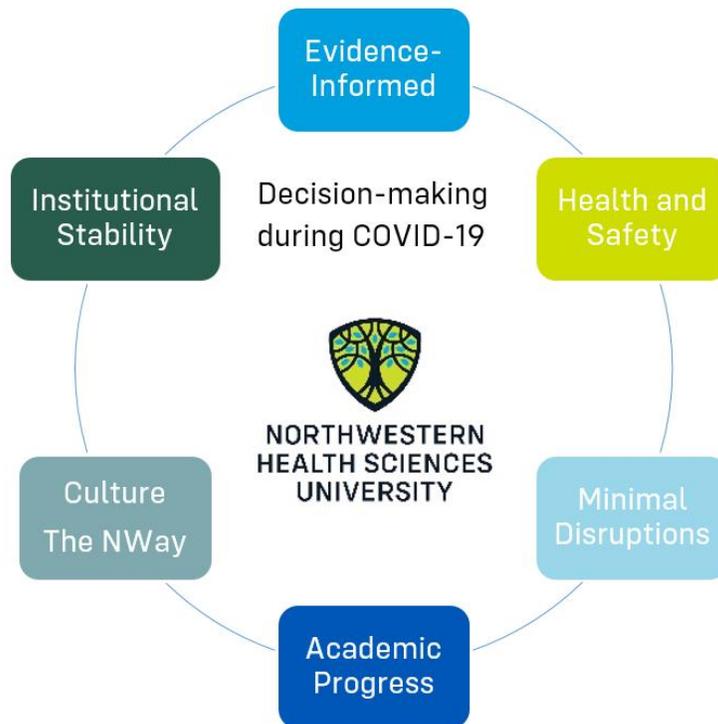


NWHSU Academic COVID-19 Preparedness Plan In This Together: Guiding Principles

Last Updated April 8, 2021

Guiding Principles for decision making

- Protect the safety and health of all employees, students, patients, & campus visitors.
- Make decisions using evidence-based practices knowing that evidence is still being gathered.
- Our culture is and will be our north star during this crisis. Keep our culture strong.
- Ensure business continuity: support our students, patients, and employees.
- Strive to maintain the financial health of our institution.
- Use guidance from CDC, MN DOH, and Governor Walz and other trusted resources.



We have developed the following Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. All members of our community are responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19, and that requires full cooperation among all community members. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of our institution.

Where appropriate, we will refer to the various Phases as defined below for the protocols to follow:

Phase 1: Campus building open to designated employees are approved by your division senior leader, remote teaching continues, remote work continues for employees, limited staff on campus (Campus Store, Herbal Dispensary, RCS, Maintenance, Library). Faculty may be granted access on a limited basis on campus to enhance learning experiences for students. Bloomington & HPC Clinics acute care only. Students will not be allowed on campus. If you are sick, please stay home.

Phase 2: Campus building open with key card access for designated employees as approved by your division senior leader may work on-campus, remote working where possible. Faculty may work on campus on a limited basis to enhance learning experiences. Students learn remotely with select in-person learning, practice, assessment, and internship activities on campus. Library offers remote services and curbside pick-up. Clinics are open with limited capacity and strict protocols. Campus Store and Herbal Dispensary continue to process orders and ship to customers. If you are sick, please stay home.

Phase 2.5: Campus building open with key card access. Staff may work remotely or on campus as approved by your division senior leader while adhering to the campus approved schedule in your department; pre-determined and scheduled remote and face-to-face learning experiences for faculty and students to fulfill expected learning and practice outcomes. Clinics are open to patients. Campus Store is open to the public. Library is open to students. Fitness Center is open. Campus store, Library, and Fitness Centers have reduced hours. Microwaves and refrigerators are available, and users are requested to spray and wipe down the refrigerator handle and microwaves after each use. All community members are required to wear face coverings while on-campus and requested to practice social distance and frequent handwashing; additional requirements may apply depending on one's participation in different parts of the campus outlined below. If you are sick, please stay home.

Phase 3 is effective May 3, 2021. Campus building open with key card access. Masking and social distancing rules apply. Staff may work remotely or on campus as approved by your division senior leader while adhering to the campus approved schedule in your department; pre-determined and scheduled remote and face-to-face meetings or learning experiences for faculty, staff, and students to fulfill expected learning and practice outcomes. Employees can have in-person meetings as approved by your division senior leader. Student clubs and organizations can meet on-campus with limitations as approved by [Student Affairs](#). Gym is available for use with limitations as approved by Student Affairs. Clinics are open. Campus Store, Library, and Fitness Center continue with reduced hours. Cafeteria offers grab and go food and beverages. Microwaves and refrigerators are available, and users are requested to spray and wipe down the refrigerator handle and microwaves after each use. Students are welcome on campus to use the Wi-Fi, library, and other study areas on campus (cafeteria, fireside lounge, and select classrooms) following masking and social distancing rules. All community members are required to wear face coverings while on-campus and additional requirements may apply depending on your participation in different activities as outlined below. If you are sick, please stay home.

