This document provides guidance for UT Dallas employees working on campus or at other UT Dallas facilities. It does not address the return of faculty, staff and/or students to laboratories or classrooms. This guidance may be updated as public health recommendations change and/or additional information on the spread of the COVID-19 virus becomes available. The latest version of this guide will be available here.
Thank you for your hard work, dedication and flexibility during the past few months of this unprecedented health crisis. In a time that has required much from each of us, your efforts have made it possible for the University to continue operations. I also want to thank all the members of the UT Dallas COVID-19 Task Force, led by Vice President and Chief of Staff Rafael Martín, for their hard work and leadership in navigating our University through this crisis.

As we begin planning for our return to campus, know that we are united in a single goal — to make UT Dallas a healthy environment for work, study and research.

To that end, we have prepared a detailed Return to Campus Workplace Guide. Please take the time to read it thoroughly, but I wanted to share with you some of the key points and essential practices that will help us accomplish our goal of a safe return to our beautiful campus.

- A phased return of employees to UT Dallas facilities and campus grounds has begun.
- Until notified by your supervisor, however, employees will continue to work remotely.
- If you are concerned about being at higher risk of severe illness from contracting COVID-19, please contact your supervisor before returning to campus.
- As always, stay home if you are sick or feel ill.
- Be respectful of your fellow Comets, and maintain a minimum of 6 feet between you and others.
- Employees should not gather in groups of more than five.
- Face coverings or masks must be worn by all employees working on campus.
- Only one person at a time should be on most campus elevators, and face coverings or masks should be worn even if you are alone.
- Washing your hands frequently with soap and water is one of the best practices for protecting yourself and others. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Wear gloves only during work tasks where use is specified by a job-specific safety plan or hazard assessment.

These guidelines and additional steps that will be announced later are based on the best medical advice. You have likely been following most of these practices already in your own homes. As you come back to campus, please extend them to your greater Comet family. And if you have concerns or questions not covered in this document, ask your supervisor.

Thank you for all that you do on behalf of UT Dallas. We remain Comets united.

Sincerely,

Richard C. Benson
President, Eugene McDermott Distinguished University Chair of Leadership

NOTE: This guidance may be updated as public health recommendations change and/or additional information on the spread of COVID-19 becomes available.
Concern for the health, safety and well-being of all members of our University community is the foundation for UT Dallas’ response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including these guidelines for returning our employees to campus. We will follow the advice and guidance of federal, state and local public health authorities and will comply with all applicable public health orders.

These guidelines will be updated as appropriate as our understanding of the COVID-19 virus evolves and more information becomes available.

All employees working at UT Dallas facilities are expected to comply fully with the protocols and guidelines outlined in this document. Failure to do so may result in further action in accordance with the appropriate faculty or staff disciplinary policy.

Any requests to amend or deviate from these protocols and guidelines must be submitted by the appropriate vice president to the Office of Emergency Management and Continuity Planning (OEMCP) for review and approval.
**SYMPTOM MONITORING REQUIREMENTS**

Under no circumstances should an employee exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19 report to work on campus. If employees become symptomatic while at work, they must leave work immediately and should isolate themselves and/or seek medical attention.

Employees who have been instructed to return to their workplace will be asked to conduct symptom monitoring and complete a screening questionnaire before reporting to work each day. You must be free of any symptoms potentially related to COVID-19 to be eligible to report to work.

At this time, this includes experiencing one or more of the following new or worsening symptoms, in a way that is not normal for you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated shaking with chills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runny nose or sinus congestion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muscle pain or body aches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore throat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(nausea, vomiting, diarrhea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of taste or smell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you experience any symptoms, you must report them through the UT Dallas COVID-19 screening tool, and you should take precautions to avoid possible virus transmission to others. If your symptoms are severe or worsen, you should immediately seek medical attention.

Employees who have isolated themselves after experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should follow [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov) on how and when to discontinue home isolation.
The CDC has determined that individuals in certain demographic populations and/or those with certain medical conditions may be at higher risk for severe illness related to COVID-19.

