



Return to Work on Campus Plan **Updated Aug. 14, 2020**

Purpose and Guiding Principles

University of Puget Sound is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all members of our campus community. To foster the safe return of staff and faculty members to campus, Puget Sound is utilizing a phased *Return to Work on Campus* plan.

This plan will continue to be revised with updates communicated to all faculty and staff members in response to public health conditions in Washington state and guidance from Washington state and Pierce County public health officials, the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We expect that, over time, the plan will allow more faculty and staff members to return to campus consistent with Gov. Inslee's four-phase Safe Start plan.

The *Return to Work on Campus* plan outlines institutional and operational-level guidance to facilitate a careful and deliberate return to work on campus. Underpinning this plan are several key principles that have guided, and continue to guide, Puget Sound's COVID-19 response:

- ensure the health, safety and welfare of faculty, staff, students and visitors;
- mitigate COVID-19 risks by following the governor's orders and guidance from the CDC, L&I, and state and local health departments, and consulting guidelines offered by higher education professional associations;
- maintain academic and research excellence; and
- maintain university operations and prepare the institution for the return of students to campus.

Workplace Expectations

The success of efforts to reopen campus requires the commitment of every member of the campus community.

The need to limit the number of people on campus to meet social distancing requirements is imperative as we move toward fully reopening campus. The university expects that any faculty or staff member who can work from home will continue to do so until Pierce County eases restrictions for larger gatherings and the university notifies faculty and staff of the revised protocols. Until that time, administrative and support units that can effectively maintain business operations with staff working remotely must continue to do so.

While COVID-19 continues to present a risk, the university will provide reasonable accommodation for those individuals who are in a high-risk group as defined by the CDC or by any state proclamations. Individuals in the high-risk group, with disabilities, or with other reasons to request an accommodation, such as a change in work schedule or location, should complete the [COVID-19 Reasonable](#)

[Accommodation Request Form](#) and send it to benefits@pugetsound.edu.

All faculty and staff members are expected to comply with the guidelines outlined in this document, and with other university health and safety guidance. Per July 15, 2020, correspondence to faculty and staff, the university implemented a structure of roles to conduct oversight and coordination with respect to COVID-19 protocols. The purpose of this structure is to:

- enable Puget Sound to effectively manage and supervise COVID-19 prevention and response
- foster university-wide and department level continuous healthful operations and behaviors
- comply with state and health department requirements

The structure includes a range of roles, including COVID-19 Leads for each department and program. Department heads/chairs and program directors serving as COVID-19 Leads for their areas of responsibility will develop and communicate site-specific COVID-19 prevention plans and take steps to ensure implementation of and compliance with plans, policies and protocols to best support their particular department operations and health.

Phased Staffing

Faculty and staff members will be approved to return to campus in alignment with Washington's Safe Start plan. Expanded on-campus staffing will be based on operational need, ability to control and manage specific work environments, and necessity to access on-site resources. These decisions, once approved as noted below, will be communicated broadly to the campus community at www.pugetsound.edu/coronavirus and via email.

Social distancing requirements needed to reduce the number of people on campus at any given time will continue for some time. Departments that can continue to effectively work remotely should do so until restrictions are eased. Expansion of numbers of people on campus will be intentionally coordinated to mitigate potential risks and ensure the safety of the campus community. Departmental staffing levels beyond current needs to support critical on-site operations should not increase without prior approval from your area Vice President/Provost. Once decisions to expand on-campus staffing have been made and communicated, faculty and staff members should follow the *Return to Work on Campus* guidelines detailed within this document and other university communications.

Faculty and staff members who have been approved to return to work on campus may need to work in new and innovative ways. Faculty and staff members on campus are expected to maintain a required six feet of distance from others and reduce population density within buildings while continuing to meet the operational needs of the university. (When strict physical distancing is not feasible for a specific activity, other prevention measures are required, such as masks or barriers). Campus work options will need to take into account the following considerations:

- **Continue remote work.** Those who can work remotely to fulfill some or all of their work responsibilities should continue to do so, consistent with the Safe Start plan, to reduce the number of individuals on campus and the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus. This approach temporarily supersedes Puget Sound's existing Work at Home/Telecommuting Policy for faculty and staff; however, faculty and staff must continue to meet their essential job functions, which may include working on campus as determined by your area Vice President/Provost. Please see Puget Sound's coronavirus website for more details on [continuing remote work](#).

