



HEALTHIER WORKPLACES | A HEALTHIER WORLD

Back to Work Safely: Guidance for **Institutions of Higher Education**

Guidance Document, 2nd edition

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[aiha.org](https://www.aiha.org)

Overview

During the initial stages of the pandemic, most institutions of higher education (IHE) in the United States were forced to close or switch to fully remote education. Now, many IHEs are planning to reopen campuses in the fall and welcome back large numbers of on-campus students, faculty, and staffs for face-to-face (F2F) instruction. Thus, there is a need for guidance on reducing the risk of transmission for teachers, school staff, and students. This document is intended to provide guidance for IHE campuses—specifically, small- to medium-sized IHEs—including private and public universities and colleges and technical, trade, and vocational schools. While the scope of these guidance documents does not cover workplace testing or vaccination guidance, please refer to state, local, and federal guidance on these topics, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s [COVID-19 testing](#) and [vaccine](#) webpages.

As some restrictions have lifted and continue to be lifted, many uncertainties still remain. IHEs are faced with difficult questions that must be addressed as they reopen, resume normal operations, or continue normal operations, such as:

- How can we best protect the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff returning to campus?
- What communication is needed to keep all students, faculty members, and staff informed of the preventive steps being taken?
- What steps can we take to minimize the risk of disease transmission?
- What training is needed for our faculty and staff returning to campus?
- What health and safety measures do we need to take regarding new virus variants?
- What do we do if a student, faculty member, or staff member tests positive for or is suspected to

have COVID-19?

- What do we do if a student, faculty member, or staff member is sick or not following guidelines?
- How do we handle crowd management throughout high-traffic or common areas, including during peak times?
- Is it safe for students to move back into on-campus housing?
- How do we deal with cleaning and disinfecting high-contact surfaces, such as check-in desks, computer keyboards, and door handles, regularly during the day?
- What can on-site personnel and organizations do to minimize COVID-19 transmission?

In addition to the questions asked by the administrators of the institutions of higher education, faculty, staff, parents, and students are also thinking of ways that they can protect themselves.

The current scientific evidence indicates that SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is spread primarily by airborne transmission, through exposure to respiratory aerosols or droplets in the air that carry the virus. These respiratory aerosols and droplets are generated by the human respiratory system during normal activities, including breathing, speaking, shouting, singing, coughing, and sneezing. Exposure to these respiratory droplets in poorly ventilated or crowded indoor spaces is particularly of concern, and infection can occur through exposure to mucus membranes, such as the eyes, nose, and mouth. In addition, while not the primary route of exposure, people may also become infected from touching surfaces contaminated with the virus. It has also been shown that the virus can survive in aerosols for hours and on surfaces for days, depending on the type of surface. Measures can be taken to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 from person to person or by contact with potentially contaminated surfaces.



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The purpose of this guidance document is to provide clear and actionable steps towards the safe operations of IHEs through prevention, early detection, and control of COVID-19. This document offers practical guidance for IHEs to implement multiple layers of risk mitigation strategies through the hierarchy of controls, a system used to minimize or eliminate exposures to hazards. The hierarchy of controls ranks hazard control approaches in order of most effective to least effective—through the elimination of a hazard, substitution of a hazard, use of engineering controls, use of administrative controls, and correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Specifically, to reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19, the controls we focus on in this document are engineering controls, such as ventilation; administrative controls, such as physical distancing, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices, and personal hygiene; and PPE, such as gloves and face coverings. Aside from the hierarchy of controls, we also focus on mitigation strategies to use within restrooms and on contact surfaces, employee wellness, training, waste and laundering, and communication. No single mitigation strategy will be sufficient to address COVID-19 health and safety risks; rather, a multilayered risk management approach using controls, which can include vaccines, is recommended to limit the spread of COVID-19.

It is important to continue to monitor the global (World Health Organization or WHO), federal (CDC), state, and local guidelines for changes or updates in recommendations, disinfection strategies, worker protections, and other COVID-19 risk management best practices. It is also important that administrators of IHEs consistently monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of implemented mitigation strategies and alter their approaches as needed.

Any relaxation or modification of the recommendations herein (e.g., based on employee vaccine status) should be based on and comply with federal, state,

and local requirements, as well as best practices.

