On-campus Operations

COVID-19 Facemask Rule Changes

Governor Jim Justice issued Executive Order No. 77-20 dated November 13, 2020 and effective November 14, 2020, The Order concerns the wearing of face coverings or masks and strengthens the requirements of the original mask order. The order superseded EO 50-20.

Note: all guidance herein is based on currently available evidence, resources, information, and expert opinion and is subject to change.

PRIORITY ONE: SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The safety of our campus community is of utmost importance! Concord has followed or exceeded recommended health precautions to help make Concord the safest university in the state and has succeeded in minimizing the spread of COVID-19. However, one case is one case too many.

It is an assumed risk that faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and/or event participants may face exposure to a communicable disease, which may include COVID-19. Each and every employee is expected to adhere to good health and safety practices and comply with all environmental health and safety rules, laws, and regulations, including Executive Orders issued by the President or, as in this case, the Governor.

Individuals may come in close contact with an individual who is infected. Individuals are therefore urged to take all reasonable safety precautions including wearing of facemasks/face coverings, social distancing, proper handwashing, and cleaning and disinfecting.

Please note that Concord’s safety rules regarding face masks and face coverings are more stringent than the Executive Order out of an abundance of caution.

As per the Executive Order No. 77-20, facemasks or adequate face covering shall (i.e., must) be worn “when in confined spaces where other individuals may be present, regardless of one’s perceived ability to social distance from other individuals.” Until further notice, masks or face coverings must be worn indoors in all University facilities even with social distancing, with limited exceptions. Masks are not required:

1) In one’s residence. This would include in an individual’s personal space in the Residence Halls.
2) When individuals are able to physically isolate in a
   a. In a physically separated office, or
   b. other areas when no one is present.
3) When actively engaged in the consumption of food and/or beverage.
The Order also requires that businesses and organizations post signs notifying the public of the mask wearing requirement, which has been done since restoring public access to the campus in August. The new Order states that organizations shall (i.e., must) enforce the wearing of masks or face coverings in our facilities.

The Order goes on to define that the term “face covering” shall be construed very broadly to include, by way of example only, cloth face coverings, bandanas or handkerchiefs, face shields, and dust masks as may be appropriate.” Again, Concord’s safety rules are more stringent. Concord requires the use of face masks or cloth face coverings but does not permit the use of face shields except in limited circumstances.

Concord permits the use of plastic face shields in certain circumstances, such as use by faculty in the classrooms to facilitate communication. This exception to the use of cloth face coverings has been expanded to permit using plastic face shields in lieu of masks in shared work spaces with appropriate social distancing. Face shields are not acceptable in lieu of masks in public spaces.

Interpretation of the Order:
- The use of Plexiglas barriers in classrooms without a mask or plastic face shield is no longer acceptable practice.
- Private offices are excluded from the mask rule except when “guests” are present. With others present, masks or face shields are required even in private offices.

This revised briefing and the Governor’s Order are designed to add to and strengthen safety precautions now in place and do not eliminate any current precaution.

Unless noted by strike through (deleted) or underlined (new language), the established safety precautions below shall remain in effect.

Several precautionary measures have been implemented that include, but are not limited to:
- Employees will **must** conduct symptom monitoring and screening daily before reporting to work.
- Individuals who are not members of the campus community are encouraged to make appointments and must wear facemasks/face coverings when entering a campus facility.
- Use of facemasks/cloth face coverings is required in all indoor classrooms and public spaces.
- More frequent cleaning of common areas and frequently touched surfaces in accordance with CDC guidelines is being conducted.
- Wider availability of hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies.
- Staggering of work shifts and/or classes to reduce congestion by employees or students, respectively.
- Revising Revised work layouts and seating arrangements to achieve social distancing. Regardless, face coverings or face shields are now required in shared work spaces.
• Technology is available in each classroom to facilitate synchronous and asynchronous learning.
• Faculty, staff, and students have been provided training on the importance and expectations of increased attention to preventive and mitigation measures.
• A process has been established to address COVID-19 related requests for ADA accommodations or job modifications. See the HR Briefing on ADA or Modification Requests for application form.