- **Flexible scheduling.** In order to limit the number of individuals and interactions among those on campus, departments should consider partial on-campus staffing with rotating schedules to meet in-person operational needs. Such schedules will help enable social distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces.
- **Alternate work schedules.** The beginning and end of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting times, departure times, breaks, and meals times will reduce traffic in common areas.
- **Individual offices.** Faculty and staff members in individual offices should consider working with office doors closed.
- **Workplace modifications.** Temporary changes in layout and design may be needed to create a separation of individuals. Approved modifications will be completed by or in partnership with Facilities Services health and safety representatives.
- **Continued use of technology.** Departments should support ongoing use of technology, including video conferencing and conference calls, to limit in-person gatherings.

Safety in the Workplace

The university has established expectations that will help reduce COVID-19 risks on campus. These expectations were developed from guidance by Washington public health officials and the CDC, as well as Washington State Department of Labor and Industries and Division of Occupational Safety and Health. All faculty and staff members returning to work on campus are expected to comply with the following practices and other university guidance:

- **No non-essential university-related travel.** In light of ongoing restrictions on international travel, quarantine requirements for international and certain domestic travel, and the increased presence of the coronavirus locally, regionally, and nationally, university travel currently is being restricted per the university's July 2020 [Statement Regarding Temporary Restrictions on International and Domestic Travel](#). All international travel on behalf of or otherwise supported by Puget Sound is prohibited until further notice. All domestic non-essential travel on behalf of Puget Sound also is prohibited until further notice. At this time, only essential university travel, as determined and approved in advance by the applicable Cabinet member, is authorized.
- **Events.** Given the continuing pandemic and consistent with the Governor's [proclamation](#) for the reopening of higher education institutions, the university has implemented an [interim policy for Sponsored and Hosted Campus Events for Fall 2020](#). In-person sponsored and hosted events are strongly discouraged during Fall 2020 and require advance approval by the provost/applicable vice president. All approved events must adhere to applicable regulatory restrictions, including those regarding size of gatherings, wearing of face coverings, and physical distancing, and food or beverages are not allowed.

Virtual sponsored and hosted events are strongly encouraged. Technology Services can be contacted for a consultation regarding live-stream capabilities. Technology Services requires at least one week notice, preferably two, for events requiring support.

- **Self-screen.** To help reduce the spread of the coronavirus, and consistent with the Governor's [proclamation](#) for the reopening of higher education institutions, all faculty and staff members (as

well as students) are required to complete a daily on-line COVID-19 health self-screening form for each day they are scheduled to work and prior to coming to campus. An online self-screen program was introduced on July 14, 2020, as one of several strategies to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Staying away from campus when persons have symptoms of COVID-19, have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, or have tested positive for COVID-19 is an important part of maintaining a safe and healthy community. A daily campus community email reminder provides access to the self-screen, which provides response instructions when someone does not pass the screen and is prohibited from coming to campus. All medical data will be maintained confidentially by Counseling, Health & Wellness Services.

The university also has [leave policies](#) that encourage faculty and staff members to stay at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when isolation or quarantine is required. Public health officials will inform faculty and staff members if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 in the workplace, and will advise on a course of action to mitigate the spread of the disease.

- **Practice physical distancing.** Since people can spread the virus even when they have no symptoms, physical distancing has been implemented across campus.
 - Faculty, staff, students, and visitors on campus should maintain a distance of six feet (about 2 arms' length) and consistently practice this level of social distancing.
 - Faculty, staff, students, and visitors must avoid gathering in groups and in confined areas, including elevators. If employees need to take the elevator because they cannot use the stairs, please limit capacity to ensure physical distancing.
 - Work spaces, classrooms, labs, common spaces, meetings, and activities will be evaluated and adjusted as necessary to maintain proper physical distancing.
 - Faculty and staff should do their best to avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use (including shared copiers).
- **Assess office environments.** Facilities Services is working with departments to evaluate work environments and will implement any measures deemed necessary to provide healthy work environments.
- **Wear a face covering when physical distancing cannot be maintained.** In July 2020 the State of Washington issued requirements mandating the wearing of face coverings in any indoor public setting or when outdoors and unable to maintain six feet of physical distance from others. The state also issued requirements for entities to require and enforce the use of face coverings. Information about these requirements can be found at:
<https://www.coronavirus.wa.gov/information-for/you-and-your-family/face-masks-or-cloth-face-covering>.

