

# Returning to the Workplace

Issued June 26, 2020

Westfield  
STATE UNIVERSITY





Westfield State University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to be aligned and consistent with the CDC Guidelines and Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandates.

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Campus Community,

The advent of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has required colleges and universities across the country and around the world to adjust their methods of instruction; student life; and workforce to maintain the health, safety, and security risks for their communities.

The talented and devoted employees of Westfield State University, in accordance with the guidelines offered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, have collaborated to assemble this thoughtful guide for our workforce to allow a gradual return to on-campus operations.

This has been a difficult and taxing time, and I thank faculty, staff, and students for their continued flexibility and cooperative spirit as we work together, soliciting and relying upon input from the community, to progress through the University's recovery from the pandemic.

By working collaboratively, Westfield State University will meet this challenge and continue to fulfill its mission to provide a high-quality, accessible education focused on student engagement and success.

Thank you for your support as the University advances toward this "new normal."

Sincerely,

Ramon S. Torrecilha, Ph.D.  
*President*





## A MESSAGE FROM OHRIDE

Dear Campus Community,

I am pleased to share with you Westfield State University's Return to Work Guide. This guide's goals are to protect the health of employees, ensure the well-being of the campus community, and carefully and deliberately prepare for the return of on-ground working and learning environments.

As we begin our gradual, phased return to work plan, we proceed with an abundance of caution. It is important to note that the **success of our efforts to safely return to work on our campus depends on the commitment of each employee to exercise good judgment and to comply with the guidance and directives contained in this document. We all are responsible for protecting the community's health.**

The Office of Human Resources, Inclusion, Diversity, & Equity (OHRIDE) based this plan on current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker, and other best practices to support our safe and healthy return to campus. As knowledge and understanding of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) continue to evolve, institutional plans and guidance will be updated as appropriate.

Please take the time to carefully review the guide. If you have any questions, your supervisor, area vice president, or the Office of Human Resources, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity will be happy to help you.

We appreciate your flexibility and cooperation as we begin our phased-in return to work this summer.

Note that due to the fluid nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the related federal and state guidelines, this guide may need to be regularly revised.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jalisa D. Williams  
*Associate Vice President for Human Resources  
Office of Human Resources, Inclusion, Diversity, & Equity  
Westfield State University*



## Training for Social Distancing and Hygiene Protocol

Westfield State will offer training to its faculty and staff about social distancing and hygiene protocols. The training for faculty and staff will be administered through the OHRIDE and the Division of Student Affairs will administer the appropriate training for students. Supervisors are expected to continually remind employees of safety precautions, social distancing and hygiene protocols and other measures aimed at reducing disease transmission.

Campus training will include:

- Social distancing, hand-washing, proper use of face coverings
- Self-screening at home, including temperature checks and symptom checks
- Importance of not coming to work if ill
- When to seek medical attention if symptoms become severe
- Which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting and suffering from a severe case of the virus

Supervisors who conduct training should know that the training does not need to include in-person training. Training can be done through virtual means, or providing this document for discussion with teams. Departments may request a representative from OHRIDE to join their department meeting to discuss/clarify specific health and safety or workplace/personnel matters.

## Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

In a time of crisis such as COVID-19, it's not unusual or outside the norm to experience many emotional and psychological disturbances. You might find that you feel more anxious, depressed, angry, as well as have times when you have difficulty sleeping, eating, or enjoying life. These are reactions to all the stress the virus brings to your life. Even if you've never had these types of difficulties before, this event in your life and all it causes can produce the symptoms. At times like these, it might be very helpful to see someone for help in managing the feelings you're having. You won't be alone in the need for extra help during these times. Many people are turning to mental health providers to assist in taking care of their mental health. There are community resources such as BHN The Carson Center (413-568-1421) in Westfield as well as resources made available through the Office of Human Resources, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity.

