



Northwestern
University

Approving University Official: Senior Vice President for Business and Finance; Provost; Vice President for Research; Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer; Senior Associate Vice President and Chief Risk and Compliance Officer

Responsible Office: Risk, Internal Audit, and Compliance Office

Effective date: June 1, 2020

Next review date: December 31, 2020

COVID-19 RETURN TO CAMPUS POLICY

Purpose

This policy is intended to mitigate the risks of spread of COVID-19 as staff, faculty, and certain students continue to return to work on campus. All staff and faculty are expected to follow and model compliance with this policy in order to sustain a healthy campus while the community recovers from a global pandemic. It is important that we all diligently adhere to these health precautions.

This policy is subject to frequent change with the introduction of additional public health guidelines from local, state, and federal authorities. Any policy amendments or updates will be communicated immediately through the [University Policies website](#) and will take effect as of the date and time of publication. Visit Northwestern's [Coronavirus/COVID-19 website](#) for the latest information about the University's response to COVID-19, including frequently asked questions on work-related topics. It is expected that this policy, or subsequent versions of it, will be in force through at least the Fall Quarter 2020 but may be modified at any time.

This policy aligns with the [Return to Campus Principles](#) outlined to the campus community.

Audience

This policy applies to all staff and faculty who return to work physically on our campuses or are planning to do so. This policy also applies to graduate and undergraduate students upon their return to campus to work or research in laboratories. Separate policy guidance will be issued for students as they return to campus for academic coursework. The University expects staff who currently work remotely to familiarize themselves with, and abide by, the terms of this policy during any subsequent visit or an eventual return to campus.

Definitions

The definitions contained herein have been specifically developed to address a phased return of faculty, staff, and certain students to Northwestern campuses as a result of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. As this policy is tied directly to a specific set of conditions, in the event of inconsistency between the terms and/or definitions of any institutional policy and this policy, the terms and definitions of this policy shall prevail in connection with any COVID-19 return to campus matters.

Essential On-site Staff ("EOS"): positions that are deemed **essential to be physically present at one or more locations within the perimeters of the University's campuses or physically present, on a continuous or intermittent basis, at other University owned or leased facilities** during a campus emergency or crisis, including a closure or a partial or total shift to virtual operations, pursuant to the policy on [Employees in Essential Functions and Positions](#). Essential On-site Staff preserve and protect the security, safety, and integrity of members of the community, the physical infrastructure, and the integrity

of the University Critical Infrastructure. Essential On-site Staff include staff who are required to work in any location designated as an Emergency Operations Center.

University Critical Infrastructure (“UCI”): systems and assets, whether of a physical or digital nature, that ensure the viability and continuity of the University’s operations.

Critical Staff (“CS”): individuals in positions other than those of Essential On-site Staff, who by reason of subject matter expertise or functional responsibilities, **are required to be physically present to complete, support, and/or oversee completion of activities that support important, but not essential**, campus operations. Critical Staff may be expected to be on-site on an intermittent basis to provide onsite support for campus facilities, research, or core financial and human resources operations.

Non-Remote Staff (“NRS”): individuals in positions other than EOS whose core duties require in-person interaction or service delivery at University facilities, and which cannot be carried out (in whole or in substantial part) through remote or virtual means.

All Other Staff and Faculty (“AOSF”): individuals other than EOS, CS, or NRS, who can perform their duties in whole or in substantial part (i.e., at least 75% of core duties) through remote or virtual means. AOSF include positions at all pay grades and levels of authority. As such, these may include, without limitation, individual contributors, temporary or contingent workers, supervisors, managers, directors, faculty, administrators, and executives.

Contractor(s): person(s) or company(ies) that are not University employees who undertake(s) the provision of materials, labor, or services pursuant to a purchase order or service agreement with the University. Depending upon the nature of the goods or services they provide, Contractor(s) may be classified by the University’s Chief Risk and Compliance Officer or the relevant Vice President (or their designee) as EOS, CS, NRS, or AOSF for purposes of the application of this policy.

Policy Implementation

The following conditions shall apply to all staff, faculty, and students instructed or permitted to return to campus during the phased return to campus and until otherwise deemed not applicable by the Provost and the Senior Vice President for Business and Finance:

Reporting to Campus

- Staff and faculty may return physically to campus only if:
 - They meet the criteria outlined in the applicable period of the University’s phased return to campus plan; and
 - They are specifically instructed or permitted to return to campus, on a continuous or intermittent basis, by their school or unit leadership.
- School and unit leadership are expected to monitor their faculty and staff who return to campus and ensure compliance with the phased return plan.
- As a condition of returning to campus, all staff, faculty, and students returning to campus must complete the mandatory COVID-19 online training (available through [myHR Learn](#)).
- Staff and faculty may be required to return to remote work at any time and are required to cooperate if directed to do so. In any such situations, unit and school leadership will take appropriate measures to ensure on-going participation of such staff and faculty in their core professional and teaching activities, respectively.

