



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: September 1, 2021

COVID-19 RETURN TO CAMPUS POLICY

Purpose

This policy is intended to mitigate the risks of spread of COVID-19 as staff, faculty, and 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 Spring Quarter 2021 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 returning physically should align with their school or unit’s [Return to Campus](#) plan and any campus-wide guidelines regarding the presence of faculty and staff on campus, such as the guidance during Wildcat Wellness periods.
- Leadership is expected to monitor their faculty and staff who return to campus and ensure compliance with the school or unit’s 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).

- In all campus public and shared environments, including outdoor spaces and instructional spaces, staff and faculty must wear a face mask or face covering.
- 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 not obtained directly through Northwestern onsite testing
 - 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](#). 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 adhere to guidance on [social distancing](#) .
- 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 and Quarantine

- 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 CDC maintains 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 and update their symptom tracker. Staff should contact their manager and the Office of Human Resources. 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.
- Beginning September 1, 2020, if an employee is asked to quarantine or isolate and the employee is unable to work from home, the employee will be paid for the quarantine or isolation time without having to use vacation or sick time. In order to be eligible for this paid time, (1) the employee's exposure must have been in the workplace, (2) the exposure must have been identified through the University's contact tracing process, and (3) the employee must have followed all of the University's Covid-related policies and processes.

Remote Work

- Remote work will continue in some units through the Spring Quarter 2021. Individuals units will be creating their return to work plans based on department/unit operational needs.
- Staff and faculty returning physically to campus should align with their school or unit's [Return to Campus](#) plan and any campus-wide guidelines regarding the presence of faculty and staff on campus, such as the guidance period [Wildcat Wellness periods](#).
- The University has created the [Alternative Work Arrangements Policy](#) which will govern individual arrangements that cannot be determined at the School or Unit Level.
- 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.

Gathering Meetings, Events, and Visitors

- Gatherings meeting and events must adhere to local guidance for Evanston and Chicago, including limits on room capacity and room size.
- University health and safety guidelines, including social distancing and mask wearing, must be followed at all times.
- Additional information on gatherings, meetings and events can be found [here](#).
- A visitor is any individual who is not a currently enrolled student in good standing, a registered participant in Northwestern programming for pre-collegiate students or active employee for the University. Expectations regarding visitors, including Contractors, to campus are outlined [here](#).

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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