Daily Screening Prior to Reporting to Work
Employees (faculty, staff, or students) are expected to follow the safety and health precautions identified in this briefing when reporting to work on campus:

• Each employee is expected to self-screen daily for symptoms of COVID-19, including checking for fever, before reporting to work each day.
• COVID-19 symptoms include:
  o Fever >100.4 Fahrenheit or chills in the last 48 hours
  o Cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing
  o Fatigue
  o Headache, muscle or body aches
  o New loss of taste or smell
  o Sore throat
  o Congestion or runny nose
  o Gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea in last 24 hours
• If you have seasonal or chronic symptoms plus any other symptom of COVID-19, then you must stay home and notify your supervisor.

Do Not Report to Work on Campus When
The University is committed to maintaining a safe workplace and taking necessary and reasonable steps to minimize health risks for its employees and other members of the campus community, including requiring that employees NOT come to work on campus if they, or a member of their household, have symptoms of COVID-19, been diagnosed with, or have been exposed to, COVID-19.

Note: If you have seasonal and chronic symptoms that are normal for you, then look for any other symptom of COVID-19.

If you:
• have symptoms of COVID-19 (see note), then you must stay home and notify your supervisor.
  o If you report to campus with symptoms of COVID-19, you will be sent home.
  o Get tested and self-monitor your symptoms for 14 days.
  o If your symptoms continue or get worse, then you should contact your healthcare provider.
• are currently being tested for COVID-19. (not targeted, surveillance, or baseline testing) **Self-quarantine is required pending test results.**
• are sick with any respiratory or gastrointestinal illness.
• receive official notification that you have been identified as a “close contact” of someone who has a confirmed case of COVID-19. **Self-quarantine for 14 days after exposure. May be tested after six days after last contact.**
• have anyone in your household who has any of the symptoms of COVID-19 (see note).
• are caring for an individual who has been notified of potential exposure and /or who is in quarantine. **Self-quarantine for 14 days is required.**
• For persons exposed to someone with COVID-19 illness, CDC recommends quarantine (stay home) until 14 days after last contact.
• If you experience symptoms of COVID-19 while at work, report your symptoms to your supervisor and go home.
• If unable to drive, then you will be separated from others until arrangements are made to get you home.

**Mental Health**
Optum, part of UnitedHealth Group, operates an Emotional-Support Help Line. Professionally trained, mental health staff are there to support people who may be suffering from fear or stress created by COVID-19. Optum’s Emotional-Support Help Line number is 866-3426892 and will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The service is free of charge and open to all PEIA members.

**Risk Communication**
University personnel with high frequency interaction with the public are considered to be in the medium risk category and are expected to follow identified safety measures to protect themselves and others. Office personnel who have minimum contact with the general public or coworkers are at the lower risk but must exercise caution and follow recommended safety practices. The staff in the Student Health Center, Athletic Training, WFF, and Residence Life are at higher risk of exposure and therefore must wear personal protective equipment as appropriate to their role and activities.

**MAINTAINING WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH**

**EXPOSURE CONTROL**

**Employee Reporting**
An employee who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 is responsible for reporting that information to the University Office of Human Resources for the health and safety of the campus community.
The employee is to remain off work until the period of isolation has ended consistent with CDC discontinuation of isolation criteria found below.

An employee who has been seriously ill with COVID-19 and/or associated complications shall not return to work until isolation is discontinued and the employee is released to return to work by her/his medical provider.

Contact-Tracing
When an employee or student has been identified as having COVID-19, contact tracing will be initiated. Contact tracing is a responsibility of DHHR and the Health Department. Concord faculty and staff who have the training and are certified by DHHR may complement the efforts of the Health Department.

Individuals who have been identified as close contacts are to self-isolate for 14 days from last contact, regardless of outcome of COVID-19 testing.

Targeted Testing
Although the CDC does not recommend targeted testing for faculty, staff, and students returning in the fall, Concord will have each employee and contractor participate in targeted baseline testing for COVID-19 prior to beginning student instruction on August 17th. For a person participating in targeted testing, the individual is not required to quarantine. This applies to the baseline targeted testing of all employees and students who have not had symptoms or known exposure to COVID-19.

Employees returning from out-of-state or from an area where there is substantial community spread should be tested and continue to self-monitor their health for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following return to campus, even with a negative test result.

