

UT Southwestern Medical Center

Campus Policies on Masking and Other NPIs Will Remain Unchanged

March 4, 2021

To the UT Southwestern Community:

I want to thank all of you who joined the Executive Vice Presidents and myself at our Town Hall yesterday and hope that you found it informative and helpful. I am writing to follow up on an issue that I am sure is on the minds of many on the campus – to provide clarity on our campus policies going forward in the context of the announcement made by Gov. Greg Abbott on Tuesday, March 2, permitting businesses to return to 100 percent of their activity and terminating the statewide mandate for masks (to commence next Wednesday, March 10).

The policies and practices that have been in place here on the UT Southwestern campus – as well as at our satellite facilities – since fall 2020 will remain unchanged. These include the requirement for a mask or other appropriate face covering except when alone in an office, maintenance of physical distancing, and limitations on the size of gatherings. These requirements will continue to ensure the safety of our campus community and those who visit UT Southwestern, including our patients and their families.

As communicated in November, our plan is to continue our current state of operations through at least May 1. As conveyed in my last biweekly Campus Briefing two weeks ago, I have asked the E/ROC to formulate recommendations for policies and practices beyond May 1 – whether that is to continue in our current status or to begin to advance toward Phase 3 operations. The guiding principles for these recommendations will be ensuring the safety of our operations, and within that assumption, appropriate policies and practices that optimally advance the mission of our institution. It is my intention to provide guidance to the campus by the end of this month regarding operations beyond May 1, based on the recommendations of the E/ROC.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to once again thank the entire UT Southwestern community for their remarkable commitment and perseverance through this yearlong pandemic that has allowed us to care for our patients, support our community and our state, and, as highlighted in our Town Hall yesterday, still make striking advances in all dimensions of our institutional mission.

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