



Overview

This document outlines parameters and protocols for resuming in-person instruction and daily operations at the University of Mississippi (UM) under the Safer at Home order of Governor Tate Reeve's reopening plan. Aspects of this plan will continue to evolve as we receive more direction from local, state, and federal governing bodies. Our goal is to continue an on-campus learning environment with the safety and well-being of our campus population as top priority.

UM's parameters and protocols will be aligned and consistent with ordinances of the City of Oxford and Lafayette County, as well as the State of Mississippi's reopening plans. UM will also follow recommendations from the White House Opening Up America Again guidelines, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH), and the American College Health Association (ACHA).

Health and Safety Guidelines

COVID-19 is a disease caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2. The virus is thought to be spread easily and sustainably from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets. [Currently identifiable symptoms](#) include *cough, shortness of breath, fever, new loss of taste or smell, chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea*. Currently, there is no treatment or vaccine available. To mitigate spread, we must identify possible cases, isolate positive cases, and conduct contact tracing in collaboration with the MSDH.

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Here are some ways the virus is thought to be spread:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. These droplets can land on nearby surfaces or in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

CDC best practices that limit the potential of being exposed to the virus are as follows:

- Wear face coverings.
- Practice social distancing.
- Self-monitor for symptoms.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.



- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

These preventive measures form the base upon which the following parameters and protocols are built.

Return to Work on Campus

The University is taking necessary measures to maintain a safe workplace, consistent with guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Governor Tate Reeve's Safe Return executive order, the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH), city of Oxford's Serving Oxford Safely order, and local health authorities.

As staff presence increases and operations resume on campus, officials will closely monitor and assess the potential spread of the virus, as well as existing policies and procedures to mitigate it. If localized outbreaks emerge, tighter restrictions and reduced on-campus staffing may need to be implemented again.

Employee Responsibilities

All staff are expected to comply fully with the policies, protocols and guidelines.

Must Do

- On or just prior to the first day of work on campus, employees must affirm, confidentially and securely, their understanding of the responsibility to self-monitor for any symptoms each day before reporting to work, and to adhere to current university-established protocols and procedures based upon public health guidance. The link to the attestation will be provided to each employee via their olemiss.edu email address.
- Wear a face mask or face covering at all times while in a shared work space/room. Face masks/coverings are not required when people are outdoors unless they are seated within 6 feet of another person.
- Employees working in areas where items are exchanged (such as store fronts, dining, points of sale, residence halls, any high-touch areas, etc.) will receive training on COVID-19 hygiene and cleaning protocols, including the wearing of face masks/coverings and gloves.
- Observe occupancy limits and avoid crowding of breakrooms.
- If you require some flexibility, speak with your supervisor to develop a plan that achieves work goals and meets your needs.
- Stay abreast of university policies and communications regarding COVID-19 and public health recommendations.



- Take reasonable steps to comply with guidelines on sanitation from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and the [Mississippi State Department of Health](#).
- If symptoms develop, stay home (or leave the workplace) and notify the supervisor.
- Report any safety and health concerns to your supervisors and/or appropriate representatives on campus.
- All vulnerable individuals, including all elderly individuals (age 65 or older per CDC guidelines) and individuals with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised as such by chemotherapy for cancer or any other condition requiring such therapy, are encouraged to work remotely when possible. Employees with one or more of these health conditions or another condition or disability that puts them at higher risk should contact Human Resources. A reasonable inquiry as to the condition may be made to determine appropriate and safe work situations for the employee.

Where Feasible

- Avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment when possible.

Supervisor's Responsibilities

Must Do

- Plan and execute a phased return of employees to no more than 30% of the workforce at a time, staggering phases every 2–4 weeks up to for full return. Depending on the size and needs of the workforce, the percentage may vary.
- Encourage those with increased risk of severe illness or those over age 65 to continue working remotely, when possible. If remote work is not possible, vulnerable employees should be given duties that minimize their contact with visitors and other employees. Provide accommodations to enhance the protection of vulnerable employees. Examples include providing additional or enhanced personal protective equipment (PPE); placing physical barriers to separate the vulnerable employee from coworkers or the public; eliminating, reducing, or substituting less critical, non-essential job functions that create more risk of exposure; modifying work schedules; or, moving employee workstations. Work with Human Resources to determine additional options, if needed.
- Review and discuss department-specific policies and protocols, including resources available the person to contact for any questions or concerns.
- Communicate often keeping in mind employee's well-being/state of mind and being flexible within reason.
- Provide PPE, as called for by the work, to support increased environmental cleaning, and promote employee health care.
- Instruct employees not to use other employees' workspaces or equipment.
- Post and promote University provided prevention posters and literature.



