UC SAFE

Returning to the Workplace

UTICA
COLLEGE

PURPOSE

This Interim Guidance outlines a "phased-in" return to work for Utica College during Phase II and III of NY State's identified re-opening initiative. This document will serve as general guidance, and provide Utica College a return pathway to on Campus Operations in a safe and strategic manner in an effort to help protect against the spread of COVID-19.

These guidelines are minimum requirements established by the Utica College Return to Campus Task Force. These guidelines are based on the best-known public health practices at the time of Phase II and Phase III of New York State's reopening initiative. However, they do not preclude department heads or supervisors from requiring additional precautions or increased restrictions when deemed necessary to protect life and health. The recommendations upon which these guidelines are based change frequently. Utica College is accountable for adhering to all local, state, and federal requirements relative to office-based work activities. Utica College is also accountable for staying current with updates to these requirements, as well as incorporating those updates into office-based work activities and the UC Safe Plan.

BACKGROUND

- March 7, 2020 – Governor Andrew M. Cuomo issued Executive Order 202, declaring a state of emergency in response to COVID-19. Community transmission of COVID-19 has occurred throughout New York. To minimize further spread, social distancing of at least six feet must be maintained between individuals, where possible.

- March 13, 2020 – Utica College President Laura Casamento announced the College has suspended all on ground, in-person instruction due to the threat of COVID-19. It was declared Utica College would move to online course delivery for the remainder of the 2020 Spring Semester.

- March 20, 2020 – Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order 202.6, directing all non-essential businesses to close in-office personnel functions. Essential businesses, as defined by Empire State Development Corporation (ESD) guidance, were not subject to the in-person restriction, but were, however, directed to comply with the guidance and directives for maintaining a clean and safe work environment issued by the New York State Department of Health (DOH), and were strongly urged to maintain social distancing measures to the extent possible.

- April 12, 2020 – Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order 202.16, directing essential businesses to provide employees, who are present in the workplace, with a face covering, that must be used when in direct contact with customers or members of the public during the course of their work.

- April 15, 2020 – Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order 202.17, directing that any individual who is over age two and able to medically tolerate a face-covering must cover their nose and mouth with a mask or cloth face-covering when in a public place and unable to maintain, or when not maintaining, social distance.

- April 26, 2020 – Governor Cuomo announced a phased approach to reopen industries and businesses in New York in phases based upon a data-driven, regional analysis.

- May 4, 2020 – Governor Cuomo provided that the regional analysis would consider several public health factors, including new COVID-19 infections, as well as health care system, diagnostic testing, and contact tracing capacity.

- May 11, 2020 – Governor Cuomo announced that the first phase of reopening would begin on May 15, 2020 in several regions of New York, based upon available regional metrics and indicators.

- May 29, 2020 – Governor Cuomo announced several regions of New York State, including the Mohawk Valley, would enter Phase II allowing businesses and specific manufacturing operations to resume.

- June 12, 2020 – Governor Cuomo announced several regions of New York State, including the Mohawk Valley, would enter Phase III.

- June 12, 2020 – The Utica College Board of Trustees approves the Utica College Return to Operations Plan, "UC Safe."

- June 16, 2020 – Utica College announces a phased approach for faculty and staff to return to campus beginning the week of July 1, 2020.

- June 20, 2020 – Utica College releases the "UC Safe" plan to the Campus Community and the general public.

- June 22, 2020 – Governor Cuomo issues Interim Guidance for Higher Education During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

- July 10, 2020 – Utica College submits Reopening Plan to New York State.

Please note that where guidance in this document differs from other guidance documents issued by New York State, the more recent guidance shall apply.

STANDARDS FOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICE ACTIVITIES AT UTICA COLLEGE ▬▬

Office-based work can resume only if in compliance with minimum State standards, as well as applicable federal requirements, including but not limited to such minimum standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and United States Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The State standards apply to all office-based work activities

(essential and nonessential) in operation during the COVID-19 public health emergency until rescinded or amended by the State. The standards contained within this guidance apply to all office-based work activity – both essential and non-essential. Utica College, designated department heads, and supervisors shall be responsible for meeting these standards.

The following guidance is organized around three distinct categories: people, places, and processes.

I. PEOPLE

A. Physical Distancing

- New York State Guidance: where office-based work is located in a region that is in Phase II, III, & IV the total number of occupants is limited to no more than 50 percent of the maximum occupancy at any given time for a particular area as set by the certificate of occupancy. Where applicable, Utica College will work with department heads and supervisors to maintain capacity limits; and

- Utica College will strongly encourage a minimum distance of six feet is maintained among individuals at all times, unless safety of the core activity requires a shorter distance.