**AllOne Health**, Westfield State's Employee Assistance Program, offers services and support to employees and their family members in need of guidance. Free confidential telephonic or video counseling is available, as well as online courses and a broad range of self-assessment tools to guide you to healthy learning and decision making. If you need to speak with a counselor or have questions about the program, call the EAP at 800-451-1834 or visit their website at [allonehealth.com](https://allonehealth.com).

**Mass4You**, the State Employee Assistance Program provided by the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) is a friendly, confidential service that provides a wide range of resources for any life situation. Need a rental car? Meals delivered to your home? Mass4You will search and verify services to help you and your family, and will provide support when are tough. For information and assistance, call 1-844-263-1982 or visit [liveandworkwell.com](https://liveandworkwell.com) and use the access code mass4you.



## RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE

### Workplace Expectations & Guidelines

The health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff are the primary focus as we begin returning to campus. This return to the workplace document provides information, expectations and guidelines that all Westfield State employees are expected to follow. The safe and gradual return of the workforce is a responsibility that we all share and complying with these protocols and guidelines will help make the gradual return as safe as possible for all Westfield State constituents.

Westfield State University will continue to operate with restricted access on campus throughout the summer. Restricted access means that access to academic and administrative campus buildings is restricted to faculty and staff through use of their University-issued identification. Building access by permissible contractor and vendors must be organized through department directors or otherwise referred to Public Safety (413-572-5262). In addition, we will continue to discourage students from visiting campus in June, July, and August.

### Symptom Monitoring

Before coming to work, employees who have been instructed to return to the workplace must be free of any symptoms potentially related to COVID-19. Employees are encouraged to take their temperature every day before reporting to work.

For a list of symptom updates, employees should go directly to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.

At this time, these symptoms include one or more of the following:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Runny nose or new sinus congestion
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- New GI symptoms
- New loss of taste or smell

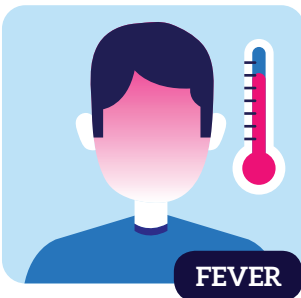
If you have any symptoms, contact your primary care physician for guidance. If you believe that you have contracted COVID-19 or have come in contact with someone who has tested positive with the virus, for the purpose and well being of the entire campus community, please also notify Tina Bonés, Benefits Manager at 413-572-5274, or Alexa Fiorita, Administrative Assistant at 413-572-8730, or email [hr@westfield.ma.edu](mailto:hr@westfield.ma.edu), in the Office of Human Resources, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (OHRIDE). Any information provided to OHRIDE is kept confidential. Consistent with existing university policy, employees are also required to notify their supervisor of all expected and unexpected absences from the workplace (including COVID-19).

People of all ages with underlying medical conditions are at a higher risk, particularly older adults (age 65 and older) and individuals with medical conditions, such as:

- Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
- Chronic lung disease
- Diabetes
- Serious heart conditions
- Chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis
- Severe obesity
- Hemoglobin disorders
- Immunocompromised

To review a complete list of CDC's high risk populations, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higherrisk.html>





## Personnel Expectations

Safeguarding the health and safety of the campus community is paramount, we therefore expect employees to notify the OHRIDE, by calling 413-572-8730 or emailing [hr@westfield.ma.edu](mailto:hr@westfield.ma.edu), if they have been in contact with or exposed to COVID-19. Contact with or exposure to COVID-19 should be interpreted as contact with someone who has tested positive (presumptive or confirmed) for COVID-19. Based on CDC's current knowledge, a close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated. Employees who have been exposed should stay home, maintain social distancing, and self-monitor until 14 days from the last date of exposure. These actions are expected of employees who are instructed to report to work in part or in whole.

Employees asked to report to the workplace are expected to inform OHRIDE if they:

1. have had contact with someone who has tested positive (presumptive or confirmed),
2. are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19; or
3. they have tested positive (presumptive or confirmed) for COVID-19.

