COVID-19 GENERAL WORKPLACE GUIDELINE (GWG)

This guideline applies to all work and study areas including research spaces*.

*This document replaces the Guideline for Reopening Research Spaces.

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# Table of Content

1 INTRODUCTION 4
   STEPS OF RE-OPENING (RESUMING OPERATIONS) 6

2 SCOPE 7
   RESPONSIBILITIES PRIOR TO RESUMING OPERATIONS 7

3 MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF TRANSMISSION 15
   SCHEDULING TASKS & WORKFLOW 15
   PERSONAL MEASURES TO REDUCE RISK OF EXPOSURE 16
   PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES 17
   VENTILATION 22
   CLEANING AND DISINFECTION 26
   SELF-SCREENING (UCHECK) 27
   VACCINATION AND RAPID SCREENING 30
   COMMUNICATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS 36
   TRAVEL 37
   WORKSTATION ERGONOMICS AND REMOTE WORKSPACE SAFETY 38

4 PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF A UCHECK RED SCREEN, CONFIRMED AND/OR SYMPTOMATIC COVID-19 CASE 39

5 COVID-19 GENERAL WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT TOOL (GAT) 40
   INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESEARCH ACTIVITIES 41
   INSTRUCTIONS FOR NON-RESEARCH ACTIVITIES 41
   INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COVID-19 GENERAL ASSESSMENT TOOL 41
   INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE STUDENT SOCIETIES (IN LIEU OF A GAT) 42
   INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE EVENTS GUIDELINES 43
   COVID-19 GENERAL ASSESSMENT TOOL (GAT) 44
1 INTRODUCTION

As government regulations and public health advice continue to evolve, the University is looking ahead to resuming operations that were closed or operating with reduced occupancy due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In so doing, the health and safety of people in these spaces must be a priority and appropriate public health measures put in place. These measures will consider such factors as legal obligations, public health advice, and operational considerations. The University will need to put in place measures to protect the health and safety of its faculty, librarians, staff, students and other members of the U of T community, and to provide reassurance to community members who may have concerns about COVID-19 transmission.

This guideline outlines strategies and best practices for making workplaces ready for increased occupancy, and for addressing the needs of employees and others who will be returning to the workplace. This guideline is also a consolidation of various tools and resources from the University and other public health authorities that will be useful. This document is intended for CAOs, HR managers, Chairs, Directors, Deans and academic and research leadership.

As we begin this gradual and staged approach to returning to on-campus operations, units should utilize these workplace guidelines to develop their own COVID-19 procedures for their specific workplace:

**Administrative and other Non-Research Activities:** Build your re-entry plan using the COVID-19 General Assessment Tool (GAT). Divisions are encouraged to work closely with their Divisional HR Office and Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) as needed to complete their re-entry plans. It is the responsibility of each unit to ensure that EHS has reviewed and provided feedback on their GAT, and that all EHS recommendations are incorporated and implemented in their final Re-Entry Plan. Once a department / division has completed their local re-entry plan, it is to be submitted to the Faculty Dean, Division Head, or designate for approval. Figure 1 provides an overview of organizational structures involved in planning and implementing COVID-19 recovery plans at the University. Divisions/units may wish to consider developing organizational structures/working groups within their areas in order to ensure effective communication and implementation of the guidelines.
**Figure 1: COVID-19 Leadership Organizational Chart**

Division and/or Faculty

Environmental Health & Safety (EHS)

Planning and Re-Entry Advisory Group (PRC)

Response and Adaptation Committee (RAC)

Following the General Workplace Guidelines (GWG), divisions develop their local re-entry plan using the General Assessment Tool (GAT) for their Dean and/or Principal’s approval.

Once approved by the Dean/Principal, a final review of the GAT is completed by Environmental Health and Safety and returned to the Dean for implementation. EHS recommendations must be incorporated in the final plan.

Unique or broader issues are brought forward to the Planning and Re-Entry Advisory Group/Committee (PRC). PRC is a cross-portfolio team that supports Divisions, Campuses and central units in decision-making for reopening.

The Response and Adaptation Committee (RAC) is a tri-campus committee that assists all portfolios across the institution with COVID-19 related issues and projects.

**Research:** Faculty members / Principal investigators / Academic Supervisors use the [Approach for Research Recovery & Adaptation](#) and the [COVID-19 General Assessment Tool](#) as a guide to create a plan to re-open research facilities and return necessary researchers to campus. Deans, in consultation with the AVP, Research Oversight & Compliance, are empowered to approve the return to campus for researchers as long as it is being done in accordance with VPRI guidance. Administrative leaders should contact their Dean for more information about their local approval process. For example, in Arts & Science, all requests to resume on or off-campus research require the approval of the Vice-Dean Research.

For more information, access the [COVID-19 HR Leadership Toolkit](#) and review information on what documents must be submitted to HR & Equity. Information on how and where to submit these documents to HR & Equity is available in the Toolkit. Please note that submission of the re-entry plans or General Assessment Tool is not required unless a unit is requesting to resume in-person operations.

At U of T, the potential stages of restart will follow the steps set out in Ontario’s framework, implemented to our institutional circumstances. The steps are outlined below but for more information, please refer to: “[UTogether2020: A Roadmap for the University of Toronto](#).”

In support of the recovery process, the University has created a number of teams and working groups to coordinate and implement various aspects of the re-opening. A list of team leads and key contacts is available here.
STEPS OF RE-OPENING (RESUMING OPERATIONS)

For more information on the different steps of re-opening under Ontario’s COVID-19 Response framework, please refer to information from the Government of Ontario: https://www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario.

From an institutional perspective neither Step 1 nor Step 2 would see anyone but essential staff and researchers who are able to maintain social distancing rules returning to campus. Step 3 sees a responsible opening of all workplaces; the University still anticipates a very gradual return to work.
2 SCOPE

These guidelines apply to all buildings and areas occupied or operated by the University of Toronto at all campuses and other off-campus locations. This includes spaces that are used by students and other visitors. It applies to all faculty, librarians and staff. For student-related queries, please refer to specific guidelines as they become available.

All measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 should be in compliance with requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and its Regulations, the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act and its Regulations, and public health directives issued under the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA).

RESPONSIBILITIES PRIOR TO RESUMING OPERATIONS

Unit or Department Heads

- Approve which groups or activities are required on-site and/or in-person and which ones are able to continue to work remotely.

- Provide support as required for units needing to restart / re-enter and for those continuing or increasing operations.

- Approve re-entry plans developed by the units and research groups* under their purview. Ensure that public health and provincial guidelines and re-entry plans are complied with. This includes ensuring 2-metre physical distancing is being maintained in common areas, in administrative areas and in research spaces. For all activities where physical distancing cannot be consistently maintained, ensure mitigation measures are considered before relying on PPE.

* Individuals working in research affiliated institutes and/or hospitals must follow the host location’s guideline and/or directives in addition to applicable health and safety requirements in this Guideline.

Supervisors, Managers, Academic Administrators & Principal Investigators (PIs)

Before resuming operations, any individuals who supervise other employees must (below are general considerations to be reviewed in the context of units developing their guidelines):

- Determine which activities need to be performed on-site to support University activities. Outside of these functions, work/research/study activities should continue to work remotely where possible until advised otherwise. For assistance, please review the HR&E’s COVID-19 website for the latest information on COVID-19.

- There may be considerations, if applicable, for individuals regarding:
  - At-risk status (i.e. individuals within the category considered at-risk by provincial public health officials).
  - Employees may be entitled accommodation under existing processes.
• Please contact your divisional HR office if you require further information on sick leaves and accommodation. For students requiring accommodation, please contact the Office of the VP-Provost Students for assistance.
• Accommodate for caregiving obligations (note that at this time, most childcare facilities and all schools in the province remain closed) and employees who live with an at-risk individual. Employees may be entitled to unpaid leaves of absence or measures of accommodation under existing processes.
  o If a faculty/librarian/staff member requests workplace accommodation, the applicable HR & E office (e.g. divisional HR office, Health and Well-Being, Family Care Office) will provide guidance.
  o For students requiring accommodation, please contact the Office of the VP-Provost Students for assistance.

• Consider transportation concerns around use of public transit – see information from the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC). Please visit applicable transport authority website (Go Transit, MiWay) for more information and refer to the use of personal, non-medical masks in the PPE section.

Some individuals carpool to work. Here are some general precautions when carpooling:
• Self-screening prior to carpooling and coming to work. Do not go to work and carpool if you receive a “red” Ucheck status based on responses to either the UCheck or offline paper-based assessment: https://www.utoronto.ca/utogether/ucheck
• Wear a mask.
• Maintain physical distancing while waiting for a ride.
• Reduce the number of occupants in the vehicle to allow maximum physical distancing (e.g. passenger riding in the back seat and distanced from the driver where possible).
• Avoid touching unnecessary surfaces and use hand sanitizer.
• Clean and disinfect surfaces with the vehicle often.
• If possible, open windows
• Maintain the same people in the vehicle where possible to reduce exposure to others.
• For more information, please refer to Toronto Public Health, Commute Ontario, and the US Centre for Disease Control (CDC).

If employees and researchers are required to come to campus to conduct work and they have questions regarding personal use of vehicles or would like to discuss commuting needs, they should speak to their supervisor/manager for arrangements on a case-by-case basis. The supervisor/manager should consult with their HR contact.

• Non-medical mask are required in all common-use spaces in our buildings. For more information, on masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), please refer to Ch6.
• Develop, document, implement and enforce appropriate operating procedures specific to the unit. Allow sufficient time for planning and implementation prior to resuming operations. Obtain approval from the designated unit lead. Stay current on local public
health and provincial requirements and review and modify re-entry plans/GAT periodically.

- Ensure unit-level enforcement plans are fair, unbiased and non-discriminatory. Issues regarding compliance are expected to be varied and unique and are to be assessed on a case-by-case basis by applicable unit leads. Confirm that measures put in place (e.g. physical distancing requirements, PPE requirements) are compliant with accessibility requirements.

- Ensure, following reopening, that controls identified in the COVID-19 operating procedures specific to their unit are followed.

- Provide equipment, PPE, instructions or other resources as identified by the COVID-19 operating procedures.

- Ensure faculty, librarians, staff and students are provided with appropriate, accessible communications and training on the re-entry procedures. Examples of responses to frequently asked questions and concerns can be found in the Manager’s Guide to Returning to Operations on Campus (please refer to the HR& Equity Management Resources section at the link).

- Ensure the re-entry procedure is readily available to applicable employees and students. Policies and procedures may change due to public health directives. Please review this guideline and update your GAT regularly and ensure that changes and updates are communicated to applicable individuals.

- Ensure that contractors or external vendors engaged directly by the unit to perform work in occupied buildings and shared work areas are also aware of this guideline and comply with their sector-specific COVID-19 procedures upon resumption of operations. For construction projects, refer to the Construction Guidelines. External groups must also sign and return COVID-19 Contractor/Externals Safety Acknowledgment Form and provide a copy to their UofT Contact. Also refer to the section on External Groups at the end of this chapter.

- Develop a process to document individuals (e.g. employees, contractors, researchers) who are on-campus under your purview for contact tracing purposes including when (dates, times) and where (locations). For meetings, an example is using the outlook invite and documenting who came to the meeting (i.e. planned vs. actual).

- Ensure contact information (i.e. phone numbers) for employees, contractors, researchers and other applicable individuals coming on campus for activities under your purview is current.

- Protect physical and psychological health and safety by dealing immediately and effectively with concerns and non-compliance. For employees, please contact your Divisional HR Office for consultation if needed. For students requiring accommodation, please contact the Office of the VP-Provost Students for assistance. Units may consider having a designated person receive and collate all queries to ensure consistent, clear messaging and follow-up.
• **Provincial regulation** and **public health guidance** now require that post-secondary institutions implement COVID-19 health screening for anyone coming to campus. In order to comply with these directives, **a self-assessment is now required for all members of our community, including faculty members, librarians, staff, and students, each day they visit any one of the three U of T campuses or any other property owned or operated by U of T**. This self-assessment MUST be completed **BEFORE** coming on-site.

There are two ways that individuals can complete the required self-assessment and generate a risk status each time they come to U of T: **by using UCheck, or by completing a paper-based or offline self-assessment log**.

Screening completion should be confirmed prior to onsite work commencing. This may be accomplished by confirming screening completion at the beginning of a shift, at the beginning of a meeting, via e-mail etc. Monthly reminders (or daily, weekly as appropriate/required) should be sent to employees regarding the requirement to screen BEFORE they enter university. For more information, please refer to the **COVID-19 Self-Assessment: A Guide for Managers, Supervisors, and Academic Administrators** in the **HR Leadership toolkit**.

