



PREPARED BY

**The Workforce  
& Facilities Committees**

JULY 2020



# Guiding Principles

The University of Memphis guidelines and protocols for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic will be rooted in safety for our employees,\* students and for the greater Memphis community while we continue the institution’s vital mission of education, research and service. Protecting the health of the University of Memphis community will require a long-term effort and commitment, cooperation, teamwork, understanding and flexibility - values that our University community has shown in a multitude of ways in recent months.

As knowledge and understanding of the COVID-19 virus continues to evolve, the University is committed to doing its part to reduce community spread. Although 100% safety can never be ensured, the University is taking necessary measures to maintain a safe environment consistent with guidance from federal, state and local authorities. This Return to Campus Plan is just one of many measures being implemented to meet that commitment.

## THE UNIVERSITY’S PLANS FOR CONTINUING OPERATIONS AND INCREASING THE PRESENCE OF EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS WILL BE GUIDED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

The intentional effort by all employees to exercise both personal and community responsibility and create a culture that sustains a healthy and safe on-campus environment.

Existing and future federal, state and local restrictions and recommendations.

Contact tracing, case management protocols and isolation capabilities.

A commitment to exercising appropriate financial stewardship of public dollars.

The number and rate of COVID-19 cases on campus.

Alignment with the University’s strategic framework that the escalation of on-campus activities will support primary mission of objectives of the institution.

\*Any reference to “employees” throughout this document includes faculty, staff, adjuncts/part-time faculty, temporary employees, graduate assistants, student employees and college work-study workers.

# Workplace Expectations and Guidelines

## SYMPTOM MONITORING

Employees are required to conduct symptom monitoring and check their temperature every day before reporting to work. Symptom monitoring currently includes the following:

- **Fever or chills (repeated shaking with chills)**
- **Cough**
- **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
- **Fatigue**
- **Muscle or body aches**
- **Headache**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Sore throat**
- **Congestion or runny nose**
- **GI symptoms (nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea)**



Anyone experiencing a temperature of 100.4 degrees (F) or higher or who has any of the above symptoms must stay home and NOT report to work. Employees should immediately contact their health care providers and then notify their supervisors of the needed absence. Supervisors of faculty and staff employees should notify Human Resources at **901.678.3573** between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. or at [hrrservicecenter@memphis.edu](mailto:hrrservicecenter@memphis.edu) outside regular working hours for further instructions. For student employees, supervisors should contact the Student Health Center at **901.443.1397** or **901.443.6438**.



### SELF-REPORTING

Employees who test positive for COVID-19, are being tested due to symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, or who have had close contact with an individual confirmed to have COVID-19 must NOT report to work and must immediately notify Human Resources. Upon notification to the University, self-reporting employees will receive further information about quarantine and clearances required for return to work.

### TRAINING

Prior to returning to campus, all employees are required to complete specific online trainings designed to create awareness on how to sanitize shared spaces as well as following appropriate protocols while on campus. These online trainings will be available through Learning Curve and/or LinkedIn Learning.

### FACE MASKS/COVERINGS

All employees must wear face masks/coverings (disposable or reusable cloth masks) while on campus in public settings (common workspaces, public spaces, hallways, stairwells, elevators, meeting rooms, classrooms, breakrooms, restrooms, etc.). Faculty who are delivering on-campus instruction may remove their face mask/covering to teach, provided they are located within a delineated teaching area that is no less than 10 feet from students. If social/physical distancing is possible, individuals working in private offices or laboratory environments that do not otherwise require face masks/coverings may remove their face masks/coverings while in such space.

Employees may bring their own masks/face coverings or use University provided masks/face coverings. Two reusable cloth face masks/coverings per employee will be provided by the University. Cloth face mask/covering must only be worn for one day at a time and must be properly laundered before use again. Disposable masks may only be worn for one day and then must be placed in the trash. For more information about wearing, making and maintenance of cloth face coverings, visit the [CDC website](#).

