

Health and Safety Guidelines for Return to Campus

Revised January 4, 2022

Date	Author/Editor	Change	Page reference	Version
Sept. 17, 2021	Kate Windsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarifications on instructional space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Physical distancing requirement ○ Face coverings ▪ Amended PPE requirements, remove use of GPE term 	12, 13 17, 18	Health and Safety Guidelines for Return to Campus_v.5.3_SEPT2021
Jan. 4, 2022	Kate Windsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expanded definition of instructional space ▪ Removed restrictions on handling paper in classrooms ▪ PPE recommendations 	13 17, 18	Health and Safety Guidelines for Return to Campus_v.5.4_JAN2022

The COVID-19 situation is continually changing. These guidelines will be updated as required to reflect the latest public health and government recommendations and internal adopted measures.

Contents

Purpose	3
Definitions	3
Guiding Principles	3
Roles and responsibilities	4
Department Heads/Directors/Chairs.....	4
Supervisors	4
Employees.....	5
Safety Office	6
Visitors and Contractors	6
Health Protocols	6
Employee self-assessment screening	6
Assessment & Testing Centres	7
UW Health Services' COVID-19 Support and Advice	7
On-campus rapid antigen screening.....	7
Illness and absence reporting	7

Illness tracking	8
Tracking protocol for individual disclosures of COVID-19	8
How to navigate student COVID-19 disclosure	8
How to navigate employee COVID-19 disclosure	8
Health Protocols for COVID-19 cases and exposure.....	9
Confirmed case on campus	9
<i>Risk assessment and controls for COVID-19 prevention.....</i>	9
Research and Departmental COVID-19 Safety Plans.....	9
<i>Workplace preventative measures for COVID-19: hierarchy of hazard control.....</i>	10
Continuing to work remotely	10
Adjust the Workplace	10
Physical Distancing	11
Physical Barriers.....	14
Ventilation - Building HVAC Systems.....	15
Adjust Work Processes	15
Hand hygiene	15
Respiratory etiquette.....	16
Cleaning Protocols	16
Provide PPE - Protective equipment.....	17
Determining protective equipment needs	17
Accessing Face coverings and PPE	18
<i>Communication, Training, and Resources</i>	18
<i>Evaluation and Monitoring</i>	18
<i>Resources</i>	18

Purpose

This document is intended to assist the University of Waterloo community in planning for the phased resumption of activities, while mitigating risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines provided in this document incorporate recommendations provided by federal, provincial, and local public health authorities, best practices within similar industry groups, the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act, and other applicable legislation.

Definitions

Employee

Faculty, staff or union employee, Graduate students, Teaching Assistants, Visiting Faculty/Post-Docs, Co-op Students/Unpaid Learners, Undergraduate Students Employed at UWaterloo.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment, (PPE), is equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses. Specific to COVID-19, this includes surgical masks, respiratory protection, gowns, gloves, and face-shields commonly used in healthcare environments.

Supervisor

The term Supervisor is used interchangeably with Manager and is defined as a person who has charge of a workplace or authority over an employee, including graduate students under their authority.

Guiding Principles

The University has established 7 guiding principles that provide a foundation to safely and successfully return employees and students to campus.

1. Health and safety first

The health and safety of employees and students will be the guiding principle and primary focus as we plan to return to campus and sustain the 'next normal'. This includes incorporating newly accepted norms of physical distancing, hygiene, and responsible use of group protective equipment (GPE) and personal protective equipment (PPE) to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It also depends on a culture that encourages personal and group adherence to new safety standards.

2. Government-informed and evidence-based

Applicable local, provincial, and federal public health directives and guidelines will inform the planning, timing, and sequence of resuming research, operational and student support operations. Decisions and directives will be evidence-based, strive to follow best practice, and align with institutional priorities.

3. Responsible

To reduce risk, faculties and departments will follow a coordinated approach that considers the overall impact of increasing operations and risk exposure associated with it.

4. Equitable

Consideration and recognition of equity issues unique to different groups and individuals will be given. This will include but is not limited to consideration and appropriate accommodation of those who feel that they are at increased risk and those who rely on schools and daycare centres for childcare.

5. Responsive and proactive

The University will plan for and react immediately to new directives from government and public health authorities or to any signs of a possible resurgence of COVID-19. We will remain nimble, flexible, and adaptive as we gain insights from the progressive physical return to campus. All plans for resumption of operations will include contingency plans for safe and rapid modification, scale-back or complete shutdown if necessary.

6. Open, transparent, and collaborative

The University will put mechanisms in place to ensure that employees are represented and involved in developing plans and recommendations. Final plans, recommendations and responsibilities will be clear, well communicated, and ready to implement.