The following document addresses aspects of IHEs that have not been previously evaluated in other AIHA guidance documents. Please refer to the “Resources” section for links to AIHA guidance documents concerning other areas that may have characteristics in common with and guidance applicable to higher education campus life, including libraries, offices, childcare facilities, restaurants and dining halls, retail, ridesharing, small and medium sports and entertainment venues, gyms and workout facilities, and construction work.

What should IHE Leadership do to reduce risk for themselves, their faculty, staff, and their students?

IHE leadership (i.e., employers of the faculty and staff) is encouraged to continually monitor global (WHO), federal (CDC), state, and local guidelines for changes or updates in recommendations, disinfection strategies, worker protections, and other COVID-19 best management practices. These employers should also consider developing a knowledgeable team to monitor, assess, and implement new strategies as they become available and as knowledge evolves regarding SARS-CoV-2 transmission, vaccines, new virus variants, and other aspects of the virus.

IHE employers are also encouraged to complete a task-based risk assessment or job hazard analysis to best determine, by job task, where engineering or administrative controls can be implemented to reduce or eliminate virus transmission. Refer to the [OSHA Job Hazard Analysis document](#).

Due to the wide variety of geographic locations, sizes, physical layouts, and structures of higher education buildings and spaces, it may not be possible for all companies or employers to implement all of the following guidelines. However, implementing as



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many as possible through a multilayered risk management approach can help reduce health risks and risk of transmission.

Ventilation

- Keep heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems operational to maintain thermal comfort and maximize outdoor air based on system design.
 - Strive to maintain the relative humidity at 40-60%.
 - Refer to [AIHA's Indoor Environmental Quality document](#).
- If you need assistance on HVAC issues, ask an HVAC professional and see the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers' (ASHRAE) COVID-19 preparedness resources for more information.
 - AIHA occupational and environmental health and safety (OEHS) science professionals and industrial hygienists are also well-versed in general dilution ventilation. AIHA has a consultants list of such qualified professionals.
- Consider using portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration units with variable flow control or other ventilation-related engineering controls to accommodate differing room sizes and ventilation needs. Refer to [AIHA's indoor air quality document](#) for more information. Consider whether the noise produced by these units when they are turned on is appropriate for the application.
- If fans, such as pedestal fans or hard mounted fans, are used, take steps to minimize air blowing from one person directly at another individual. If fans are disabled or removed, it is important to remain aware of and take steps to prevent [heat hazards](#).
 - Be mindful of using portable pedestal or overhead ceiling fans, as these may contribute to the

spread of the virus.

- Use natural ventilation by opening windows and doors to increase airflow, if possible.

Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting Practices

- Consider developing a standard operating procedure, checklist, or audit system to consistently train school staff and employees on enhanced cleaning and disinfecting practices or to track when and how cleaning and disinfecting is conducted, including cleaning and disinfection of spaces previously occupied by someone confirmed to have had COVID-19. Refer to [AIHA's guidance document on workplace cleaning for COVID-19](#).
 - Make Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for cleaning and disinfection products available and ensure employees are aware of the hazards of use. Incorporate new hazards into the existing OSHA Hazard Communications Program.
 - Use disposable wipes or rags when available. Ensure reusable rags are maintained, handled, and cleaned per manufacturers' instructions. For more information, see the "Laundering" section below.
 - All items should be allowed to dry thoroughly after cleaning.
 - Establish a disinfection routine and ensure disinfection protocols follow product instructions for application and contact time.
- Select appropriate disinfectants.
 - The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has developed a list of products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, [EPA List N](#).
 - Do not mix different EPA-registered chemicals together. The combination could be toxic by inhalation. Be particularly careful when using any products containing ammonia, sodium hypochlorite (bleach), or hydrogen peroxide.