**All Employees**

If returning to our campuses to work, all employees must:

• Report hazards and concerns to their supervisor/unit head.

• Request accommodation where applicable by speaking to their supervisor/manager/unit head or HR.

• Review and follow instructions in the re-entry procedures specific to your work unit.

• Use equipment and/or PPE as defined in the re-entry procedures.

• Follow applicable procedures in the event of suspected exposure to or illness caused by COVID-19. If the employee suspects they have been exposed to COVID-19 and/or is experiencing symptoms, the Ontario Ministry of Health self-assessment for COVID-19 must be completed: [https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/](https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/). Upon completion of the self-assessment, the employee will receive information on what to do next. Immediately contact the U of T’s Occupational Health Nurse by email at ehs.occhealth@utoronto.ca if they test positive for COVID-19.

• Stay home if sick. If units are having difficulties with employees who are not compliant, please speak with your HR contact. For student related issues, direct queries to applicable U of T contact/academic lead.

• **Provincial regulations** and **public health guidance** now require that post-secondary institutions implement COVID-19 health screening for anyone coming to campus. In
order to comply with these directives, a self-assessment is now required for all members of our community, including faculty members, librarians, staff, and students, each day they visit any one of the three U of T campuses or any other property owned or operated by U of T. This self-assessment MUST be completed BEFORE coming on-site.

There are two ways that individuals can complete the required self-assessment and generate a risk status each time they come to U of T: by using UCheck, or by completing a paper-based or offline self-assessment log.

Upon completion of the UCheck self-assessment, if the individual receive a “red” status, the UCheck web portal prompts them to stay home, and immediately connect with their Manager, Supervisor, Dean, Chair or Academic Director to discuss next steps if they need to come to campus.

In addition to using UCheck, employees must continue to inform their direct manager or supervisor through normal processes if they will be absent due to illness, including cold or flu-related absences. Employees who are ill with any cold or flu-like symptoms must stay home, and not attend campus. NOTE: Employees are no longer required to fill out the COVID-19 Employee Absence Self-Declaration Form on the HR Service Centre if self-isolating or ill due to COVID-19.

Students

If returning to campus, students must:

- Report hazards to their academic supervisor or contact.
- Stay home if sick.
- **Provincial regulation** and **public health guidance** now require that post-secondary institutions implement COVID-19 health screening for anyone coming to campus. In order to comply with these directives, a self-assessment is now required for all members of our community, including faculty members, librarians, staff, and students, each day they visit any one of the three U of T campuses or any other property owned or operated by U of T.

- There are two ways that individuals can complete the required self-assessment and generate a risk status each time they come to U of T: by using UCheck, or by completing a paper-based or offline self-assessment log.
- Upon completion of the UCheck self-assessment, if the individual receive a “red” status, the UCheck web portal prompts them to stay home, and immediately connect with their Dean, Chair, Academic Director or academic lead to discuss next steps if they need to come to campus AND to contact their local student health clinic to determine whether further follow up is required by the OHN.
• Declare their absence through the Absence Declaration tool on ACORN if they are sick or self-isolating.

• Advise their supervisor, undergraduate coordinator, or graduate coordinator of their status if they are sick or self-isolating if they have been on campus.

• Abide by the relevant sections in this guideline if employed by or conducting work for the University.

• Review and follow instructions in the re-entry procedures specific to your academic or research unit.

• Use equipment and/or PPE as defined in the re-entry procedures.

For student-related queries, please refer to applicable guidelines when they become available. For more information, please see the COVID-19 Information for University of Toronto Students.

Campus-Specific Property Management / Facilities Management Groups

Before resuming operations, property and facilities management groups must:

• Review this guideline, and in consultation with appropriate stakeholders, implement measures in this guideline in common and shared areas in buildings (e.g. stairwells, loading docks, corridors, elevators and lobbies, washrooms). Post clear instructions to ensure communication for all building users, including visitors.

• Ensure that contractors are aware of and comply with the COVID-19 procedures applicable to the areas in which they will perform work.

Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSCs)

During this highly complex emergency situation, the role of the JHSC, as part of the Internal Responsibility System, remains unchanged. As employees return to work on-campus, all JHSCs must:

• Ensure the workplace internal responsibility system is functioning by holding regular meetings and conducting monthly workplace inspections to ensure workplace hazards are addressed.

• Participate in applicable hygiene sampling plans, work refusals and critical injury investigations.

• Act as a resource for employees and receive their health and safety concerns when an issue is not resolved with the employee’s supervisor and manager.

• Virtual inspections are an interim measure in place of in-person, monthly workplace inspections. As there is a gradual return-to-campus, virtual inspections may not be
required. However, in the event that virtual inspections are required, the JHSC manager will contact the committee to schedule as required.

- Workplace inspection information is readily available to all committee members. If individuals have questions regarding workplace inspections, they are encouraged to contact their supervisor or engage their JHSC.

- Contact the U of T JHSC Manager, if they have any concerns: ehs.jhsc@utoronto.ca

Environmental Health and Safety

Environmental Health and Safety is responsible for:

- Developing and periodically updating this guideline, in consultation with the appropriate stakeholders, based on the changing COVID-19 situation and public health directives.

- Managing all COVID-19-related employee cases and risks at the University via the Occupational Health Nurse.

- Conducting unannounced safety and regulatory visits and audits in research spaces while respecting capacity limits established by lab staff.

- Identifying and facilitating best practices for COVID-19 safety.

- Being available for consultation as needed.

External Groups

External groups such as contractors, tenants, external groups that have a service agreement, occupancy agreement, lease agreement, etc. are responsible for following UofT procedures in common areas such as elevators, lobbies and hallway (e.g. directional arrows). For spaces under their control, external groups are responsible for assessing their operations and developing/implementing COVID-19 related measures. External groups must also sign and return COVID-19 Contractor/Externals Safety Acknowledgment Form and provide a copy to their UofT Contact.

The COVID-19 Contractor/Externals Safety Acknowledgment Form includes insurance requirements for external parties who attend university premises. In some cases, such as small vendors and individual contractors who may not have any liability insurance Units will need to determine whether to exercise discretion where appropriate to allow the external contractor to assume contractual duties without insurance. Careful consideration regarding when, how and by whom these decisions are made and whether the unit would assume responsibility for a claim arising from an uninsured contractor would need to be assessed on a case by case basis. Units are advised to limit these situations where it has assessed the risk. Units are instructed to advise contractors to seek out resources and platforms where certain classes of activities/workers can purchase insurance on a short-term basis at affordable rates. This is an example (not endorsement) of a company that can provide such short-term insurance: Duuo –  

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each contractor should do their due diligence and evaluate the product that suits their work activities. UofT units can contact EHS (ehs.office@utoronto.ca) if they require assistance.

If applicable, units should consider emergency repairs and whether their contractor/vendor has fully vaccinated staff to send to UofT premises. If the contractor is not able to check off the appropriate box regarding vaccination in the COVID-19 Contractor/Externals Safety Acknowledgment Form, please contact EHS for guidance. Depending on the nature of the situation, additional public health measures may be needed for the duration of the emergency visit (e.g. ensure physical distancing, limiting use of the area to essential staff who are fully vaccinated, rapid antigen screening protocol contractor will follow prior to coming on site, etc.). If the contractor is arranged through a different UofT unit (e.g. facilities), please confirm with your property manager or local facilities group has submitted an Acknowledgement Form. However, the expectation is that the contractor would comply with the UofT vaccination requirement and exemptions are only considered on a case-by-case basis.

The COVID-19 Contractor/Externals Safety Acknowledgment Form will be integrated in to central procurement process such as the Purchase Order Terms and Conditions and the Invitation to Quote forms. For more information, please refer to the Procurement Services website.
3 MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF TRANSMISSION

Certain key elements need to be addressed in operating procedures and must be in place before on-campus operations resume. Units should utilize these workplace guidelines in order to develop their own COVID-19 procedures for their specific workplace.

SCHEDULING TASKS & WORKFLOW

Investigate ways to reduce potential exposure to the COVID-19 virus by minimizing the need and possibility of in-person interactions as much as possible. This may be on-going and may require adjustment over time, depending on applicable government and public health directives. For example:

- Implement staggered shifts and flexible work arrangements to reduce the number of people in a space at the same time. Consider cohorts so the same individuals are scheduled to be in at the same time.

- Ensure any scheduling changes are consistent with collective agreement and policy requirements.

- Consider whether the work of the unit can be rearranged to reduce the need for in-person contact:
  - Provide services/conduct research on-line or by phone.
  - Increase information on websites to reduce in-person inquiries.
  - Review services being offered to determine what is essential to offer onsite and what can be eliminated, deferred, or provided offsite.
  - Use text communication to minimize in-person interaction as much as possible.
  - Schedule virtual meetings, sharing screens, training/webinars etc.
  - Divert essential in-person appointments to virtual discussion to minimize in-person time required.
  - General visitors, volunteers and guests should be prohibited unless critical or essential to be on-site.

- Meetings, including research team meetings and one-on-one meetings between supervisors and grad students/postdocs/employees in department spaces: are encouraged to be held virtually; however, small group meetings with all applicable protective measures (physical distancing, mask, sign-up calendars, access controlled, collection of contact tracing information, Ucheck, GATs etc. as applicable) may occur.

- Graduate student/postdoc recruitment activities: same requirements as above for meetings PLUS completion of paper based screening form for any related parties that
come onsite who do not have a UTORID and cannot use Ucheck electronically.

- Individuals who are sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should stay at home until cleared to return to campus. For employees, refer to COVID-19 HR guidelines. Due to absenteeism, illness or self-isolation, scheduling needs to be flexible.

- Minimize the need for individuals to wait in a waiting room (e.g., by spreading out appointments, having each individual stay outside the facility until the room is ready for them and then call in by phone preferably, or by scheduling visits to eliminate people gathering in reception areas).

- Remove non-essential items from any counters that the public/clients/staff may touch. This will reduce the need to disinfect those items.

- Continue to promote COVID-19 awareness, education, behaviours, and cough etiquette. Procedures include frequent handwashing and use of hand sanitizers with 70-90% alcohol content.

- UofT community members and visitors must screen using Ucheck or its paper equivalent: https://www.utoronto.ca/utogether/ucheck. In addition, anyone who enters University buildings will be screened through use of the University-approved poster (Restricted Access Poster_8.5x11_FA poster). Ensure screening procedure is unbiased, fair and not discriminatory.

- During the pandemic, the building is opened to members of the University community only. Units are encouraged to discuss operating hours (when the building will be unlocked) with their property manager. Please note that all operations within the building must be considered when setting such hours, including its impact on accessing to classrooms, study spaces, or ancillary series (café, food services, etc.). Where appropriate, use restricted access measures including key/fob control. Individuals who inaccurately answer the self-screening question will be asked to leave the premises by the appropriate authority. Employees should report these concerns to their supervisor. Students should speak to their academic lead or contact. Follow up will be conducted by the supervisor or academic lead/contact

PERSONAL MEASURES TO REDUCE RISK OF EXPOSURE

Units should advocate the following Infection Prevention and Control strategies, which are based on government and public health directives:

1. Avoid touching your face, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
2. Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
3. Practice proper respiratory etiquette, such as sneezing and coughing into your elbow.
4. Do not shake hands.
5. Maintain physical distancing of two metres or more.
6. Individuals who are sick or who have COVID-19 related symptoms should stay home. Complete a UCheck self-assessment before arriving on campus.
7. Follow all applicable policies, including the Policy on Face Masks.

In order to support the above strategies, conspicuously post the public health posters that are linked in Appendix A. Resources for COVID-19 of this guideline.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES

Oct. 29, 2021 update:
- No changes have been made to instructional spaces (see section on In-person instruction regarding definition and examples).
- No changes have been made to workplace activities such as meetings. Physical distancing continues to apply.
- For student-led activities, social gather limits per Table 2 continues to apply.
- Certain facilities such as museums, galleries and outdoor amenities with indoor club houses may “opt-in” and require proof of vaccination and proof of ID at the point of entry. By opting-in to this process, physical distancing and capacity limits do not apply. Facilities may also decide NOT to opt-in in which case physical distancing and capacity limits continue to apply. If opting into this process, place of business or facility must post signs at all entrances to the premises of the business or facility, in a conspicuous location visible to the public, that inform patrons that proof of vaccination is required in order to enter the premises. Please contact EHS if you requiring assistance in determining if your operations qualify for this opt-in.
- Physical distancing/capacity limits do not apply to operations such as indoor events in/by a professional venue/organizer (see Table 2 for definition), dine-in food establishments and athletic/fitness facilities, i.e. facilities/operations where proof of vaccination/ID is a requirement. For more information, please refer to the Vaccination section. Please also review and update existing GATs including PPE requirements for staff if physical distancing is not longer applicable.