Two reusable cloth masks have been distributed on campus for each faculty and staff member. Cloth face coverings must only be worn for one day at a time, and must be properly laundered before use again. It is recommended that faculty and staff members also have their own suitable supply of cloth face coverings to reduce the need for daily laundering.

Wearing a face covering is one of the most vital COVID-19 prevention measures. Faculty, staff, students, and visitors on campus must wear a mask or face covering (their own or provided by the university) when in the presence of others within campus buildings and when outdoors and unable to maintain six feet of physical distance. A mask or face covering is not required if you are

working alone in a self-contained work space or open campus space, but should be worn when entering or leaving that space or to access other facilities outside of your contained work space. If you are unable to wear a mask or face covering for any reason, please notify your supervisor or a department head so that other accommodations can be assessed. They can partner with Human Resources as needed to address accommodation requests.

It is important to understand that some people cannot wear face coverings for health, sensory, or other reasons. Please remember it is not always obvious who does or does not experience issues related to the wearing of face coverings. If you meet someone without a face covering, please assume they are doing their best in caring for themselves and the community.

Wearing masks and face coverings

- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to handling the face covering.
- Ensure the face-covering fits fully over the nose and under the chin.
- Tie straps behind the head and neck, or loop around the ears.
- Avoid touching the front of the face covering.
- When taking off the face covering, do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Wash hands immediately after removing.
- [More information](#) from the CDC about how to wear cloth face coverings.

Caring for cloth face coverings

- Keep face coverings stored in a paper bag when not in use.
 - Cloth face coverings may not be used more than one day at a time and must be properly laundered with regular clothing detergent after each use.
 - Disposable masks must not be used for more than one day and must be disposed of after daily use.
 - [More information](#) from the CDC about caring for cloth face coverings.
- **Wash hands often.** Consistent with CDC guidance, in order to minimize the spread of COVID-19 faculty and staff members should frequently wash their hands using soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially true after a faculty or staff member is in a public place; after touching frequently used items or surfaces; or after nose-blowing, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol should be used. The university has provided hand-sanitizer dispensers throughout campus.
 - **Limit numbers of people using restrooms at the same time.** Use of restrooms should be limited based on size to ensure at least six feet of distance between individuals. Faculty and staff members must wash hands thoroughly after using the restroom to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.
 - **Cleaning.** Facilities Services staff members will clean public spaces such as building lobbies, restrooms, door handles, handrails, and elevator buttons consistent with recommended cleaning standards, which are subject to change. The university will maintain hand-sanitizer stations at major building locations. If there is a confirmed positive case of COVID-19 reported to the university, Facilities Services will coordinate cleaning and disinfecting of the affected individual's work space. Faculty and staff members are encouraged to use disinfectant between uses of shared spaces throughout the day and to keep workspaces free of clutter, excess personal items, and other unnecessary items to allow for maximum cleaning of all surfaces.

- **Training.** COVID-19 prevention training is required for all faculty and staff prior to or immediately upon returning to campus. We encourage all faculty and staff members to take this short training now even if not yet working on campus. You will find a quick link to the required training [here](#). **As indicated in the training, faculty and staff members must send an email message to the university's Environmental Health and Safety office at EHStraining@pugetsound.edu to confirm completion of the training as required by L&I.**
- **Building security.** Buildings and campus will continue to be open only for limited use by essential faculty and staff members, approved non-essential faculty and staff members, and a limited number of students. Buildings will continue to be locked and faculty and staff members must use electronic access points or keys to enter buildings. Doors should NOT be propped open. Faculty or staff members who cannot access a building to which they require ongoing access should notify their supervisor, who will work with a department head and Security Services to approve access. Building lock and unlock schedules will be adjusted as needed over time.

Contact Information

If you have questions about any of the issues covered in the *Return to Work on Campus Plan*, please contact your supervisor or department head, Human Resources (hr@pugetsound.edu) or Puget Sound's COVID-19 site supervisors:

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