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- Review product labels and SDS and follow manufacturer specifications for cleaning and disinfecting.
- Allow for appropriate ventilation during cleaning and disinfecting.
- Keep cleaning and disinfecting products out of the reach of children.
- Provide appropriate signage regarding cleaning and disinfecting measures being taken, if needed.
- Ensure any commonly used items and high-touch surfaces (e.g., pens, desks, and doorknobs) are cleaned and disinfected on a frequent or regular basis and after each use.
- Consider consulting an occupational and environmental health and safety (OEHS) science professional or industrial hygiene expert if additional advice is needed. AIHA has a consultants list of such qualified professionals.
- The institution’s leadership should evaluate the campus to determine the most appropriate application method for disinfection. Please refer to [EPA’s guidance](#) on the use of different methods for applying disinfectants to learn more.
 - Currently, CDC does not recommend fogging, fumigation, or wide-area or electrostatic spraying as a primary method for surface disinfection in most cases. Refer to [CDC’s COVID-19 webpage](#) on cleaning and disinfecting facilities.
- Perform a normal cleaning routine for outdoor areas. Do not disinfect sidewalks or roads.
 - The risk of becoming infected with SARS-CoV-2 from touching outdoor surfaces is very low, and disinfection is not effective.
- Books and other paper-based materials are not considered at high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection. Plastic coverings on books or other plastic or metal materials should be disinfected between use.
- Common areas, such as lobbies, should be cleaned and disinfected before and after students or staff members arrive and before and after students and staff members leave.
 - Disinfect all surfaces and commonly touched equipment, such as computer stations.
 - Seating, doors, restrooms, common areas, etc., should be disinfected at the end of each day.
- The impact of cleaning and disinfection protocols on materials and electronics should be considered. Some cleaning and disinfecting protocols can adversely impact materials such as fabrics in terms of both appearance and structural integrity. Some electronics can be adversely impacted by the chemicals used for cleaning or disinfecting.

Personal Hygiene

- Establish a “before and after class” handwashing or sanitizing protocol for all students, teachers, and staff.
- Consider touchless entry for buildings, classrooms, or lecture halls.
- Provide handwashing stations or, if not feasible, touch-free automated hand sanitizer dispensers at high-traffic locations (e.g., at the entrances of institution buildings, at exits, near elevators, and outside restrooms). These should contain hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol.
 - If providing neither a station nor a dispenser is feasible, then at a minimum, consider providing hand sanitizer at high-traffic locations. This sanitizer should contain at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol.
 - Post signs at each hand sanitizer station to encourage proper use and illustrate proper hand sanitizing techniques.



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Physical Distancing

- Physical distancing can help limit transmission. Institutions of higher education should follow all local, state, or federal physical distancing requirements.
- Modify or adjust workstations to minimize close contact (e.g., within six feet or less for a cumulative 15 minutes over a 24-hour period) of faculty with other faculty, staff, or students, when possible.
- Post signs around the institution or campus as reminders to maintain physical distancing at all times.
- Use methods to physically separate faculty, staff, and students in the institution (e.g., entrance and exit areas and classrooms), when possible.
 - Use visual cues, such as floor markings and signs, to encourage physical distancing. Mark increments of six feet on the ground outdoors, at the entrance to buildings, so that students, faculty, and staff can maintain appropriate distancing if waiting in line.
 - Consider implementing assigned seating in classrooms to aid contact tracing efforts.
 - Space chairs at least six feet apart. Use barriers, such as screens, when possible.
 - Individual desks rather than communal tables should be used whenever possible.
 - If communal tables must be used, consider installing dividers, such as plastic barriers, between students.
 - Be mindful that barriers can disrupt ventilation and airflow.
 - Desks should be spaced at least six feet apart and should face the same direction, rather than towards each other or the center of the classroom.
- For large lecture halls, consider taping off seats or rows to allow for proper physical distancing.
- Limit the number of in-person attendees; conduct smaller classes in larger classrooms to allow for proper physical distancing and spacing.
- Consider offering a combination (hybrid) approach of some distance learning and some in-person learning to reduce the number of in-person attendees. Consider creating multiple sections or shifts for every class to reduce the number of in-person attendees.
- Consider outdoor learning, when feasible.
- Consider staggering class schedules to reduce the density of students in high-traffic areas.
- Consider closing staff lounges or restricting occupancy.
- Avoid sharing objects such as electronic devices, books, pens, demonstratives, or learning aids.
- Discourage the use of shared items that are difficult to clean or disinfect.
- Develop specialized plans for courses or instruction when physical distancing is not possible or that involve high-contact activities.
- Consider canceling or postponing special large group events or gatherings (e.g., festivals, holiday events, and special performances). If possible, encourage essential events, such as orientation for new students, to be outdoors or virtual as much as possible.
- If possible, arrange for administrative staff to work from home to decrease the number of individuals in an office area.

Face Coverings

- Face coverings can help limit transmission. Employers should follow all local, state, or federal face covering requirements.