Employees should also fill out the **Notification of Travel/Exposure form** (which will be maintained in OHRIDE).

CDC explains that many people may not show visible signs or symptoms right away, they may be asymptomatic. Symptoms may appear 2–14 days after exposure to the virus. Employees with these symptoms may have COVID-19 (please refer to the CDC website for the most current and complete list of symptoms: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>):

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Runny nose or new sinus congestion
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- New GI symptoms
- New loss of taste or smell

Employees should call their medical provider for any symptoms that are severe or concerning to the employee.

Look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

The following protocols shall be followed until time period determined as no longer needed.





## Returning to the Workplace

### When employees call in sick

**Consistent with existing University policy, employees are responsible for contacting their supervisor if they are unable to report to work for any reason.**

When an employee calls in sick, the employee should provide and/or may be asked if they are exhibiting symptoms associated with COVID-19. **CDC** provides that symptoms include cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, runny nose or new sinus congestion, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, fatigue, new GI symptoms, and new loss of taste or smell.

The University regards any responses from employees as confidential medical information and asks that employees contact OHRIDE if they are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, as identified above and as provided by the CDC. If a supervisor, manager, or department chair receives a call from an employee, who discloses information about symptoms, the supervisor/manager/department chair must notify OHRIDE immediately in a confidential manner. Supervisors, managers, and department chairs are expected to direct employees to contact OHRIDE directly rather than discuss confidential medical information with an employee. OHRIDE strongly encourages employees to contact its office directly at **hr@westfield.ma.edu** or call Tina Bonés, Benefits Manager at 413-572-5274 or Alexa Fiorita, Administrative Assistant at 413-572-8730.

### What to do if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms

- If an employee is experiencing the symptoms listed on page 2 and 3 (see section: **When employees call in sick**), the employee should remain out of the workplace and use their leave accruals to cover their sick leave absence from the workplace.
- If an employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and has worked on campus within the last 14 days of experiencing symptoms and/or diagnosis, the employee should contact OHRIDE and remain out of the workplace for 14 days at minimum. Providing this information to OHRIDE will help the university with the notifications for contract tracing. During which time, the employee should use accrued leave or, if appropriate, leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act ("FFCRA"), to be compensated. **Employees diagnosed with COVID-19 will not be able to return to the workplace before receiving approval from OHRIDE. The University reserves the right to require medical documentation before an employee is permitted to return to work.**
- If employees have exhausted all accrued leave, eligible APA and MSCA employees shall be allowed to use the sick leave bank without being required to go off the payroll for five (5) days before access. AFSCME employees without accrued leave are encouraged to apply for an extension of sick leave.

### If an employee calls to report they have been exposed to COVID-19 but is not displaying symptoms

Before reporting to work, all employees are expected to contact OHRIDE if they have been exposed to COVID-19 but are not displaying symptoms. OHRIDE will discuss with the employee the cautionary measures being taken by the University, including the need to remain out of the workplace, and whether alternative work options are available.



## When an employee in the workplace presents with symptoms

When an employee in the workplace presents with symptoms, the employee will be asked to leave the workplace by OHRIDE and use sick leave or other available accrued leave, should the employee not have available sick leave to cover their absence. OHRIDE will discuss with the employee available leave options or possible alternative work arrangements. Additionally, OHRIDE will ask the employee to inform OHRIDE if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or have been exposed to COVID-19. Employees must contact their supervisor if they are unable to report to work.

- If the employee was diagnosed with COVID-19 or was exposed to COVID-19, the University will follow the guidance above (see section: **When employees call in sick**). In the event the employee indicates that they were not diagnosed or were not exposed to COVID-19 and their symptoms no longer persist, the employee will be permitted to return to the workplace. Employees should continue to self-monitor to ensure their health and the health and safety of others.