Physical distancing (2m) is required in non-instructional spaces in the building with the exceptions noted above:

- Provide space for physical (social) distancing of at least two metres (2 metres) between colleagues, employees, students and visitors (e.g. by moving desks). Post maximum occupancy signage. This include common use areas such as hallways, washrooms, etc.

- For multi-use buildings with diverse operations and activities (where physical distancing May or MAY NOT apply, e.g. a building that has interdepartmental workspaces and indoor event/athletic spaces), physical distancing applies to washrooms and common areas unless these areas are dedicated for the sole use of the indoor event/athletic space all the time (not just during the event/athletic activity). For clarity, it is not recommended that signs be continuously removed or re-applied multiple times, for example, removing and applying signs in a washroom that is used by event/athletic facility attendees at certain times and
employees at other times. Note: dedicated areas/buildings such as event/athletic facilities are fully exempt from physical distancing/capacity limits (including washrooms/common spaces) where the entire area/building is dedicated for events/athletics.

- **Three (3) metres** may be require for singing or wind instrument musicians. Please refer to Ch 3, under Dramatic Performances and Music Club Rehearsals.

- Modify furniture arrangement for visitors or staff to increase physical distancing (pre-arrange moving of furniture with local facilities group).

- Remove or tape off chairs in waiting rooms, service and receiving areas to promote physical distancing for the public.

- Consider measures such as restricting building access to fob/key only.

- Floorplans are available for all three campuses through Campus & Facilities Planning: [https://updc.utoronto.ca/campus-facilities-planning/building-plans/](https://updc.utoronto.ca/campus-facilities-planning/building-plans/). However, it is recommended that each unit and/or manager develop their own simple schematics if applicable. In many instances, because of reduced occupancy, adhering to general physical distancing and using our resources including but limited to: floor stickers and elevators signs will suffice. If required, EHS will assist for specific division level considerations.

- Install other **protective barriers**, such as clear plastic sneeze guards (consider only if other measures are not feasible or it is not possible to maintain physical distance of two metres. NOTE: plexiglass barriers do not increase occupancy limits. Maximum occupancy is usually the lesser of either the gathering limit (where applicable, as set by the provincial government) or the ability to physical distance.

  When designing/determining the need for physical barriers, please refer to the considerations in the section on Protective Barriers in the General Assessment Tool. For more information, please also refer to Physical barriers for COVID-19 infection prevention and control in commercial settings.

- **Reminder**: consideration must be given to accessibility requirements when making changes to physical workspaces.

### In-person instruction (including academic related study spaces)

Physical distancing and capacity limit requirements are NOT required for INDOOR instructional spaces/activities including any academic related study space.

Divisions should work together with their local facilities group/property management/CAO, academic leadership etc. to identify appropriate instructional and academic related study spaces within their jurisdictional buildings to adequately support student needs.
Definition of In-person instruction: Academic related activity taking place in classrooms, teaching laboratories, instructor offices, areas where TAs/grads/undergrads have been assigned desk, academic related study spaces, computer labs, libraries and in-person for-credit experiential learning. In-person instruction also includes assessment activities such as exams, midterms etc.

The definition of in-person instruction also applies to activities taking place in academic research laboratories that involve a learner or group of learners (graduate students, undergraduate students, postdocs and other research staff etc.) conducting research under the guidance and instruction of a faculty supervisor, where the learners are being trained on scientific/research methods, receiving technical training, and/or performing experiments and the like in any space that the faculty member uses for their research group, has trainee workspaces that the supervisor oversees and in which they interact with trainees. Divisions would be permitted but not required to apply this definition within their specific laboratory contexts.

Required Protective Measures:

The lifting of physical distancing and capacity limits in spaces used for instructional/academic related activities is contingent upon the following measures being implemented:

- Non-medical masks must be worn at all times;
- No public access e.g. point of building entry/instructional/study area Ucheck verification, monitoring, building signage etc;
- If masks need to be removed during an instructional activity, a “mask exemption for pedagogical reasons” (Instructor Mask Removal Request for indoor Instructional Spaces Questionnaire) must be applied for by the instructor and approved by EHS and the unit lead.
- If masks need to be removed in a study space (e.g. for eating), students should relocate to spaces with physical distancing (e.g. lunchrooms). See below guidance for designating Eating Areas;
- Contact information should be collected e.g. QR code reader, online booking, log-in book, enrollment/attendance lists for classes etc.
- Self-screening and proof of vaccination (Ucheck) is required, as it is for all activities on campus: Ucheck ambassadors, point of building/room/area entry checks, monitoring etc.
- Where feasible, use a booking system to manage occupancy in study spaces;
- Post signage to clearly denote study space areas. Include: Ucheck requirement, non-public use, monitoring provisions (as applicable), mask use, etc. (see template, COVID-19 Academic Study Space Signage Template)
- If units plan to allow more than 25 persons in a study area please contact EHS to discuss additional protective measures which may apply e.g. congestion mitigation measures in common hallways, elevators, washroom etc.
Units may also consider a gradual approach to expanding their instructional and/or study spaces based on resources, logistical limitations restraints etc.

Note: Common room areas for recreational uses (e.g. spaces that have pool tables, foosball tables, areas for social gathering, kitchenettes etc.) would NOT qualify as in-person instructional or academic related study space and physical distancing would apply.

Academic related study spaces may reside in highly variable, multi-use areas across the campuses. Ventilation assessments are not required in these areas. In addition to the above measures, open windows and doors where possible. Please see Ventilation section to determine when assessments are required. It is recommended that physical distancing be maintained where feasible.

It is expected that the above will greatly assist divisions in providing adequate spaces for students. We also encourage divisions to assess their non-instructional spaces to best support student needs during the colder months even though physical distancing, capacity limits and other applicable public health measures would still apply (in these non-instructional areas). Please contact EHS for support and guidance.

*Instructors (faculty, TA etc.), regarding in-person instructional activities – please refer to the In-Class Instructional and Teaching Lab Guideline for additional information. To assist departments in implementing the guidance above, a COVID-19 Academic Study Space Signage Template has been created.

### Food Services and Eating Areas

- For dine-in food establishments, please refer to requirement for vaccine verification in the Vaccination and Rapid Screening section in this chapter. This is required at the point entrance or at the service counter.

- Keep background music and any other background sounds, such as from televisions or other electronic sound producing devices, no louder than the volume of normal conversation (with the exception of live performances carried out in accordance with the provincial Step 3 regulation).

- Please note, for any food services area which may be permitted to open for dining-in/seating, patron information for each person must be collected at the point of purchase: E.g.QR codes laminated and affixed to the tables to record by UTORid who is sitting there, tent card on tables to instruct persons to log in via the QR code AND to use the sanitizing wipes before/after/both using the table.

- Room furniture is set out for physical distancing; no moving tables or chairs; consider removing large tables to avoid crowds from gathering around a particular table.

- Masks must be worn by anyone not eating or drinking (i.e. if they are studying)

- Disinfection to occur of each use by staff or provide disinfectant wipes and signage/tent cards instructs users to disinfect the table.
• Food service locations only: re-usable mugs/beverage containers will not be used for re-filling customer beverages until further notice.

• Monitoring of the area by staff, patrols, etc. to ensure that furniture has not been moved, deter large groups and compliance with other COVID-19 measures.

• **Residences**: Residences should limit seating for only those who have T Cards (to facilitate contact tracing) which can be used to meet the customer log requirements above. If dining/seating options are provided to non-TCard holders or individuals NOT purchasing food are allowed in the dining/seating areas, if dining/seating options are provided to non-TCard holders or individuals NOT purchasing food are allowed in the dining/seating areas, each person’s information must collected (e.g., QR codes as described above). Here is a log template from TPH: [https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/8d95-Restaurant-Customer-Log-Sheet.pdf](https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/8d95-Restaurant-Customer-Log-Sheet.pdf). It is recommended that residences provide a resource to monitor the dining/seating areas to ensure the log book/QR code is completed by such individuals.

• A General Assessment Tool (GAT) or Event Assessment Tool (EAT) is to be approved by the Dean/CAO and reviewed by EHS. Please include details in the GAT/EAT.

Food and beverages are permitted in meetings. Masks are permitted to be removed when eating/drinking but must be re-donned immediately after eating/drinking. In general, physical distancing is required in non-instructional spaces and should be emphasized (e.g., reminders, meeting invites) when masks are removed for eating. If catering food for a meeting, please complete an Event Assessment Tool (EAT) – see Ch 5. When bringing own food/lunch, an EAT is not required but COVID-19 measures should be documented in the unit General Assessment Tool (GAT). For information regarding mask exemptions during workplace meetings (non-instructional activity), please refer to Ch 6. Please note, assessments need to be conducted on a case-by-case basis and where exemptions apply, details must be included in the GAT. In instructional spaces where physical distancing and capacity limits do not apply, designated eating areas with physical distancing should be used for eating. Please contact EHS if your require assistance or assessment.

Where possible, such as in an office, lunch/food should be consumed at the individual’s workstation. Eating in instructional spaces (e.g., classrooms) should be avoided since it results in prolonged removal of masks and eating spaces should be provided to students (see below). Brief removal of the mask to sip water should be avoided if possible. Where necessary (e.g., class duration of several hours), students may briefly remove their mask to take a sip of water but must re-don their mask immediately after drinking water.

As students return to campus, units are encouraged to work with their local facilities group/property management group to identify spaces where students can study/occupy between classes and for eating their lunch to avoid congestion and overcrowding in common areas. Where it is necessary to provide such spaces, units will document in the GAT and include similar measures as for eating areas listed above such as:

• Physical distancing (2 m).
• It recommended to limit capacity to 25 persons; if larger capacities are required please contact EHS (physical distancing continues to apply).
• No moving tables or chairs; consider removing large tables to avoid crowds from gathering around a particular table.
• Disinfection and cleaning (e.g. provision of disinfectant and clear signage to that users are responsible for disinfectant their table).
• Contact tracing (e.g. log book, sign-in sheet, QR codes as described above).
• Monitoring of the space (e.g. by staff or causals engaged for this purpose) for compliance; signage to reinforce COVID-19 measures.

For a listing of locations to eat, study, and access computers, please refer to: Where to go between classes at U of T.

VENTILATION

The University of Toronto has developed a Tri-campus HVAC Strategy as part of a wide range of precautions to curtail the risk of COVID-19 transmission. This strategy is consistent with best available public health and engineering guidance and includes upgrading building ventilation and air filtration.

Public health authorities and medical evidence/infection control continue to state that risk of transmission is greatest when in close contact with an individual who is positive for COVID-19 (CDC and PHAC). Transmission may also occur from touching a contaminated surface and then touching your eyes/nose/mouth. Non-medical masks are also required in indoor common use areas, providing an additional layer of protection per the Policy on Face Masks and the Joint Provostial and Human Resources Guideline on Face Masks. The University has implemented a multi-layered 12-step strategy for a safe return to in-person instruction and activities on-campus. Additional protective measures for specific activities such as music or athletics will be reviewed through the GAT submission process.

Current public health guidance does not require portable air filtration in general building areas such as administrative offices, hallways, and meeting rooms. If you have questions about your particular area you can contact EHS. We continually monitor public health guidance and emerging best practices to update our procedures and guidance.

It is important to note that that a space not having mechanical ventilation does not necessarily mean that there is elevated risk for COVID-19. Most work performed at U of T is classified as low risk. For example, office workers who do not have frequent close contact with coworkers, customers, or the public are classified as low risk for COVID-19. Using a non-medical mask, reductions in onsite staffing levels and applying maximum occupancies based on public health guidelines significantly reduces transmission risk in addition to any other applicable recommendations by public health. Other measures such as self-screening (UCheck), staying home when you are sick, physical distancing, de-densification and finding alternatives to higher risk activities (e.g., virtual participation in events), use of masks, enhanced disinfection of high-touch points and increased hand hygiene continue to be emphasized by public health
In-person instruction

The following applies to instructional spaces such as auditoriums, classrooms, teaching spaces and dry labs (e.g. without chemical fume hoods) where large numbers of transient students may be present. This does not apply to offices, restricted or limited access research labs or other support spaces which are instructional in nature (e.g. graduate student offices, offices in open spaces) and where there is a limited, consistent cohort of <15 persons present at a time; in these spaces, open windows/doors where feasible, non-medical masks must be worn at all times and no eating/drinking, etc. or other activities that require masks to be removed. Ventilation assessments in these spaces are also not required if physical distancing is applied. Please contact EHS if you require assistance or an assessment.