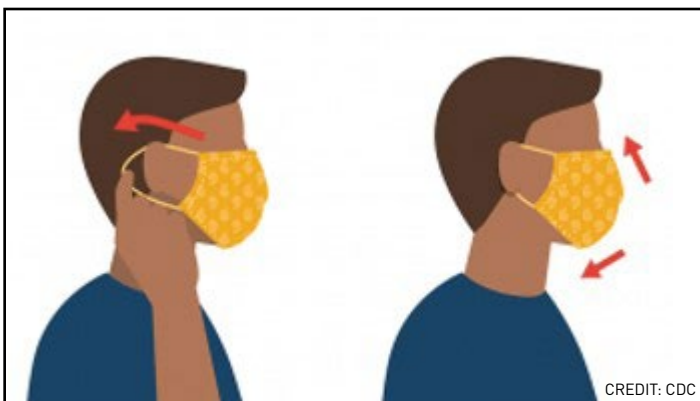


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- Provide disposable or washable cloth face coverings to students, faculty, and school staff, if possible.
- Students, faculty, and staff should be frequently reminded not to touch their cloth or disposable face covering and to wash their hands frequently.
- Train faculty, staff, and students on the proper way to maintain, wear (covering both the nose and mouth), handle, and clean or dispose of face coverings, as discussed by CDC. Refer to the graphic below and to [CDC's guidance on how to wear masks](#).
- Encourage faculty, staff, and students to wear cloth or disposable face coverings if using public transportation to get to work or class. Refer to [CDC's guidance on safe use of public transportation](#) during COVID-19.
- Additional information on cloth face coverings can be found in [CDC's guidance for using masks](#) to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Restrooms

- Post signage limiting restroom occupancy, to allow for proper physical distancing, and to remind students, teachers, and staff to wash their hands before and after using the restroom.
- Minimize touchpoints when entering and exiting restrooms, if possible.



- If the door cannot be opened without touching the handle, provide paper towels and a trash can by the door so that a paper towel can be used when touching the handle and then discarded.
- Consider controlling access to bathrooms with a key so that disinfection measures can be better managed. If a key is used, consider disinfecting it after each use.
- If possible, allow doors to multi-stall restrooms to be opened and closed without the handles needing to be touched.
- Place signs as reminders to close toilet lids (if present) before and after flushing.
- Use no-touch faucets, towel dispensers, soap dispensers, and waste receptacles when possible.
- Hand soap should be readily available for use by occupants.
- Provide paper towels in restrooms.
 - Refer to the [AIHA's guidance document on using hand air dryers during COVID-19](#) for more information.
- If feasible, work with HVAC professionals to ensure that bathrooms are well ventilated and, if filtration is used, that proper filtration practices are being followed.
- Increase frequency and efforts to keep bathrooms clean and properly disinfected and maintain a record of sanitary work practices.
 - Take precautions when cleaning or maintaining showers, sinks, and toilets (i.e., avoid creating aerosols, close toilet lids before flushing, and use disposable gloves).

Waste and Laundering

- Single-use items and used disinfection materials can be treated as regular waste, following regular safety guidelines.



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- Any reusable cloth materials should be washed and dried on the highest temperature setting allowable for the fabric.
- When handling dirty laundry, wear gloves and a mask and do not shake.
- Clothes hampers or laundry baskets, if used, should be cleaned according to manufacturers' instructions.
- Wash hands after handling dirty laundry.