7. Resourced

Efforts to return to campus must be appropriately resourced to ensure safety for the entire community. Efficient use of these resources will be also be considered in the prioritization and timing of returning to campus to manage responsibly any incremental costs.

Roles and responsibilities

The University will coordinate a safe and staged return to campus strategy to ensure the safety and well-being of all employees, students, and visitors.

Without adversely impacting the health of our employees or students, institutionally, our goal is to:

1. Provide supervisors with tools, strategies, and resources to help safely and effectively transition employees back to campus.
2. Assist employees with their gradual return to campus while simultaneously managing risk related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Department Heads/Directors/Chairs

- In consultation with senior leaders, coordinate the development and implementation of departmental Research and Departmental COVID-19 Safety Plans, taking into consideration occupancy, work unit interactions, work from home efficiency and overall unit operations.
- Monitor areas under their direction to ensure compliance to this guide is maintained.
- Review tools and resources with the [Human Resource Partner](#) to prepare the workspace for a safe and staged return to campus.

Supervisors

Pre-return responsibilities – before employees return to campus:

- Acknowledge that returning to campus will require an adjustment which may temporarily impact productivity and extend support to those who may struggle with the change
- Ensure employees can access buildings and work areas, since [some buildings](#) may be locked at times.
- Establish appropriate schedules that enable employees to maintain appropriate physical distance from one another if necessary.

- Provide clear expectations (e.g., work, safety, and behaviour) regarding what will happen when employees return to campus and ensure employees have acknowledged specific procedures related to their work area and duties.
- Conduct a thorough health and safety [inspection](#), ensure the first aid kit is stocked and a small supply of spare non-medical masks are available.
- Ensure that cleaning supplies and required personal protective equipment (PPE) are available.

Ongoing and general responsibilities

- Reinforce the need for completing daily self-assessments for symptoms of illness
- Monitor adherence to the departmental COVID-19 Safety Plan, including physical distancing, hand hygiene, and health protocols
- Encourage open dialogue to address concerns and reinforce expectations
- Reach out to support services on campus if there is concern over employee morale and well-being.
- Be in regular consultation with department head; check updates from senior leadership, including emails and Daily Bulletin articles and update employees accordingly
- Maintain a current contact listing of direct reports
- Maintain a log of employees in their workplace (e.g. via shared calendar, schedule or sign-in sheet). This may include external parties including contractors or vendors working on campus. In the event of illness, Occupational Health will use this list to help identify people with whom positive cases may have been in close contact.
- Implement corrective actions when non-conformance occurs.
- Ensure all employees have access to required technology. When supporting a blended team (where some team members will be on campus while others will continue to work remotely) the supervisor is encouraged to:
 - Monitor and address needs for working from home
 - Coordinate the return and set up of equipment* for employees resuming work on campus
**Unless otherwise directed to do so, employees will return technology, equipment and furniture to campus while working on site.*
- Assess impact and potential risk of an employees' inability to perform their regular responsibilities, either on campus or remotely
- Refer workplace questions to your [HR Partner](#). General questions on the University's pandemic response can be sent to coronavirus@uwaterloo.ca
- Continue to manage [work from home](#):
 - Work arrangements should continue to be both flexible and appropriate and must consider operational requirements.
 - Identify how daily work requirements will be accomplished with a blended team (members on campus and those working from home)
 - Coordinate the technical assistance needed to work from home (information is available on the IST website)
 - Communicate the following expectations:
 - Be available for contact during regular work hours and maintain a regular contact schedule with their supervisor
 - Have regular discussions about work priorities and other matters that relate to the assigned work

Employees

All employees returning to campus are expected to:

- Be familiar with their department’s Return to Campus Safety Plan.
- Report vaccination status and complete the COVID-19 screening questions using the [Campus Check-In tool](#) before arriving on campus each day, and do not attend campus if experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.
- Wear personal protective equipment (PPE) as required by their supervisor.
- Wear a face covering when in common areas of buildings or in any work area where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Undergo any other training as required by the University and your supervisor
- Follow procedures and signage to minimize the spread of COVID-19
- Report absences to their respective supervisor
- Follow University of Waterloo procedures for disclosing COVID-19 symptoms
- Employees who experience any symptoms of COVID-19 or Influenza-like-illness (ILI), should follow Public Health guidelines, and contact a testing and assessment centre directly to book an appointment.
 - If directed to self-isolate, advise Occupational Health at occupationalhealth@uwaterloo.ca of your first date absent, related symptoms, and if unable to work, the expected return to work date

Safety Office

The Safety Office is the overall authority on workplace health and safety COVID-19 related guidance and will:

- Keep this guide updated with the latest and best information available
- Provide interpretation of this guide where needed
- Support units in the creation of Research and Departmental COVID-19 Safety Plans
- Monitor adherence to this guide and compliance with public health directives
- Manage the on campus rapid antigen screening site

Visitors and Contractors

Supervisors must ensure that external visitors or contractors directly engaged by their unit are aware of the University’s guidelines, and their requirement to comply with their sector-specific COVID-19 procedures upon the resumption of activities. Contractors working on campus construction projects will follow the [contractor and service provider requirements](#) outlined by the Safety Office. All contractors and visitors must complete a daily self-assessment before or upon arrival on campus and shall not attend campus if experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.