1. All instructional classes must occur in one of the 800+ designated 6ACH inventory classrooms, as per the [webpage](#).

2. If, due to specialized equipment needs, room logistics etc., the activity cannot occur in an inventory class space, the unit will review to determine whether the activity can be modified to take place in an inventory classroom.

   *OHS/unit to assess and only in the RARE cases where the activity cannot be moved to an inventory classroom after exhausting all tenable options would we proceed to 3-4 below.

   **The expectation is that academic units will modify pedagogical approaches to allow course content delivery for classes to occur within an inventory classroom ONLY.**

3. If the OHS/unit assessment determines that it is essential to proceed with in-person instruction in a non-inventory classroom, the unit may proceed if utilities determines that air filtration units can be installed within the space or use of alternate appropriate air filtration units can be employed to accommodate the activity as intermittently required.

   *Only appropriately selected air filtration units as per Utilities are to be used for this purpose and will be provided by Utilities ONLY. Utilities/OHS will assess how the air filtration units for the instructional activity.

4. In any circumstance where 2) applies and 3) CANNOT be applied, these cases will be assessed case by case to determine how/if the instructional activity may proceed.

Dramatic Performances and Music Club Rehearsals

UofT members participate in a number of clubs that may involve dramatic performances and music rehearsals. Most activities do not present an elevated risk and can proceed with public health guidance used in most spaces (e.g. Ucheck self-screening, physical distancing, capacity limits, non-medical masks, enhanced hand hygiene and disinfection). However, certain higher risk such as singing and wind instruments. The following measures apply to dramatic and music club performances and rehearsals not associated with in-person instruction (e.g. program of
study). For in-person instruction, if unmasking is required for pedagogical reasons, please complete the Instructor Mask Removal Request for indoor Instructional Spaces Questionnaire. The questionnaire will reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

1. Any performances without singing or wind instruments:
   a) Proceed with following usual public health requirements (e.g. Ucheck self-screening, physical distancing, capacity limits, non-medical masks, enhanced hand hygiene and disinfection, daily attendance/contact tracing information for all individuals present
   b) Use of inventory classrooms, as per the webpage, is NOT required.
   c) The use of non-medical masks while physically distanced are required. Suggestions for groups/clubs if they wish for their faces to be seen during the performance:
      i. Use a clear panel mask; OR,
      ii. Use a barrier (e.g. plexiglass) between each person on stage; OR,
      iii. If there is a performer who is unmasked, only this performer is allowed on stage at a time and at least 2 metres away from the audience and all other persons.

2. Singing and/or wind instruments

   This guidance applies to those who are fully vaccinated. Individuals who are not vaccinated should contact EHS for additional guidance for conducting these activities.
   a) Using an inventoried classroom, as per the webpage, OR outdoors:
      I. Daily attendance/contact tracing information for all individuals present
      II. Open doors and windows where feasible/applicable
      III. Follow posted room occupancy based on 2 metre physical distancing
      IV. Physical distancing (2 metres) OR plexiglass barrier between each person.
      V. Singers – medical mask (in addition to physical distancing of 2 metres and OR plexiglass) – no unmasked singing in any circumstances in any indoor room or outdoor space. Singers must use medical grade mask and eye protection when there is more than one singer. Solo singing performances may proceed without eye protection.
      VI. Wind instrument musicians – bell covers (in addition to physical distancing of 2 metres or plexiglass) + only remove mask during the playing of the instrument, non-medical masks to be worn at all other times.
VII. If there is an audience, performers and the audience will also be separated by physical distancing of 2 metres or plexiglass.

b) Using a non-inventoried classroom

Consider modifying performance where possible to remove singing or wind instruments. Consider pre-recording and playing video, etc. during performance these types of performances and integrating videos into the performance.

If the performance or rehearsal must proceed in-person:

i. Daily attendance/contact tracing information for all individuals present

ii. Limit to 25 persons total in the space; 2 metres physical distancing between persons who are NOT singers and wind instrument musicians.

iii. Open doors and windows where feasible.

iv. Physical distancing (3 metres) OR plexiglass barrier between each person.

v. Singers – medical mask (in addition to physical distancing of 3 metres and plexiglass) – no unmasked singing in any circumstances in any indoor room or outdoor space. Singers must use medical grade mask and eye protection when there is more than one singer. Solo singing performances may proceed without eye protection.

vi. Wind instrument musicians – bell covers (in addition to physical distancing of 3 metres or plexiglass) + only remove mask during the playing of the instrument, non-medical masks to be worn at all other times.

vii. If there is an audience, singers and wind instrument musicians and the audience will also be separated by physical distancing of 3 metres or plexiglass.

For additional guidance regarding to plexiglass (e.g. height), please refer to the considerations in the section on Protective Barriers in the General Assessment Tool and Physical barriers for COVID-19 infection prevention and control in commercial settings.

Ventilation shutdowns

For in-person instructional spaces (either inventoried classrooms or non-inventoried classrooms), ventilation shutdowns (for repair, maintenance, etc.) should take place when theses spaces are unoccupied where feasible (to be assessed on a case-by-case basis). For other spaces (e.g. labs, offices), shutdowns may proceed if physical distancing, along with all other applicable public health measures (e.g. Ucheck, mask, etc.) continue to be followed. Local
facilities groups planning for shutdowns should liaise with building occupants to discuss the impact/affected areas of ventilation shutdowns and develop a schedule to accommodate occupant usage of the affected spaces. For prolonged shutdown periods (e.g. more than 1 day’s duration), additional assessments/measures may apply, please contact EHS for assistance.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

Caretaking will implement applicable procedures for high touch areas in common spaces (such as doorknobs, elevator buttons, light switches, handrails, etc.). For more information, please refer to the Tri-Campus Caretaking Strategy for Return to the University.

However, building occupants are also asked to clean high touch areas in their workspace (such as workspace countertops, shared equipment/tools) throughout the day. Units can contact Caretaking for supplies.

Considerations for disinfection:

- If using reusable cloths to disinfect, change cloths regularly and use sufficient amounts disinfectant to wet the surface being disinfected. Follow manufacturer’s instructions on use and contact time. Depending on the product, you may be able to spray directly on the surface and allow it air dry without wiping. Reusable cleaning items can be washed using regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C).

- After disinfection is completed, the item or space can return to normal use/operations.

- Objects or spaces that cannot be disinfected or cleaned: The risk associated with transmission with shared objects is low and focus should be on regular hand hygiene an respiratory etiquette to reduce the risk of transmission. As an added measure, in situations where objects are difficult to disinfect, disinfect the accessible surfaces (if applicable) and quarantined/isolated for 72 hours.

Discourage sharing of equipment such as telephones, keyboards, desks or workstations. Please refer to the General Assessment Tool for more information. Shared equipment and surfaces (e.g. benchtops) must be disinfected between users (e.g. before and after use).

Disinfectants must have a Drug Identification Number (DIN) from Health Canada or be approved by Health Canada for use against COVID-19. In addition, a laboratory or research environment, lab members may use the following chemicals for disinfection:
  a) 0.1% sodium hypochlorite (active ingredient in bleach) for 5 minutes of contact time then rinsed with water – note that sodium hypochlorite is corrosive;
  b) 70% ethanol;
  c) 0.5% accelerated hydrogen peroxide products such as PreEmpt (follow manufacturers’ recommendations for contact time).
Paper, mail, packages and deliveries: This risk of the virus transmitting as result of handling paper, mail, packages and deliveries is low. General precautions for further reducing risk include: where possible, implement contactless delivery and use electronic documents and frequent hand washing with soap and water (or use hand sanitizer if hand washing facilities are not available) after handling a package. Avoid practices such as passing handouts to the back of the room between students. Instead, lay out papers individually at the designated seating area or lay out individually at the entrance for pick up while following physical distancing. For roles which require frequent handling of deliveries, the use of disposable gloves may be considered. Employees should continue to practice good hand hygiene since gloves are not a replacement for washing hands regularly. Where practicable, consider wiping down the outside of packages with disinfectant.

If your department receives regular deliveries, develop safe work procedures which include:

- Delivery personnel must wear a non-medical mask
- Deliveries should be completed under 15 minutes
- Follow contactless delivery such as posting a phone number for the delivery personnel to call, designating a physically distanced drop-off point and staff members retrieving the items after the delivery personnel has left.
- Delivery personnel are expected to self-screen at the building entrance. Please ensure that the COVID-19 Restricted Access Self-Screening Poster is posted at every entrance including loading docks or other access points.

SELF-SCREENING (UCHECK)

All members of our community who come onto U of T campuses or premises must complete a health screening and be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and are required to upload proof of vaccination via UCheck. ***The self-screening must be completed daily. If you have completed Ucheck the day before but within the last 24 hours, please re-log in and completed the assessment for each day you are on-campus so that your green screen shows today’s date.***

Note: The Ucheck web-portal is only accessible to users with an active UTORID and an active record in one of these university systems: HRIS, ROSI, PRS, PGME. If not, the individual will need to use the paper based self-screening on the Ucheck webpage.

Any individual that is not compliant with the vaccine guidelines will no longer get a green health screen.

Ucheck reminders and compliance takes place in a number of ways:

- A dashboard is available to leadership in all areas that indicates real-time status of health screens. This is available to CAO’s for staff, and appropriate leadership for faculty (chair, vice-dean, etc.).
- Some Ancillary and Library facilities are asking individuals to display their green ucheck screen before entering the building (e.g. Robarts, KPE, Hart House, etc.).
The **UCheck Ambassador Program** is a friendly and educative way to remind members of our community to complete their UCheck health screening each and every day they are on campus. The program uses small teams of UCheck Ambassadors to visit high-traffic locations across U of T campuses. These trained ambassadors will ask every individual approaching a building entrance or space if they have completed their health screening in UCheck. For additional information, please also refer to the UofT News article: [U of T’s UCheck ambassadors remind community members to complete COVID-19 self-screening](https://www.utoronto.ca/ucheck anunciado).

- EHS lab inspections will now include verification of UCheck
- At locations where proof of vaccination is required (e.g. dine-in food establishments) and indoor events
- Where appropriate, supervisors/managers to require UCheck verification at the beginning of the shift, week, etc. to ensure compliance
- Verification measures are documented in the GAT (General Assessment Tool) or EAT (Event Assessment Tool) where applicable and appropriate.
- Employee memos: [https://people.utoronto.ca/category/covid-19/](https://people.utoronto.ca/category/covid-19/)
- Reminders and communications through various social media sources (e.g. [UTogether webpage](https://utotogether.utoronto.ca/), Ucheck webpage, UofT Student Life [website](https://students.utoronto.ca/), [twitter](https://twitter.com), and newsletters.

The following prompts are also used to remind faculty, staff and students to complete Ucheck:

- Link to Ucheck located across the top of the [UofT website](https://www.utoronto.ca)
- A banner reminder appears in Quecus to complete Ucheck
- Instructor slide deck with reminders regarding Ucheck, vaccination, masks, etc. – please refer to the COVID-19 In-Class Instruction Guidelines for Course Instructors and First Class or Tutorial Slide Deck in the COVID-19 Leadership Toolkit (available through their program administrator, Chair or Dean).
- Instructors/TAs may ask to see students’ Ucheck status before entering a classroom, but they are not required to.
- Reminders on the Office of the Vice-Provost Students [webpage](https://provost.utoronto.ca/viceprovoststudents).

The university has also conducted an assessment and has identified high volume buildings/areas that are used by multiple community groups e.g. students, staff, visitors etc. Ucheck validations are required at these locations - point of entry or point of purchase. Please note the listing below may change periodically as the pandemic evolves:

**UTSG (St. George):**

- Athletic Centre
- Varsity
- Goldring
- Robarts Library
- Gerstein Library
- OISE (252 Bloor) and OISE Library
- John M. Kelly Library (St. Michael’s College)
• Hart House
• Faculty of Law
• Rotman School of Management
• New College Dining Hall
• Howard Ferguson Dining Hall in Morrison Hall
• Café Reznikoff in Morrison Hall
• Food vendor with nearby seating
  o Sid Smith Café
  o MSB Café
  o MSB Starbucks
  o Sandford Fleming Veda

UTM
• Health and Counselling Centre (HCC)
• Recreation, Athletics and Wellness (RAWC)
• Library

UTSC
• Library
• La Prep

All campuses
• Indoor events as applicable per the Step 3 regulation

When verifying Ucheck, units need to consider the following principles in determining whether this is applicable:

• Importance of in-person activity and the health and safety of our community.
• Equity in approach across campuses and divisions. While checks may vary on location or timing, where they are in place, everyone should be checked.
• Focus on higher risk activities/environments (e.g. activities covered under provincial passport regime such as indoor dining, gyms, and high numbers of transient populations present where contact tracing information is difficult to attain and where live screening would be beneficial such as libraries, student orientation events, front-facing receptions etc.).
• Dedicated consistent resources to apply live screening (e.g. staff for controlled entry point e.g. athletics card swipe entry points).
• Friendly and educative approach to on-site checking by ambassadors/staff.
• Culture of support for those staying home with mild symptoms.