## Inquiring about travel

In our efforts to lessen the risk and protect the well-being of our campus community while following state guidance, we ask that all employees who have traveled domestically and/or internationally within the last three (3) weeks, or who have upcoming travel plans to any country identified as Level II or higher by the CDC, report this travel to OHRIDE. Employees should complete the electronic **Notification of Travel/Exposure form** (which will be maintained in OHRIDE) or may contact Alexa Fiorita, administrative assistant at 413-572-8730 or [hr@westfield.ma.edu](mailto:hr@westfield.ma.edu). This information will assist OHRIDE on how to work best with employees who may need to self-isolate for 14 days.

Provided in the Governor's Reopening Massachusetts plan listed in the current Stay-at-Home order and in the Phase 1 and 2 columns that "all travelers to Massachusetts urged to self-quarantine for 14 days," we understand that Westfield State has a small population of employees who do not live in Massachusetts and commute from neighboring states. We ask that this population of employees work with their supervisors for possible alternative work capabilities to reduce their travels to Massachusetts to the extent possible and as approved.

## Phased-in Staffing

The University is using a phased-in approach for the return of employees to the workplace starting on or around July 1, 2020 as the start of phase one. The return to on-ground working will be conducted gradually and we will continue to assess staffs' ability to work remotely, as approved. As we initiate phase one, to include the full return of our Facilities and Operations staff and other service critical positions, we will also move to gradually return other employees as identified by department heads and area vice presidents. For now, phase one includes no more than the return of 25 percent occupancy within buildings. Occupancy levels may exceed 25 percent depending upon the critical operational need and the ability to carry out safety precautions. Most offices will be unable to accommodate more than 25 percent of their staff in offices/buildings at any given period starting July 1, 2020.

The gradual return to work approach will be unique for each office/department, as department heads along with their area vice presidents will need to consider slowly phasing-in 25 percent occupancy within their offices/buildings in phase one, and while ensuring a process/schedule that allows appropriate social distancing. There has been no determination as to when phase two would start and the parameters of a phase two. We will continue to assess the health and safety and conditions of our workforce as well as following the guidance provided by the Governor's Office.





## Returning to the Workplace

Positions that are necessary for campus safety, facilities operations, dining operations, student housing and operations, some classroom learning and/or designated on-ground activities, as well as jobs that cannot be effectively performed from home and are critical to ongoing operations will be prioritized in the University's phased-in return to work approach.

The need to maintain a reduced number of people on campus to meet social distancing requirements will likely continue for some time as we work to create a workable model for campus learning and operations. Many employees who have been effectively working remotely may be permitted to continue to do so, with the department head's approval. However, employees may be required to shorten their remote schedule and work a day(s) on-campus as the University implements its phased-in approach to repopulating the campus. During the phased-in approach, employees may have a hybrid work schedule that incorporates both social distancing within offices and departments on campus and remote work from home. Approval to work remotely will be periodically assessed during the University's phased-in approach and approval to work remotely may be revoked at any time and for any reason at the University's discretion.

The campus will continue with restricted access throughout the summer. Employees may access their office area based on the approved on-ground summer work schedule. Changes to an employee's on-ground work schedule and/or requesting access to buildings or offices outside the approved schedule must be submitted for supervisor approval. The revised schedule and/or building/office access request must be submitted to the Office of Human Resources, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (OHRIDE) by the department head before the schedule or access can be acted upon. Access to buildings/offices and changes to on-ground schedules generally require 72-hour notice to OHRIDE and Facilities and Operations. Faculty may access their offices during the summer months by providing advance notice to their college dean who will inform OHRIDE and Facilities and Operations. During this phased-in approach, employees should visibly wear their employee ID while on campus.

### Staffing Options:

When employees have been instructed to return to work on-site, there are several options that departments will consider to maintain required social distancing measures and reduce the population density within buildings and work spaces. Employees should know that not all positions will be able to continue with the implemented telecommuting ability as the campus moves forward with its on-site operations. Department heads will examine the functions and duties of the position to make determinations on the position's ability to be performed in the methods listed below. Telecommuting and other unconventional working arrangements are temporary in nature for most positions as the University implements its phased-in approach. The University's goal is to safely and methodically repopulate the campus community.