Health Protocols

Employee self-assessment screening

To ensure the health and safety of yourself and your colleagues, the University of Waterloo requires that employees and students monitor themselves daily for symptoms of COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status.

Before arriving on campus each day, complete the COVID-19 screening questions using the [Campus Check-In tool](#). If you have medical questions, contact your health care provider or your [local public health unit](#). The

[provincial self-assessment tool](#) is available and signage to remind individuals to conduct screening is located at building entrances.

If, after completing the self-assessment, you are advised to go to a COVID-19 assessment centre for testing, follow the instructions that are provided. Please stay home and do not come to campus. Email Occupational Health (occupationalhealth@uwaterloo.ca) and advise your manager.

Employees and students will also be reminded to conduct self-assessment at building entrances.

If you become ill while at work, report to your supervisor and Occupational Health immediately.

Assessment & Testing Centres

For current information regarding assessment and test centres please visit: [COVID-19 Assessment and Testing Centres in Waterloo Region](#).

Health Services has a Testing & Assessment Centre on campus and more information can be found at: <https://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/covid-19-testing-assessment-centre>

UW Health Services' COVID-19 Support and Advice

Submit a [COVID-19 Assessment Registration Form](#) for support from Health Services if you test positive for COVID-19, experience symptoms or think you may need to quarantine or get tested. You can expect to hear back within 24 hours.

If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 911 or your local emergency services.

On-campus rapid antigen screening

Rapid antigen screening helps identify people infected with COVID-19 that other screening protocols might otherwise miss. This can help break the chain of transmission on our campus by preventing individuals from unknowingly spreading COVID-19. Screening is available and is mandatory for employees and students who have an accommodation for medical or religious/creed reasons.

Rapid screening is only available for asymptomatic people.

[Learn more](#) about eligibility for the Rapid Antigen Screening Centre and how to book an appointment.

Illness and absence reporting

All employees must be aware of COVID-19 [symptoms](#). Employees must report absences to their supervisor or delegate, and symptoms to Occupational Health before the beginning of the first day absent.

Confidentiality of personal information will be maintained at all times and subsequent actions will include:

- If the employee is ill, the supervisor is to ask the employee if they have completed the COVID 19 self-assessment as per above. Advise them to notify Occupational Health if the result of the assessment indicates they should isolate and/or be tested. If they are not experiencing any covid related symptoms, they do not need to notify Occupational Health unless they are absent 5 or more days, at which time, regular Sick Leave procedures apply.
- The supervisor is to proceed with usual illness reporting procedures through Workday (Not applicable for CUPE employees)

- During the return to campus phase, Occupational Health will continue to monitor all absences

When reporting the absence please include:

- The name of the absent employee
- The department (include work area or location)
- The employee's home and/or mobile phone number

Occupational Health will communicate with the individual, as well as the departmental or administrative head, to provide guidance about maintaining good health practices in the workplace.

Normal sick leave procedures captured within the [University of Waterloo Disability Management Guide](#) will be followed. Medical documentation will be required after the fifth workday absent.

If you have questions, please consult with Occupational Health for further direction.

Illness tracking

The University will collect certain information from employees and students and communicate how that information will be used, disclosed, and kept secure. Clear direction will be provided outlining why certain medical information is being collected and why it is necessary and reasonable for the University to collect, use, and disclose medical information in response to the pandemic.

Tracking protocol for individual disclosures of COVID-19

The following protocols – for student disclosure and for employee disclosure of COVID-19 cases – protect the privacy of individual health information and adhere to all applicable health legislation.

How to navigate student COVID-19 disclosure

Instruct the student to contact the Health Services' COVID-19 Support and Advice service by completing the web form found at <https://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/covid-19-testing-assessment-centre/covid-19-support-and-advice>.

Staff managing the submissions will guide the student through next steps and coordinate tracking the case and initiating Public Health contact tracing.

How to navigate employee COVID-19 disclosure

1. Record the employee's full name and updated contact information.
2. Advise the employee to remain at home in isolation and that you will forward their information to Occupational Health (OH). OH will be in touch with the employee to advise on next steps.
3. Email Occupational Health with the information you have gathered.

Important: you must not share personal health information with unapproved recipients.

