



Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine

RESTART PLAN #4

Submitted to NJ Office of
the Secretary of Higher Education (OSHE)
on June 17, 2021

for the period 7/1/2021 **through 12/31/2021**

Submission of Institutional Plan for Restart Cover Sheet

Institution Name: Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine
Date Submitted: June 17, 2021

Key Contact(s):

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Website for Restart Plan Posting: <https://www.hmsom.org/>

Note: Institutions do not need to wait for OSHE confirmation prior to posting to a website. The plan should go live on the website when it is submitted. Components of Institutional Plan for Restart Checklist (Note: Before submitting, please review and check that the following components are included in the plan. The plan should be submitted with the headings below. If you are only submitting for certain sections, check only those that apply).

- 1. General Safeguarding
- 2. Screening, Testing, and Contact Tracing Protocols
- 3. Instruction
- 4. On-Campus Residential Housing
- 5. Computer Labs/Libraries
- 6. Research
- 7. Student Services
- 8. Transportation
- 9. On-Campus Dining
- 10. Study Abroad and International Travel
- 11. Athletics
- 12. Other Information/Appendices (as needed)

By signing below, the institution certifies that all statements provided are true and correct and that the institution will comply with all applicable requirements set forth in the Governor’s Executive Orders.



Bonita F. Stanton, M.D.

June 17, 2021
Date

Introduction

On June 18, 2020, the state of New Jersey issued “Restart Standards for all New Jersey Institutions of Higher Education,” which provides colleges and universities in the state with guidelines for developing reopening plans. The standards encompass ten key on-campus functional areas, including: instruction, residential housing, computer laboratories, libraries, research, student services, transportation, dining, international travel, and athletics. The document provides direction and clarification on requirements (“must” statements), examples of safeguarding practices, and items for consideration (“should” statements) in each of the key areas.

This restart plan is purposefully aligned with the “Restart Standards for all New Jersey Institutions of Higher Education,” and Executive Orders that will still be in place until Jan. 1, 2022 (though can be modified or rescinded prior to that date by the Governor). Those include Executive Orders 106, 111, 112, 123, 127, 150, 159, 170, 178, 207, 229, 233, 237 and 242. This restart plan also acknowledges the lifting of the New Jersey state of emergency by Executive Order 244 dated June 4, 2021. It also addresses the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) released guidance for institutions of higher education¹, also issued on June 4, 2021..

This Restart Plan proposes a gradual and phased re-population of in-person classes and activities, as the eased restrictions allow. This Restart Plan specifically seeks a waiver to expand in-person teaching and student life as “the New Normal” period indicated in “The Road Back: Restoring Economic Health Through Public Health”² commences.

In accordance with state requirements, HMSOM has developed this robust and thoughtful plan that accounts for public health concerns, adheres to state and CDC guidelines, outlines modifications to the limited portion of the academic program and student life, and describes how students, faculty, and staff will safely work at the School. HMSOM will continue to monitor federal, state, and local guidance regularly, and understands that the state will announce changes in response to any changes in the trajectory of the pandemic (incidence and prevalence of infection).

HMSOM’s return to campus continues to follow these guiding principles:

- We are committed to protecting the health of our students and employees.
- We are committed to developing plans with the goal of maintaining the financial well-being of students and employees, especially those who experience the greatest impact.
- We are committed to protecting HMSOM’s mission of education and research, including focusing resources on HMSOM’s highest priorities.
- We are committed to protecting the long-term financial health of the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine.
- We are committed to transparency.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html>

² http://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20200518/ff/c9/8c/41/1917eaf623c02595b9225209/Strategic_Restart_Plan.jpg ; <https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/nj-schools-and-universities/are-colleges-and-universities-open-are-summer-programs-open-what-are-the-safety-requirements>; on July 1, during stage 2, universities are permitted to begin in-person clinical, lab, and “hands-on” academic programming, subject to the submission of the institution’s re-opening plan to the state 14 days prior.

Prior Submissions

1. On July 2, 2020, Seton Hall University included HMSOM's request for a waiver to send its second-year medical students to their clinical rotations throughout Hackensack Meridian *Health* System. A copy of the request and the related health- and-safety training procedures and a copy of the Reopening Plan were included.
2. On July 22, 2020, HMSOM submitted its initial request for a waiver to introduce clinical skills training and submitted a subsequent amendment on August 11, 2020.
3. On September 3, 2020, HMSOM submitted an updated plan describing the return to Gross Anatomy Lab as outlined in Restart Plan #2.
4. **On October 24, 2021, HMSOM submitted a further updated plan that addressed the conduct of the Immunity, Infection and Cancer course, the Transitional Clerkship course, and the continuation of clinical skills training.**

Health and Safety Considerations: General Safeguards

All students are required to provide proof of COVID vaccination prior to returning to campus. This will be tracked by the Office of Student Affairs and Wellbeing. Students requesting a vaccination waiver for health or religious reasons can take advantage of the Hackensack Meridian Health network's vaccination waiver procedures.

HMSOM faculty and staff are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated. Those who have not been vaccinated are strongly encouraged to continue to wear face coverings and maintain social distancing. Students, faculty, and staff are also required to use the HMH COVID-19 Daily Screening and Travel Portal.

HMSOM continues to implement frequent cleaning and sanitation of classrooms, restrooms, and other areas. All training materials previously provided remain available. Masks are available to those who request them from Public Safety representatives upon entering the lobby of the campus. We expect to continue to make remote instruction available for faculty and/or students who are unable to participate in in-person instruction through the duration of this reporting period (i.e., through December 31, 2021).

Instruction

As COVID restrictions are relaxed, a great proportion of instruction will take place on campus. This will include small and large group instruction, clinical skills instruction, lab sessions, as well as office hours, advising, and mentoring.

Selected instructional sessions may remain remote to accommodate remaining COVID restrictions and for other logistical reasons.

Online remote instruction, meetings, and events will utilize the technologies described in previous reports.

Faculty office hours and advising will continue to be offered online and expand to include in-person meetings. Specialty mentoring by clinical physicians of interested students may also be delivered online but may also be arranged in-person.

In addition to an increase in in-person support, library staff may continue to provide remote/online assistance to all students, faculty, and staff. This is done using screen-sharing and chat software, e-mail, and FAQ service(s), videoconferencing, and SharePoint® and Teams® sites.

Student activities including interest groups, mentoring, and other extra-curricular activities will continue in both in-person and remote options, as driven by COVID restrictions and practical planning considerations.

Clinical activities will continue in the clinical setting for students in all curricular years, following COVID protocols at the clinical site.

Community-based activities will take place in both remote and in-person settings. In-person activities will follow COVID protocols at the community-based site and state guidelines if taking place in an individual's home.

Student Services

The Office of Student Affairs and Wellbeing will continue to offer services in-person, Monday through Friday from 11am to 4pm for any students in the building. Student Financial Services, Student Accessibility Services, and Academic Support services are offered both remotely and in-person by appointment.

Admissions

The Admissions process will continue to be administered by The American Medical College Application Service® (AMCAS®), and applicant questions will continue to be addressed virtually through the HMSOM Admissions website, email, Zoom and telephone. The School will virtually conduct all Interview Days for the 2022 Cohort, due to matriculate in early July 2022.