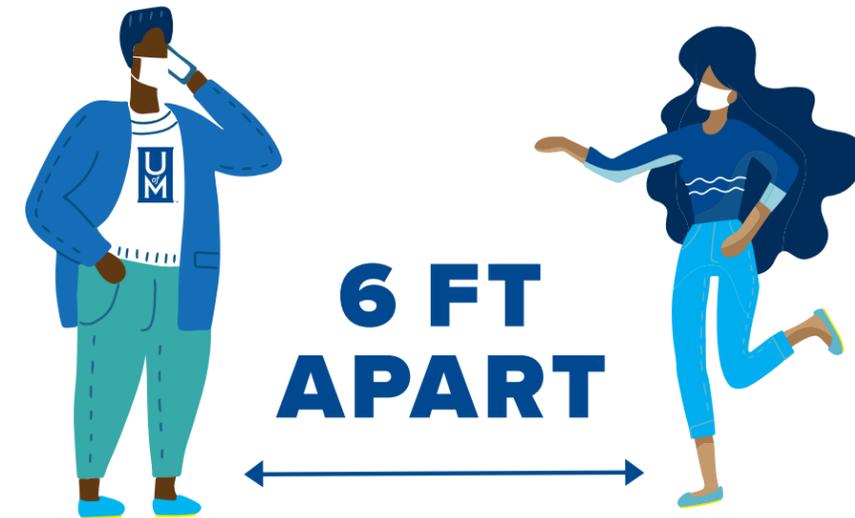
### TRAVEL

No out-of-state travel is permitted. In-state vehicle travel exceptions can be directed to the Office of the Provost (for faculty members) and the Office of Business & Finance (for staff members).

*Employees who have a medical condition that prevents them from wearing a face mask/covering should contact Human Resources at 901.678.3573 or [hrservicecenter@memphis.edu](mailto:hrservicecenter@memphis.edu).*

### SOCIAL/PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Maintaining space of at least six feet (about two arms' length) between individuals is one of the best tools to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus, and it is required of everyone while on University premises, including outdoor campus spaces. Social/physical distancing is important for everyone, but especially to help protect people who are at higher (vulnerable) risk of contracting COVID-19. Detailed information about the office and classroom environment will be covered below. The following are some general guidelines related to social/physical distancing.



**Meetings:** Employees should communicate with colleagues and supervisors by email, instant message, telephone or other available technology rather than face-to-face. In-person meetings should only take place if necessary, and as approved by department heads, provided proper protocols (distancing of six feet apart and wearing of face masks/coverings) are followed. Phone/video conferencing should remain the primary mode for meetings whenever possible.

**Groups/Gatherings:** Gatherings of individuals for non-work-related meetings in a manner that makes social distancing difficult must occur only in compliance with federal, state and local requirements. Groups/gatherings should never exceed 50% of a room's capacity, assuming individuals can still maintain six feet of separation for social/physical distancing requirements.

**Elevators:** Employees should use the stairs whenever possible given that elevator capacities may be challenging due to their

size. No more than one person may enter an elevator unless it is larger than six feet. For elevators larger than six feet, multiple persons may ride at the same time, as long as proper social/physical distancing guidelines are maintained. Riders should anticipate having to wait, and whenever possible, should allow those with critical and accessibility needs priority use of the elevators. While using the elevator, face masks/covering must be used and touching the elevator buttons with exposed hands/fingers should be avoided whenever possible. Upon departing the elevator, hands should be washed with soap and water or by using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl.

**Restrooms:** Restroom occupancy should be limited based on size to ensure at least six feet of distance between individuals. Hands must be thoroughly washed before leaving the restroom to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.



## PERSONAL SAFETY PRACTICES

**Handwashing and Sanitizing:** Employees must wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after being in a public place, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing or touching their face. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol. All surfaces of the hands should be rubbed together until they feel dry. Individuals should avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth, and should wash their hands after touching their face.

**Gloves:** Health care workers, childcare workers and those deemed in high-risk areas should use gloves as part of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). Gloves are not necessary for general use and do not replace good hand hygiene such as hand washing.

**Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene:** If employees are in a private setting and do not have on their face mask/covering, they should always cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and then throw used tissues in the trash. They must immediately wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer as noted above.