In using either of the above protocols, you should not provide medical advice – please ensure that individuals know they should be seeking appropriate medical help.

You must not pass personal health information to anyone beyond the identified contacts in each protocol.

Personal health information includes **any** identifiable information about the individual or information that would tend to identify the individual.

Health Protocols for COVID-19 cases and exposure

If an employee or student tests positive for COVID-19 or has been exposed to the virus, follow the appropriate protocol found below:

- [Employee Health Protocols for COVID-19 Cases and Exposures](#)
- [Student Health Protocols for COVID-19 Cases and Exposures](#)

Confirmed case on campus

In the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case on campus:

- Supervisors are responsible for keeping a log of all employees in the workplace
- In the case of a lab confirmed positive case, the supervisor must immediately inform Occupational Health (occupationalhealth@uwaterloo.ca) extension 40538 or 46264. Occupational Health will notify Environmental Services for disinfection purposes.
- Supervisors and employees are reminded that a positive test result is a medical diagnosis, and must be treated confidentially, including not sharing this with any co-workers, and only Occupational Health and/or Region of Waterloo Public Health (ROWPH)
- The University and Occupational Health will work with ROWPH to determine next steps required
- Contact tracing will be done by Occupational Health in consultation with ROWPH and identify only those who are required to self-isolate and/or get tested. The University will take advice from appropriate public health bodies on the approach to contact tracing and communication on a case-by-case basis. While maintaining the individual's health privacy, we will act on public health unit instruction to post notices of positive COVID-19 results:
 - On our COVID-19 information website
 - On Twitter and Facebook from main UWaterloo channels
 - In the Daily Bulletin (a daily email/online publication intended for University of Waterloo audiences)
- Only those who meet Public Health's determination of a "high-risk contact" will be individually notified. Although each case is determined individually, generally, close contact means:
 - being less than 2 meters (6 feet) apart AND
 - not wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) AND
 - for longer than 15 minutes
- Anyone who is identified as a high-risk contact of a COVID-19 positive case will be asked to self-isolate for 10 days from the last known contact with the affected individual. No other individuals need to be contacted, this includes those who were in the same building, or touched the same surfaces of the affected employee

Risk assessment and controls for COVID-19 prevention

Research and Departmental COVID-19 Safety Plans

Prior to the resumption of activities, the Department Head/Chair/Director will be responsible for assessing potential COVID-19 hazards in the workplace and implementing control measures to eliminate or reduce the identified risks by completing Research and Departmental COVID-19 Safety Plans. The control measures required to reduce those hazards should follow the Hierarchy of Controls model (see below).

Each Department Head/Chair/Director is responsible to ensure that a written COVID-19 safety plan is in place for their unit. All employees are required to be trained on and acknowledge the plan, and the plan is to be

posted in the workplace. A template for Research and Departmental COVID-19 Safety Plans is available to [download](#). The following sections provide guidance for managing COVID-19 hazards.

Workplace preventative measures for COVID-19: hierarchy of hazard control

Hazard mitigation should always focus on implementing measures to eliminate or reduce the risk which, in this case, is contact with COVID-19. For this purpose, the **hierarchy of measures to control the hazard** must be considered, as outlined below and has been modified to apply to the current circumstances of COVID-19. Risk control must follow the hierarchy of controls. The most effective control is to eliminate the hazard. If this is not possible, risk must be minimized by working through the lower and less effective levels in the hierarchy. Before GPE/PPE is considered, every effort should be taken to plan out and implement the other controls in the hierarchy as much as possible. The following diagram outlines the hierarchy of controls for COVID-19.

