New Jersey, New York, and other parts of Pennsylvania. You can help us to keep cases from rising and thus avoid the need to implement new restrictions by:

- **Avoiding all social gatherings with people outside of your household**, even while wearing masks and maintaining safe distancing.
- If you do gather with others, gathering outdoors, with everyone wearing masks.
- Screening yourself before you go out. If you have any cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, sore throat, muscle pain, or new loss of taste or smell, get tested for COVID-19 and otherwise stay home and away from others.
- Continuing to follow these guidelines even if you recently tested negative. Remember that even if you have recently tested negative, you can still spread COVID-19 to your friends and community members. You are contagious two days before experiencing symptoms; a negative test just means you are not shedding virus the moment you were tested.

Thank you for taking this epidemic seriously and protecting yourself, your loved ones, and the City of Philadelphia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas Farley".

Thomas Farley, MD, MPH
Health Commissioner