- Any time individuals must come within six feet of another person, suitable face coverings must be worn. Individuals must be prepared to put on a face covering if another person unexpectedly comes within six feet.

  - Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings and disposable masks that cover both the mouth and nose.

  - Utica College departments must close or limit capacity in all common indoor seating areas (e.g. reception areas) within their office space. To the extent that such spaces remain open, department heads and supervisors, with assistance from the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), will modify seating areas arrangements (e.g. chairs, tables) to ensure that individuals are at least six feet apart in all directions (e.g. side-to-side and when facing one another).

- Department heads and supervisors may modify or reconfigure the use and/or restrict the number of workstations, employee seating areas, and desks, so that employees are at least six feet apart in all directions (e.g. side-to-side and when facing one another). Employees will not share workstations without cleaning and disinfecting between uses (users will be responsible for this – cleaning supplies will be provided). When distancing is not feasible between workstations, Utica College will require the use of face coverings.

- Supervisors are encouraged to implement strict clean-desk policies, so that non-essential items are stored in enclosed cabinets or drawers, rather than on desks.

- Supervisors are encouraged to limit the use of shared workstations (e.g. "hot-desks"), to the extent practicable. To the extent that such workstations remain in use, they must be cleaned and disinfected between users (users will be responsible for this – cleaning supplies will be provided).

- Utica College will prohibit the use of small spaces (e.g. elevators, supply rooms, personal offices, and vehicles) by more than one individual at a time. Exceptions may occur under specific circumstances if all parties are wearing suitable face coverings. However, even when face coverings are in use, occupancy must never exceed 50 percent of the maximum capacity of the space or vehicle.

- Increased ventilation with outdoor air to the greatest extent possible (e.g., opening windows and doors in individual office rooms) will be encouraged while maintaining safety protocols. Placards and signage has been posted as additional measures to prevent congregation in elevator waiting areas and limit density in elevators, and encouraging the use of stairs.

  - Access to areas that have reached maximum capacity under distancing guidelines will be restricted.

  - Signage has also been deployed to reduce bi-directional foot traffic using signs with arrows in narrow aisles, hallways, or spaces, and distance markers denoting spaces of six feet in all commonly used areas (e.g. break/study rooms, dining areas, reception desks, etc.).

- Signage with CDC guidance is posted in office areas reminding individuals to:

  - Cover their nose and mouth with a mask or cloth face-covering when six feet of social distance cannot be maintained.

  - Properly store and, when necessary, discard PPE.

- Adhere to physical distancing instructions.
- Report symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19, and how they should do so.
- Follow hand hygiene and cleaning and disinfection guidelines.

B. Gatherings in Enclosed Spaces

- In-person gatherings (e.g. meetings, conferences) will be limited to the greatest extent possible. UC will use other methods such as video or teleconferencing whenever possible, per CDC guidance "Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)."
- Walk-in appointments will be prohibited. All in-person appointments must be scheduled and held in a space that meets social distancing guidelines.
- Practices to limit in-person gatherings and to enforce appropriate social distancing measures when meetings are held are in place such as:
  - Increased desks to spaces previously used for group gathering (e.g. meeting spaces, conference rooms).
  - Mark tables in meeting rooms with distance markers.
- Non-essential amenities and communal areas that promote gathering or are high-touch (e.g. vending machines, communal coffee machines) will be severely limited or closed.
- Social distancing in small areas, such as restrooms and breakrooms, will have signage and systems (e.g. flagging when occupied) to restrict occupancy when social distancing cannot be maintained in such areas.
- Supervisors will develop staggered schedules for employees to observe social distancing for any gathering (e.g. coffee breaks, meals, and shift starts/stops).
- If required, employees that don't need to be in the office may be allowed to collect documents from their place of work on a case-by-case basis, but such collection should occur minimally, not with frequency.
- Non-essential common areas (e.g. gyms, pools, game rooms) will remain closed.

C. Workplace Activity

- Department heads and supervisors, per New York State guidance, must take measures to reduce interpersonal contact and congregation, through methods such as:
  - Adjust workplace hours.
  - Reduce in-office workforce to accommodate social distancing guidelines.
  - Avoid multiple teams working in one area by staggering scheduled tasks and using signs to indicate occupied areas.
- With Office of Human Resources authorization, supervisors may consider approving an employee to work from home if necessary (illness or immunocompromised conditions).

D. Movement and Commerce

- All non-essential off-campus travel will be discouraged when working on campus.
- The Cynkus Family Welcome Center has been designated as the campus pickup/delivery location for all necessary deliveries and retrievals.