Training

- Provide awareness training to faculty and staff on cleaning and disinfection products used in the workplace following [OSHA's Hazard Communication Standards](#).
 - For employees who will use cleaning and disinfecting products, training should also include proper use, PPE, disposal, and relevant precautionary measures.
- Provide instruction and training to faculty and staff on how to correctly maintain, handle, wear, clean, and dispose of cloth or disposable face coverings.
- Provide appropriate training and education for all PPE, including disposable and reusable gloves.
 - **NOTE: If an institutional employer chooses to provide or the employee supplies their own N95 respirator, please fully consider all the potential OSHA requirements.**
 - Use videos and in-person visual demonstrations of proper PPE donning and doffing procedures, while maintaining physical distancing during these demonstrations.
 - Emphasize that care must be taken when putting on and taking off PPE to ensure that the worker or the item does not become contaminated.
 - PPE should be: (1) disposed of; or (2) properly disinfected and stored in a clean location when not in use.
- Stress hand hygiene before and after handling all PPE.
- Correct maintenance on handling, wearing, cleaning, and disposing of PPE.
- Make SDS for cleaning and disinfection products available and ensure employees are aware of the hazards of use. Incorporate new hazards into your existing [OSHA Hazard Communication Program](#).
- Implement and inform institutional faculty and staff of supportive workplace policies, as applicable.
 - Provide flexible sick leave policies consistent with public health guidance. Providing paid sick leave is important to encourage employees to stay home when sick.
 - Refer to [CDC's guidance for businesses and employers](#) regarding COVID-19 test results from employees.
 - Offer institutional faculty and staff the flexibility to stay home to care for sick family members.
 - Implement human resources policies consistent with public health guidance and state and federal workplace laws. For more information on employer responsibilities, visit the [Department of Labor](#) and [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) websites.
 - Provide employee assistance programs and community resources to help employees manage stress and receive support.
 - Offer special accommodations upon request for faculty and staff at increased risk for severe illness, to allow them to perform their job duties safely, while also protecting sensitive employee health information.
- Post signs and reminders at entrances and in strategic places to provide instructions on hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and cough etiquette. Include signs with images for non-English readers, as needed.



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- Train faculty and staff on new or modified working schedules, how they can stay up to date on new scheduling requirements, and how to make requests for schedule changes if a need arises.

Other Control Measures

- Students, faculty, and staff should be encouraged to stay home if they are symptomatic.
- Institutional leadership is encouraged to explore work-from-home options, staggered work shifts or hours, and other flexible approaches, as feasible.
- If faculty, staff, or students commute to campus using public transportation, consider asking them to:
 - Use other forms of transportation, if possible.
 - Maintain physical distancing and wear cloth or disposable face coverings.
 - Commute at off-peak times, if possible.
 - Wash their hands before the trip and as soon as possible after arriving.
- Educate students, faculty, and staff on recognizing the symptoms of COVID-19 and provide instructions on what to do if they develop symptoms.
- Although perhaps not necessary if handwashing protocols are rigorously followed, consider providing disposable gloves to employees, especially for cleaning and disinfecting, removing waste materials, and cleaning the restrooms.
 - If gloves are worn, change them regularly; wearing gloves is not a substitute for handwashing.
 - If worn, inspect gloves frequently. Remove or replace any gloves that are torn, damaged, or contaminated.
- Plan for employee absences by developing flexible attendance and sick leave policies, plan for alternative coverage, and monitor and track employee absences related to COVID-19.
- Stay informed of local and state COVID-19 information and updates in your geographic area.

Communication

- Communication and training should be easy to understand; in languages preferred to be spoken or read by faculty, staff, and students; and include accurate and timely information.
 - Methods for communicating with faculty, students, and staff could include emails, texts, automated phone calls, websites, and signage.
- Adopt a communication strategy that is customized to your institution and emphasizes transparency.
 - Communicate to faculty, students, and staff what is being done to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 (e.g., disinfection routines, health policies for staff, and health and safety measures in place).
 - Establish formal and informal routes of communication for faculty, students, and staff to express concerns, questions, comments, and feedback.
- If the institutional facility is in a multi-tenant location, consider establishing a communication pathway with other tenants to inform each other of confirmed COVID-19 cases present in the building.
 - Communicate ventilation concerns and responses with other tenants (e.g., HVAC systems can be shared by multiple tenants and therefore adjusting the system in one area may have negative effects in another area).

Student, Faculty, and Staff Wellness

- Communicate to faculty, students, and staff the importance of being vigilant when monitoring personal health symptoms and contacting the institution's leadership if or when they start to feel sick.
- Revisit your sick leave program to allow for time off and follow all HR policies and HIPAA or other regulatory requirements.
- Conduct faculty, student, and staff temperature screenings and wellness checks before each class or beginning work each day. **(NOTE: Comply with**



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OSHA's Access to Employee Medical and Exposure Records Standard for confidentiality.)