If the decision is made to proceed with live Ucheck confirmations, units should incorporate verification of the Ucheck green status into the procedures for the EAT or GAT, including considerations for queuing during the checking process. Physical distancing and non-medical masks must be worn when queuing in common areas of the building.
Units that do not verify the Ucheck status of each person should have a process to regularly communicate/remind faculty/staff/students and visitors to use Ucheck (or complete the paper-based screening form) before attending campus. Examples are:

- Posting Ucheck signage posted in conspicuous locations, as documented in the unit’s GAT or EAT.
- Periodically at the start of class – please refer to COVID-19 In-Class Instruction Guidelines for Course Instructors and First Class or Tutorial Slide Deck in the COVID-19 Leadership Toolkit (available through their program administrator, Chair or Dean)
- Reminders – emails, memos, meetings (minuted), tag line in email signatures
- During booking or appointment-making process
- Incorporating reminders in front facing positions: “Hi, just a reminder that you must complete your Ucheck health screening before entering…”

Note: the above may also be applied to units who do choose to implement live Ucheck sc

External persons who are visiting campus, e.g. those purchasing from food vendors, delivery companies are required to complete the paper visitor form if they stay on UofT premises for more than 15 minutes.

External or contractors who have completed the UofT COVID-19 Contractor/External Acknowledgement Form are not required to complete the paper visitor form as they will follow their own internal organization’s health screening processes before coming to campus.

**VACCINATION AND RAPID SCREENING**

This September, all members of the University community—including students, staff, faculty, and librarians—will be required to provide proof of full vaccination or register in the University’s rapid screening program, where results will need to be uploaded regularly. For more information, on vaccinations, please refer to the UTogether COVID-19 Vaccination webpage (https://www.utoronto.ca/utogether/vaccines), UTogether FAQs. (https://www.utoronto.ca/utogether/faqs#vaccines) and the Joint Provostial and Human Resources Guideline on Vaccination. If you require further information on how vaccinations can be obtained, please refer to COVID-19: How to Get Vaccinated from the City of Toronto or COVID-19 Vaccine from the Peel Region of Health.

For more information, on rapid screening, please refer to: https://www.utoronto.ca/utogether/rapid-screening. Student or employee personal information will not be disclosed or shared for any reason, except for Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) purposes in the event of a presumed positive case. A designated occupational health staff member will work with the applicable units to confirm that those with exemptions are enrolled in rapid screening program and uploading results regularly as required. Medical and religious exemptions are submitted through via U of T’s Enterprise Service Centre (ServiceNow).

People who have had COVID-19 in the past should still get vaccinated. Natural immunity from having COVID-19 may not last long and may not protect against COVID-19 variants. Get
vaccinated to stay protected. Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms, including fever, should not go to a vaccine clinic. Please wait at least 10 days until you are no longer in self-isolation or your symptoms have gone away. For more information, please refer to: COVID-19: About the Vaccines – City of Toronto and About the COVID-19 vaccines - COVID-19 vaccine - Region of Peel (peelregion.ca).

The University has implemented a multi-layered approach which includes vaccination, self-screening (i.e. Ucheck), physical distancing, increased hand hygiene, enhanced cleaning/disinfection and mask use. The University will also comply with capacity limits required by the province where applicable. For more information on who UofT is preparing for in-person instruction, please refer to: https://www.utoronto.ca/news/12-ways-u-t-preparing-safe-return-person-instruction.

If you have any specific concerns regarding your particular medical circumstance, please contact our occupational health nurse at: ehs.occhealth@utoronto.ca

Vaccination status is private medical information and individuals should not be asked about their status of their vaccination unless there is a vaccine requirement related to their work or study (e.g. applicable clinical placements). In such cases, the individual will be referred to the appropriate medical/clinical resources at the University (e.g. occupational health) for this information. Students in residences will follow processes developed specifically in that setting to ensure confidentiality of their medical information.

At this point in time, there are no changes in University procedures based on vaccination status. All community members must follow University polices (e.g. self-screening, mask use, physical distancing, hand hygiene, enhanced disinfection, etc.) and unit-specific procedures when on-campus. The University will continue to monitor the situation closely and update/communicate changes where applicable and appropriate.

All faculty/librarians/staff/students must complete health screening using the Ucheck web portal prior to coming to campus. Ucheck paper forms are available for health screening for external persons who DO NOT have access to the Ucheck webportal. UofT community members (with valid UTORIDS) must use the web portal where possible for health screening and would use the paper form only in extenuating circumstances, e.g. forgot their device at home that day. Please note that completing the Ucheck paper form does not replace the requirement for UTORID holders to complete the UCheck Vaccine Declaration in the UCheck web portal. All faculty/librarians/staff/students must still use the UCheck webportal to upload their vaccine information. If faculty/librarians/staff do not have access to electronic devices, they should speak to their supervisor/manager/chair/designated unit lead who will arrange access. Students should contact their academic lead who will arrange access.

The University of Toronto requires all those present on our premises to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. This requirement will be added the Restricted Access/Self-screening poster shortly. Due to the short and transient nature of their visit and with other public health measures in place (e.g. mask, physical distancing, enhanced disinfection), they are low risk to our community. Please note that the provincial requirements for vaccine passport/verification do not include brief activities such as drop-offs, pick-ups, making a retail purchase, etc. For visitors who are on our premises for > 15 minute, the UofT contact for the visitor must ensure that the
Ucheck paper visitor form is completed. Additionally, for regular contractors and externals that are regularly on our premises, the UofT COVID-19 Contractor/External Acknowledgement Form is completed by the UofT contact and the external/contractor. Both these processes provide means for the University to follow up with the visitor/contractor/external as required for vaccination information.

**Student Placements**

A number of programs (e.g., health sciences, education) place students in sites where vaccination is required by law/regulation. In many cases, the onus is on the placement site to verify vaccination status. In others, existing agreements require verification done by the U of T division. In those cases where divisions are already verifying vaccination status, divisions should be expanding the secure systems that they are already using to verify similar types of confidential student information that is required by law/regulation (e.g. police checks, other types of required vaccinations, TB screening, etc.).

As a reminder, guidance around vaccination verification for graduate students and post-docs in research settings in hospitals or third-party sites is available online. See: https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/lookingahead/frequently-asked-questions/#section_3. As indicated in that guidance, there will likely be scenarios where students will be required to demonstrate proof of vaccination more than once. Where possible, the University of Toronto and its partners aim to incorporate the tracking of COVID-19 vaccination status into existing processes that monitor similar information. Where partnership agreements exist, processes must be compliant with those agreements.

For divisions that already have vaccination validation processes in place (e.g. varicella, TB, rubella, Covid-19 etc.) please continue to ensure that adequate notice of data collection information is provided to placement students in advance of vaccine validation. In situations where divisions do not have pre-existing vaccination validation processes in place, you may adopt your own verification process by checking the authenticated Enhanced certificate with QR code from the Government of Ontario (plus ID). For the purposes of confidentiality, please designate one divisional contact person to act as a designate on placement vaccine validation matters. If you require additional support and/or need assistance in conducting the verifications, please connect directly with the Occupational Health (ehs.occhealth@utoronto.ca) who will provide you with guidance and support.

As another option, units may also check the student’s ID and the Enhanced certificate with QR code from the Government of Ontario.

**Proof of identification and of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 at the point of entry**

As of Sept. 22, 2021, the University is required to abide by all laws and regulations, including requiring proof of vaccinations: https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r21645. Proof of identification and of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 at the point of entry are required.
for all patrons under the following circumstances (for more information, please refer to Proof of Vaccination Guidance for Businesses and Organizations under the Reopening Ontario Act):

- The indoor areas of restaurants, bars and other food or drink establishments where dance facilities are not provided, including student residence cafeterias/dining halls for patrons are dining-in. If such food establishments (including quick service restaurants) requires all dine-in patrons to order or select their food or drink at a counter, food bar or cafeteria and pay before receiving their order, the establishment may require dine-in patrons to provide the proof of identity and of full vaccination at the counter, food bar or cafeteria line.

  Exemption: does not apply to takeout and delivery service.

- The indoor and outdoor areas of food or drink establishments where dance facilities are provided. For clarity, this requirement does not apply to outdoor areas of food or drink unless there is dancing.

  Exemption: Does not apply to takeout and delivery service.

- The indoor areas of meeting and event spaces, including conference centres or convention centres. However, this would not be required for faculty/staff if they are booking a meeting space for work purposes or for in-person instructional activities.

  Host should notify their guests ASAP of the vaccination requirements.

  Exemption:

  - Does not apply to day camps, childcare or provision of social services.

  - Does not apply to those who entering the indoor premises of a meeting or event space, including a conference centre or convention centre, solely for the purposes of attending a wedding service, rite or ceremony or a funeral service, rite or ceremony, Note: the requirement does apply to associated social gatherings of the above

  - Does not apply to those who are entering the indoor premises of a meeting or event space, including a conference centre or convention centre, for the purposes of attending a social gathering associated with a wedding service, rite or ceremony or a social gathering associated with a funeral service, rite or ceremony, on or after September 22, 2021, but before October 13, 2021*, as long as the patron produces the results of an antigen test administered within the previous 48 hours establishing that the person is negative for COVID-19 to the person responsible for the establishment.

  Hosts should review the regulations carefully and share this information with their guests to avoid being prohibited from entering University premises. Hosts should notify their guests ASAP of the requirements in this section.

- The indoor areas of facilities used for sports and recreational fitness activities, including waterparks and personal physical fitness trainers and indoor areas of facilities where spectators watch events.
Exemption:

- Does not apply to day camps, childcare or provision of social services.
- Does not apply to those who are under 18 years of age, and who are entering the indoor premises of a facility used for sports and recreational fitness activities solely for the purpose of actively participating in an organized sport, in accordance with guidance published by the Ministry of Health on its website for the purposes of this provision. This is however a provincial exemption:
  - As of Nov. 1, 2021, TPH requires all persons age 12 and older who attends an indoor facility for the purpose of actively participating in organized sports and or coaching, caregiving, volunteering at or officiating organized sports to provide proof of vaccination at the point of entry.
- The indoor areas of concert venues, theatres and cinemas.
- The indoor areas of places where commercial film and television production takes place, where there is a studio audience. A member of the studio audience is considered to be a patron of the production.

In addition to the specific exemptions above, this requirement does not apply to patrons who enter an indoor area:

- To use a washroom;
- To access an outdoor area that can only be accessed through an indoor route;
- To make a retail purchase;
- While placing or picking up an order;
- While paying for an order;
- To purchase admission; or
- As may be necessary for the purposes of health and safety;
- A patrons who is under 12 years of age;
- A patron who provides a written document, completed and supplied by a physician or registered nurse in the extended class, stating the individual is exempt for a medical reason and the effective time-period of the medical reasons; and
- Workers, contractors, repair workers, delivery workers, students, volunteers, inspectors or others who are entering the business or organization for work purposes and not as patrons.

*Summary table*
WEDDINGS

NEW Point of Entry Proof of Vaccination Requirement under provincial regs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOR INDOOR WEDDING SERVICES</th>
<th>NONE – WEDDING SERVICES EXEMPT ENTIRELY.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 14 FOR WEDDINGS THAT HAVE ASSOCIATED SOCIAL GATHERINGS**</td>
<td>Proof of identification and of being fully vaccinated against COVID-UNLESS provided with a written document, completed and supplied by a physician or registered nurse in the extended class, (i) a documented medical reason for not being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, and (ii) the effective time-period for the medical reason or UNDER 12.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Applies for all activities listed in the new regs: https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r21645.