To minimize the interference of the delivery of critical services, some positions will return to on-site either in whole or in part.

**Full Return:** Some offices and/or departments may require the full return of its staff to preserve public health or public safety considerations or where reduced staffing may interfere with the continued delivery of critical services. Additionally, some positions based on the primary duties performed, will require the employee's full return to campus.





**Remote Work:** With supervisor's approval, employees who can work remotely to fulfill some or all of 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. These arrangements must be approved by the department head and can be done on either a full or partial day/week schedule as appropriate. Area vice presidents and/or department heads periodically may review the feasibility of remote work.

**Alternating Days:** 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 distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces. The office coverage schedule, should not exceed 25 percent occupancy in the office/building at any particular time. Some departments may exceed this maximum occupancy level based on a demonstrated need for relief or inability to perform duties from home based on either public health or public safety considerations or where strict compliance may interfere with the continued delivery of critical services.

**Staggered Reporting/Departing:** The beginning and end of the workday typically brings many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Departments will endeavor to stagger start times and departure times by at least 15 to 30 minutes to reduce traffic in common areas and assist in meeting social distancing requirements.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE

### Personal Safety Practices

The University requires all employees to wear face coverings in all campus public spaces and in common spaces such as restrooms and copy areas. Employees who work alone in their offices are not required to wear a mask in their office. Employees that work at a distance beyond six feet but still share common space with coworkers are required to wear masks in their shared common space. Employees with a medical condition(s) who would be negatively affected by the requirement should contact Tina Bonés (413-572-5274 or [hr@westfield.ma.edu](mailto:hr@westfield.ma.edu)) in the OHRIDE.

**Handwashing:** 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. 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.

**Face Masks/Coverings:** In accordance with the executive order, face masks or face coverings must be worn by all staff working on campus when in the presence of others and in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., common workspaces, hallways, meeting rooms, restrooms, classrooms, etc.). Appropriate use of face masks is critical in minimizing risks to others near you. You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick. The wearing of a face mask is not a substitute for social distancing. The face mask should cover both your nose and mouth and extend to your chin.

Employees are expected to supply their own face coverings; however, a limited supply of face masks will be available for staff members who do not have, or who have forgotten a face covering. Employees who forget to bring their face coverings to campus should inform their department head who will work with their area vice president to secure a mask. Cloth face coverings must only be worn for one day at a time, and must be properly laundered before use again. Having a week's supply of cloth face coverings can help reduce the need for daily laundering. See details regarding mask use and care in the chart on page 8.



# Type and Intended Use of Face Coverings/Masks



Description			
Homemade 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	Provides 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 (office spaces, general research/work settings, shops, community areas where 6' social distancing cannot be consistently maintained. Must be replaced daily. (While likely necessary for ingress and egress, not required when working alone in an office		These masks are reserved for healthcare workers.	

Personal protection equipment (PPE) that exceeds beyond having a mask requirement, will be provided to select employees based on the nature of their job function and inherent risk. Job-specific PPE requirements will be communicated to employees by their direct supervisors.

## 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 behind the head and 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.
- When taking off the face covering/disposable mask, loop your finger into the strap and pull the strap away from the ear, or untie the straps.
- Wash hands immediately after removing.

## Care, storage, and laundering

- Keep face coverings/disposable masks 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 masks must not be used for more than one day and should be placed in the trash after your shift or if it is soiled, damaged (e.g., stretched ear loops, torn or punctured material) or visibly contaminated.