- Temperature screening methods can include a manual thermometer (use non-contact infrared thermometers) or thermal camera meeting [FDA's recommendations](#). Additional screening information or guidance can be found on [CDC's website](#).
- Assign a faculty or staff member to manage and conduct temperature screenings while following CDC guidelines. If this is not possible, faculty, staff, and students can self-check their own temperatures.
- Screening should be done in a manner such that the privacy of faculty, students, and staff is respected.
- Perform visual inspections for other signs of illness (e.g., flushed cheeks, rapid or difficult breathing without recent physical activity, fatigue, or coughing).
- Faculty, students, and staff who have a fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius) or above or other signs of illness should not be admitted into the school campus or building.
- Institutions of higher education can consider incorporating a wellness questionnaire similar to [CDC's general screening survey](#). However, we encourage checking your regional health department websites. For example, there is a [personnel screening form](#) available on the San Francisco Department of Health's website.
- Refer to [CDC's guidance for businesses and employers](#) regarding faculty or staff members who have symptoms or signs of COVID-19 (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) or who have had close contact with someone who has COVID-19.
- If a student or faculty or staff member tests positive for COVID-19:
 - Follow federal, state, and local recommendations for reporting and communicating cases, while remaining compliant with regulations and guidelines pertaining to protecting private health information, such as confidentiality required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). See [OSHA for guidance on reporting workplace exposures to COVID-19](#).
 - Engage HR immediately and enforce all applicable HR rules and regulations.
 - Follow federal, state, and local recommendations for any individuals that had close contact with the student or faculty or staff member.
 - Use trained personnel to perform enhanced cleaning and disinfecting of any surfaces that the employee may have come into contact with.
 - o Encourage the trained personnel to wear face coverings and gloves, dispose of their gloves after use, and wash their hands and faces when complete. Visibly dirty surfaces should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water PRIOR to disinfection.
 - For disinfection, use only EPA-registered disinfectants on [List N](#).
- Encourage faculty, staff, and students who are sick to stay home. This includes:
 - People with flu-like symptoms or who live with someone with these clinical symptoms.
 - People with COVID-19, people who live with someone with COVID-19, or people who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Institutional leadership is encouraged to educate students, faculty, and staff on recognizing the symptoms of COVID-19 and provide instructions on what to do if they develop symptoms.

Shared or Congregate Housing

- Limit staff and other students from entering students' rooms or living quarters unless necessary.



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- Consider discontinuing or limiting nonessential visitors or outside volunteers.
- For common areas, such as lobbies, check-in desks, laundry rooms, game rooms, computer rooms, and study areas, consider applying the following guidance.
 - Place a hand sanitizing station with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol at each entrance of the common area; this includes the entrances to each room or building.
 - Ensure that common areas are adequately and continuously stocked with hand sanitizer, soap, and paper towels. Encourage frequent hand-washing.
 - Provide training for students and post signs in common areas informing students on how to sanitize or wash their hands properly.
 - Post clear signage (including notification of maximum occupancy limits) and physical distancing measures in accordance with public health rules and guidelines in the common areas.
 - Place markings at 6-foot intervals on the floor of lobbies and common areas wherever lines may develop, to assure proper physical distancing.
 - Clean and disinfect common areas daily, at a minimum. This includes commonly touched surfaces and equipment, such as elevator buttons, door-knobs, and light switches, in common areas, including laundry facilities, shared kitchens, shared bathrooms, computer rooms, dining rooms, and study areas.
 - Consider closing some or all of the shared spaces. If not possible, limit the number of individuals allowed in a common area or shared space at one time, including visitors, and encourage physical distancing.
- Encourage students and staff not to linger or socialize in common areas.
- Activities that involve close contact are not recommended in common areas.
- Remove all shared literature, such as magazines, from common areas, including front offices and lobbies.
- Stagger students' schedules during high-traffic times (e.g., move-in days, mealtimes, and during activities) in common areas to reduce mixing and close contact between students.
- Minimize foot traffic in enclosed spaces. Consider limiting the number of individuals in elevators and, if possible, designate one-directional traffic flow in stairwells.

Shared Dining and Kitchen Areas (For Dining Halls, see *Back to Work Safely: Guidance for Restaurants*)

- Consider eliminating shared common areas used for consuming snacks or beverages, such as water or coffee.
- Kitchen areas and equipment should be cleaned and disinfected daily, at a minimum.
- The outside of dishwashers should be cleaned and disinfected at the beginning and end of the day.
- All silverware and dinnerware should be cleaned in the dishwasher, when available; after cleaning, the cutlery and dishware should be stored to prevent contamination.
- Silverware should be stored in a way so that adjacent silverware is not easily touched when retrieving a piece.
- If silverware and dishes cannot be kept clean and covered, disposable options are recommended.
- Install touchless water or beverage faucets when possible. Water or beverage faucets that require touch activation should be disinfected throughout the day.



