



UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

UST:SO06-00-ME03
A.Y. 2022-2023

TO : THE THOMASIAN COMMUNITY
FROM : OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
RE : UPDATED HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS¹
DATE : 31 AUGUST 2022

In keeping with recent developments in the COVID-19 situation in the country, and in compliance with recent government regulations, the University issues the following *updated health and safety protocols* for strict observance by all stakeholders on campus:

I. ACCESS TO THE UNIVERSITY

A. Pedestrian Access for Students and Staff

- All students and staff may enter and exit through the different pedestrian gates.
- The previously set *zoning policy* is hereby removed.

B. Access to Campus and Buildings

- Upon entry to the campus, an accomplished health declaration form from the *Thomasian Online Medical Support and Services (ThOMedSS)* or *StaySafe.PH* app will be presented.
- The 'one entry, one exit' foot traffic flow for facilities is maintained.
- All students and staff entering the buildings are required to tap their ID cards on the designated terminals to facilitate entry.
- If the ID card is not yet available, the registration form/appointment paper, vaccination card, and accomplished health declaration form ([ThOMedSS](#)) will be required.
- Only students who are part of the scheduled cohorts for the day shall be allowed entry to each building.
- Students may enter and exit a building more than once within a day as long as they are part of the scheduled cohorts for the day.

II. MINIMUM PUBLIC HEALTH STANDARDS

A. Vaccination

- Given the high proportion of fully vaccinated students and staff in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the decrease in the number of COVID-19 cases in the past weeks,

¹ As of 31 August 2022



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unvaccinated individuals may now participate in face-to-face classes, in compliance with the recent government mandate.²

- The University reiterates its strong encouragement for students and staff to be fully vaccinated and avail booster shots against COVID-19 to support the Department of Health's "PINASLAKAS" Nationwide Booster Vaccine Campaign.

B. PhilHealth and Supplementary Insurance

- The government no longer mandates students to register with PhilHealth or acquire medical insurance coverage before participating in *in-person* classes.³
- However, the University strongly encourages students to continue availing of insurance coverage for added financial support for medical needs, not only for COVID-19 but likewise for other illnesses.

C. Wearing of Face Mask and Proper Hand Sanitation

- The wearing of face mask, both indoors and outdoors, except when eating, remains to be strictly enforced.
- The University likewise continues to provide hand disinfection supplies in different areas in the campus.
- All stakeholders are reminded to observe proper hygiene.

D. Physical Distancing and Cyclical Cohorts

- Cyclical cohorts of students attending *in-person* classes will remain to be used when the maximum capacity [measured with one (1) -meter physical distancing] of a learning facility is exceeded.

E. Contact Tracing and Reporting

- The consistent reporting of one's health status in the [ThOMedSS](#) portal remains in place, specifically through the COVID-19 Case Tracker.

III. HYGIENE AND SANITATION

A. Ventilation

- To ensure better ventilation, doors and windows will remain open even in air-conditioned classrooms, unless the facility has an exhaust system or the new air filters/purifiers have already been installed.

B. Disinfection of Facilities

- The University continues to disinfect facilities regularly by implementing existing cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

² cf. Commission on Higher Education (CHED), *Press Release: COVID-19 Vaccination not a Requirement for Face-to-face Classes*, 30 August 2022.

³ cf. CHED Memorandum Order No. 5, series of 2022, 30 May 2022.



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C. Bringing of Packed Food for Meal Times

- Students are strongly encouraged to bring their packed food/snacks for designated meal times, which they may consume in their classrooms or designated areas in their buildings.
- All stakeholders are reminded to take the necessary precautions when dining in public places inside and outside the University by strictly observing physical distancing, checking that the facility has adequate ventilation, and removing masks only when eating.

The University reiterates that the safety and well-being of all, especially in a pandemic, is a **shared responsibility** of all stakeholders, and thus everyone is enjoined to adhere to the aforementioned protocols. It is our hope that University health and safety protocols will help guide the community as we adjust to the return to *in-person* classes.

Thank you.


FR. LOUIE R. CORONEL, O.P., EHL
Secretary-General