Those groups/conditions may include:

- Older adults (aged 65 years and older)
- People with HIV
- Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
- Chronic lung disease
- Diabetes
- Serious heart conditions
- Chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis
- Severe obesity
- Being immunocompromised

Employees who have been instructed to return to work at UT Dallas facilities and have concerns about doing so because of potential higher risk from illness related to COVID-19 should contact their supervisor. Supervisors will consult with the Office of Human Resources (HR) about appropriate arrangements for these employees.

Access to campus facilities and grounds will be restricted during the phased return of employees to campus facilities. Employees will need their Comet Card and/or University-issued keys to access their offices or workplace. Employees must abide by the signage at entry points and throughout University facilities that provide guidance and reminders of social distancing, face coverings and other requirements.
A. Phased Approach

The return of employees to UT Dallas facilities and campus grounds will occur in phases over time to ensure appropriate social distancing and availability of masks or face coverings and screening tools.

UT Dallas will assess the need to return employees to campus based on the following factors in priority order:

1. Employee’s job duties cannot be performed remotely;
2. Employee’s job duties can partly, but not entirely, be performed remotely;
3. Employee is needed to work on-site based on managerial priority; and/or
4. Employee would be more productive on-site rather than working remotely.

Units will submit their unit return requests through their vice presidents to OEMCP for review and approval. Once approved, employees will be notified by their supervisor when and where to report to work.

The need to reduce the density of people in UT Dallas facilities and on campus grounds to meet social distancing requirements will likely continue for some time. Support units that can continue to work effectively remotely will likely continue to do so until restrictions are eased for larger gatherings. Expanded staffing will be tightly controlled and coordinated to mitigate potential risks and to ensure the safety of our community members. Once decisions to expand on-site staffing are made, employees should follow the guidelines and protocols detailed in this guide and the directions of their supervisor for returning to work on campus.

As employees return to UT Dallas facilities, OEMCP and the Research, Campus, and Environmental Safety department will closely monitor and assess potential spread of the virus across Texas and within our local communities. Additionally, changes in public health guidelines and procedures to mitigate the spread of the virus will be regularly evaluated. If localized outbreaks emerge, tighter restrictions and limiting the number of employees on campus may need to be implemented again.
B. Work Options

In developing their return plans, units must consider the need to maintain required social distancing measures and to reduce population density within buildings and workspaces where possible. Supervisors will consider the following options when developing their return plans:

**REMOTE WORK**

Those employees who can work remotely to fulfill some or all of their work responsibilities may continue to do so to reduce the number of individuals in UT Dallas facilities and the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus. These arrangements, which must be approved by the immediate supervisor in accordance with unit protocols, may consist of alternative work schedules, including a full or partial day/week schedule as appropriate.

**ALTERNATING DAYS**

To limit the number of individuals and interactions among those on campus, departments may schedule partial staffing on alternating days. Such schedules will help enable social distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces. To the extent possible, cohorts of employees should work the same schedule (e.g., Group A works Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and Group B works Tuesday and Thursday in week one and the opposite in week two) to promote social distancing by avoiding interactions with the other group.

**STAGGERED REPORTING/DEPARTING**

The beginning and end of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting and departure times by at least 30 minutes will reduce traffic in common areas to meet social distancing requirements. Allowing employees to start or end their workday remotely will help in staggering arrival and departure times.
A. Personal Safety

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools we have to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19 and slowing its spread. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are ill or even exposed, it is important to maintain physical distance from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms. Social distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk of severe illness.

Employees working on-site must follow these social distancing practices:

• Stay at least 6 feet (about two arms’ length) from other people at all times.
• Do not gather in groups of more than five.
• Stay out of crowded places, and avoid mass gatherings.

MASKS/CLOTH FACE COVERINGS

Masks or cloth face coverings must be worn by all employees working on campus when in the presence of others and in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., common work spaces, classrooms, meeting rooms). This includes outdoor spaces where social distancing is not possible.

Employees who are unable to wear a face covering in accordance with the policy should contact the C19 Coordinator in Human Resources (HR) at C19resource@utdallas.edu. HR will provide guidance regarding the process for submitting an exception request, and will review submissions to make a determination on a case-by-case basis. Documentation from the treating physician will be required for medical exceptions.

