



Western
University
OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Returning to Campus



Guide for Returning to Campus

Table of Contents

■ GUIDING PRINCIPLES	2
● Workplace Expectations & Guidelines.....	2
● Symptom Monitoring Requirement	2
● Level of Illness and Requirements to Return to Work and/or Campus.....	3
● Phased Staffing	4
● Staffing Options	4
◆ Remote Work.....	4
◆ Alternating Days/Week	4
◆ Staggered Reporting/Departing	4
● Personal Safety Practices.....	5
◆ Cloth Face Coverings.....	5
◆ Face Masks	5
● Use and Care of Face Coverings.....	6
◆ Putting on the Face Covering/Disposable Mask.....	6
◆ Taking Off the Face Covering/Disposable Mask.....	6
◆ Care, Storage and Laundering	6
● Social Distancing	6
● Hand and Respiratory Hygiene	7
◆ Soap and Water.....	7
◆ Alcohol Based Hand Sanitizer/Rub (ABHS)	7
◆ Gloves	7
◆ Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene	7
◆ Goggles/Face Shields	7
● Cleaning/Disinfection	7
● Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios.....	8
◆ Working in Office Environments.....	8
◆ Restrooms	9
◆ Elevators.....	9
◆ Meetings.....	9
◆ Meals.....	9
◆ Laboratory Work.....	9
◆ Mental and Emotional Wellbeing	9
● Building Access	10
◆ Signage and Posters.....	10

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

WesternU's policies and protocols for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic will be rooted in safety for our employees, students, health care providers, and for the public we interact with and serve.

The primary goals for WesternU's response to the COVID-19 pandemic are to protect public health, support patient care and clinical staff at WesternU Health, and continue the institution's vital missions of education and research.

WesternU's COVID-19 Response Plan (Plan) is aligned and consistent with local public health officer orders, the State's of California and Oregon Roadmaps for Reopening, and the CDC's COVID-19 Guidelines. WesternU's Plan also follow recommendations from the WesternU Coronavirus Response Team (CRT), and the Health Monitoring Team.

As we have all learned, our knowledge and understanding of COVID-19 continue to evolve, therefore, the university's policies and plans will be updated as needed.

Workplace Expectations & Guidelines

Everyone who is on campus must always comply with social distancing and face covering mandates.

All staff are expected to fully comply with the policies, protocols and guidelines as outlined in this document. Failure to do so may result in corrective action.

Symptom Monitoring Requirement

Staff who have been instructed to return to the workplace must complete a symptom's monitoring check using the [Qualtrics App](#) or this QR Code every day before reporting to work. You must be free of ANY symptoms potentially related to COVID-19. Currently, these symptoms include one or more of the following:



- **Fever**
- **Cough (recent onset)**
- **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Runny nose or new sinus congestion
- Chills
- Muscle pain, body aches
- Fatigue
- New GI symptoms, e.g., diarrhea, nausea, vomiting

**If you are experiencing any of the above symptoms,
STAY HOME!
DO NOT COME TO CAMPUS!**

According to the CDC, individuals with certain conditions may have a higher risk for COVID-19 infection. Those conditions may include, but are not limited to:

- Older adults (aged 65 years and older)
- Chronic lung disease
- Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
- Serious heart conditions, e.g., heart failure, coronary heart disease
- Diabetes
- Chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis
- Severe obesity
- Being immunocompromised

Employees who have been instructed to return to work on-site and have concerns about doing so due to a medical condition that places them in a higher risk group, those who are pregnant, or those who wish to seek ADA Reasonable Accommodations related to returning to campus should contact the Office of Human Resources.

Level of Illness and Requirements to Return to Work and/or Campus

Mild Illness. Individuals who had any of the various signs and symptoms of COVID 19 (e.g., fever, cough, sore throat, headache) without shortness of breath or abnormal chest x-ray.

*Employees returning to work/campus do not require a healthcare provider's note.

Moderate Illness. Individuals who had evidence of lower respiratory disease by clinical assessment or imaging and an oxygen saturation of (SpO₂) $\geq 94\%$ on room air at sea level.