## Return to Campus

### PHASED RETURN AND STAFFING ALTERNATIVES

The University will employ a phased return to on-campus work approach informed by the latest guidance from federal, state and local officials and public health authorities. At each phase, new populations may be cleared to return to campus and campus buildings may be cleared for expanded utilization. These efforts will be tightly controlled and coordinated to mitigate potential risks and ensure the safety of our campus community.

Employees returning to campus must comply with all workplace expectations and guidelines, and may only return to campus if they are specifically instructed to return to campus, on a continuous or intermittent basis, by their supervisor or department/division leadership.

### THE UNIVERSITY ANTICIPATES FOUR PHASES ENDING WITH THE INITIATION OF THE FALL 2020 SEMESTER. IN GENERAL TERMS, THE FOUR PHASES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

#### **Phase 1 Essential Staff**

Staff deemed essential to be physically present on campus, on a continuous or intermittent basis, to preserve and protect the security, safety and integrity of members of the University community and the physical infrastructure. Travel, visitors and events are prohibited.

**IN PLACE SINCE MARCH**

#### **Phase 2 Research and Student Support**

Reestablish the primary physical presence of core student support staff in preparation for the fall 2020 semester. Expand research activities, specifically laboratory-based activities, and phase in the presence of research faculty and graduate students. Visitors are allowed on campus only with approval by department heads. Events are prohibited unless approved at the divisional

level and in compliance with federal, state and local restrictions. Travel limited with restrictions and approval at the division level.

**TARGETED DATE, JULY**

#### **Phase 3 Targeted Expansion**

Selectively return other key research, educational and support functions to campus based on predetermined percentages. Visitors are allowed on campus only with approval by department heads.

**TARGETED DATE, BEGINNING OF AUGUST**

#### **Phase 4 Fall 2020 Semester**

Most employee positions operating on campus as necessary to safely begin the academic year.

**TARGETED DATE, MIDDLE OF AUGUST**

Updates on travel, events and campus visitors will be communicated via the [website](#).

Due to the University's duty to comply with state and local laws and regulations, all phases are subject to change. More detailed information about the phases can be found on the [University's COVID-19 Updates page](#).

**DURING THE PHASED RETURN, DEPARTMENTS ARE ALSO ENCOURAGED TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE STAFFING OPTIONS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE REQUIRED SOCIAL/ PHYSICAL DISTANCING MEASURES AND REDUCE POPULATION DENSITY WITHIN BUILDINGS AND WORKSPACES. SOME EXAMPLES OF ALTERNATIVE STAFFING OPTIONS INCLUDE:**

**Remote Work:** Those employees who can fulfill all their work responsibilities remotely should continue to do so to reduce the number of individuals on campus and the potential spread of COVID-19. These arrangements, which must be approved by the immediate supervisor and acknowledged by Human Resources, can be done on a full or partial day/week schedule as appropriate. An Alternative Work Arrangement Request must be completed by employees who will be working remotely.

**Alternating Days:** In order to limit the number of individuals and interactions among those on campus, departments should schedule partial staffing on alternating days. Such schedules will help enable social/physical distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces. An Alternative Work Arrangement Request must be completed by employees who will be alternating their workplace between working on campus and working remotely.

**Staggered Reporting/ Departing Work:** The beginning and end of the workday typically brings many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting and departure times will reduce walking traffic in common areas to meet social/physical distancing requirements. Employees working staggered work schedules must complete an Alternative Work Arrangement Request, have it approved by their supervisor and submitted to Human Resources.

**HIGH-RISK INDIVIDUALS**

According to the CDC, individuals with certain conditions may have a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 and developing more severe complications from the infection. Those conditions may include older adults and people who have:

- **HIV**
- **Asthma (moderate-to-severe)**
- **Chronic lung disease**
- **Diabetes**
- **Serious heart conditions**
- **Chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis**
- **Severe obesity**
- **Been immunocompromised**

Employees who have one of the above conditions or live with a high-risk individual and have concerns about returning to campus should contact Human Resources. For more information on addressing concerns around returning to work, employees are encouraged to review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) located at [memphis.edu/hr/covid-19.php](http://memphis.edu/hr/covid-19.php) and [memphis.edu/health/coronavirus/university-faqs.php](http://memphis.edu/health/coronavirus/university-faqs.php).