It is not known if face shields provide any benefit as source control to protect others from the spray of respiratory particles. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention does not recommend use of face shields for normal everyday activities or as a substitute for cloth face coverings. Appropriate use of masks or face coverings is critical in minimizing risks to others near you. You could spread the virus that causes COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel ill. A mask or cloth face covering is not a substitute for social distancing.

UT Dallas will provide disposable masks or cloth face coverings to all employees asked to return to work in campus facilities. Disposable masks must only be worn for one day and then must be placed in the trash. Similarly, cloth face coverings may only be worn for one day at a time and must be properly laundered before use again. Most returning employees will be issued two cloth face coverings to allow for laundering between use on alternating days.
Care and use of face coverings

- Wash your hands immediately before and after handling your face covering.
- Ensure your face covering fits securely over your nose, mouth and under your chin.
- Keep the face covering over your nose and mouth at all times. (Do not put the covering around your neck or up on your forehead.)
- Avoid touching your face covering while wearing, and don’t touch your eyes, nose or mouth when putting your face covering on or taking it off.
- Handle your face covering only by the straps.
- If you need to store your face covering between wearing times, store it in a paper bag or envelope. Do not place your face covering on desk/table surfaces, and do not store in clothing pockets.
- Consult with your supervisor if use of your face covering presents safety concerns relative to conducting your job duties.

HANDWASHING

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing or touching your face. Handwashing should be performed at least once per hour. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands, and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and wash your hands after touching your face.

HAND COVERINGS/GLOVE USE

Gloves should only be worn during work tasks where use is specified by a job-specific safety plan or hazard assessment. When disposable gloves are worn by workers conducting cleaning operations, gloves must be discarded after each use to prevent cross-contamination. For the general public, the CDC recommends wearing gloves only when you are cleaning or caring for someone who is sick. Wearing gloves outside of these instances will not necessarily protect you from getting COVID-19 and may still lead to the spread of germs.
B. Workspace Safety

**WORKSPACE CLEANING/DISINFECTION**

**Facilities Management**
Custodial teams will clean offices and workspaces once daily based on CDC guidelines for disinfection. Facilities Management will also maintain hand-sanitizer stations in high-traffic areas.

**Unit Personnel**
Facilities Management will provide returning units with cleaning supplies for use by unit personnel. Returning employees should wipe down commonly used surfaces before and after use with the provided cleaning supplies. This includes any shared-space location or equipment (e.g., copiers, printers, computers, audiovisual and other electrical equipment, coffee makers, desks and tables, light switches, door knobs).

**MEETINGS**

Convening in groups increases the risk of virus transmission. Where feasible, meetings should be held in whole or part using available collaboration tools (e.g., Microsoft Teams, WebEx, conference call).

In-person meetings are limited to the restrictions of local, state and federal orders. Meetings must not exceed 50% of a room’s capacity and must allow for 6 feet of separation between participants to meet social distancing requirements. Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add other visual cues in meeting rooms to support social distancing practices between attendees. **All attendees must wear masks or face coverings while sharing space in a common room.**

During your time on-site, you are encouraged to communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed by email, instant message, telephone or other available technology rather than in person. You can also use a range of available collaboration tools (e.g., Microsoft Teams, WebEx, telephone).

**RESTROOMS**

Occupancy of restrooms should be limited based on restroom size to ensure at least 6 feet of distance between individuals. Wash your hands thoroughly afterward to reduce the potential transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19. Whenever possible, hand drying with paper towels is preferred to using air dryers. Contact Facilities Management if paper towels are not available in a restroom.
HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE (CONT.)

ELEVATORS
No more than one person may ride in an elevator at a time. Returning employees should use the stairs if physically able without risk of injury or harm whenever possible. If you must use an elevator, wear a mask or face covering and, if possible, avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers. Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers as soon as possible upon exiting the elevator.