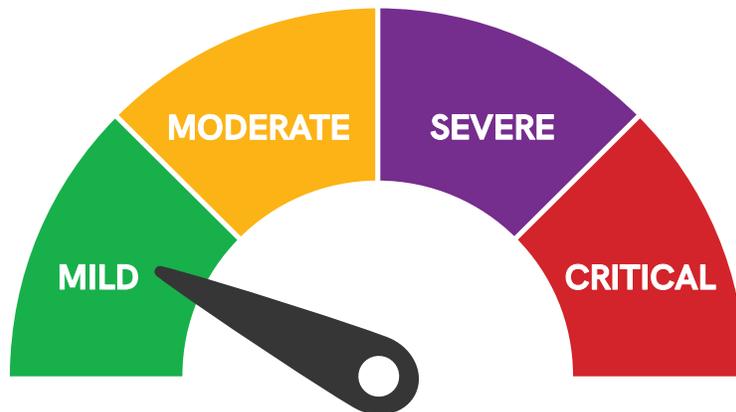
*Employees returning to work do not require a healthcare provider's note.

Severe Illness. Individuals who had increased respiratory rate of >30 breaths per minute, SpO₂ $<94\%$ on room air at sea level, or lung infiltrates $>50\%$ and may have required in-patient hospitalization.

*Employees returning to work *must* have a healthcare provider note.

Critical Illness. Individuals who had respiratory failure, septic shock, and/or multiple organ dysfunction, likely ICU admission.

*Employees returning to work *must* have a healthcare provider note.



Phased Staffing

WesternU recognizes the need to minimize the number of people on campus (density) to meet social distancing requirements. WesternU will use a coordinated phased approach for returning staff to campus. This is to ensure that the availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) and clinical testing capabilities for COVID-19 are sufficient to meet what will likely be an increasing demand. No Operating Unit or College should increase staffing levels beyond current needs to support critical on-site operations without approval from University Administration. Support units that can continue to effectively work remotely will likely do so until local public health restrictions are significantly eased. Once approval to expand on-site staffing in certain areas have been granted by local authorities, all employees are expected to follow the policies and protocols detailed in this guide for returning to work on campus.

Expanding on campus staffing will be tightly coordinated and controlled to mitigate potential risks of viral transmission to others, to ensure the safety of all employees, and the communities we serve.

As staffing on campus increases and operations expand, Administration will closely monitor and assess the potential spread of the virus and determine if existing policies and procedures require revising. Clinical testing will be a critical part of assessing the impact of increased staffing. If localized outbreaks emerge, tighter restrictions and reduced staffing on campus may need to be reactivated. Please visit [Return to Campus](#) for the most up to date information.

Staffing Options

There are several options that Operating Units and Colleges can use to maintain the required social distancing measures and reduce population density within their buildings and workspaces. However, there are some positions that cannot be performed through remote work options and the employee(s) must report to campus in order to complete those job tasks, e.g., Campus Security, Facilities, EH&S.

Remote Work. Those who can work remotely to fulfill some, or all their work responsibilities may continue to do so to reduce the number of individuals on campus and the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus. The ability to work remotely is at the discretion and approval of the immediate Supervisor

Alternating Days/Week. In order to limit the number of individuals and interactions among those on campus, Operating Units and Colleges should schedule partial staffing on alternating days or work weeks. Such schedules will help enable social distancing, especially in areas with large common/shared workspaces.

Staggered Reporting/Departing. The beginning and end of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting and departure times by at least 30 minutes will reduce traffic in common areas to meet social distancing requirements.

Personal Safety Practices

Masks and cloth face coverings are not a substitute for social distancing due to the fact that COVID-19 can start to shed two days before symptoms begin to appear and for up to 14 days after they do, but with an average of 5-6 days after exposure occurs. This means you could be exposed to the virus if you are not wearing appropriate face coverings/masks. See details regarding mask type and use below.

Cloth Face Coverings. Cloth face coverings must be worn by all non-healthcare staff on campus, especially when in the presence of others and in settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., common workspaces, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Appropriate use of face coverings is critical in minimizing risks to yourself and others near you. They should also be washed daily. WesternU will provide one (1) cloth face covering to every employee. Additional cloth face coverings will be available for sale through the WesternU bookstore.

Face Masks. Disposable face masks may only be worn for one day and then must be placed in the trash. The medical grade masks are to be used only by those staff in patient care delivery sites or in research lab areas. Disposable face masks will be provided by the University, as needed.