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- Ice machines that require a handheld scoop should not be used, as it is difficult to control potential contamination.
- Arrange chairs and tables to be placed at least six feet apart during shared meals or other events.

Living Quarters and Bathrooms (See Also Restrooms)

- If possible, assign one single resident per room, unless they are in the same family unit.
- Disinfect doorknobs and other high-touch surfaces at least daily.
- Shared bathrooms should be cleaned and disinfected regularly, at least twice per day and possibly after times of heavy use. Fans should be left running continuously unless there are mechanical or noise-related reasons not to do so.
- Inform residents that sinks or counter surfaces in shared bathrooms may be a source of contamination. Request residents refrain from placing toothbrushes or other toiletries directly on sink or counter surfaces. For example, totes can be used to store toiletries and hung to reduce contact with surfaces in bathrooms, when possible.
- Limit the capacity in shared bathrooms, depending on size and HVAC capacity. Consider using floor markings to encourage physical distancing. Consider staggering bathroom schedules to reduce occupant density in bathrooms during times of peak use so that lines do not form.

Research Facilities and Laboratories (See Also Back to Work Safely: Guidance for Laboratories and Back to Work Safely: Guidance for Libraries)

- Disposable face coverings, rather than cloth face coverings, are recommended for laboratory work that involves working with—but not being overexposed to—hazardous chemicals or biological or radiological materials. They can be disposed of after

these tasks are completed. If contamination with hazardous materials may have occurred, face coverings should be disposed of immediately per your facility's disposal requirements.

- This recommendation is specific to the COVID-19 pandemic and does not address PPE requirements for hazards associated with all laboratory activities. Refer to specific laboratory policy for proper PPE required in the laboratory.
- Avoid sharing PPE as much as possible; disinfect reusable PPE, such as safety glasses, splash goggles, and face shields, between uses.
- Single-use items and used disinfection materials can be treated as regular waste, following regular safety guidelines.
- Any reusable cloth materials, such as lab coats, should be washed with detergent and dried on the highest temperature setting for the fabric after use.
- Limit the number of laboratory occupants to allow for physical distancing.
 - Consider staggering laboratory schedules, shifts, or classes to reduce the number of laboratory occupants. Create schedules for shared equipment.
 - Maintain compliance with local or institution-specific guidance where applicable (i.e., maintaining no fewer than two personnel in the laboratory at a time during certain analytical procedures or use of certain chemicals).
- Determine which procedures can be performed remotely, including laboratory meetings, study design, data analysis, and report writing.
- Review laboratory-assigned duties and consider reassignment, cross-training, or coordination.
- Confirm that outside contractors have established COVID-19 protocols and procedures consistent with the institution's requirements.



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What can IHE Faculty and Staff Members do to protect themselves and minimize the transmission of COVID-19?

- Faculty and staff members should evaluate their health continuously; if they are sick, have a fever or symptoms, or have someone sick at home, then they should remain home.
 - **NOTE: Employer HR policies, HIPAA guidelines, and other laws should be followed at all times.**
- Disinfect shared equipment and high-touch surfaces frequently, after each use at least.
- Maintain a clean cloth or disposable face covering. Replace it frequently, if needed, and replace after contamination.
 - When wearing a face covering, ensure both your nose and mouth are covered.
 - Change your face covering if it becomes wet, damaged, or contaminated.
 - Wash your hands before touching your face covering.
 - Wear a cloth or disposable face covering while using public transportation.
 - Additional information on cloth face coverings can be found on [CDC's website](#). (**NOTE:** Cloth or disposable non-valved face coverings primarily protect other people but can also protect wearers. When wearing a face covering, ensure both your nose and mouth are covered. The use of a cloth or disposable face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing.)
 - Have extra face coverings on hand.
- Maintain good hygiene practices by washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol. For more information, refer to [CDC's handwashing guidelines](#).
- If you are a faculty or staff member who tests positive for COVID-19, or who has come in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, follow [CDC's guidelines](#).
- At a minimum, wash your hands after being in a public place; after touching your face covering; after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; after using the restroom; after touching any common contact surfaces; and before eating. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands when you arrive at work, throughout the day during various activities (e.g., before and after preparing food, before and after administering medication, after handling garbage, and after using the bathroom), after touching your face covering, when you leave the campus or facility, and when you arrive home.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw used tissues in the trash. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands. Immediately wash your hands after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Learn more about [coughing and sneezing etiquette](#).
- Let institutional leadership know if you have concerns about PPE or face coverings that may be provided to you and ensure that you are properly instructed on how to use them. CDC has recommended sequences for donning and doffing PPE.
 - **NOTE: If an employer chooses to provide an N95 respirator, please fully consider all the potential OSHA requirements.**

Worker Rights

This document presents and supports workplace protections that are essential components of occupational health and safety systems and programs. These basic protections are worker rights, as well as essential ingredients of occupational health and safety systems.



