

August 21, 2020

To the New England College community:

On Wednesday, August 19, 2020 a female NEC student was notified of a positive COVID test result. The student, who arrived at the College on Sunday Aug 16, 2020, was tested for COVID following the College's protocol to test all students residing or attending classes on its campuses in Henniker and Manchester. The student, who resided briefly in Henniker, returned home prior to learning of the test result Wednesday morning after experiencing a dry cough and feeling ill.

Following discussions with New Hampshire's Department of Health and Human Services – Public Health Unit and consistent with College policy, all those who were in contact with the student – both other students and staff – will be placed in isolation and will receive follow up COVID tests. These individuals will remain in quarantine for 14 days per the guidelines of the State of New Hampshire and the Center for Disease Control until they show no evidence of infection and have received a COVID test with a negative result. The College is working with State authorities to trace all possible contacts with the student in question and will isolate any additional individuals as appropriate following professional guidance. Similarly, we have notified local authorities of this case.

At this time, the College has tested 361 students on our Henniker campus, and this is the only occurrence of a confirmed COVID infection on either campus since the pandemic began. Currently, we are working to confirm a possible second case involving a student who is in medical care for a condition unrelated to COVID-19. The College will continue its testing program throughout the fall semester for all students who are living and learning on campus. All facilities are sanitized regularly with special attention to any areas that may be used by an infected individual. Faculty and staff who are no longer working remotely were required to have a negative test prior to returning to campus and will participate in ongoing testing throughout the term.

Fall in-person classes are limited to 10 students. Students who are ill and need to return home or must be in quarantine will be able to participate in classes remotely.

There is no single tipping point for a transition to remote instruction. I, with counsel from senior team, will be monitoring every exposure and positive COVID case members of the community experience and will plan accordingly as needed to transition from in-person to remote instruction. The “hyflex” model of instruction was effectively deployed last Spring with little time to transition. With the benefit of that experience and ample time to plan over the course of the Summer, we are positioned to transition to remote learning on a temporary or longer-term basis as required. We are also able to make determinations about appropriate transitions by campus as well.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michele Perkins, President
New England College
98 Bridge Street, Henniker, NH 03242