Type and Intended Use of Face Coverings/Masks				
Type	Cloth Face Covering 	Disposable Mask 	Medical-Grade Surgical Mask 	N95 Respirator 
Description	Home-made or commercially manufactured face coverings that are washable and help contain wearer's respiratory emissions	Commercially manufactured masks that help contain wearer's respiratory emissions	FDA-approved masks to protect the wearer from large droplets and splashes; helps contains wearer's respiratory emissions	Provide effective respiratory protection from airborne particles and aerosols; helps contain wearer's respiratory emissions
Intended Use	Required for campus community use in non-healthcare settings (e.g., office spaces, general work settings, shops, community areas where 6' social distancing cannot be consistently maintained). Must be replaced daily. Not required when working alone in an office.		These masks are reserved for staff in healthcare delivery settings and other approved areas with task-specific hazards determined by EH&S.	

Use and care of face coverings

Putting on the face covering/disposable mask

- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to handling the face covering/disposable mask.
- Ensure the face-covering/disposable mask fits over the nose and under the chin.
- Situate the face-covering/disposable mask properly with nose wire snug against the nose (where applicable).
- Tie straps on the crown of the head and behind the neck or loop around the ears.
- Throughout the process, avoid touching the front of the face covering/disposable mask.

Taking off the face covering/disposable mask

Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth when removing the face covering/disposable mask.

- Loop your finger into the strap and pull the strap away from the ear or untie the straps. Dispose or store masks as instructed.
- Wash hands immediately after removing.

Care, storage, and laundering

- Keep face coverings/disposable mask stored in a paper bag when not in use.
- Cloth face coverings may not be used more than one day at a time and must be washed after use. Cloth face coverings should be properly laundered with regular clothing detergent before first use, and after each shift. Cloth face coverings should be replaced immediately if soiled, damaged (e.g. ripped, punctured) or visibly contaminated.
- Disposable/medical masks must not be used for more than one day and should be placed in the trash at the end of the shift or if it is soiled, damaged (e.g., broken tie, stretched ear loops, torn or punctured material) or visibly contaminated.



Social Distancing

Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools we can use to lessen the risk of being exposed to COVID-19 virus and slowing its spread. Since people can spread the virus 2-days before they know they are sick, it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms. Social distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk of getting very sick. Staff who work on-campus must wear some form of face covering/mask and also follow these social distancing practices:

- Always stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people
- Do not gather in groups if social distancing cannot be maintained
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid large gatherings, e.g., more than 10 people



Hand and Respiratory Hygiene

Performing hand hygiene often is considered the best practice for minimizing the spread of infection.

Soap and Water. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching your face, and before preparing food and eating.

Alcohol Based Hand Sanitizer/Rub (ABHS). If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and wash your hands after touching your face or hair. After 5 times of use without washing hands in between, hand sanitizers become ineffective and you must perform hand washing for at least 20 seconds.

Gloves. Staff working in healthcare delivery settings and others in high-risk areas should use gloves as part of their PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). Per the CDC, gloves are not necessary for general use and do not replace good hand hygiene. Gloves should be discarded in the regular trash bin.

Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene. If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Then throw used tissues in the trash. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Goggles/Face Shields. Staff do not need to wear goggles or face shields as part of general activity on campus. Good hand hygiene and avoiding touching your face are generally sufficient for non-healthcare environments. However, if your job requires frequent contact with the public, goggles, or a face shield, in addition to a face covering, should also be worn.

Cleaning/Disinfection

Housekeeping will clean office and workspaces based on CDC guidelines for disinfection. Facilities will also maintain hand-sanitizer stations located throughout all buildings on campus. Staff should also wipe down commonly used surfaces before and after use with products provided by the university. This includes any shared-space location or equipment (e.g., copiers, A/V equipment, microwaves, coffee makers, desks and tables, light switches, doorknobs, etc.).

Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios

During your time on-site, you are encouraged to communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed by email, telephone, or other available technology rather than face-to-face. You can also use Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

Working in Office Environments

If you work in an open environment, be sure to maintain at least 6 feet distance from co-workers. If possible, have at least one workspace separating you from another co-worker. You should always wear a face covering while in a shared workspace/room/office.

Operating Units should work with Facilities to correctly assess open work environments and meeting rooms to safely institute measures to physically separate and increase distance between employees, other coworkers, and visitors. Facilities will assist with such things as:

- Placing visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, or signs to indicate where people should stand while waiting in line.
- Placing one-way directional signage for large open workspaces with moving through the space multiple through-ways to increase distance between employees
- Designating specific stairways for up or down traffic if building space allows.