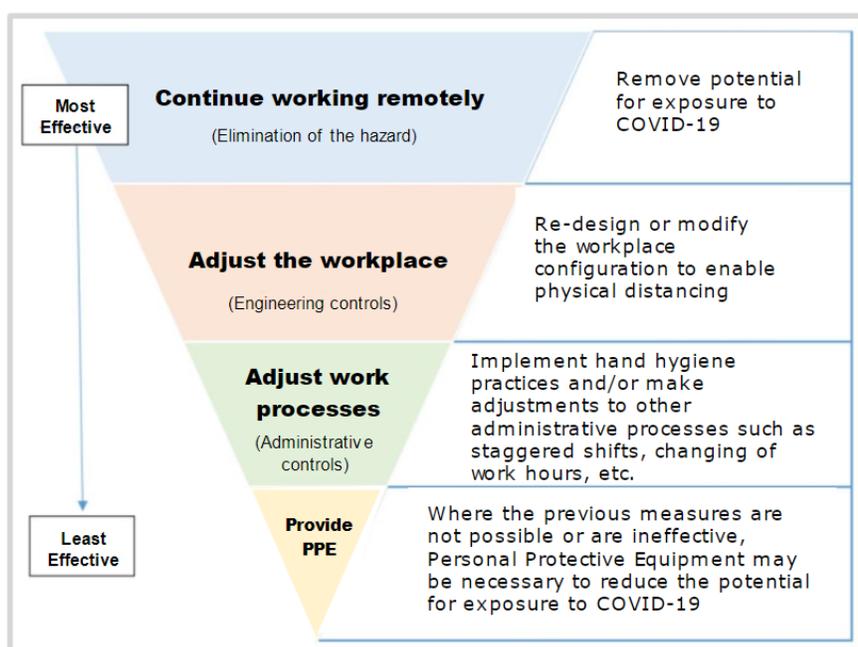


Figure 1: Hierarchy of Controls for COVID-19

Continuing to work remotely

Continuing to have employees work from home is the most effective way to remove the hazard of COVID-19 from their workplace. As the risk of COVID-19 transmission decreases and operations gradually return to normal, this method will be utilized to support physical distancing and a staged return to campus. Employees are to continue working at home until they are expressly authorized to work on campus.

Adjust the Workplace

The following three primary controls are used to minimize the spread of infectious disease:

1. Physical distancing
2. Physical barriers
3. Ventilation

Physical Distancing

Occupancy and workflow

Physical distancing of 2m is required in all areas except those designated as Instructional Space (see Instructional Space section below). Designating occupancy limits for spaces to accommodate a 12.5 m² (2 m diameter) space per person is an effective way of maintaining physical distancing and accounts for movement within the space. In all cases, there may not be less than 2 m between individuals at any time if a face covering/PPE is not worn. By implementing physical distancing, the use of face coverings while working at a stationary workstation is not required.

Scheduling controls

Option 1: Alternating scheduling. This approach limits employee staffing such that fewer people are in close proximity to each other at any one given time. Consideration must be given to ensure that employees have the tools necessary to perform their work in both on-campus and at-home locations.

Option 2: Staggering start and end times. This approach lessens congestion at the beginning and end of each workday; however, it may not decrease overall population density. Staggering schedules will make it easier to manage traffic in communal areas such as: kitchens, washrooms, and communal areas.

The University's [Working Alone guideline](#) must be followed when deploying employees in any operation or fieldwork.

Workflow controls

- Workflow in this context refers to designation of one-way travel. Designation of workflow in a space is only useful if aiseways, hallways, and spaces cannot accommodate two persons simultaneously without touching when walking normally. In all other cases, designating workflow is not recommended.

In order to manage occupancy load, consider the following factors:

- Workflow
- Equipment usage/sharing
- Equipment requirements and supplies
- Process requirements and supplies
- Creation of workstations to designate work and separate tasks
- Scheduling of specific tasks or equipment
- Non-essential tasks removed from high demand workspaces
- PPE requirements and availability

When designing workspaces for occupancy limits, ensure that physical distancing of 2 m is maintained in the work area. In addition:

- Indicate maximum occupancy on all entrances
- Remove extraneous seating from the workspace
- Designate workstations as single-person use (use tape or other markings)
- Develop workflow patterns for one-way travel
- Document and communicate all changes to all occupants/ employees
- Post signage to promote physical distancing practices

The following circumstances demonstrate instances within the workplace where physical distancing is possible.

1. Room occupancy limits: The employee can maintain a 2m distance from colleagues.
2. The operation of equipment or completion of tasks: Where 2 or more people share the same workspace or equipment, they can maintain a 2m distance while simultaneously operating equipment or completing tasks. If any equipment is shared there must be processes in place for the proper cleaning of this equipment.

In instances where physical distancing may not be possible, the supervisor is encouraged to consider alternate work schedules.

Meeting Rooms, Kitchenettes, Lunch & Break Rooms

Managers must include these common areas when assessing their space and establish occupancy limits and plans to minimize the risk of infection. Considerations include:

- Continuing to hold meetings virtually. If a meeting is needed to be held in-person, the room must be large enough for all attendees to maintain physical distancing and masks are required when attendees are not seated.
- Promote breaks or lunch outdoors or in private offices. No eating is permitted in laboratories.
- Spaces closed for use that are not suitable (eliminate the risk)
- Modifications to ensure physical distancing (e.g., seating/furniture removed to maintain 2 m distance)
- Protocols for use of the space are posted (e.g., maximum capacity limits posted, physical distancing, cleaning/disinfection procedures for use, including shared equipment such as microwaves, fridges, cutlery, water coolers, etc.).

Access and egress

Each building has designated entrances which will be open to the public. All other entrances will be for egress only. Upon entering the building, occupants are again reminded to verify that they are symptom-free before entering.

Washrooms

Washroom protocols will be posted at the washroom entrance. The maximum occupancy is limited to the number of stalls in the washroom. Where possible, paper towels should be used upon exiting the washroom, and a garbage receptacle placed near the door for disposal of paper towels.