II. PLACES

A. Protective Equipment

- In addition to the necessary PPE as required for certain workplace activities, all employees must wear acceptable face coverings when in the presence of fellow employees. Utica College will provide one cloth and one disposable face covering to all employees.
- Face coverings must be cleaned or replaced after use and must not be shared. Please consult CDC guidance for additional information on cloth face coverings and other types of PPE, as well as instructions on use and cleaning.
- UC will allow employees to use their own suitable face mask and will not prevent employees from wearing their personally-owned protective coverings (e.g. surgical masks, N-95 respirators, or face shields).
- The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) in conjunction with the Student Health Center has developed and made available training for all faculty, staff, and students relative to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including but not limited to, appropriate face coverings.
- As stated, all employees and visitors are required to wear face coverings in common areas including elevators, lobbies, and when moving around the office.
  - As a general rule, when sitting and proper social distancing measures are in place a mask is not required. If standing or walking, a face mask/covering must be worn.

B. Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection

- The College has developed operational plans exceeding advised CDC and DOH adherence to hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection requirements. This includes signage defining "Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19," and the "STOP THE SPREAD" as applicable.
- Facilities Management staff will maintain logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection.
- Facilities Management has developed hygiene stations located throughout the academic complex, community, and office spaces.
- The Facilities Management has also increased the number of hand sanitizer dispensers three fold across campus.

- As stated, hygiene stations will be deployed and contain appropriate cleaning/disinfection supplies for sanitizing shared and frequently touched surfaces.
- Faculty, staff, and students must assist in the effort to keep surfaces clean and sanitary.

• Therefore, these cleaning supplies will be readily available for use.

• Cleaning and disinfection of all spaces will occur with greater frequency focusing on high-risk (high traffic volume) areas.

- Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- To ensure distancing rules are adhered to, signage, occupied markers, and other methods will be used to reduce restroom capacity where feasible.
- UC will follow specific protocols for cleaning and disinfecting of exposed areas in the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19.
  - This cleaning and disinfection will include, at a minimum, all heavy-transit areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g. touchscreens, printers, keypads, telephones, hand rails, door handles).

• UC will follow CDC guidelines on "Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility" if someone is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19. The guidelines are as follows:

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Shared building spaces used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 (e.g. elevators, lobbies, building entrances) will be shut down and cleaned and disinfected in coordination with the building manager (For more information, see, "Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Commercial Building Management").
- Outside doors and windows will be opened to increase air circulation in the area.
- Custodial personnel will wait 24 hours before cleaning/ disinfecting.
- All areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 will be cleaned and disinfected.
- Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected, it can be reopened for use.
  - Persons who did not have close contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the work area immediately after cleaning and disinfection.
  - Per CDC contact tracing guidance, close contact is defined as being within six feet for at least 15 minutes.
  - When the extent of contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 is not clear, the Oneida County Health Department will be consulted for guidance.
  - Persons who have had close contact will undergo a 14-day quarantine.

• If more than seven days have passed since the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary, but routine cleaning and disinfection should continue.

• The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) discourages shared food and beverages (e.g. buffet style meals, pizza deliveries, and other communal foods).

- Employees should consider bringing lunch from home.
- Supervisors will reserve adequate space for employees to observe social distancing while eating meals.

C. Phased Reopening

• UC will phase-in reopening offices in an effort to allow facilities procedures and other operational concerns to be resolved before campus function returns to normal levels. Per New York State Guidance, the number of employees will be limited in specific areas.

• A strictly enforced "No-Visitor" policy will be in effect throughout Phases II and III. Only those persons cleared through the Offices of Emergency Management and Campus Safety will be permitted access following a "symptom- and concern-free" health screening. This policy and the number of persons permitted on campus will adjust to changes in local and state guidance.

D. Communications Plan

• Utica College has a robust communications network that reaches all UC Community members and visitors. This communications plan includes applicable instructions, training, signage, and provides the UC Community with timely and important information.

• Utica College encourages all community members and visitors to adhere to CDC and DOH guidance regarding the use of PPE, specifically face coverings when a social distance of six feet cannot be maintained, through numerous communication platforms and signage.

III. PROCESSES

A. Screening and Testing

• Utica College has implemented a mandatory daily health screening of all UC Community members and, where practical, visitors.

- UC Community members will receive a text and an email directing them to a link for Daily Health Screening purposes. Only one submission is allowed and required daily.
- If necessary and to the extent possible a health screening may be performed on site (Welcome Center) for visitors.