**Working in Office Environments**

For employees working in an office, no more than one person should be in the same room unless the required six feet of distancing can be consistently maintained. Employees who work in an open environment or shared office space must make sure to maintain at least six feet distance from others and should always wear a face mask/covering while in a shared workspace/room. Face masks/coverings should be worn at all times by any employee in a reception/receiving area.

**DEPARTMENTS OR PHYSICAL PLANT SHOULD ASSESS OPEN WORK ENVIRONMENTS AND MEETING ROOMS TO INSTITUTE MEASURES TO PHYSICALLY SEPARATE AND INCREASE DISTANCE BETWEEN EMPLOYEES, OTHER COWORKERS AND CUSTOMERS, SUCH AS:**

**DEPARTMENTS:**

Place visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape or signs to indicate to customers where they should stand while waiting in line. Visual cues such as floor tape and/or decals can be obtained from Physical Plant.

Place one-way directional signage for large open workspaces with multiple through-ways to increase distance between employees moving through the space.

**PHYSICAL PLANT:**

Consider designating specific stairways for up or down traffic, if building space allows.

Place directional signage on building doors and hallways to increase distance between employees moving through these areas.

**Meals**

Employees are encouraged to take food back to their office area or eat outside. If obtaining food from dining sites on campus, employees must also wear face masks/coverings when picking up food and must maintain six feet of distance from others especially while in line. Social/physical distancing guideles apply in break rooms or other areas where employees may gather to eat. Observe occupancy limits and avoid crowding break rooms. Face masks/coverings should only be removed to eat and put back on immediately when finished eating. Common break room food and beverage items should not be used (shared coffee pots, shared water pitchers, etc.). Reusable kitchenware should not be used and should be replaced with disposable options.

Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in employee break rooms to support social/physical distancing practices between employees. All surfaces, including tables, chairs, refrigerator handles, coffee machines, etc. used in common areas should be wiped down by the user after each use.

*For additional information regarding dining on campus, see the dining plan developed by Chartwells at: [dineoncampus.com/UofM/covid19-communication](http://dineoncampus.com/UofM/covid19-communication).*

**Mental, Emotional and Physical Well-being**

The University acknowledges the impact of COVID-19 on the University community and recognizes that it is typical to experience anxiety, worry or fear. The University's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to offer emotional support during this stressful period. Telephone or video counseling is available, and employees can access this service using smartphones, tablets and computers with a camera. The EAP may be contacted by calling **1.855.437.3486** or visiting the EAP website.

**Visitors to Campus**

Visitors and invited guests (contractors, volunteers) are allowed on campus only with explicit permission and are expected to abide by all campus-wide and building-specific protocols as referenced in the Campus Visitors Guidelines document (Link to be added once Visitors Guidelines are finalized.)

## Building Access, Cleaning and Disinfection

### Building Access

Entry to buildings will be regulated and monitored as necessary. During the beginning phases of reopening, all buildings will be locked, and entry will only be permitted at designated single-point of entry locations. All remaining doors in each building will be used as exits only.

As employees enter or exit a building or office, they may not hold or prop open doors for any other person. Appropriate signage and visual markers will be available inside the buildings and will assist occupants with locating primary entry and exit points. After entering a building, hands should be sanitized at the nearest sanitizer station, displayed signage should be obeyed and all social/physical distancing guidelines outlined in this plan followed.

Departments or offices should coordinate arrival and departure times of employees to reduce congestion during typical “rush hours” of the business day. Staggered schedules should be considered for lunch and break times. Once employees have been authorized to return to campus, they should arrive and depart work at the designated time to limit the number of people entering and exiting buildings at any one time. Employees need to be mindful of directional signage and be prepared to change their daily routine to adhere to any new circulation patterns.