Elevators

Elevator protocols and maximum capacity will be posted. Individuals waiting to enter the elevator must allow the exiting person to pass by before proceeding onto the elevator.

Instructional Spaces

The University considers **Instructional Space** to include:

- Classrooms
- Teaching labs
- Student computer labs (see Computer Labs below)
- Group work/study rooms – capacity limit must be posted, not to exceed the number of seats available. Study space and maximum occupancy signage is available on the [signage order form](#).
- Libraries (certain areas)
- Research labs where the instruction of graduate, undergraduate or postdoctoral fellows occurs

- In-person experiential/clinical learning settings
- Field trips and associated travel modes (e.g. buses), subject to field location restrictions
- Faculty and graduate student offices where instructional/study activity is occurring.
- **Instructional spaces do not have physical distancing or capacity limits.**
- While occupancy limits have been loosened for instructional activities, instructors should remain at least 2 metres from students when lecturing (since lecturing generally involves speaking loudly while facing the students). Instructors should encourage similar distancing when students are giving presentations
- Instructional spaces are cleaned daily. Disinfecting wipes and hand sanitizer are located in all Registrar’s Office-managed classrooms. Students and instructors are encouraged to wipe down surfaces before use.

Additional instructional space operational guidelines

- Face coverings must be worn by everyone, at all times in instructional spaces.
- If outdoor spaces are used as instructional space, face coverings are required unless 2m physical distancing can be maintained.
- Physical partner or group work, including group discussions is permitted during in-person classes.
 - If students are permitted to leave the room for partner/group work, they must be instructed to maintain 2 m physical distancing if outside of the instructional space.
- Student presentations are permitted, with students required to wear a face covering during presentations.
- Quizzes, tests, exams, and other assessment methods can be delivered by paper. No special handling arrangements need to be made.

Instructors and staff may access detailed information at: <https://uwaterloo.ca/registrar-resources-staff-and-faculty/instructors/covid-classroom-guidelines>

Computer Labs

- Consistent signs should be installed in all computer labs across campus - advising of risks, rules, and procedures. Additional signs can be used if a lab has further restrictions.
- Absolutely no eating is permitted
- Water permitted only with the use of a straw under face covering.
- Designated self-service sanitation stations should be available in each lab, consisting of hand sanitizer and wipes for surface cleaning.
- Recommend users sanitize hands when entering and exiting labs and wipe equipment prior to use.
- Computer labs may operate at full capacity. Where possible remote access will remain.
-
- Remote access will be encouraged and available via Microsoft Remote Desktop Protocol [RDP], Windows Virtual Desktop [WVD] or Secure Shell [SSH].
- Physical repairs or servicing of computers may be performed off-hours when students are not present.

Study Spaces

Study spaces will be available on campus. Public Health guidance will be utilized to determine maximum occupancy and other parameters for use of spaces for studying. Face coverings will be required in these spaces except while actively drinking – eating is not permitted in open study spaces.

Empty classrooms may be used by individual students for quiet study purposes. Physical distancing and face coverings are required, and large groups are not permitted.

Study Space signage is available on the [signage order form](#).

Dining and Eating Areas

Dining and eating areas on campus will be determined by current Public Health guidance and may change throughout the year. Proof of vaccination and identification is required to enter some dining spaces where capacity limits have been lifted.

Study/Lounge spaces have been established, where physical distancing is required, and masks may ONLY be removed while actively eating. Signage is available on the [signage order form](#).

Gatherings

On-campus activities include a broad variety of indoor and outdoor gatherings that include social gatherings, performance arts events, athletic events, land-based learning and field work, and other events such as convocation where large numbers of individuals may gather. With any of these types of gatherings resuming, key principles must be used in planning, including, but not limited to: the use of masks or face coverings while in indoor settings, physical distancing, and cleaning and disinfection. Event organizers should remind participants to screen for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure before attendance via Campus Check-In. Ill individuals (e.g., those who fail COVID-19 screening) should be reminded to avoid attending in-person gatherings and seek medical advice. The University has policies in place that clearly communicate and ensure that gatherings are managed in a way that aligns with public health rules and guidance and maintain contact lists of attendees for the purpose of contact tracing.

Approved events must follow the provincial guidelines for physical distancing and maximum number of people as determined in the Provincial [Reopening Ontario](#) plan. As event plans are developed, spaces will be evaluated for physical distancing and maximum occupancy.

An [event guideline](#) is available for student and other social gatherings.