It is recommended that the following be communicated to those who have booked events:

a. The University is required to abide by all laws and regulations, including requiring proof of vaccinations: [https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r21645](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r21645)
b. The University’s own vaccine guideline still requires the host to ensure all their vendors are fully vaccinated (ie; set up, music etc.). Vendors are not considered patrons under the provincial amendment.
c. Hosts should notify their guests asap FOR WEDDING RECEPTIONS OCCURRING BEFORE— WE ARE REQUIRED TO VIEW AT POINT OF ENTRY, NEGATIVE ANTIGEN TESTS FROM EACH GUEST, IF CANNOT PRODUCE VACCINE CERTIFICATE. FOR ANY SOCIAL GATHER, OCCURRING ON OR AFTER OCTOBER 13, WE ARE REQUIRED TO VIEW AND ALL GUESTS ARE REQUIRED TO PRODUCE ID AND VACCINATION CERTIFICATE UNLESS THEY HAVE A MEDICAL NOTE SETS OUT, (I) A DOCUMENTED MEDICAL REASON FOR NOT BEING FULLY VACCINATED AGAINST COVID-19, AND (II) THE EFFECTIVE TIME-PERIOD FOR THE MEDICAL REASON.
d. Host should review the regulations carefully and share this information with their guests to avoid being prohibited from entering University premises: [https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r21645](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/r21645)

Verifying proof of identity and of being fully vaccinated

Effective Oct. 29, 2021, UofT community members who have access to the Ucheck web portal may use their GREEN Ucheck screen to demonstrate proof of vaccination and ID. Event staff, coordinators and volunteers who are verifying this information must check the name and date on the Ucheck screen. Individuals who do not have the Ucheck web portal (e.g. external persons, visitors etc.) must show a vaccination receipt or enhanced vaccine certificate and proof of ID, please refer to the COVID-19 Vaccination Verification Decision Guide. Starting Oct. 15th, 2021, the Enhanced certificate with QR code from the Government of Ontario in lieu of a vaccination receipt. To scan this QR code, the unit must download the Verify Ontario app. Individuals who received their vaccination outside of Ontario should contact their local public health unit in Ontario to verify and document their vaccination. This would allow them to receive an Ontario vaccination certificate and/or use the Enhanced Certificate with QR code.
For externals who present a medical exemption, additional information is available in this guide: Verifying Documentation for Exemption from COVID-19 Vaccination for Externals.

Validation of identification must also be undertaken to ensure that vaccination receipt offered by the patron belongs to them. Validation of vaccination will be based on two key identifiers:

- Name of the identification holder; and
- Date of birth.

A photo identification is not required.

A person is fully vaccinated against COVID-19 if they have received:

- The full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of such vaccines,
- One or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or
- Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada.

They must have received their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days prior to be fully vaccinated.

During this verification process, per regulatory requirements, the University will not maintain any hardcopy or digital copies of this information.

COMMUNICATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Once a re-entry plan has been developed, it is important to communicate this plan in accessible and plain language to faculty, librarians, staff, students and other users of the space. The communication strategy will vary depending on the unit, but here are some recommendations:

- Consult with divisional, faculty, campus and University communications teams for resources and materials. Communications may take the form of memos, emails and meetings (following physical distancing). Ensure alternate formats of communication are made available. Please contact the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Office or appropriate divisional HR office for more information.
- Direct readers to University websites and resources for further information – see Appendix A for Resources.
- In addition to faculty, librarians, staff and students in the unit, consider how you will communicate with contractors, organizations and other departments that you work with routinely. Please refer to the COVID-19 Construction Guidelines when available.
- Update procedures for scheduling appointments.
• Post signage at an accessible height to remind workers and inform students and visitors. (Common signage will be developed for use across the University.)

• Post information on your website or send email to all clients advising them to call prior to coming to your office or facility and update your email signature with instructions on new procedures.

• Utilize social media channels to provide updates and reminders.

• For high traffic flow areas, consider providing a resource to explain the procedure and direct visitors.

• Communications will need to occur more than once. Consider creating an official feedback mechanism (refer to Diagram 1) to get feedback from faculty, librarians, staff and students who may have additional suggestions to improve the procedure. The procedure may also change over time as restrictions continue to lift. The re-entry procedure may need to be adjusted over time and re-communicated to relevant parties.

Rumours and misinformation can circulate rapidly amongst the community and widely via social media. Stigma can undermine institutional cohesion and prompt possible social isolation of individuals and/or groups, which might contribute to a situation where the virus is more, not less, likely to spread. Stigma is when people are labelled, or stereotyped, and can lead to discrimination in the workplace based on their age, disability, ethnic origin, place of origin, and race, or other protected grounds in the workplace. Consider creating unit-level communication and awareness campaigns, tailored to specific workplace environments, developed with assistance from University of Toronto Communications, EHS, and HR & Equity Offices.

For more information, please review the document entitled Social Stigma associated with COVID-19 from UNICEF.

TRAVEL

Non-essential travel by faculty, libraries and staff is permitted but units are encouraged to review the need for the travel during the pandemic. Should someone choose to travel, please review the Government of Canada Foreign Affairs website for travel advisories and ensure follow-up is conducted with their applicable travel insurance company regarding coverage restrictions. Public Health directives will need to be followed at the destination country as well as upon return to Canada (see Government of Canada website). For those returning to Canada after travelling abroad, please ensure that the travel guidance is followed and if COVID-19 related symptoms develop upon return. It is not necessary to contact please contact our occupational health nurse unless the employee has COVID-19 related symptoms.

For more information regarding travel for students, please refer to:
• FAQs from the Vice Provost, Students: https://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/covid-19/#FAQSafetyAbroad
• UoT Safety Abroad Office*: https://safetyabroad.utoronto.ca/
• Off campus safety
• International travel for non-research purposes (conferences, workshops, etc.). Anyone travelling internationally for purposes of University business is encouraged to review the Guidance on Research and Travel during the COVID pandemic.

Given that Global Affairs Canada has lifted the world-wide “avoid non-essential” travel advisory, as of November 3, 2021 university sanctioned activities abroad can now resume for U of T students for countries and regions that are listed at “exercise normal security precautions” and “exercise a high degree of caution”. Please follow the instructions and pre-departure steps as indicated on the Safety Abroad Student’s page well in advance of your travel abroad. Please contact the Safety Abroad Office (safety.abroad@utoronto.ca) if you have questions or you are a student traveling abroad. For additional updates from the university related to COVID-19, please visit the VP Students COVID-19 FAQ page.

Field Trips should be limited to only those denoted as essential/required for course/degree completion until further notice. Field trips which are required must be approved by the Dean. The organizer is responsible for ensuring the business/location/site (as applicable) where the field trip is going is permitted to open and is in compliance with any specific requirements on it arising from COVID. The University is responsible to take all reasonable precautions to protect workers and students. Field trips to any location and associated modes of transportation must be compliant with all applicable COVID-related regulatory or public health requirements. For information regarding transportation (e.g. school bus), some useful information can be found in Public Health Ontario’s Daily Camp Operations: COVID-19 Preparedness and Prevention for Day Camps. This document is only meant to be a guide/information purposes (Not all information in a day camp facility is applicable to the University setting. Transportation such as buses should continue to be planned with physical distancing between riders until further notice.).

For more information on off-campus research and non-research field trips and excursions, please refer to Chapter 5.

WORKSTATION ERGONOMICS AND REMOTE WORKSPACE SAFETY

Employees may have questions about workstation ergonomics or other health and safety concerns when working at home or making changes to their workstation (e.g. furniture or computer equipment being moved after cleaning/disinfection or after re-arrangement for meeting physical distancing). Please visit the EHS Office Ergonomics webpage and the EHS Office Ergonomics Infographics website. Employees can further learn about how to fully assess and set up their workstation by taking the free online course EHS536 Office Ergonomics (to locate the course please go to the My EHS Training and follow the instructions). If you have a
specific request such as taking office equipment home, please contact your supervisor. Supervisors/managers can contact HR for assistance.

Employees and faculty who have been approved to work from home (e.g. accommodation, approved alternate work arrangement) should review, the Working Remotely site, the Working at Home Checklist and Appendix B: Remote Workspace Safety Checklist in the Alternative Work Arrangement Guideline.

4 PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF A UCHECK RED SCREEN, CONFIRMED AND/OR SYMPTOMATIC COVID-19 CASE

In order to better respond to the global COVID-19 pandemic and protect the health of faculty, librarians, staff and students, the University’s tracking procedures for probable or confirmed COVID-19 cases among members of our University community are outlined in this section.

For the most current procedures, please also review procedures visit the EHS COVID-19 webpage. Instructions on what to do if you receive an alert from the Health Canada COVID-19 app is also on the webpage.

For more information on the case management, please refer to the UofT COVID-19 Case Management Process (Symptomatic & Confirmed cases).

Please also refer to the UofT COVID-19 Update webpage for the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases.
5 COVID-19 GENERAL WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT TOOL (GAT)

Assess:

- Scheduling, task, workflow, shared items, shared or common areas, high touch points

Communicate:

- Identify relevant stakeholders and communicate new procedures/changes

Modify (apply controls):

- Based on assessment.

Review:

- Feedback from stakeholders, due to changes (e.g. lifting of restrictions)

Figure 2: Key steps of re-entry planning assessment, control and continuous improvement of
The process outlined below follows the continuous improvement process shown in Figure 2.

For more information, access the COVID-19 HR Leadership Toolkit and review information on what documents must be submitted to HR & Equity. Information on how and where to submit these documents to HR & Equity is available in the Toolkit. Please note that submission of the re-entry plans or General Assessment Tool is not required unless a unit is requesting to resume in-person operations.

Policies and procedures may change due to public health directives. Please refer to the latest version of guidelines and assessment tools which can be found here: https://hrandequity.utoronto.ca/covid-19/returning-to-campus/

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

Faculty members / principal investigators use the Approach for Research Recovery & Adaptation, Guideline for Reopening Research Spaces, and the COVID-19 General Assessment Tool as guide to create a plan to re-open research facilities and return necessary researchers to campus. Individual Deans, in consultation with the AVP, Research Oversight & Compliance, are empowered to approve the return to campus for research staff as long as it is being done in accordance with VPRI guidance. Administrative leaders should contact their Dean for more information about their local approval process.

Please also refer to Ch 9 for more information regarding research lab activities, face-to-face (F2F) and Off-Campus (OC Research).

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR NON-RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

There are a number of different tools for different groups at the University for different times of activities (e.g. units vs. student societies or regular operations vs. events). Before proceeding, please review the instructional guidance (Table 1). For guidance of maximum attendees or gathering limits, please refer to Table 2 in the same document.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COVID-19 GENERAL ASSESSMENT TOOL**

Units are to use the COVID-19 General Assessment Tool (GAT) to build Re-Entry Plans for units and offices. Divisions that have not yet submitted a plan are encouraged to work closely with their Divisional HR Office and Environmental Health and Safety as needed to complete their Re-Entry Plans. Instructions are outlined in the COVID-19 Leadership Toolkit.
With the aim of streamlining approvals, GAT submissions will no longer require approval from the Workforce Planning Committee. It is the responsibility of each unit to ensure that EHS has reviewed and provided feedback on their GAT, and that all EHS recommendations are incorporated and implemented in their final Re-Entry Plan. Once EHS’ feedback has been incorporated, unless there are further questions or concerns, it is not necessary to resend the GATs to EHS. Deans, Division Heads, or designates will be responsible for final review and approval of all GATs and Re-Entry Plans for their units.

Please note that submission of the General Assessment Tool is not required unless a unit is requesting to resume in-person operations. However, departments can use the Tool for planning future resumption of in-person operations.

In addition to the GAT, there are additional (optional) tools at the end of this guide for units to use: Appendix B – COVID-19 Control Template (excel), Appendix C - COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedure template and Appendix D – PPE Assessment Tool. Changes and amendments to GATs: Changes may be made to existing GATs and approved by the Dean or unit lead. EHS can be consulted if needed. Please note the Employee Tracker Form is no longer required – if you have any questions.

If you have any questions, concerns or special considerations (e.g. outdoor areas, food service, etc.), please continue to follow these steps and contact EHS (ehs.office@utoronto.ca) for assistance.

Prior to making any physical changes to the workplace, any installation that involves the disturbance of building fabric (e.g. walls, flooring, ceiling) should be evaluated for asbestos. For example, some lab countertops may also contain asbestos. Please always work with your Property Manager or local facilities group to ensure proper procedures are followed. Please also work with your Property Manager or local facilities group for moving any furniture or heavy items to reduce the risk of injury.

Consideration must be requirements when making changes to physical workspaces – please contact your Divisional HR Office or the AODA Office for assistance.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE STUDENT SOCIETIES (IN LIEU OF A GAT)

The submission of the Student Society Assessment Acknowledgement Tool (SAT) is required if a student society is requesting to resume in-person operations (in lieu of the GAT). The SAT process follows the same process as a GAT. EHS reviews to ensure alignment with public health and provincial requirements and provides recommendations where applicable. Final approval is from the Dean or designated unit lead. This document applies to student societies as defined by the Compulsory Non-Academic Incidental Fees with employer responsibilities under the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act (for example SCSU, UTMSU, UTSU, APUS, GSU, EngSoc, ASSU). A student society that does not have employer responsibilities should contact their local campus, college or divisional administration to complete a GAT.
Student societies must put in place measures to protect the health and safety of any and all individuals in the operations under their control (e.g., staff, volunteers, contractors, suppliers, agents, etc., collectively “personnel”) and visitors. Student society leads must be familiar with and run the organization in compliance with, and ensure staff members comply with:

- All applicable laws, bylaws, regulations, codes,
- Public health recommendations,
- Federal/provincial/municipal guidelines, and
- Publications of provincial health and safety associations.