Phase 4: Our Way Forward and CDC and other experts have declared we are post-pandemic. Campus building open, in-person direct instruction as identified for learning, clinics are open, and designated on-campus employee working established schedules. If you are sick, please stay home.

Internships: Because internships are specific to Programs, they will be managed separately by their Program Leaders and not part of these Phases.

Our Preparedness Plan follows guidelines issued from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines and federal OSHA standards related to COVID-19 and addresses:

- Screening policies.
- What if we have a confirmed COVID-19 case on campus?
- Facial Covering.
- Handwashing.
- Respiratory etiquette.
- Social distancing.
- Cleaning and disinfecting practices.
- Communications and training.
- Other Resources.
- Questions.

Screening and policies for community members exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

Community members have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess your health status prior to entering our campus buildings and to report when you are sick or experiencing symptoms.

Phase 1, 2, 2.5, & Phase3: Community members are required to **check your temperature and be able to answer “no”** to the following questions prior to coming to campus. If your temperature is >100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or if you have answered “yes” to any the following questions, please do not come to campus. Employees should report this information to Mary Gale via email at mgale@nwhealth.edu and Students should report this information to Susan Neppi via email at sneppi@nwhealth.edu.

- Do you have a fever (100.4°F or higher)?
- Do you have a new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Are you experiencing new shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Do you have a new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Are you experiencing new muscle aches that you cannot attribute to another health condition, or that may have been caused by a specific activity (such as physical exercise)?
- Do you have new chills that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Do you have new headaches that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Do you have new loss of smell or taste that you cannot attribute to another health condition?

How long should you stay away from campus if you have any of the above symptoms:

- If you have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (temperature/fever of 100.4 degrees F or higher, new or increased cough, shortness of breath), you should stay home for at least 10 days, and for 24 hours with no fever and improvement of respiratory symptoms—whichever is longer. (Your fever should be gone for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medicine.) AND
- At least 10 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*, AND
- If you feel sick or have any new symptoms (sore throat, diarrhea, muscle aches, headache), you should stay home until symptoms resolve.

NWHSU has leave policies that promote employees staying at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when required by a health care provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household. Pursuant to the Families First Coronavirus Response Act Employees may be eligible for Emergency Sick Leave or Emergency Family Medical Leave. If an employee is not eligible for these leaves, they may use Sick Hours (Classroom Faculty), Paid Time Off (PTO) for PTO Faculty and Staff, or Short-Term Disability subject to the provisions outlined in the policies. [Employees with underlying medical conditions should contact Human Resources for information on accommodations.](#)

What if I have been exposed to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 and I'm not fully vaccinated?

Since you have been exposed to a person with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 and you meet the definition of close contact (within 6 feet and for ≥ 15 minutes within 24 hours) you are required to self-quarantine as follows:

- Quarantine can end after Day 7 with a negative test and no symptoms.
- Quarantine can end after Day 10 without testing and no symptoms.

In both cases you are required to self-monitor for symptoms through Day 14:

- Check temperature twice a day.
- Watch for fever*, cough, or shortness of breath, or other [symptoms](#) of COVID-19

Minnesota Department of Health recommends you get tested, ideally within 5-7 within your exposure.

What if I have been exposed to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 and I'm recovered from COVID-19 within the past 90 days?

If you have recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days and have close contact with someone with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19, you do not need to quarantine if **ALL** of the following are true:

- Your illness was confirmed with a positive lab test in the past 90 days.
- You have fully recovered.
- You do not currently have any symptoms of COVID-19.

What if I have been exposed to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 and I'm fully vaccinated?

If you have completed a COVID-19 vaccination (two doses in a two-dose series or one dose in a one-dose series) and are exposed to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 you do not need to quarantine if **ALL** of the following are true:

- The COVID-19 exposure was at least 14 days after your vaccination series was fully completed.
- The COVID-19 exposure was within 90 days of their final dose of the vaccination series.
- You do not currently have any symptoms of COVID-19.

What if I am a Health Care Personnel (HCP) who has been exposed to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 and I'm fully vaccinated?

If you are a Health Care Personnel (HCP) who has an underlying immunocompromising condition (e.g., organ transplantation, cancer treatment), which might impact the level of protection provided by the COVID-19 vaccine then quarantining for 14 days should still be considered.