Where Feasible

- Gauge employee willingness to volunteer to be the first to return and prioritize those with the greatest ability/desire to return. Allow those who may be vulnerable and/or are experiencing childcare difficulties to be the last to return and/or delay their return to the campus.
- Supervisors may continue to encourage their staff to work remotely if that has proven productive and effective.
- The beginning and end of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting and departure times will reduce traffic in common areas to meet social distancing requirements to reduce the number of people in the workplace at the same time.
- Conduct meetings electronically, even when working on campus. If meetings cannot be conducted virtually, individuals should wear face mask/coverings and follow current guidance from the Governor, which is:
 - Group Gatherings (Social Distancing IS NOT Possible): Public and private social gatherings and recreational activities shall be limited to groups of no more than 20 people in a single indoor space or groups of no more than 50 people in an outdoor space where individuals are in close proximity (less than 6 feet) to each other.
 - Group Gatherings (Social Distancing IS Possible): Except as otherwise provided, public and private social gatherings and recreational activities shall be limited to groups of no more than 50 people in a single indoor space or groups of no more than 100 people in an outdoor space where individuals are able to maintain a minimum of 6 feet separation.
- Encourage single occupancy in work rooms.

Leave Programs

Human Resources Policies to Take Effect July 1

As we shift from a mission-critical staffing presence on campus to more regular levels of on-campus activity, we have adopted new leave policies. Currently, employees who are unable to telecommute have been on administrative leave with pay. Effective July 1, 2020:

- Employees who are unable to telecommute and cannot report to their on-campus workplace will be eligible for up to two weeks of emergency leave.
- Employees who are unable to work regularly scheduled hours due to caring for a child, whose school or place of care is closed, or child care provider is unavailable due to COVID-19 related reasons may be eligible for Expanded Family & Medical Leave (FMLA+) until December 31, 2020.
- If the employee becomes sick or must care for a loved one who becomes ill, they will be eligible for Family Medical Leave for 12 weeks, 10 of which would be paid.



For detailed information about additional COVID-19 leave programs for which you may be eligible, visit hr.olemiss.edu.

Training

- Employees are required to complete an online training module available on [Blackboard](#). The online training covers the following topics:
 - Policies to reduce the spread of COVID-19
 - General hygiene
 - Symptoms and what to do if sick
 - Cleaning and disinfection
 - Cloth face coverings
 - Social distancing
 - Use of PPE
 - Safe work practices
 - Stress management

Travel

This information will be updated as CDC guidance changes.

- All university-affiliated international and domestic travel is prohibited until further notice.
 - Faculty who believe their travel is essential must apply for a waiver with the Office of the Provost.
 - Staff who believe their travel is essential must apply for a waiver through their respective Vice Chancellor.
- Students, faculty or staff members returning from international travel will be required to self-quarantine, self-monitor, fill out the Travel Reporting Portal, and follow [CDC recommendations](#) for what to do for a minimum of 14 days.
- All personal international travel is strongly discouraged.

Self-Monitoring for Symptoms

Must Do

- Use the university's COVID-19 Daily Symptom Checker to assist in self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms. This can be accessed by following this link [UM COVID-19 Daily Symptom Checker](#).

Protecting Visitors



- All employees are responsible for maintaining a safe environment for visitors. This includes refraining from reporting to work if experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, wearing a face covering, practicing social distancing, and assisting with cleaning and disinfecting high touch point areas. Further instructions will be provided within employees' departments.

Facilities

Physical Distancing

Must Do

- Individual desks/workstations should be arranged to maintain at least 6 feet distance between employees.
- Facilities Planning will develop seating plans for all classrooms and auditoriums with fixed seating. Fixed seating in classrooms and auditoriums should be conspicuously marked to identify the optimum seating pattern for appropriate physical distancing. Marks should be removable without damage to the seats. Where appropriate, block or remove seats that are not available for use. For assistance with marking and/or blocking seats, contact Facilities Management.
- In classrooms with node chairs or moveable chairs, floor markings should be installed that show where chairs should be located. Where appropriate, excess seating should be blocked or removed. For assistance in developing appropriate seating plans for classrooms with moveable furniture, departments should contact Facilities Planning. For assistance in moving furniture or marking/blocking seats, contact Facilities Management.
- Evaluate spaces to determine the maximum occupancy that will still permit appropriate physical distancing. Approximate planning factors should provide for 6 feet of physical distancing and/or 60 square feet per person. This allowance may need to be increased, depending on the configuration of the space (layout, fixed or loose seating, furniture, etc.) and/or how the space will be utilized. Departments should contact Facilities Planning for assistance, as needed, to determine the exact occupancy limits of a given space.
- Maximum occupancy signage should be posted in classrooms, conference rooms, waiting rooms, break rooms, study rooms, and common areas to promote appropriate physical distancing. Signage should be standardized and should be removable without damage to walls or other surfaces.
- Signage should be provided to discourage people from congregating in hallways, common spaces, and atria. Signage should be standardized and should be removable without damage to walls or other surfaces.
- Visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, or signage should be used in queuing areas, elevator lobbies, bus stops, and other locations where people commonly wait to



indicate where people should stand to maintain appropriate physical distancing. Marks should be removable without damage to the floor.