Student society leads must advise the University of any health and safety hazards that may impact the University as a result of student society operations. This document is an assessment tool for assisting student society leads in applying COVID-19 exposure-reducing controls, strategies and precautions in their operations to develop their health and safety procedures and as a mechanism to inform the University of potential impacts. There is a large variety of different operations and physical work environments across the campuses and each student society should review their specific operations and physical environment to determine which of the controls below can be implemented. In addition, student societies must ensure that all vendors, contractors, service providers are aware of and abide by applicable health and safety procedures.

Student society event organizers with employer responsibilities are responsible for putting measures in place to protect the health and safety of any and all individuals operating the event under their control (e.g., event staff, volunteers, contractors, suppliers, agents, etc., collectively “event organizer’s personnel”) and participants of the event. Please refer to the COVID-19 Events Guidelines and complete Appendix D. Student Society Event Organizer Acknowledgement.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE EVENTS GUIDELINES

In-person meetings for regular workplace operations may continue to occur as necessary. Virtual meetings should also be considered where appropriate. As we plan for increased in-person activity our first priority is to provide space for teaching and learning. For that reason, the centrally shared classroom, auditorium and indoor common spaces on the St. George Campus have not been available for student groups. Space is available to student groups at Hart House, New College, the UTSU Student Commons as well as federated colleges. At UTM, Ulife-recognized student organizations should contact the Centre for Student Engagement. At UTSC, students can contact Campus Groups through the Office of Student Experience and Wellbeing, and can connect with SCSU https://www.scsu.ca/booking. For more details on permitted events/activities, please refer to Section 3 of the COVID-19 Events Guidelines.

All event organizers are responsible for putting measures in place to protect the health and safety of any and all individuals operating the event under their control (e.g., event staff, volunteers, contractors, suppliers, agents, etc., collectively “event organizer’s personnel”) and participants of the event. Please refer to the COVID-19 Events Guidelines and complete an Event Assessment Tool (EAT) instead of a GAT.

Student society/club/group should obtain information from the VP-Provost Students
COVID-19 GENERAL ASSESSMENT TOOL (GAT)

There are a number of different tools for different groups at the University for different times of activities (e.g. units vs. student societies or regular operations vs. events). Before proceeding, please review the instructional guidance (Table 1). For guidance of maximum attendees or gathering limits, please refer to Table 2 in the same document.

An electronic version of this WORD document is available: General Assessment Tool. Please submit the GAT at least 7 business days in advance of planned re-opening to ensure adequate time for feedback, clarifications and implementing recommendations. For future amendments, please ensure you use/download the most recent of the form.

Student Societies should fill out the Student Society Assessment Acknowledgement Tool (SAT) for any resumption of in-person activities that is not related to an event instead of a GAT.

This document is an assessment tool for assisting unit leads in applying COVID-19 exposure-reducing controls, strategies and precautions in their operations. GATs document specific details regarding the unit staff who will be onsite, the work they will perform and the facilities to be used. Facilities used may include spaces controlled by/allocated to the unit, or other spaces, including temporary work spaces and shared spaces such as meeting rooms. If using a space not controlled by or allocated to your unit for an activity covered by a GAT prepared for your unit, ensure that you have communicated with the space owner to identify any controls, strategies and precautions identified in any GAT they have prepared which covers the space, and to advise them of the GAT your unit has prepared and will be following when in the space. Ownership of spaces and roles and responsibilities for allocation of space vary across organizations within UofT. For example spaces may be owned by the University, college or other entity. For the purposes of this guideline: A space owner is the party which owns or controls allocation or assignment of a space in accordance with local space management allocation procedures. A space user is a party to whom a space is allocated or assigned. Processes and responsibilities for allocation may differ across and within campuses and should be accurately reflected in GATs. Please also discuss your return-to-work plans with your local facilities group to ensure spaces (including common use spaces such as entrances, elevators, washrooms) are prepared accordingly and confirm these details in the GAT. The Toronto Public Health document Strategies to Increase Physical Distancing and Spread Reduction for Community Partners is also an excellent resource for workplaces. If you have questions or require assistance in completing this tool, please contact your local Environmental Health and Safety designate, or you can reach out to EHS at ehs.office@utoronto.ca. If you would like to see a sample of a completed General Assessment Tool, please contact EHS.

Please note, this GAT template will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis based upon changes to legal requirements, public health advice, operational needs, and other
circumstances. For the same reasons, GATs completed and submitted by units, including the control measures set out in completed GATs, are expected to evolve and change over time. Policies and procedures may change due to public health directives. Please refer to the latest version of guidelines and assessment tools which can be found here: https://hrandequity.utoronto.ca/covid-19/returning-to-campus/. It is the responsibility of the unit or division to update their GATs as required to reflect changes to public health, provincial directives and/or University policies/procedures. For units or divisions wishing to plan ahead, or where, as a result of changes to public health and provincial directives or University policies/procedure, activities in an approved GAT are (temporarily) not allowed, it is the unit/division’s responsibility to ensure measures outlined in the GAT align with public health/provincial directives that are in effect at the time when activities are taking place.

Please note that submission of the General Assessment Tool is not required unless a unit is requesting to resume on-campus operations. For more information on how to request approval to resume on-campus activities, access the COVID-19 Leadership Toolkit and review information on what documents must be submitted to HR & Equity for approval. Information on how to submit these documents to HR & Equity is available in the Toolkit.

Employees who have a medical condition and are concerned about COVID-19 (e.g. are medically at-risk) should contact U of T Health and Well-Being for guidance: hwb@utoronto.ca or 416-978-2149.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR NON-RESEARCH FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

For off-campus non-research activities (e.g. academic field trip, conference, workshop, etc.), please review the Guidance on Research and Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic and complete the Off-Campus Safety Planning Record (Risk Assessment). This Safety Planning Record is designed to guide units in assessing potential risks (COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 hazards) where there are is no international or interprovincial travel. Non-COVID-19 hazards may include chemical and biological agents, remote travel, wild life, equipment/tools, etc. For more information, please refer to the EHS Off-Campus Safety webpage. During the pandemic, non-essential travel should be avoided where possible.
6 NON-MEDICAL MASKS AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Please note this is the institutional position on the use of face masks. Departments/units are to follow the Policy and Guideline when developing their own unit-level plans. This information will change accordingly with government and public health directives. Please regularly refer to the University’s FAQs for updated information.

In October 2020, the provincial government enacted a mandatory requirement for non-medical masks to be worn within enclosed public spaces in O.Reg. 364/20 Provincial regulation. Public health authorities recommend wearing a non-medical mask in addition to physical distancing to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Non-medical masks should always be worn when physical distancing may be challenging or not possible. When we all wear a mask to cover our respiratory droplets it provides source control to reduce the spread of germs into the air and on surfaces. While those with symptoms should stay home, there are cases of transmission of disease from asymptomatic individuals.

Please refer to Figure 3 on Physical Distancing and Mask Use Evaluation Flowchart and the sections below on when a non-medical masks or PPE would be required.
Figure 3: Physical Distancing and Mask Use Evaluation Flowchart

NON-MEDICAL MASKS (WHEN PHYSICAL DISTANCING IS CONSISTENTLY MAINTAINED)

Non-medical masks may be used in non-healthcare settings for source control (i.e. protects others, not the wearer). However, non-medical masks are not personal protective equipment (PPE) and their use does not alter the contact tracing risk assessment process; therefore,
physical distancing should still be consistently practiced even when non-medical masks are being worn.

Per Toronto Public Health, qualities of a good non-medical mask include masks that are made of at least 2 layers. A three-layer mask may provide added protection. However, the Chief Public Health Officer has said this does not mean that existing masks need to be disposed of and they can continue to be used. Information on how to add a filter to existing 2 layer masks is available at the Toronto Public Health webpage provided above. Per the City of Toronto, a face mask must covers the nose, mouth and chin without gapping.

The following types of face covering is **not recommended for general use**:

- **Face shields** are not a replacement for a non-medical mask. They can be an option for those who require an accommodation. Accommodations are made on case-by-case basis. Face shields is another option for eye protection when employees are working <2m apart. Employees requiring accommodation should advise their supervisor and contact their divisional HR Office. Students requiring accommodation should contact their academic lead and the Office of the Provost – Students. Non-medical masks with a clear panel may be an option and are available from UofT Medstore. For more information on face shields, please refer to the CCOHS COVID-19: Using Face Shields posters.

- **Masks with an exhalation valve** are not recommended because they may filter dust particles in the air as the person inhales, but they may not filter virus particles or respiratory droplets. This means droplets from a person can be spread in a room, reducing the benefit of the mask. Respirators with exhaust valves are also not recommended. These are intended to make the respirator more comfortable for the person who is wearing it, but they can also allow respiratory droplets to spread in room. *If you must use a respirator with an exhaust valve, use them when you are working alone or wear a mask over the respirator (note: a medical mask must be worn if physical distancing cannot be consistently maintained).*

- **Clear plastic face masks** with openings or gapping areas that extend below the chin and wrap around the sides of the face may be considered when communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, to allow them to lip read. However, clear plastic face masks are not recommended for general use as they do not cover the nose, mouth and chin without gapping and cannot be properly cleaned and disinfected between uses.

Masks with clear screens may be worn to facilitate working/teaching with those who are Deaf, Deafened, Hard of Hearing or who have hearing loss and in circumstances where visualization of facial expression is of pedagogical importance such as studio/performance activities. Consider using written communication, closed captioning or decreasing background noise. If using written communications, avoid sharing pens or disinfected shared pens between users. Non-medical masks with a clear panel may be an option and are available from UofT Medstore. Masks with a clear panel may be either medical or non-medical tasks. If physical distancing cannot be consistently maintained, please ensure you use a medical mask with a clear panel and eye protection. Units may purchase masks with screens from external vendors with the following guidance in mind: [https://ehs.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Cloth_Mask.pdf](https://ehs.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Cloth_Mask.pdf) and FAQ: [https://www.utoronto.ca/utogther2020/faqs](https://www.utoronto.ca/utogther2020/faqs).
Masks or stickers with microbial claims: According to a recent Health Canada notice, face masks that make antiviral claims or use antiviral materials are not endorsed as safe or effective since there is a lack of manufacturer’s evidence to support such claims. As such, EHS does not endorse their use for the purposes of viral transmission mitigation.

University of Toronto Policy on Face Masks

Masks are to be worn indoors, including classrooms and common areas in residences on University property. Please ensure you have a non-medical mask or face-covering ready when working on-campus to meet this policy. Units are being encouraged to provide masks where and if applicable/appropriate, e.g. for those who forget them, teaching labs, student/client/reception facing areas, etc.

Enforcement: Enforcement will depend on the individual’s relationship with the University, the nature of an incident, the place in which it occurred, and the impact on others in that place. Individuals who do not comply with this policy and who do not have an approved accommodation may be asked to leave premises by the appropriate authority. Employees should engage with their supervisor and students should engage with their academic lead/contact if they have concerns. Follow up will be conducted by the supervisor or academic lead/contact.

For exceptions for when a masks are not required refer to the Joint Provostial and Human Resources Guideline on Face Masks at the University of Toronto. The guideline will be updated periodically as our response to COVID-19 evolves. Until further notice, the information contained in the Policy, Guideline and the exemptions below apply during all steps of the provincial COVID-19 response framework.

Non-medical masks should be worn when lining up outside for services even if physical distancing is maintained.

If you require non-medical masks and cannot source your own supply, please contact Medstore.

Masks are not required under the following conditions/situations:

- Children under the age of 2.
- Children who are attending school within the meaning of the Education Act or attending a child care program.
- Private offices, open concept/shared offices and other work areas when all of the following conditions apply: 1) there is no public access; 2) physical distancing (2 metres) can be consistently maintained; 3) all individuals are performing work for the University (e.g. employees, contractors). For offices, once seated and with physical distancing, employees may remove their mask but must put mask back on when leaving their desk. Physical distancing may require units to follow a rotational schedule or stagger shifts. Once seated, no “visiting” other occupied workstations.
• Workspace behind protective barriers. However, masks are required if employees behind the barriers cannot maintain physical distancing from other employees.