- [COVID-19 Recommendations for Health Care Workers \(PDF\)](#)

If you do not have any underlying immunocompromising conditions (e.g., organ transplantation, cancer treatment) and you have completed a COVID-19 vaccination (two doses in a two-dose series or one dose in a one-dose series) and are exposed to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 you do not need to quarantine if **ALL** of the following are true:

- The COVID-19 exposure was at least 14 days after your vaccination series was fully completed.
- The COVID-19 exposure was within 90 days of their final dose of the vaccination series.
- You do not currently have any symptoms of COVID-19.

What precautions do I need to follow after I have been fully vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19?

Even after you are fully vaccinated or recovered from COVID-19 you are required to maintain social distance, properly wear a mask, wash your hands often, and follow safety precautions. For more information, see [CDC: When to Quarantine](#).

Where can I get tested?

[Click on this link to find out where to get tested.](#)

What if we have a confirmed COVID-19 case on campus?

The safety, security, and health of our students, patients, and employees is our top priority. If we have a positive COVID-19 case we will determine when the person was on campus and who may have had close contact with them (close contact is defined as being within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes during a 24-hours, having direct face-to-face contact, or being coughed or sneezed on by the ill person). Communication will be sent to the close contact list and as appropriate a broader communication may be sent depending upon the circumstances. Decontamination cleaning will occur if a COVID case is confirmed and all or a portion of the building may be closed until it is deemed safe. We will also consult with the Minnesota Department of Health for further guidance.

The most important actions each of us can take to further protect ourselves include:

- Staying home if you are sick.
- Washing your hands often with soap and water; covering your cough and sneeze; avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Practicing self-care by eating a healthy diet and taking time to rest.
- Avoiding large gatherings.

Recommendations for Health Care Personnel (HCP) experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or in prolonged close contact with a patient with confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis.

- If a HCP goes home because they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, we recommend they get tested. If negative they can come right back to work after the negative test result if there has not been any known exposure to COVID-19 and symptom free for 24 hours. If a lab confirmed test is positive, see guidance listed above “How long should you stay away from campus”
- from your healthcare provider.

- If a HCP goes home because they are experiencing any symptoms outside of COVID-19, there is no need to get tested and they should return to work when they feel better.
- If employee is in contact with a person having confirmed COVID-19, contact Stacy Boone-Vikingson to undergo a risk assessment based on CDC and MDH guidance to categorize their exposure as low or high risk. The Health Care Personnel Assessment is for patients visits of 15 minutes or greater. If the visit was less than 15 minutes, HCP should self-monitor.
- Based on the outcome of the risk assessment the employee will be provided the following guidance:

Risk Assessment Results	Guidance:
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restrictions • Follow all recommended infection prevention and control practices, including wearing a facemask, social distancing, handwashing, and, monitoring yourself for fever or symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Health screening questions and temperature scans prior to entering the campus building. If you are sick, please stay home. • Any HCP who develop fever or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should immediately self-isolate and contact Stacy Boone-Vikingson and arrange for testing.
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-isolate after last exposure and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quarantine can end after Day 7 with a negative test and no symptoms ○ Quarantine can end after Day 10 without testing and no symptoms <p>In both cases you are required to self-monitor for symptoms through Day 14:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check temperature twice a day • Watch for fever*, cough, or shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19 • Any HCP who develops fever or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should immediately self-isolate and contact Stacy Boone Vikingson and arrange for testing.

Facial Covering

All faculty, staff, students, and independent contractors are **required** to wear a surgical paper mask or respirator mask (e.g., N95 & KN95) (see Face Shield section below) at a minimum to enter campus and be in any common space. **Please note:** cloth mask, neck gaiter, scarf, bandanna, or other similar face coverings are not acceptable. A face covering must cover the nose and mouth completely. External patients, customers and visitors may wear a cloth mask.

You may remove the facial covering if you are in a private workspace or outside of the building. NWHSU will provide facial coverings.

There is some research to support that an infected person wearing a mask may reduce spreading the disease to others. Since a person infected with COVID-19 may not exhibit symptoms for several days, he or she may unknowingly spread the virus when interacting with others.

Cloth facial coverings are not considered personal protective equipment (PPE). Surgical masks and respirator masks (e.g., N95 & KN95) are considered PPE by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

[For more information on how to properly wear and make a mask.](#)

Face Shields

[Face shields](#) may be worn with a cloth mask as an alternative for people who cannot wear a surgical or respirator mask due to medical or other conditions. In clinics and classroom labs, face shields **with a cloth mask** may be used if approved by Human Resources for employees and Disability Services for students. A face shield must cover the entire front (that extends to the chin or below) and sides of the face. Adhere to recommended manufacturer instructions for [cleaning and disinfection](#) or to the instructions on this link when they are unavailable.