General Health and Hygiene Rules

- All staff and faculty shall refrain from visiting campus or University facilities whenever they are sick or have symptoms of respiratory illness (see below).
- When on campus and in the presence of others, staff and faculty must wear a face mask or face covering. All faculty and staff must wear masks when in elevators, common rooms, hallways, or other shared spaces.
- Staff and faculty must follow these [health guidelines](#) as part of the phased return to campus:
 - Monitor temperature and health regularly at home and complete a daily symptom check form (via mobile application or manual form) before coming to campus. If experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 or other respiratory illness, do not report to work in person until such symptoms are no longer present and as directed by CDC guidance. Additional Northwestern guidance can be found [here](#).
 - Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds, particularly after coming into contact with high-touch surfaces, such as doorknobs, handrails, and commonly used equipment.
 - Cough/sneeze into sleeves, preferably into the elbow. When using a tissue, discard it properly and clean/sanitize hands immediately.
 - Avoid touching faces, particularly eyes, nose, and mouth, with hands to prevent infection.
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in personal workspaces.
 - Keep desk work surfaces clean of paper and other materials every night, to allow for proper cleaning.

COVID-19 Specific Health Reporting Requirements

- All staff and faculty are required to report the following using the University’s online reporting [portal](#):
 - Any positive tests for COVID-19, whether obtained through Northwestern onsite testing or elsewhere
 - Voluntary self-isolation due to a suspected exposure to COVID-19, or the presence of symptoms of respiratory illness
 - Additional information about reporting can be found at <https://www.northwestern.edu/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/health/health-monitoring/index.html>
- Current testing protocols applicable to faculty and staff will be posted on the COVID-19 website [here](#). [If diagnosed with COVID-19](#), a faculty or staff member must provide notification immediately by filing an [online report](#) or by contacting the University’s [Director of Environmental Health and Safety](#). Staff should then contact their manager and the Office of Human Resources to request leave. Faculty should contact their dean or department chair.
- In the event of a positive or suspected COVID-19 diagnosis, staff and faculty are required to cooperate fully with the University’s [self-isolation](#), [contact tracing](#), and notification protocols, in alignment with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH).
- Staff and faculty health information reported pursuant to this policy will be shared only with those who need to know to assist with contact tracing requirements.

Social Distancing Rules

- Staff and faculty must maintain at least 6 feet of [social distance](#) from others wherever possible.
- All managers and supervisors must continue to develop and refine plans for facilitating and implementing the social distancing of staff and faculty, utilizing [resources and guidance](#) provided by the University.
- Managers, supervisors, staff, and faculty are required to follow any capacity and space restrictions outlined by the [Return to Campus Workgroup or Subgroups](#).
- Staff and faculty are required to follow any signage or instruction regarding the use of common spaces, hallways, or pathways through campus.
- Staff and faculty are expected to report locations or examples of social distancing congestion or near misses to assist with identifying potential problem areas.
- Additional guidance can be found at <https://www.northwestern.edu/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/campus-return/guidelines/social-physical-distancing/index.html>

Personal Illness

- Staff and faculty may not report or return to campus while they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 (or other respiratory illnesses), such as cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, muscle pain or body aches, headache, or chills. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention maintain a current list of symptoms associated with COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.
- Staff or faculty who experience an onset of symptoms while at work must leave campus immediately. Staff should contact their manager and the Office of Human Resources to request leave. Faculty should contact their dean or department chair.
- Employees who are unable to work due to personal illness should use available sick time. If an employee's available sick time has already been exhausted, they should contact a Benefits Counselor at benefits@northwestern.edu to discuss available leave options.

Remote Work

- Remote work will continue in some units through the Fall Quarter 2020. Individuals units will be creating their return to work plans based on department/unit operational needs.
- The University has created the Alternative Work Arrangements Policy which will govern individual arrangements that cannot be determined at the School or Unit Level. <https://www.northwestern.edu/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/campus-return/prepare/alternative-work-arrangements.html>
- Commuting to campus is the responsibility of employees. Employees not wishing to utilize public transit may evaluate other mechanisms to travel to campus, such as driving and parking, or utilizing ride-share services.

Travel

- Current travel expectations can be found [here](#).
- The University does not regulate the personal travel of staff and faculty, but faculty and staff should educate themselves about and follow government requirements regarding travel where applicable.

Meetings, Events, and Visitors

- Meetings should continue to take place in a virtual setting wherever possible.
- No in-person meetings should take place unless 6 feet of distance can be maintained.
- Additional information on meetings and events can be found [here](#).
- Expectations regarding visitors to campus are outlined [here](#).
- Faculty or staff bringing Contractors to work on campus are required share this policy with such Contractors. As a condition for continuous or intermittent access to University campuses or facilities, Contractors must have their own COVID-19 risk mitigation policies or procedures. Such policies and procedures must be provided to, and receive approval from, Northwestern Procurement and Payment Services prior to their phased return to campus for the delivery of goods and/or services. Contractors who do not have their own COVID-19 risk mitigation policies and procedures must go through mandatory training provided by the University and certify completion.

Staff and faculty knowingly violating any of the requirements of this policy may be removed from campus and required to work remotely and be subject to discipline as may be appropriate. In such cases, building access by their Wildcard may be restricted or suspended.

Related Information

Return to Campus Responsibilities: <https://www.northwestern.edu/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/campus-return/policy/core-responsibilities.html>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/>

Northwestern Coronavirus/COVID-19 Updates: <https://www.northwestern.edu/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/>

Community expectations: <https://www.northwestern.edu/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/campus-return/expectations/index.html>

Contacts

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[TBD](#)