**Employees must dispose of their mask and/or gloves in the proper trash receptacles located throughout the campus.**



**Social Distancing:** Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools we have to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus and slowing its spread. Since people can spread the virus 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 that work on-site must follow these social distancing practices:

- Stay at least six feet (about two arms' length) from other people at all times.
- Avoid gathering in groups where social distancing is difficult or not possible such as break rooms, eating areas, copy rooms, etc. If you are utilizing group spaces be sure to allow six feet of physical distancing.
- Avoid engaging in activities that could lead to crowded places and mass gatherings.

No more than 25 percent maximum occupancy levels within offices/buildings can be occupied on campus effective July 1, 2020 (some exceptions may apply). Departments such as Facilities and Operations, whose work is primarily on grounds, will have to ensure that its staff can social distance. The maximum of 25 percent occupancy is within offices/buildings and social distance should be adhered to on campus grounds.

Departments may exceed the 25 percent maximum occupancy level based on a demonstrated need for relief due to public health or public safety considerations or where strict compliance may interfere with the continued delivery of critical services. For Westfield State, this would include such departments as Facilities and Operations, Public Safety, Health Services, and Dining Services or others.

### **Additional Operational Practices at Westfield State**

- Dining Services will reopen following all applicable guidelines from federal, state, and local agencies.
- Physical partitions must separate workstations that cannot be spaced out. In areas where partitions are not available or capable, employees must wear their mask.
- Directional hallways and passageways for foot traffic where possible will be established, to minimize contact. Westfield State will post signage regarding these policies.
- We will limit permissible visitors where feasible, and avoid congregation in common areas (e.g., lobbies). OHRIDE recommends that departments and offices set up only necessary meetings by appointment only. Departments/offices will be required to keep a log of all visitors so the University can identify potential exposure, if necessary.
- Managers/Supervisors/Department Heads will designate assigned working areas (e.g., floor, building) to individuals where possible to limit movement throughout the facility and limit contact between workers, including conducting meetings remotely when possible.
- Employees are asked to limit in-person meeting sizes to ensure six feet of social distancing and schedule all in-person meetings with students and colleagues to ensure size limitation where remote meetings are not possible/feasible.
- Supervisors should encourage remote participation for all meetings when possible.
- Supervisors should ensure staggered lunch and break times, regulating maximum number of people in one place and ensuring at least six feet of physical distancing.
- Employees must minimize the use of confined spaces (e.g., elevators, control rooms, vehicles) by more than one individual at a time; all workers in such spaces at the same time are required to wear face coverings.
- Employees should avoid the sharing of office equipment, including the sharing of pens, electronic devices, etc.
- Employees should not shake hands with colleagues, students, and visitors.





## Returning to the Workplace

**Gloves:** According to the CDC, gloves are not necessary for general use. Washing your hands often is considered the best practice for everyday tasks.

**Cleaning/Disinfection:** Facilities and Operations will continue to clean office and work spaces based on CDC guidelines for disinfection protocols. Employees should also wipe down commonly used spaces, to include any shared space, location, or equipment (e.g. copiers, printers, computers, A/V and other electrical equipment, coffee makers, desks and tables, light switches, door knobs, etc.), before and after all use with products that meet the EPA's criteria for use against COVID-19 and are appropriate for the surface. Surface cleaning materials will be provided to departments for this purpose. Departments may order cleaning supplied through approved Westfield State vendors. Facilities and Operations will also maintain hand-sanitizer stations at major building entrances.

Employees are discouraged from bringing in their own cleaning materials. Department heads should notify the Facilities and Operations if cleaning materials are needed and Facilities and Operations will provide the appropriate materials.

**Employees are encouraged to keep their personal items (e.g., cell phones, other electronics) and personal work spaces clean and to use disinfectant wipes to regularly wipe down their workspace.**

**Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene:** If you are in a private setting and do not have on your face covering, remember to either 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.

## Guidance for Specific Workplace Considerations

**Public Transportation:** Wear a mask before entering any shared transportation vehicle (bus, ride-sharing service, carpool, etc.) and avoid touching surfaces with your hands. Upon disembarking, wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater than 60% alcohol as soon as possible and before removing your mask.