EATING AT WORK
Before and after eating, you should wash your hands thoroughly to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

If you are eating in your workspace (break room, office, etc.), maintain at least 6 feet of distance between you and others. Individuals should not sit facing one another. In common spaces, only remove your mask or face covering in order to eat, then put it back on. Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cues in employee break rooms to support social distancing practices between employees. Wipe all surfaces, including table, refrigerator handle, coffee machine, etc., after using in common areas.

OFFICES/CUBICLES
If you work in an open environment (i.e., open cubicles), be sure to maintain at least 6 feet of distance from co-workers. If possible, have at least one workspace separating you from another co-worker. You should wear a mask or face covering at all times while in a shared workspace/room (e.g., supply/copier room, break room, kitchen).

Departments should assess open work environments and meeting rooms to institute measures to separate physically and to increase distance between employees, other co-workers, guests and visitors, such as:

- Place visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape or signs to indicate to customers where they should stand while waiting in line.
- Place one-way directional signage for large open workspaces with multiple throughways to increase distance between employees moving through the space.
- Consider designating specific stairways for up or down traffic if building space allows.

If you work in an office, no more than one person may be in the same room unless the required 6 feet of distance can be consistently maintained. If more than one person is in a room, masks/face coverings must be worn at all times. A mask or face covering is not required if you are working alone in a confined office space (does not include partitioned work areas in a large open environment where employees are less than 6 feet apart).
HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE (CONT.)

COMMON SPACES

Masks/face coverings must be worn by any staff in a reception/receiving area. Masks/face coverings must be used when inside any UT Dallas facility or on campus grounds where others are present, including walking in narrow hallways, break rooms, conference rooms and other meeting locations.

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY

Maintaining appropriate fire barriers and life-safety protections in buildings and workspaces is critical. Furniture or other items that are rearranged to support physical distancing cannot block or diminish paths of travel (aisles, hallways, corridors), or in any way hinder access to egress doors. Personnel and units must not prop open or inhibit the operation of doors, especially doors that are designed to be self-closing for fire-safety or security purposes.

LABORATORIES

The Office of Research has developed a process for researchers to request resumption of their research programs, including protocols for ensuring social distancing and appropriate protection for employees working in laboratory environments. See the Research Continuity page on the UT Dallas COVID-19 Information website for details.

CLASSROOMS

The Office of Academic Affairs is preparing guidance for return of faculty and students to classrooms. This guidance is posted online in the Students Guide to Classrooms.
HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES

UT SELECT Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas Health Advocates
Coordinated, expert assistance for medical care needs via health advocate, information about medical issues, chronic illness support and more.

866-882-2034
bcbstx.com/ut
Chat on the BCBSTX mobile app

UT CONNECT Customer Service
Enhanced customer service designed to make navigating health care simpler.

888-399-8889
bcbstx.com/utconnect

24/7 Nurseline
Registered nurses are available around the clock to assist members to decide if a situation is an emergency, answer health-related questions and understand the condition.

888-315-9473

MDLIVE
Virtual visits with MDLIVE: Speak with a doctor anytime, anywhere. Online access to qualified health professionals is just a click away. Get care when and where you need it 24/7/365. Offered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas in partnership with MDLIVE, virtual visits by a licensed medical provider are available for nonemergency medical issues and behavioral health and psychological health needs. Visits are available on your computer, tablet or smartphone for no copay.

mdlive.com/bcbstx
MDLIVE app
888-680-8646
Text BCBSTX to 635-483
**Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

UT Dallas offers counseling and mental health services to all employees through the Deer Oaks Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Services. The EAP services can be accessed by calling 888-993-7650 or visiting deeroakseap.com. To access the online services, visit the member login page, and enter “utdallas” for both the username and password.

**Employee Wellness**

Wellness resources (e.g., fitness, nutrition, health screenings) can be found on the [employee wellness website](#).

**Student Health Center**

Individuals on the Student Health Insurance Plan have access to a 24/7 Nurseline and telehealth appointments by calling 800-581-0368. Virtual health appointments are available to current policyholders at no cost.

**Student Counseling Center**

The Student Counseling Center continues to support students through virtual counseling sessions and consultations. Information on how to access SCC services can be found at [utdallas.edu/counseling](#), by leaving a message at 972-883-2575 or emailing counselingcenter@utdallas.edu.