

We, as a community, are being confronted by COVID once again. In just the past days:

- Eleven additional employees have tested positive. Several more are off work, symptomatic, awaiting test results. As you know, all are vaccinated and many are 'boosted.'
- Two additional residents, one each in the Central Tower and the North Tower, have tested positive following off-campus holiday events.
- Milwaukee county experienced nearly 6,200 cases in the past seven days. The testing "positivity rate" was 20.75%, the highest recording of the pandemic.
- Some good news: infections among the vaccinated seem, at this time, to be less severe. All affected residents and staff are having "cold-like" symptoms and are recovering at home. County-wide hospitalizations held steady, and Milwaukee-area deaths from COVID declined.

It seems clear we are on the brink of potential widespread exposure to a mild, but highly contagious to even the vaccinated, strain of COVID-19. We believe that even a milder strain of COVID-19 could have potentially devastating impact on the Saint John's community. We believe we must act now.

Effective after lunch today, we are canceling all in-person events, activities, and dining for at least the next two weeks.

Included in this cancellation:

- **The New Year's Eve party.** Desserts will be available for pick-up, and the scheduled entertainment will be live streamed on Channel 955. More details to come from LifeStreams.
- **All Towers' LifeStreams events.** Where possible, events will be live streamed or held on Zoom. The library, media center, tech center, and card/game rooms remain open for individual use.
- **In-Person dining in Taylor's and the Bistro,** effective after lunch services today, 12/29. Take-out meals will be available from both venues.
- **In-person chapel services.** The chapel will remain open for individual prayer and meditation, and scheduled chapel services will be live streamed.
- **Surprising Findings,** Saint John's resale shop, will be closed.
- **Pool-based fitness classes.** Other fitness programming will continue, but masks will be required and participants will be physically distanced from each other. The gym will remain open.

We are not further restricting guests or visitors at this time. However, please remember all visits must occur only in resident apartments or in outdoor spaces. We are discouraging residents from having large groups of outside guests visiting in their apartments. We also recommend not having any contact with unvaccinated guests, especially unvaccinated children.

All persons – residents, visitors, and employees – should always wear a properly-fitted face mask while outside of their residence. There are no exceptions.

Questions?

The weekly COVID Updates are produced by Saint John's COVID Response Team. If you have a question for the team, please contact Matt Loyd, COO, at (414) 831 – 6953 or mloyd@saintjohnsmilw.org.