Physical Barriers

Barriers or shields are options to consider in open-plan offices or customer service areas where staff and customers may find themselves in close proximity to one another. These barriers can provide protection during interactions in addition to simultaneously enabling clear and unobstructed lines of sight. Barrier materials must be easy to clean and sanitize. Plexiglass has been used to provide a physical barrier between people and to help capture respiratory droplets when individuals are in close contact while providing visual connection.

- It is important to note the following: COVID-19 spreads in several ways and barriers do not provide a zero-risk solution. Physical barriers, such as plexiglass, protect users from directly projected particles from another person. They, however, do not provide protection from contaminants suspended in the air.

Barriers should be installed where physical distancing cannot be maintained, such as front-line, transactional, and customer-service areas.

- Recommended areas:
 - Reception and service counters
 - Food services, dining, and retail counters/points of sale
 - Front counters in residences
 - Library circulation and help desks
- Other potential areas
 - Waiting rooms if capacity is critical and distancing cannot be maintained
 - Office and work areas if the distancing between staff cannot be maintained (minimum height 5.5ft)
 - Study spaces if six feet between spaces cannot be maintained (minimum height 5.5ft)
- Areas for other measures
 - Meeting rooms – reduce capacity; facilitate virtual meetings
 - Counselling offices – maintain minimum distancing between occupant and visitor; facilitate virtual meetings
 - Lounges, Kitchens – reduce room capacity; encourage the use of alternate spaces
 - Open workspaces, study areas – reduce room capacity, encourage use of alternate spaces, maintain virtual work until guidance on distances is modified

How do I request help?

- You can submit requests via [Plant Operations website](#).

Signage

Signage has been posted throughout the campus to help instruct and guide individuals. Signage communicates important information, including instruction on screening for COVID-19 symptoms and hand hygiene. Signage will be posted on designated building entrances, and additional signage may be ordered online for your department at no cost via the on-line order form through Retail Services' [Signage order form](#).

Ventilation - Building HVAC Systems

The University has 63 major buildings with 398 HVAC units that support a wide variety of research, teaching, and student activities. In July 2020 Plant Operations accelerated the retrofit of mechanical infrastructure. The process prioritized teaching spaces, study spaces, and dry research laboratories (including computer laboratories).

Plant Operations staff have been inspecting the HVAC units and have retrofitted building filtration systems with more efficient filtration products to meet the latest ASHRAE recommendations. All major buildings have been fitted with MERV13 filters (some with additional pre-filters) ensuring a high level of cleanliness of indoor air.

Residence buildings that are currently occupied are equipped with operable windows and building automation systems are programmed to provide 100% fresh air.

Adjust Work Processes

Hand hygiene

Hands are the most common vehicle for the transmission of microorganisms. Hand hygiene reduces the risk of transmission from person to person, environment to person, or person to environment.

Hand hygiene can be accomplished by washing using soap and running water or hand sanitizing using an alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR).

Ensure there are hand hygiene stations appropriate for the type of work being conducted, in or near the workspace. For example:

- If the work will result in dirt and debris soiling hands, a handwashing sink is required (E.g., vehicle shop, laboratories, kitchens, workshops)
- If the work will not cause soiling of hands, hand sanitizing stations are sufficient (E.g., office work).
- Hand sanitizer is available in dispensers throughout University buildings, in common areas such as main entrances and exits, elevator areas, etc. Classroom and common area dispensers are maintained by Plant Operations. Supervisors are responsible to provide hand sanitizer to front-line reception/service areas, or areas where handwashing facilities are not readily available. Supervisors can purchase hand sanitizer by contacting [Plant Operations](#).

In addition, document and communicate the following guidelines to all occupants/employees.

Frequency of hand hygiene

- Hands should be washed or sanitized upon entering and exiting any space (room to room)
- Hands must be washed or sanitized before and after specific work tasks
- Hands must be washed or sanitized before eating, after removing gloves and after performing any surface decontamination

Refer to these resources from Public Health Ontario:

- [How to Hand Wash](#) (video)
- [Hand Wash Pocket Guide](#)
- [How to Hand Rub](#) (Video)
- [Hand Rub Pocket Guide](#)

Respiratory etiquette

Infectious diseases can easily spread when an individual coughs and sneezes. Manage this potential using the following etiquette:

- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, and immediately discard the tissue in the trash.
- If a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.
- Perform hand hygiene immediately after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If you are experiencing fever, cough, runny nose, or headache, isolate yourself at home or another suitable location and follow the [University's protocol for individual disclosures of COVID-19](#).

Cleaning Protocols



High-Contact Touch Points and Classrooms

The University has adjusted its cleaning protocols to focus on the cleaning and disinfecting of high contact touch points, including classrooms, classroom equipment, door handles, elevator buttons, handrails, washroom faucets, water fountains, garbage receptacles, etc.

These common high touch contact points will be cleaned by Environmental Services staff to the current recommendations of public health.