- The maximum occupancy of restrooms should be limited to one-half of the total number of fixtures (commodes, urinals, sinks) in the restroom. Maximum occupancy signage should be posted in each restroom. Signage should be standardized and should be removable without damage to walls or other surfaces.

Where Feasible

- Barriers should be considered in workspaces where people must face each other or are unable to be 6 feet apart. (Note: Cubicle walls with a height of 5 feet or higher will be considered an appropriate physical barrier.) Contact Facilities Management for assistance as needed
- Plexiglass barriers should be considered at high-traffic areas, such as reception desks and check-in points. If used, plexiglass barriers should be freestanding and removable without damaging the furniture, countertop, etc., unless they are intended to be permanent installations. Departments should contact Facilities Management for assistance, as needed.
- Chairs and seating in classrooms, conference rooms, waiting rooms, break rooms, and common areas should be arranged (or removed) to promote appropriate physical distancing. Departments wishing to remove excess seating/furniture should consider making their own arrangements for storage since centralized storage options will likely not be available. For assistance in moving furniture, contact Facilities Management.
- The maximum occupancy of classrooms should be limited to fewer than 30 participants.
- Eating, studying, etc. outdoors should be encouraged when possible
- Teaching outside should be encouraged when the weather is good.
- Non-traditional teaching spaces, such as at the Student Union Ballroom, Turner Center, Multipurpose Area at the JAC, and other locations should be considered as an alternative to traditional classrooms to increase teaching capacity, if necessary.
- The maximum occupancy of a University-owned vehicle or cart should be limited to one-half of the total number of seats in the vehicle or cart. If more than one person is in the vehicle or cart, face masks/coverings should be worn.
- In retail spaces, food courts, and other locations where monetary transactions take place, customers should be encouraged to make non-cash payments.

Building Traffic Circulation

Must Do

- Individuals should use good judgment to avoid crowding one other when transiting hallways, stairwells, doorways, sidewalks, etc., even though a strict 6-foot physical distance may not be feasible in these situations.



Where Feasible

- Specific building entrances/exits should be designated for inbound or outbound traffic to facilitate a common flow of people moving in/out of buildings.
- One-way directional signage should be considered for hallways and large open work spaces with multiple through-ways to increase distance between people moving through the space.
- Specific stairways should be designated for up or down traffic to facilitate a common flow of people moving between floors.
- Class start/stop times should be considered to reduce congestion in the halls, stairwells, and building entrances/exits.

Infection Control

Must Do

- Hand sanitizer dispensers should be provided at all building entrances, elevators, classrooms, restrooms, breakrooms, and other high-traffic areas within buildings. Hand sanitizer must be alcohol based and contain at least 60% ethanol. For assistance in determining where hand sanitizer dispensers should be placed, departments should contact Facilities Management.
- Individuals should use hand sanitizer frequently, upon building entry, after using the elevator, restroom, public transportation, etc.
- Departments should consider providing disposable face masks to visitors who need them in buildings. Departments should contact Facilities Management for assistance in obtaining masks.
- Magazines, common pens, and other high-touch items should be removed from reception areas and waiting rooms or wiped down with a disinfectant between users.
- Hand sanitizer pumps/bottles should be provided in reception areas and waiting rooms. Departments should contact Facilities Management for assistance in hand sanitizer bottles.
- Facial tissue should be provided in reception areas and waiting rooms. Departments should contact Facilities Management for assistance in obtaining facial tissue.
- Frequently touched surfaces and objects in common areas will be cleaned/disinfected throughout the day by FM custodial staff; these include entry/exit door handles, push plates and crash bars, interior doors, automatic door operators, stair hand rails, elevator buttons, common area tables and countertops, faucets and sinks, drinking fountains, flush valves, light switches, public telephones, public touchscreens, furniture armrests (non-porous material only), vending machines, etc.
- Frequently touched surfaces and objects in departmental spaces and offices should be cleaned/disinfected throughout the day by departmental staff; these include telephones, keyboards, mice, countertops, desk/conference room chairs, conference



room tables, door handles, light switches, etc. Departments should contact Facilities Management for assistance in obtaining appropriate disinfectant products and cleaning supplies.

