

EWC Housing Weekly Update December 30

Dear Students,

We recognize that the recent increase in COVID-19 cases in our community has caused concern and raised questions. The EWCPA Board has shared some of these with us. We have put together the FAQ below to help address some of these concerns. Should you have other questions or concerns, please send them to: CTF@eastwestcenter.org so that we can address your concerns as quickly and directly as possible.

East-West Center Covid-19 Task Force

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

1. If students test positive for COVID-19, do they need to pay for their quarantine in Lincoln Hall?

No. If a student tests positive for COVID-19 or gets moved there because they are exposed and identified as a close contact by the contract tracing process, they do not need to pay for their stay in Lincoln Hall.

However, if students decide to travel, their 10-day self isolation time in Lincoln Hall is at their own expense. The EWC is offering a significantly reduced rate equivalent to the students' HM or HK room rate.

2. There is concern about what's deemed a close contact in the dorms, especially when considering the intimate nature of the shared bathrooms. For example, if someone is unmasked in the bathroom brushing their teeth and someone else is unmasked showering or using the toilet, one might not know who else was sharing that space with them and would therefore be unable to list them as a close contact. Students who share the same unit would like to be informed if someone in their unit/bathroom was positive so that they can know to get themselves tested. There's actually more concern about the bathrooms than the kitchens. Can the CTF and Housing revisit this bathroom issue in particular give some direction that addresses their concerns?

Contact tracing is happening in every case. Contact tracing relies on the COVID positive individual to identify those that he or she deems to meet the criteria for close contact. This is defined by the Hawai'i State Department of Health as anyone who was within 6 feet (approximately two arm lengths) of an infected individual for a combined total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (More information on identifying close contacts is [here](#)).

Due to privacy laws, the EWC must not provide information that clearly identifies the individual. However, the individual is free to inform their own friends, dorm mates and colleagues of their status. We strongly encourage students to let their bathroom mates know of their status so that they may take any precautions they deem useful. If the individual gives express permission to the EWC to inform unit mates, the EWC will do so. Those who believe they might have been exposed can seek a rapid test from the front desk of Hale Mānoa.

3. When a student contracts Covid-19 and moves to Lincoln Hall, is there any kind of disinfecting of their room that happens? There is concern that if a buddy or friend needs to pick things up for the student from their room that they might risk exposure. Not sure if this is valid since we know that it's an airborne virus but it was a concern none the less.

In most cases, only routine cleaning is necessary after 24 hours. Here's the CDC guidance:

- If more than 24 hours have passed since the person who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the space, cleaning is enough. You may choose to also disinfect depending on certain conditions or everyday practices required by your facility.
- If more than 3 days have passed since the person who is sick or diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the space, no additional cleaning (beyond regular cleaning practices) is needed. Source: [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility | CDC](#).

EWC does sanitize the kitchen and bathroom of the unit with an EPA-approved Clorox 360 disinfection system after any positive case.

We encourage students to plan ahead so that there is no need to enter their room after a positive test. However, if it is necessary, fellow students should wait a minimum of 48 hours and wear a high quality mask.

4. There is a lot of confusion about when/how/under what circumstances EWC participants who are UH students can access free testing at the Health Clinic across the street. Can we get clarification on this and share it with the students? Who would be the person at UH to ask about this?

Students may seek testing from University Health Services Mānoa (UHSM) if they have COVID symptoms or if they have been exposed. Students should call the clinic at 956-8965 and tell them your symptoms or about your exposure. If the medical professional at the clinic determines that a COVID test is necessary based on the information shared, then they will arrange for a test. You should expect to share your health insurance information. If you would like more information about your testing options at the University Health Services, you can call the clinic number above.

The free surveillance testing offered by UHSM (not related to symptoms or a close contact as above) is only open to students in UH Housing. EWC students will not be able to avail themselves of this testing option. See below for information about rapid antigen tests available at EWC.

5. Can you please share simple and explicit information about where to go to get a free Covid-19 test?

Here is a resource from the CDC on testing to review before pursuing a COVID-19 test: [COVID-19 Testing: What You Need to Know | CDC](#)

Getting a test in Hawaii:

PCR Tests: Please visit <https://www.oneoahu.org/covid19-testing/#map> to find a location. No-cost testing is available but we suggest that you call ahead to make an appointment and inquire about cost. Note that you may be asked for health insurance information. PCR tests are recommended for:

- Individuals with [symptoms](#) of COVID-19. (In some cases, a referral from your health care provider is required)
- Individuals who have had a known exposure to a person with COVID-19. This is for on-campus and off-campus exposure.

Antigen Rapid Tests: We have a limited supply of rapid test kits available at the Hale Mānoa front desk. Please request a kit only if needed, and if a PCR test isn't more appropriate (per the recommendations above). When using the tests, follow the included instructions carefully and note the two tests included in the kit are intended to be used twice over three days with at least 24 hours (and no more than 48 hours) between tests.

A reminder that a positive result from any kind of test must be immediately reported to Housing and your Program Coordinator.

6. What will happen if Lincoln Hall reaches capacity? Will students will get kicked off campus if too many people are ill with Covid-19 for housing to handle? What is the EWC's contingency plan?

There are 93 rooms in Lincoln Hall with 26 kitchen units. Students requiring strict quarantine will be prioritized for kitchens. Self-isolating students may be assigned a non-kitchen room.

If the EWC runs out of space in Lincoln Hall, then we will utilize UH's off-campus quarantine facilities as a back-up. If there are mass case clusters in certain units of the dorms, we might also have those units quarantine in situ.

Students will not be kicked off campus.

Best New Year's resolution—don't get COVID-19: As 2021 comes to an end, it's tempting to kiss it goodbye with a good party. But why risk starting 2022 with COVID-19? Vaccinated and unvaccinated people are reporting infections in record numbers—our state's 7-day case count was 1,485 cases, with a positivity rate of 13% (remember when 40 cases a day was our goal?). Yes, Omicron SEEMS milder, and vaccinated people seem to do well. But not everyone, and who is and isn't going to do well is still a wild card. And when YOU get infected, you can infect someone else—who may not even be vaccinated. Let's end 2021 and start 2022 by sticking with the [anti-COVID-19 protocols](#) that have protected our community.

Happy New Year!