**Working in Office Environments:** If you work in an open environment, remember to maintain at least six feet distance from co-workers. If possible, have at least one workspace separating you from another co-worker. Absent of this, employees are required to wear a face mask or face covering at all times while in a shared work space/room. Facilities and Operations will work with departments to assess open work environments and meeting rooms to institute measures to physically separate and increase distance between employees, other coworkers, and customers, such as:

- Placing visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, or signs to indicate to customers where they should stand while waiting in line if and where possible.
- Placing one-way directional signage for large open work spaces with multiple through-ways to increase distance between employees moving through the space if and where possible.
- Considering designating specific stairways for up or down traffic if building space allows. If you work 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. If more than one person is in a room, masks/face coverings should be worn at all times. A mask or 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).
- Masks/face coverings must be worn by any employee in a reception/receiving area, or when inside any campus building, including walking in narrow hallways where others travel and in break rooms, conference rooms and other meeting locations.



**Using Restrooms:** Use of restrooms should be limited based on size to ensure at least six feet distance between individuals. Employees must enter bathrooms wearing their face covering. Wash your hands thoroughly afterward to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

**Using Elevators:** No more than one person should enter an elevator at a time, so please use the stairs whenever possible. If you are using the elevator, wear your mask or face covering and avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers, if possible. Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater than 60% alcohol upon departing the elevator.

**Meetings:** Convening in groups increases the risk of viral transmission. Where feasible, meetings should be held, in whole or part, using the extensive range of available collaboration tools (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, telephone, etc.).

In person meetings are limited to the restrictions of local, state and federal orders and should not exceed 25 percent of a room's capacity, assuming individuals can still maintain six feet of separation for social distancing requirements.

All attendees must wear a mask or face covering while sharing space in a common room.

While on-campus, you are encouraged to communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed by email, instant message, telephone or other available technology rather than face-to-face.

**Meals:** Before and after eating, wash your hands thoroughly to reduce the potential transmission of the virus. If dining on campus, wear your mask or face covering until you are ready to eat and then replace it afterward.

## Resources and References

For more information on cloth face coverings, reference the following resources from the CDC information:

- **Recommendation Regarding the Use of Cloth Face Coverings, Especially in Areas of Significant Community-Based Transmission;**
- **Frequently Asked Questions about Cloth Face Coverings;** and
- **CDC Guidance on How to Make and Properly Wear a Homemade Cloth Face Covering.**

Employees may visit the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Commonwealth of Massachusetts** and/or **Westfield State University's** websites for more information and updates COVID-19.

The following resources are available to employees to check symptoms:

### **Buoy Health**

[https://www.buoyhealth.com/symptom-checker/?configuration=ma\\_covid&concern=coronavirus](https://www.buoyhealth.com/symptom-checker/?configuration=ma_covid&concern=coronavirus)

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

### **Tips for at Home Quarantine or Self-Monitoring**

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/10-tips-for-at-home-quarantine-or-self-monitoring/download>

This document was prepared using resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts state government executive orders and guidance and memorandums from the Office of the Governor.





## APPENDIX

### Resources for Further Reading

**American College Health Association (ACHA)  
Considerations for Reopening Institutions of  
Higher Education in the COVID-19 Era:**

[https://www.acha.org/documents/resources/guidelines/ACHA\\_Considerations\\_for\\_Reopening\\_IHEs\\_in\\_the\\_COVID-19\\_Era\\_May2020.pdf](https://www.acha.org/documents/resources/guidelines/ACHA_Considerations_for_Reopening_IHEs_in_the_COVID-19_Era_May2020.pdf)

**Buoy COVID-19 Symptom Checker:**

<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/check-your-symptoms-for-covid-19-online>

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
Considerations for Institutes of Higher Education:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html>

**Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19:**

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

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Human Resources has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies. They may be contacted at: 577 Western Avenue, Westfield, MA 01086-1630, or by phone at (413) 572-8471.