- Frequently touched surfaces and objects in departmental vehicles should be cleaned/disinfected throughout the day as used by departmental staff; these include door handles, steering wheels, seatbelts, turn signals, wiper controls, door locks, window controls, mirrors, transmission levers, radio controls, lighting controls, air conditioning controls, etc. At minimum, drivers should wipe down these surfaces with a disinfectant wipe at least one time per day, or upon entering the vehicle for the first time after it was driven by someone else. Departments should contact Facilities Management for assistance in obtaining appropriate disinfectant products and cleaning supplies.
- A sufficient supply of disinfectant products and cleaning supplies should be made available so departments and employees can clean their own workspaces and vehicles as needed throughout the day. Departments should contact Facilities Management for assistance in obtaining appropriate disinfectant products and cleaning supplies.
- A sufficient supply of disinfectant wipes should be made available in conference rooms, break rooms, etc. so departments and employees can wipe down tables, chairs, appliances, office equipment, and other frequently touched surfaces and objects as needed throughout the day. Departments should contact Facilities Management for assistance in obtaining appropriate disinfectant products and cleaning supplies.
- A sufficient supply of disinfectant wipes should be made available in classrooms, study rooms, breakout rooms, computer labs, and other frequently used areas so individuals can wipe down the various surfaces and objects that they need to touch within these spaces (e.g., tables, chairs, markers, lecterns, keyboards, a/v controls, equipment, etc.). It is expected that students, faculty, and staff will take individual responsibility for wiping down the objects that they need to use or touch.
- Signage should be posted in restrooms reminding people to lower the lid (if so equipped) before flushing commodes in public restrooms.
- Appropriate signage should be developed and posted throughout campus to educate and promote adherence to public health practices, including hand hygiene, physical distancing, proper cough/sneeze etiquette, frequent disinfection of common and high traffic areas, symptom assessment, temperature checks, and face masks/coverings in public.
- The timing, frequency, and procedures of the following activities will be adjusted as public health recommendations warrant:
 - Daily cleaning of offices by FM custodial staff; this will likely need to be modified to allow the custodial staff to focus more on disinfection of public spaces.
 - Cleaning/disinfection of spaces after positive exposure to someone infected with COVID-19



- Cleaning/disinfection of athletic/campus recreation spaces, locker rooms, weight rooms, etc.
- Cleaning/disinfection of dining areas

Where Feasible

- Where practical and permitted by fire code, interior doors should remain propped open to avoid contact. For assistance in determining whether a door may be propped open, departments should contact Facilities Management.
- Touchless door openers, either automatic door openers or foot operated door pulls/pedals, should be installed in public restrooms and other appropriate locations. Departments should contact Facilities Management for assistance, if needed.
- Touchless faucets and paper towel dispensers should be installed in public restrooms and break rooms. Departments should contact Facilities Management for assistance, if needed.
- The use of personal laptops by students should be encouraged to reduce or eliminate the need for computer labs and other shared computer resources.

HVAC

Must Do

- Where possible, HVAC system shutbacks should be disabled to allow 24/7 HVAC system operation.
- Must Do: Existing UV disinfection systems in campus HVAC units should be checked to ensure they are operating correctly.

Where Feasible

- Facilities Management should evaluate HVAC systems to consider implementing the following recommendations where feasible:
 - Where equipment capabilities permit, HVAC air filter efficiency should be increased to MERV 13 or the maximum MERV rating suggested by the manufacturer.
 - Where equipment capabilities permit, outside air ventilation should be increased to the maximum level possible (where acceptable indoor air temperature and humidity can still be maintained) in order to reduce the amount of recirculated air in campus buildings.
 - For dedicated outside air systems with rotary energy recovery wheels (e.g., enthalpy or sensible wheels), consider turning off the energy recovery wheels to limit cross contamination at the wheel.
 - Energy recovery systems with purge and or potential for air leak from the exhaust side to the supply side should be checked to eliminate air leaks.



- Passive energy recovery devices such as heat pipes, run around loops, and wrap around heat pipes where there is no carry over/leak from the exhaust air can run as originally designed.
- Where feasible and justified by available data, the installation of new UV disinfection systems in HVAC units should be considered.

Elevators

Must Do

- Signage should be posted to share the following guidance:
 - Reminding people that face masks are required, even if alone.
 - Encouraging people to use stairs and avoid using elevators, unless needed.
 - Maximum occupancy with physical distancing
 - Refrain from talking
 - Avoid leaning on elevator walls
 - Reminding people to not exceed occupancy limits and wait if needed
 - prominently inside each elevator to remind riders of expectations regarding etiquette and behavior
 - Reminding people to physically distance from others
 - Avoid touching anything after touching elevator buttons
 - After touching elevator buttons, riders should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol as soon as possible after getting off an elevator

Where Feasible

Where appropriate, floor markings should be applied to indicate where individuals should stand. When riding in an elevator with others, all riders should maximize the physical distance between each other by standing near the corners.