Handwashing

Employees are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day. Hand sanitizer dispensers are available throughout the campus.

[CDC What You Need to Know about Handwashing.](#)

Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

Please cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching your face, and in particular your mouth, nose, and eyes, with your hands. You should dispose of tissues in the trash and wash or sanitize your hands immediately afterward.

Social distancing

Social distancing is being implemented on campus through the following engineering and administrative controls:

Phase 1 & Phase 2:

- Community members are prohibited from gathering in groups and confined areas, including elevators, and from using other employees' personal protective equipment, phones, computer equipment, workstations, offices or other personal work tools and equipment.
- Where possible, remote working and learning continues.
- Stagger shifts and lunch times to maximize social distancing.
- Microwaves, vending machines, ATM, and community refrigerators will not be available during Phase 1 & Phase 2 to reduce shared touchpoints.
- Continue to conduct meetings using Microsoft Teams on and off campus.
- Departments are encouraged to develop processes that minimizes mutual people touching paperwork.
- Use a paper towel when dispensing from community water dispensers.
- Disable public access to hallway computers.

Phase 2.5 & Phase 3:

- Community members are prohibited from gathering in large groups and confined areas, including elevators, and from using other employees' personal protective equipment, phones, computer equipment, workstations, offices or other personal work tools and equipment.
- Phased teaching and working on campus. Employees may work remotely or on campus as approved by your division senior leader adhering to the campus approved schedule in your department.
- Continue to conduct meetings using Microsoft Teams on and off campus. **Effective May 3, 2021 in-person meetings are allowed using masking and social distancing rules.**
- Managers need to partner with facilities for any shared workstations that do not allow for social distancing.
- Stagger shifts and lunch times to maximize social distancing.
- Limit non-essential contact with other colleagues.
- Microwaves and community refrigerators will be available, and users are requested to spray and wipe down the refrigerator handle and microwaves after each use.
- Vending machines and ATM will not be available during Phase 3 to reduce shared touchpoints.
- Departments are encouraged to develop processes that minimizes mutual people touching paperwork.
- Use a paper towel when dispensing from community water dispensers.
- Disable public access to hallway computers and use computer labs in the library because they have a routine cleaning schedule.

Cleaning & Disinfecting Practices

Routine cleaning and disinfecting of campus including classrooms, clinic spaces, restrooms, cafeteria, and meeting rooms. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted in high-touch areas, such as door handles, light switches, elevator panels, hand railings, copy machines, etc.

Additional decontamination cleaning will occur if a COVID case is confirmed and that area of the building will be closed until it is deemed safe.

Educational Delivery

Phase(s) 2 to 3:

As we move back to campus, in addition to complying with the protocol outlined in this document, we commit to the following principles across all colleges and departments.

We will:

- Prioritize lab and clinical experiences where physical presence is essential.
- Maximize the use of time together; only use face to face time for educational content/tasks that cannot be learned via a different modality.
- Continue to develop remote/online options for education – there are several benefits to this: buffers us if/when we need to close campus abruptly as this pandemic progresses; allows a safety net for students who may have medical challenges; increases flexibility for progression toward a degree.
- Allow for social distancing of at least 6 feet while educational experience is happening.

- Only allow small groups in a room.
 - Identify number of rooms needed.
 - Message regarding need for increased flexibility in scheduling (e.g.: some evening times).
 - Identify room capacity with social distancing norms in place.
- Even in larger “rooms”, schedule no more than the approved room capacity at a time in the same space.
- Break larger cohorts into consistent small groups to minimize contact and ease any need for contact tracing.
- Develop and post room cleaning/sanitizing protocol.

Communications and training

This Preparedness Plan will be posted on the Employee Portal and distributed to all employees and students via email. NWHSU will update the communication and training, as necessary. Summaries of the document with links to the full document will be posted in classrooms.

Please clicking on the links throughout this document to enhance your knowledge on how to keep yourself and other NWHSU colleagues safe.

Other Resources:

[What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others.](#)

[What to do if you are sick.](#)

Questions

- Employees should direct questions via email to Mary Gale at mgale@nwhealth.edu.
- Students should direct questions via email to Susan Neppl at [snepl@nwhealth.edu](mailto:sneppl@nwhealth.edu).

Appendix A – Guidance for developing a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

General

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus

www.osha.gov

www.dli.mn.gov

Handwashing

www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html

www.cdc.gov/handwashing

<https://youtu.be/d914EnpU4Fo>

Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html

www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html

Social distancing

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html

Housekeeping

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html

www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html

Employees exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19

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

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html

Training

www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html

www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf