

# Summer COVID Policy

## Rare Book School Guidelines and Recommendations Regarding COVID-19

Rare Book School is very excited to welcome back to Charlottesville—and to our partner institutions in Chicago, New Haven, New York, Philadelphia, Princeton, and Upperville, VA—the faculty, students, and lecturers who form the RBS community. In order to protect the health and well-being of this wonderful community of like-minded learners, we ask all those attending in-person courses and programs this summer to adhere to some basic public health precautions recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local health experts at each course location.

Please keep reading for full details, or download a PDF version of the following information by using this link.

### Vaccination

Students and faculty will be traveling to Rare Book School from many locations across the country and around the world; we want to do everything we can to keep our community safe and healthy. Although vaccinations are not required, we recommend attendees stay current with COVID vaccinations in accordance with recent CDC guidelines. COVID-19 boosters remain the most strategic way to protect yourself from the spread of disease. Staying current on boosters is recommended.

### Respiratory Illness/Masking Recommendations; Free N95 Masks Available

At all events and locations, RBS will follow CDC and local health guidelines as a minimum standard. CDC Guidelines have recently changed, recommending a two-phased response to any respiratory illness:

**Phase 1: Stay home when sick** until your fever resolves for 24 hours **and** your symptoms improve.

- This is when you're most contagious. Please let RBS staff know when you are staying out of class because of a COVID infection by email [covid@rarebookschool.org](mailto:covid@rarebookschool.org).

- Not all infections result in a fever, so paying attention to the range of other symptoms (cough, muscle aches, etc.) is important. The severity of symptoms is loosely connected to contagiousness.
- *What does "symptoms improving" mean?* CDC doesn't define it, but some [local health](#) departments do: It's when "a person no longer feels ill; they can do their daily routine just as they did before they were ill, and any remaining symptoms, such as a cough or runny nose, are very mild, or infrequent."
- **Phase 2: Use caution** for five days after and take additional precautions (e.g., wear a mask, use at-home COVID-19 tests before seeing grandma at the nursing home).
  - This is important because people remain contagious beyond the "stay-at-home" period.
  - If you are feeling well enough to return to class, please let RBS staff know before you return to the classroom and plan to wear a mask for the rest of the course week. RBS staff may tell your classmates that you have been ill so that at-risk students have the opportunity to take additional precautions as they deem necessary.

Even though masking is not required, we encourage attendees, especially those with chronic health conditions, to consider wearing a mask during indoors activities. For maximum protection, we recommend that you wear a snug-fitting N95 or KN95 disposable mask covering your mouth and nose. If you have forgotten your mask, RBS can provide you with an N95 mask. Look for available masks in the RBS break room, or notify your course session assistant (or instructor, if no RBS staff member is on site) if you need one.

## **Self-Monitoring and Testing; Free Rapid Antigen Tests Available**

We warmly recommend all attendees to monitor their own health symptoms throughout the week; if you notice any of the symptoms associated by the CDC with COVID-19 or other respiratory illnesses, you should not attend any RBS class or other activity while ill, but rather notify [covid@rarebookschool.org](mailto:covid@rarebookschool.org) and stay home in your lodging, masking if you need to interact with others, until you feel better and your symptoms have improved as described in Phase 1. You may obtain a box of two rapid antigen tests gratis from Rare Book School; ask your session assistant or email [covid@rarebookschool.org](mailto:covid@rarebookschool.org) either to pick up a test or, if staffing permits, have one dropped off for you.

Although rapid antigen tests, such as the at-home tests that RBS can provide to any student, faculty member, or staff member, have almost no false positive tests (0.5% testing positive when in fact not infected), false-negative rates are quite high (some estimates suggest 30-40% of tests are negative even when the individual is infected).

If you realize you've become sick (with COVID-19 or another respiratory illness) and potentially exposed others, contact RBS and see the above two-phase response to help determine when you may safely interact with others again.

### **Course Requirements Questions, Refunds, for Missed Classes**

If you miss class time because you have been ill with COVID-19 or another respiratory illness, please contact RBS staff at [covid@rarebookschool.org](mailto:covid@rarebookschool.org) to inquire about impact on the course requirements or whether you may receive a partial refund for a missed class, which will be managed on a case-by-case basis.