If you work in an office that is shared with another employee, no more than one person should be in the same office unless the required 6 feet of distance can be consistently maintained. If more than one person is in a room, face coverings should always be worn. A face covering is not required if you are working alone in a confined office space (does not include partitioned work areas in a large open environment). Face coverings should be worn by any staff in a reception/receiving/common area. Face coverings should be used when inside any WesternU facility where others are present, including walking in narrow hallways where others travel and in break rooms, conference rooms and other meeting locations.



Restrooms. Use of restrooms should be limited based on size to ensure at least 6 feet distance between individuals. Stalls will be closed to ensure distance is maintained. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after using the toilet to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

Elevators. No more than two persons may enter an elevator at a time, so please use the stairs whenever possible. If you are using the elevator, wear your face covering and avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers, if possible, and stand in opposite corners. Wash your hands or use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater than 60% alcohol upon departing the elevator.

Meeting. Convening in groups increases the risk of viral transmission. Where feasible, meetings should be held in whole or part using Zoom, Microsoft Teams, telephone, etc.).

In person meetings are limited to the restrictions of local, state, and federal orders. Each conference room has signage indicating the maximum number of people allowed in the room. All attendees should wear a face covering while sharing space in a common room and perform hand hygiene prior to entering the room.

Meals. Before and after eating, you should wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

If dining on campus, you should wear your face covering until you are ready to eat and then replace it afterward. All designated lunch areas meet requirements to allow at least 6 feet of distance between each person and seating has been marked off in each designated area. Employees and students are asked to not remove any furniture or tapes that block off the seating. Staff are encouraged to take food back to their office area or eat outside if this is reasonable for your situation.

If you are eating in your work environment (break room, office, etc.), maintain 6 feet distance between you and others. Individuals should not sit facing one another. Only remove your face covering in order to eat, then put it back on. A set number of chairs and tables are in each break room to support social distancing practices between employees. Staff are asked to not bring in more chairs or tables.

Wipe all surfaces, including table, refrigerator handle, coffee machine, etc. after using in common areas with sanitizing wipes.

Laboratory Work. Specific criteria have been developed for faculty and staff working in research laboratory environments. See Reopening Research Laboratories ([Outline for Reopening Research](#) for details).

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to offer emotional support during this stressful period. Telephonic or video counseling is available, and you can access this service using most smartphones, tablets, and computers with a camera. For additional information please visit [OPTUM](#) web site. On the window for **Members: Access Anonymously** (as shown below), enter the Access Code: “westernu” and click “go”, or call OPTUM at 800-234-5465.

Building Access

Entry to buildings will be regulated and monitored. Your WesternU ID badge is required for entry to all buildings, and you are asked to not hold or prop open exterior doors for any other person.

In collaboration with Campus Security, Operating Units and Colleges should identify building access points and coordinate arrival and departure times of staff to reduce congestion during typical “rush hours” of the business day.

Staff arrival and departures should be scheduled in 30-minute increments to reduce personal interactions at building access points, hallways, stairs/elevators, etc. Please note that for non-exempt staff, all time spent in the pre-entry process (i.e. screenings, etc.) should be compensated. Accordingly, Supervisors may need to be flexible in terms of start and end times for non-exempt staff, while also being mindful of ensuring that employees take their requisite breaks and mealtimes.

Once you have been instructed to return to campus for work, you should report to work or depart work through the designated building access points and at the designated time to limit the number of people entering and exiting buildings at any one time.

Visitors, trainees, and guests are not allowed on campus during this time without prior approval or authorization. Any animals on campus are subject to our [Service-Emotional Support Animals on Campus Policy](#). Violation of these guidelines may result in the immediate revocation of building access privileges, as well as corrective action.

Signage and Posters

Building occupants are expected to follow signage on face coverings, social distancing, traffic flow through building entrances, exits, elevator usage, restrooms, lunchrooms, and similar common use areas.



QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

If you have an urgent safety concern or issue while on campus that requires immediate action, report it as soon as possible to your supervisor, campus security, or Environmental Health & Safety – ehs@westernu.edu.

Reports of non-compliance with these guidelines can be made 24/7 through the [LiveSafe app](#) by clicking **Report Incident** or by emailing Environmental Health & Safety and ehs@westernu.edu.

REPORTS CAN BE MADE ANONYMOUSLY USING THE LIVESAFE APP:

General questions or concerns should be directed to the Employee Relations Demobilization Workgroup at erdmtfw@westernu.edu or Human Resources at HR@westernu.edu



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