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What can **Students do** to protect themselves and minimize the transmission of COVID-19?

- Comply with instructions regarding COVID-19 precautions set forth by the IHE, including but not limited to physical distancing requirements and use of face coverings.
- Evaluate your own health and your family's health continually. If you are sick, stay home. If you have an elevated temperature, stay home. If someone in your house is sick, stay home. If you have allergies and uncontrollable sneezing, stay home.
- Check with the institution, prior to attending, regarding any current requirements specific to COVID-19.
- Wash your hands before and after you leave the campus or facility, if possible, especially if touching common high-touch surfaces. If not feasible, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol when you enter and before you leave the campus or facility.
- If using public transportation to get to and from the institution of higher education, wash your hands when you enter and before you leave the campus or facility. If not feasible, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropyl alcohol.
- Maintain a distance of six feet from other students, faculty members, and school staff when walking through the campus or facility, whenever possible.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw used tissues in the trash. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands. Immediately wash your hands after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Learn more about [coughing and sneezing etiquette](#).

Resources

[AIHA: Effective and Safe Practices, Guidance for Custodians, Cleaning, and Maintenance Staff Guidance Document](#)

[AIHA: Employers' Guide to COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfection in Non-Healthcare Workplaces Guidance Document](#)

[AIHA: Joint Consensus Statement on Addressing the Aerosol Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and Recommendations for Preventing Occupational Exposures](#)

[AIHA: Reducing the Risk of COVID-19 Using Engineering Controls Guidance Document](#)

[AIHA: Worker Rights White Paper](#)

[AIHA: Workplace Cleaning for COVID-19](#)

[American College Health Association: COVID-19 Resources](#)

[ASHRAE: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Response Resources from ASHRAE and Others](#)

[Campus Safety, Health, and Environmental Management Association: COVID-19 Resources](#)

[CDC: COVID-19 – Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)

[CDC: COVID-19 – COVID-19 Guidance for Shared or Congregate Housing](#)

[CDC: COVID-19 – COVID-19 Testing Overview](#)

[CDC: COVID-19 – General Business Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[CDC: COVID-19 – Guidance for Businesses and Employers Responding to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)



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[CDC: COVID-19 – Guidance for Institutions of Higher Education \(IHEs\)](#)

[CDC: COVID-19 – How to Wear Masks](#)

[CDC: COVID-19 – Protect Yourself When Using Transportation](#)

[CDC: COVID-19 – Use Masks to Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)

[CDC: COVID-19 – Vaccines for COVID-19](#)

[CDC: Facilities COVID-19 Screening](#)

[Department of Labor: Coronavirus Resources](#)

[EPA: Can I Use Fogging, Fumigation, or Electrostatic Spraying or Drones to Help Control COVID-19?](#)

[EPA: List N](#)

[FDA: Non-Contact Temperature Assessment Devices During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

[OSHA: Access to Employee Medical and Exposure Records](#)

[OSHA: Hazard Communication Standards](#)

[OSHA: Heat](#)

[OSHA: Job Hazard Analysis](#)

[OSHA: Recording Workplace Exposures to COVID-19](#)

[San Francisco Department of Public Health: Attachment A-1 – Personnel Screening Form](#)

[U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: Coronavirus and COVID-19](#)

[U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws](#)



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Disclaimer

AIHA is not legally responsible and shall be held harmless from all claims, causes of action, and demands, whatsoever, any third party may incur on account of damage, loss or injury resulting from adhering to these guidelines.

These guidance documents were primarily developed for those smaller business that don't have readily available occupational health and safety resources, and designed to help business owners, employers, employees and consumers implement science-backed procedures for limiting the spread of the coronavirus. They are subject to any local, state, or federal directives, laws, or orders about operating a business and should only be used if they do not conflict with any such orders.

These documents are subject to revision and shall be updated accordingly.

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