### Physical Plant Responsibilities

Building Services staff will continue cleaning offices and workplaces based on CDC guidelines and protocols for disinfection. Physical Plant will also maintain hand sanitizer stations at major building entrances, elevator stops and high-traffic areas. Mechanical, electrical, plumbing and monitoring systems will be assessed and

readied prior to the reopening of buildings. Enhanced cleaning protocols are in place on campus for high-risk/high-touch areas (door handles, light switches, handrails, interior doors, door push plates, common spaces, flat surfaces such as tables, elevator buttons, etc.). Increased cleaning will be performed in restrooms in common areas. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed at entrance and exit points for buildings on campus, as well as near elevators.

If an individual in a building tests positive for COVID-19, the immediate space(s) occupied by the person who tested positive will be deep-cleaned based on CDC protocols and will be re-opened once sanitized.

### Department Responsibilities

Building occupants should also wipe down commonly used surfaces before and after use with products that meet the EPA’s criteria for use against COVID-19 and are appropriate for the surface. This includes any private workspace or shared-space location or equipment (copiers, printers, computers, A/V and other electrical equipment, coffee makers, desks, tables, light switches, doorknobs, handles, etc.). Using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol is also effective after contacting commonly used surfaces.

### Classrooms and Computer Labs

General purpose classroom occupancy has been modified to ensure up to 10 feet clearance for each instructor and six feet distancing between students. Each classroom and laboratory will be stocked with hand sanitizer, gloves and disinfectant wipes. At the beginning and end of each class period, faculty should wipe down their desktop, seat and seat armrests. Students should be instructed to do the same. Physical Plant will deep clean and sanitize each room every evening after the daily class schedule is completed.

## Supplies and Purchasing

Procurement will source and procure protective supplies and have them delivered to Physical Plant. Offices should work closely with Physical Plant to make sure they have the protective supplies they need.

### Personal Protective Supplies

Departments will work with Physical Plant to assess the supplies necessary to protect employees, students and visitors. Employees in need of supplies should contact their supervisor who will complete a work request with Physical Plant through their WORQ system. The ordered items will be delivered by Physical Plant to the requesting office. Since the return to campus will take place in phases, departments should only order immediately needed items and submit subsequent work orders as the workforce increases based on the next reopening phase. The following protective supplies are available for departments to request for their employees’ use:

- **Reusable Masks**  
(Disposable masks will be provided, if needed)
- **Hand Sanitizer**
- **Disinfectant Spray**
- **Disinfectant Wipes**
- **Plexiglass Barrier Shields**
- **Corrugated Dividers**



### Physical Barriers/Plexiglass

If appropriate six feet distancing is not possible, a plexiglass or other physical barrier may need to be installed. It is recommended that areas where public access is a part of the daily work environment, such as reception or information desks, request the installation of plexiglass barriers and tape or floor signage to ensure six feet distancing and minimize the spread of the virus. To request the necessary items, a work order must be placed with Physical Plant through the WORQ order system. Up to two weeks must be allowed for the work to be completed and to have tape and/or floor stickers installed.

If assistance is needed in determining how best to ensure social/physical distancing in

dedicated spaces, a work order to Space Planning should be submitted. With the volume of work orders that are expected, generating a work order early will allow every department the opportunity for more timely assistance.

A separate document has been generated to ensure continuity of operations in research labs. [Please see the University of Memphis Research Guidelines.](#)

### Signage and Posters

Any necessary signs that need to be posted in buildings and other facilities will be made available by the University. Building occupants are expected to follow signage on traffic flow through building entrances and exits, stairs, elevators and similar common use areas.

**FOR ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THESE GUIDELINES RELATED TO EMPLOYEES RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE, PLEASE CONTACT HUMAN RESOURCES AT 901.678.3573 OR HRSERVICECENTER@MEMPHIS.EDU.**



**#StillDrivenStillDoing**

THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS POLICY ON NONDISCRIMINATION CAN  
BE FOUND AT [HTTPS://MEMPHIS.POLICYTECH.COM](https://memphis.policytech.com). UOM37FY1920/21