DHHR encourages such individuals to stay home. If a person must leave the home, they should maintain social distancing (keep 6 feet away from individuals) and wear a facemask/cloth face covering when going into public places like stores, restaurants, and work/school.

Campus Safety Illness Prevention Precautions
- Use of facemasks/face coverings is required in all indoor classrooms and public spaces in all academic buildings, except for very limited exceptions noted below.
- Maintaining social distancing in a classroom setting does not change the requirement for wearing facemasks/face coverings.
- Facemasks/face coverings are required in hallways, stairways, and elevators in every university facility and anywhere it is impossible to maintain appropriate physical distancing.
  - Facemasks/face coverings are to be worn properly, i.e., snuggly covering both the nose and mouth.
You are encouraged to use and launder your own reusable cloth facemasks/face coverings. CU will provide an initial cloth facemasks/face coverings for each employee and student.

The use of a gator for as a face covering is acceptable provided the gator is not made of fleece.

Use of a facemasks/face coverings is not required out of doors, provided social distancing can be maintained.

- Faculty have the authority to enforce the use of facemasks/face coverings in their classroom but not the authority to exempt anyone from the requirement.
- Individuals with a verified health exemption from the facemask/face covering requirements will be required to use alternative safety measures.
- When a faculty member determines that wearing of a facemask/face covering will interfere with student participation requirements or effective teaching in their classroom, alternative safety measures will be required. Such determinations are subject to advance review and approval by administration.
- Plexiglas shields and/or other safety alternatives will be used by faculty and staff in designated areas such as classrooms and offices with open public access.
- Employees and students are encouraged to maintain physical distancing of six feet in all directions whenever possible, even while wearing a facemask/face covering.
- Employees are expected to use personal protective equipment (PPE) as appropriate to your position and role. Medical grade masks or respirators will be provided for student health services staff as recommended by the CDC.
- Continue proper handwashing and other hygiene and sanitation measures, including keeping frequently touched surfaces clean and sanitized.
- Hand Sanitizer, cleaning supplies, and tissues will be widely available.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow.

DISCONTINUING ISOLATION POST COVID-19 ILLNESS
The guidance herein should not be construed as medical advice. Please check with your health care provider for any specific concerns that you have about returning to school or work and follow their directions.

Returning to Active On Campus Work following illness with Symptoms
Decisions to permit individuals who had symptoms to discontinue home isolation and return to work or school for persons who had confirmed or suspected COVID-19 will be made on the basis of a symptom-based strategy as recommended by the CDC.
Symptom-Based Strategy
Individuals who had confirmed or suspected COVID-19, had symptoms, and were directed to care for themselves at home, may discontinue isolation and return to work or school under the following conditions:

- At least three days (72 hours) with no fever above 100.4 degrees without use of fever reducing medication and
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) and
- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared

Returning to Active On Campus Work following Testing Positive for COVID-19 but with No Symptoms
Decisions regarding the return to work or school for individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 but exhibited no symptoms, will be made on the basis of a time-based strategy as recommended by the CDC.

Time-Based Strategy
Persons with laboratory confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation and return to work or school under the following conditions:

- At least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test.

STAFFING
Departments are to utilize the following guidance for returning to work and to maintain required physical distancing and reduce population density within buildings and work spaces.

Remote Work
For the most part, remote telework was phased out as of August 3, 2020 when the campus reopened to the public. Periodically, it may be advantageous to have remote work in a particular department. Any such arrangement must have prior authorization of the immediate supervisor, may be done on a full or partial day/week schedule, as appropriate. For example, during quarantine or isolation or for a COVID-19 related child care issue.

Alternating Schedules
To limit the number of individuals and face-to-face interactions among those on campus, departments should consider scheduling partial staffing on alternating days or weeks (such as half one day/week and half the other. Such schedules will help facilitate physical distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces. In this fashion, not all employees would be subject to the same potential contact or spread any illness to others. Assure that common work areas are adequately cleaned and sanitized between groups.
Staggered Reporting/Departing Times
The beginning and ending of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points. Staggering reporting and departure times by at least 30 minutes will reduce foot traffic in common areas to maintain physical distancing requirements.

WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

Entrances and Exits
Public access points may be limited as needed. Encourage visitors to call ahead and make appointments. Discourage walk ins to private offices and areas. All vendors, visitors, etc. are required to wear facemasks/face coverings in any university building.

Walking Patterns
Foot traffic patterns may have changed. Please note signage.

Signage
Signs, posters, policy, and educational materials will be widely distributed and displayed encouraging safety and health precautions.

Use signs, tape marks, or other visual cues such as decals or colored tape on the floor, placed 6 feet apart, to indicate where to stand when physical barriers are not possible.

Touch Points
Contact with doorknobs, switches, buttons, stair rails, etc. should be limited to the minimum possible and such items are to be frequently cleaned and sanitized.

Office Environment
• If you work in an open office environment, be sure to maintain at least 6 feet of distance from co-workers. If social distancing is not possible, masks/face coverings must be worn at all times.
• If you work in an office, no more than one person should be in the same room unless the required 6 feet of distancing can be consistently maintained.
• If more than one person is in a room that does not accommodate physical distancing, masks/face coverings must be worn at all times. A facemasks/face coverings or face covering is not required if you are working alone in a confined office space or in partitioned work areas in a large open environment.
• Your office is your home away from home. You set the rules regarding the wearing of facemasks/face coverings by others in your space. Consider posting a notice of the requirement, such as facemasks/face coverings required to enter.
Engineering Controls

- Transparent Plexiglas screens will be installed where appropriate to provide additional physical separation from the public.
- With administrative approval, transparent face shields may be worn by faculty when screens and facemasks/face coverings are not feasible, such as in some classrooms or to address ADA concerns, for example to accommodate the hearing impaired.
- Facemasks/face coverings must be worn by any employee in a reception/receiving area when greeting others.
- Facemasks/face coverings are to be used when inside any facility where others are present, including walking in hallways or stairways where others travel and in break rooms.
- Investigate upgrading to MERV-13 in University Point, Rahall, the Library, the Carter Center (Classroom area), Fine Arts, Marsh Hall, the Science Building, and the Student Center.
- Systems will be kept running 24/7.
- HVAC systems will increase outdoor air ventilation as realistic given environmental temperature and humidity levels.

Meeting Spaces

- Convening in groups increases the risk of viral transmission. Meetings should be held in whole or part using the extensive range of available technology.
- In-person meetings are limited by restrictions of local, state and federal orders. Currently, gatherings should not exceed 50 percent of a room’s stated occupancy capacity as determined by the state fire marshal’s office. The modified occupancy limit will be posted outside/inside each meeting room.
- Per Executive Order dated June 13, 2020, social functions are limited to a maximum of 25 people in a room with appropriate physical distancing. Business meetings for essential businesses, like the university, are not restricted to 25 people but this remains a strong consideration in planning business activities.
- Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in meeting rooms to support appropriate physical distancing practices between attendees.
- All attendees should wear a facemask/face covering while sharing space in a common room even with social distancing.
- During your time on site, you are encouraged to communicate with your coworkers as needed by e-mail, instant message, telephone, or other available technology, rather than face-to-face.

Restrooms

Access to restrooms should be limited based on facility size to ensure at least 6 feet of distance between individuals.
Elevators
- No more than 1-2 people should be in an elevator at a time, so please use the stairs whenever possible.
- If you are using an elevator, wear your facemask/face covering.
- Avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers, if possible.
- Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers upon departing the elevator.

Meals
- Employees are encouraged to take food back to their office area or eat outdoors, if this is reasonable for your situation.
- The Cafeteria reopened on August 5 with limited in person dining and carry out.
- Office kitchens and breakrooms may not be used for communal gathering or dining in.
- Wash or sanitize your hands before and after using shared appliances like refrigerators and microwaves. After use, wipe appliances down and immediately wash your hands.
- Use of communal coffee pots is discouraged. Water fountains are closed.

Building Access
- Campus instructional and student services facilities reopened to the public on August 3, 2020.

University Travel Outside the Area
University travel will be limited and restricted. Prior approval by respective Cabinet Member is required.

For additional information regarding the management of the pandemic, please reference the Pandemic Illness Emergency operations plan on the Concord University Return to Campus webpage: https://www.concord.edu/About/Return-to-Campus-Plan.aspx