Workspaces

Staff and faculty are responsible to clean their own equipment including workstations, keyboards, phones, office equipment, lab equipment, and other shared equipment. Protocols must be implemented by Supervisors for the cleaning of tools, equipment, and [vehicles](#) that are shared. Supervisors can purchase cleaning and disinfecting products through [Plant Operations](#). Cleaning products must be stored and labelled properly, with Safety Data Sheets readily available to users.



Cleaning protocols upon a confirmed COVID-19 case at the University

In the event of a suspected or confirmed case with potential contamination is received, the affected area must be isolated by the supervisor. If possible, note the location of affected workstations/areas at the entrance to the isolated area.

Environmental Services (and Housing Facilities in Residences) are responsible for cleaning and disinfection of the affected space, using recommended chemicals and personal protective equipment. This includes a final step using an electrostatic machine for thorough disinfection.

Provide PPE - Protective equipment

Protective equipment can come in many forms and categories. PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is designed to protect the wearer from one or more specific hazards. On the other hand, a face covering is used as a method of source control to prevent the wearer's droplets from reaching other persons.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is normally considered the last line of defense. It is a way to control hazards when other more effective options of control such as physical distancing or barriers are not available.

Determining protective equipment needs

A [Non-Medical Mask/Face Covering must be worn](#) by all employees, students, visitors, and contractors in common use areas of University buildings. This includes corridors, lobbies, washrooms, elevators, classrooms, teaching laboratories and meeting rooms. Where physical distancing is a challenge, an ASTM Level II medical mask is recommended. Layering a cloth mask over a medical/disposable mask also adds protection. See guidance provided by the [Public Health Agency of Canada](#).

Non-Medical Masks/Face coverings must be made of 2-3 layers of tightly woven material, and ideally contain a layer of filter material. Face coverings must fit snugly against the face and chin and must fully cover the nose and mouth. Exemptions for those who are unable to wear a face covering are available.

- Masks or respirators with an exhalation valve are NOT suitable face coverings. These types of masks are proven to be ineffective as a source control measure.
- Mouth shields are NOT a suitable face covering option as they do not fit snugly around the mouth, nose, and chin. Mouth shields allow infectious respiratory droplets to spread outside the mask, and do not help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Protective eyewear (in addition to a mask) is required where an employee is providing services to a person in any circumstance who is not wearing a face covering and is not separated by plexiglass or some other impermeable barrier. In specific environments (e.g., health care), the use of N95

respirators may be required. Any use of N95 respirators must be approved by the Safety Office and all users must undergo fit-testing and training.

- If other health and safety hazards exist, a further risk assessment and review of PPE is required. Contact the Safety Office.

In employees-only areas, managers will set the expectation with their teams based on physical setup and work activities. According to guidance from the Government of Ontario, while face coverings are required in workplaces, employees are not required to wear a face covering when working in an area that is **not accessible to the public if employees can maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from anyone else** while indoors.

Accessing Face Coverings and PPE

- Non-medical masks, disposable filters and medical masks are available for order via [Central Stores catalogue](#).
- Face shields and goggles are also available via the Central Stores catalogue.

Communication, Training, and Resources

The University has established a variety of information resources regarding COVID-19:

- University of Waterloo Return to Campus website: <https://uwaterloo.ca/coronavirus/return>
- Memos will be distributed to campus community members updating with respect to changes in protocols, etc.
- [Welcome Back Waterloo Guide](#)
- Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP): [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#)
Our Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) through Homewood Health provides eligible employees (and their eligible spouse and/or dependent children) with private and confidential support on a 365/24/7 basis both in Canada and internationally. Individuals can access the support through phone (1-800-663-1182 in Canada) or through Homeweb.ca.

Evaluation and Monitoring

Supervisors are responsible to incorporate COVID-19 hazard controls into their regular monthly safety inspections to evaluate the effectiveness of COVID-19 control measures and adjusted work processes. If control measures are found to be ineffective or non-compliance is identified, additional adjustments or corrective measures are to be implemented as necessary.

Supervisors are responsible to continue to monitor the workspace for potential hazards and take action to address any concerns brought forward by employees.

Resources

The following external resources can be referenced for further information on COVID-19:

[Government of Canada](#)

[Ontario Ministry of Health](#)

[Public Health Ontario](#)

[Ontario Health and Safety Association Guidance Documents for Workplaces](#)

[Ontario Resources to Prevent COVID-19 in the Workplace](#)

[UW Research and Departmental COVID-19 Safety Plan Template](#)

[UW COVID-19 Signage Guide](#)

[UW COVID-19 Supplies - Plant Operations](#)

[UW - Masks/Face Coverings](#)

[UW Research - COVID-19 Information](#)

[Campus Check-In](#)

[WatSAFE App](#)