- Visitor screening will occur at the Welcome Center with prior notice of arrival and prior to authorization of access to campus. This is in an effort to prevent visitors from intermingling in close contact with the UC Community prior to completion of the screening.

- According to the CDC guidance on "Symptoms of Coronavirus," COVID-19 has a wide range of symptoms ranging from mild to severe. Symptoms of COVID-19 include, but are not limited to: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell.

- Employees are required to immediately disclose if and when their responses to any of the aforementioned health screening questions changes, including if they begin to experience symptoms, including during or outside of work hours.

  - In addition to the screening questionnaire, daily temperature checks may also be conducted per U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or DOH guidelines. However, Utica College does not, and will not, keep records of employee health data (e.g. temperature data).

- UC employees (or third party contracted employees) performing screening activities, including temperature checks, must wear appropriate PPE (masks, gloves, and eye protection) protecting them from exposure to potentially infectious employees or visitors entering the office.

  - Personnel performing screening activities are trained through the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) by personnel familiar with CDC, DOH, and OSHA protocols.

- An employee who screens positive for COVID-19 symptoms will not be allowed to enter Campus. If the employee is on campus when symptoms occur, they will be sent home with instructions to contact their healthcare provider for assessment and testing.

  - Utica College will immediately notify the Oneida County Health Department of all positive cases. Utica College, in conjunction with OCHD, will provide the employee with information on healthcare and testing resources.

- An employee who has responded that they have had close contact with a person who is confirmed or suspected of having COVID-19 may not be allowed to return to UC campus sites without abiding by the precautions outlined below and Utica College Offices of Human Resources and Emergency Management has documented the employee's or visitor's adherence to those precautions.

- Emergency Management and Human Resources will review all employee and visitor responses collected by the screening process on a daily basis. OEM will maintain a record of daily screening and the review of those screenings.

- The Offices of Human Resources and Emergency Management will be contacted in the event an employee or visitor begins experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, as noted in the questionnaire.

- The Office of Emergency Management will monitor and maintain continuous compliance with all aspects of the UC Safe plan.

- To the extent possible, Utica College will endeavor to maintain a log of every person, including employees and visitors, who may have close contact with other individuals on UC campus locations; excluding deliveries that are performed with appropriate PPE or through contactless means. Utica College will support and assist the OCHD with contact tracing efforts.

- Employees should take the following actions related to COVID-19 symptoms and contact:

  - If an employee has COVID-19 symptoms and either tests positive for COVID-19 or did not receive a test, the individual may only return after completing at least 14 days of self-quarantine.

  - If an employee is critical to the operation or safety of an office, the supervisor may consult with the Office of Emergency management who will refer to the local health department for guidance.

  - If an employee does not have COVID-19 symptoms but tests positive for COVID-19, the individual may only return to work after completing at least 14 days of self-quarantine.

  - If an employee has had close contact with a person with COVID-19 and is symptomatic, the individual should notify the Utica College and follow the above protocol for a positive case. Even if symptoms are deemed not related to COVID-19, the individual must complete a 14-day quarantine after the contact.

  - If an employee has had close contact with a person with COVID-19 and is not symptomatic, the individual must complete a 14-day self-quarantine.

  - If an employee is symptomatic upon arrival at work or becomes sick during the day, the employee or visitor must be separated and sent home immediately, following the above protocol for a positive case.

B. Tracing and Tracking

- Utica College will notify the OCHD and New York State Department of Health immediately upon being informed of any positive COVID-19 test result by an employee on Campus or at any campus location.

- In the case of an employee or visitor testing positive, Utica College will advise and work closely with the Oneida County Health Department as required to trace all contacts in the workplace. UC will provide the OCHD a list of all known individuals who entered the site dating back 48 hours before the employee or visitor first experienced COVID-19 symptoms or tested positive, whichever is earlier.

  - Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations.

- Utica College will ensure that in the case of an employee showing symptoms while in the workplace, supervisors are immediately notified with information on where the individual has been throughout the building.

- The OCHD will implement monitoring and movement restrictions of infected or exposed persons including home isolation or quarantine.

- Individuals who are alerted that they have come into close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19, and have been alerted via tracing, tracking or other mechanism, are required to self-report to their employer at the time of alert and shall not be permitted to remain or return to the workplace until they have completed quarantine, as described above in Section III "Processes," Subsection A "Screening and Testing."

IV. UC SAFE

Utica College has posted a completed safety plan on its website for public viewing.

Additional safety information, guidelines, and resources are available at:

New York State Department of Health Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Website, coronavirus.health.ny.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus (COVID-19) Website, cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov

Occupational Safety and Health Administration COVID-19 Website. osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19