

Commencement 2021: Graduation Ceremonies Guidelines

This document should be used as guidance in planning for school and college graduation ceremonies. The guidelines summarize precautions that must be taken so that all graduation ceremonies are in compliance with the [City of Philadelphia public health guidelines](#) and Temple University COVID-19 protocols.

Face Coverings

- All students, faculty, staff and production crew members must wear face coverings at all times. The only exception will be after students walk across the stage and prepare to take their pictures at the step and repeat. The students will be prompted by the photographer when it is safe to remove their masks. Measures are taken to ensure that, when masks are removed, students will be within the required distance from the photographer, their peers and the stage party.
- Speakers must also wear masks. If masks are a disruption to the audience properly hearing the presenter, a plastic face shield will be provided for use. If a presenter must remove their mask, they must be 20 feet from individuals and must be instructed not to turn around to look at members of the stage party as the stage is not deep enough to allow for 20 feet behind the presenter.
- In addition to reminding all attendees to bring and wear their masks throughout the ceremony, disposable masks will be available at each venue to maintain the safety of all attendees.

Contactless Elements

- Several steps are in place to avoid physical interactions of attendees at the ceremonies. These measures include not using tickets to enter the venues and parking locations. Students are instructed to arrive in their regalia and to present their student IDs at check-in stations before taking their seats. Staff and volunteers will be provided credentials to wear while at the venues.
- Check-in stations and other support stations will be placed at proper distances with plastic coverings to avoid any potential close contact between staff and attendees.

Health Monitoring Measures

- Staff and attendees will be asked to monitor their health leading up to the ceremonies. Students and attendees who are feeling unwell prior to the ceremonies will be instructed not to come to campus or participate in any activities until they are certain that they are not infected. If someone feels unwell during a ceremony, they will be encouraged to leave the ceremony and return home or use the designated location at each venue to isolate themselves from other attendees. Emergency staff will be on site, in addition to Campus Safety, for students and staff who need immediate assistance.

- Staff will be required to contact the central planning team and their individual school or college if they are feeling unwell and no longer able to assist with the ceremony.

Physical Distancing

- Pre-arranged seating will be organized before the start of each ceremony with seats placed six feet apart to preserve safe physical distancing.
- Faculty and staff in attendance at the ceremonies will remain seated during the duration of the ceremonies.
- Signage will be placed at the venues to direct students throughout the ceremony. Students will remain seated until they are asked to line up at safe physical distancing to be acknowledged on the stage.

Crowd Flow

- Guests will not be invited nor permitted to attend the ceremonies at any of the venues. Only essential individuals (graduates, production staff, volunteers and stage party members) will be permitted entry into any of the venues.

Sanitation

- The stage podium and microphones will be wiped down in between each speaker and after the conclusion of each ceremony.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be placed throughout each venue as well as in restroom locations for all in attendance.
- Facilities staff will be present at each venue to ensure all venue restrooms are properly sanitized throughout the ceremonies.
- Following each ceremony all seating and tables and equipment will be cleaned in preparation for the next ceremony.

Communication

- Promotion of Temple's four pillars of public health to everyone attending the graduation ceremonies is essential. The university's applicable COVID-19 protocols include [student safety guidelines](#), [employee safety guidelines](#), [guest, visitor and vendor safety guidelines](#) and [on-campus events and catering guidelines](#). The City of Philadelphia has also provided [health and safety recommendations](#) for college and university graduation ceremonies.
- Digital and physical signage will be displayed at the ceremony venues and throughout Main Campus reminding the Temple community of the pillars of public health. Signage will include language and imagery reminding people to follow proper hand hygiene, physical distancing, wear their face coverings and health monitoring.