• Lunchroom - once seated and while eating/drinking. Physical distancing of 2 metres must be maintained between each person.

• Indoor areas such as designated meeting rooms, lunchrooms, spaces, rooms providing WiFi access and lounges when all of the following conditions apply: 1) there is no public access; 2) physical distancing (2 metres) can be consistently maintained; 3) all individuals in the space are performing work for the University; 4) where contact tracing information can be collected.

For regularly scheduled meetings, it is highly encouraged that masks be worn unless physical distancing can be maintained at ALL times. For example, if meeting attendees are walking within 2m of others to get to their seats, go to the washroom etc. masks should be worn. If masks will be removed during meetings:

  o Inform participants ahead of time, advise on the precautions that will be taken and provide participants with an opportunity to discuss concerns if any.

  o Masks are removed only when seated in the designated seat, distanced from others and mask will be re-donned when getting up from their seat regardless of the length of time. This includes getting up and using the washroom, walking towards their seats, etc.

  o Mask will be place in a clean bag or container when not wearing it.

  o A spare mask be available in case it is misplaced, dropped or soiled.

  o Hand hygiene will be performed prior to removing or re-donning the mask. Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes are available inside the meeting room.

Please note masks are required indoors at ALL times as per Joint Provostial and Human Resources Guideline on Face Mask at the University of Toronto. Mask use exceptions are assessed on a case by case basis and approvals through the GAT process may be retracted at anytime based on the public health and provincial requirements. Please continue to review GWG updates to ensure your GATs are updated as necessary. Please note, in most meeting contexts, we expect that maintaining 2m distancing would be very challenging and we ask that divisions approach meetings planning regarding mask compliance with prudence.

• Collaboration spaces when all of the following conditions apply: 1) there is no public access; 2) physical distancing (2 metres) can be consistently maintained; 3) all individuals in the space are performing work for the University (employees, contractors).

Research/laboratory spaces (including cold rooms) - All lab members must wear masks. Certain considerations for mask exemption may be applicable for university employees in research environments if all of the following apply 1) the approved departmental/divisional research re-entry plans allow individuals to maintain a consistent two-meter physical distance, where there is no requirement for Personal Protective equipment; 2) there is no public access, and; 3) all individuals in the space are performing
work for the University (employees, contractors). For questions regarding the application of this exception and/or regarding accommodations regarding mask use in research/laboratory spaces contact ehs.office@utoronto.ca.

Given the diversity of lab personnel and researchers, and the importance of applying a consistent approach across our research areas, the university requires everyone conducting research in labs to wear masks. Note: Masks do not replace the for other public health measures such as hand washing, and staying home when sick.

- When performing or rehearsing in a film or television product or in a concert, artistic event, theatrical performance or other performance that has been authorized by the University. In general, this does not broadly apply to extra-curricular activities and academic teaching. For in-person academic instructions, requests for a mask exemption for pedagogical reasons are reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

- Shared facilities in residences shared by a defined group of roommates (e.g. kitchen in shared townhouse residential unit).

- Working alone in publicly accessible spaces that are locked after-hours (i.e. no longer publicly accessible) and physical distancing can be consistently maintained.

- In situations where there is temporary need to remove the mask while in an indoor area,
  - To receive services that require the removal of mask
  - As may be necessary for purposes of health and safety

Note: When required to wear a mask while working with hazardous material (e.g. biological agents, flammable chemicals, radioactive agents), please speak to your supervisor/Principle Investigator on the safe use of masks.

Learning and Teaching Environments

Non-medical mask will be required in learning and teaching environments. If there are health and safety reasons or pedagogical reasons why a mask should not be worn, the instructor will delineate these reasons and attain approval from the Dean. Instructors who wish to seek an exemption to mask use for pedagogical reasons should complete the Instructor Mask Removal Request for Indoor Instructional Spaces Questionnaire and send it to EHS (ehs.office@utoronto.ca) and their unit lead for review.

Accommodations

Accommodations are made on case-by-case basis. Employees requiring accommodation should directly advise their supervisor and contact their divisional HR Office. Students requiring accommodation should directly contact their academic lead, the Office of the Provost – Students and Student Accessibility Services before coming to campus. If there are concerns regarding an external (non-employee/non-student) having or requiring a face-covering exemption, please refer
to your supervisor and/or academic lead to review on a case-by-case basis. EHS can be contacted for assistance (ehs.office@utoronto.ca; 416-978-4467).

For more information regarding student accommodations and the use of non-medical masks, please refer to: Student Non-Medical Mask Accommodation Workflow Process - TriCampus.

**PPE**

Medical masks and eye protection (e.g. goggles, face shield) are to be worn under these circumstances:

1) In all non-instructional spaces in the University, when physical distancing cannot be consistently followed.

2) Singing and wind instrument musicians: for more information please refer to Ch 3 under Dramatic Performances and Music Club Rehearsals (not associated with in-person instruction).

3) For more information re: masking and PPE requirements in instructional spaces, please refer to the IN-CLASS INSTRUCTIONAL AND TEACHING LAB GUIDELINE.

**Eye protection:** Eye protection must provide a barrier to splash/spray from both the front and from the sides and if applicable, from the top (e.g. Health care worker). For this reason, goggles and face shield are the primary forms of protection when there is a risk of splashing (e.g. healthcare workers providing care to sick patient). Some but not all forms of safety glasses may provide adequate eye protection. Safety glasses may be considered in specific situations where there is a low risk of splashing and where the use of goggles or face shields may impede the worker’s vision causing safety concerns (e.g. drivers). Where safety glasses are used, select models where gaps between the face and glasses are minimized. Where applicable, consider sourcing products that have an anti-fog coating. If you have any further questions on appropriate eye protection, please contact EHS. When selecting eye protection in the work or study environment, also take in to consideration if there are other hazards where eye protection is needed (e.g. corrosive chemicals, flying debris).

In instances where a worker is providing service or working with someone who cannot wear a mask, is within two metres of the person, and is not separated by an impermeable barrier, the worker must wear a medical mask and eye protection or face shield.

There may be supply shortages, especially for personal protective equipment (PPE) such as medical masks. Other types of PPE such as chemical resistant gloves, fit-tested N95 respirators, face shields Please ensure that you have an adequate stock of PPE before in-person operations start.

If you require assistance in determine PPE, please contact EHS (ehs.office@utoronto.ca) for assistance. Please use the PPE assessment template (Appendix D) as needed.
7 ADDRESSING EMPLOYEE CONCERNS

One of the consequences of working in a large and dynamic workplace such as the University during a time of pandemic is a heightened awareness of risk.

Work with your divisional HR office to assess and mitigate any concerns raised by employees during the process of re-opening, including:

(a) Health needs
(b) Caregiving
(c) Transportation

Employers have an obligation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to take reasonable care to maintain a safe and healthy workplace, including during a pandemic.

There are multiple sources of perceived risk in the workplace during a pandemic, including:

- a confirmed or presumptive case of COVID-19 in the workplace
- a confirmed case of COVID-19 in an employee's immediate family or other close contact
- the risk of potential exposure to COVID-19 from clients, external parties, community members and other employees depending on the nature of the workplace
- concerns from at-risk employees (e.g. age related, compromised immune system, underlying medical condition, etc. subject to change as identified by provincial public health authorities) not wishing to report to work
- employee concerns about stigma, bias and discrimination in the workplace based on age, ethnicity, place of origin, race and/or disability
- employee concerns over workplace practices and control methods, including personal protective equipment, or
- employees with a generalized fear of contracting COVID-19 by travelling to or attending work

Workplaces with robust health and safety systems as well as effective communication and outreach are often able to resolve health and safety concerns related to the above factors so that they do not escalate unnecessarily. For guidance on responding to employee concerns and for wellness supports for your employees, please reference the Manager’s Guide to Returning to Operations on Campus (please refer to the HR& Equity Management Resources section at the link).

The below are some suggestions:

1. Start each day (or week) and/or shift with a safety talk or have regular all employee
check-in meetings to see how everyone is doing. Review COVID-19 measures and/or institutional messaging. Ask for feedback and suggestions. Keep the safety talks positive. The University is engaged in numerous, exciting initiatives regarding COVID-19 – you could discuss the latest featured U of T research story, U of T News coverage, etc.

2. **Model the desired behaviour and encourage control measures**, such as physical distancing, proper personal hygiene, etc. so that employees understand and meet your expectations. Lead by example.

3. **Reach out. Be present and available to employees.** We have many employees working remotely at this time, so use institutionally approved tools such Teams to conduct staff meetings or to check in with each of your staff individually to see how they are adapting.

4. **Keep communication channels open and encourage your reports to bring concerns forward.** Talk it through and see if you can find a solution together.

5. **Be mindful of any stress that employees may be dealing with at work and at home.** If they express specific worries, pay attention. If there is a health and safety concern, address it immediately. Contact HR/EHS for assistance as required.

What to do if your staff have concerns:

1. **Respond calmly and with assurance.** Listen carefully before speaking. If you do not know the answer regarding a COVID-19 related question/matter, attain the appropriate information first before responding to a concern.

2. **Ask questions** such as “What more could we do? What would help ease your concerns? What would help you feel more comfortable doing this task?”. If you make changes, communicate them to anyone who may be affected, ideally in writing (e.g. confirm via e-mail to all your reports when you have implemented a safety measure). Please note: before implementing any measures, ensure you obtain approval first to ensure your proposed measure is consistent with other institutional risk mitigation measures. Contact your Divisional HR Office and EHS for assistance.

3. **Be flexible** and be prepared to accommodate individual needs. One single approach will not work for all as there are differing needs of among employees.

4. **Implement changes promptly.** When a concern is brought to your attention, respond immediately. Assessing a concern may take time; however, an immediate response to a concerned employee advising them that you are reviewing their concern and will be in touch soon as possible goes a long way to de-escalating worry and anxiety. If you need assistance in managing a concern, connect with your unit lead sooner rather than later to ensure you are provided with the support you require to effectively and expediently de-escalate concerns.

5. **As per the above, effective, proactive and responsive communication** in keeping with institutional messaging guidelines is instrumental in de-escalating concerns both at the individual and unit level. Employees who have concerns should engage with their supervisor immediately.

To supplement the General Workplace Guideline. HR & Equity has been developed a guide to assist managers with respect to returning employees to work on-site at the University. The Manager’s Guide to Returning to Operations on Campus (please refer to the HR& Equity Management Resources
8 EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

The re-opening procedures developed in accordance with this guideline may result in changing the way work is done and the physical environment in which it is done.

This could be a variety of equity impacts, including impacts related to:

(a) Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities (AODA) and the Ontario Human Rights Code

(b) Individual accommodation plans, such as accommodations for employees with disabilities or family caregiving obligations, which may include specific measures relating to scheduling, the physical workspace, or other elements that could be impacted by COVID-19-related changes.

(c) Employee needs relating to disability or caregiving obligations that did not previously require accommodation may now require accommodation due to changes implemented as a result of this guideline.

(d) Stigma associated with COVID-19 due to an employee’s age, ethnicity, place of origin, race, and disability could lead to discrimination in the workplace. For more information regarding human rights, please refer to the Ontario Human Rights Commission website and the Communications section above.

(e) Stigma affects us all. Address stigma at every opportunity through communications, general education and as issues arise. Please work with our Equity offices for support and assistance to address issues, create messaging and receive communication tips.

(f) Operating procedures including screening and enforcement must include an equity lens, as specific community members within the U of T community may experience differential treatment or adverse impacts. Adequate processes/procedures with equity in mind is critical.

(g) Embed equity, diversity and inclusion when developing training modules for employees on the department/division’s procedures. Please refer to the Equity Offices for further resources.

(h) As measures are being put in place, please consider existing Ontario Human Rights Code and AODA legislation and the accommodation obligations based on family status and / or disability. For additional information, contact Human Resources and Equity.
9 Research Space and Activities Considerations

For the latest information about the Division of the Vice-President, Research & Innovation’s COVID-19 response, please see the Research & Innovation Coronavirus (COVID-19) Research web site. Please take the time to review the University’s UTogether 2020 page and FAQs and the Human Resources & Equity page on COVID-19. If you or members of your unit have a question that is not covered, please contact ehs.office@utoronto.ca.

COVID19 Awareness Video for Research Laboratories

This awareness video is for those who desire supplemental information on COVID-19 when working in research spaces. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, our typical work situation has changed and there are some new procedures that we must follow to protect ourselves and our fellow U of T community members when we work on campus. This awareness video (~12 minutes) outlines some information and procedures for research personnel that need to be implemented when you are on campus.

Other topics and resources related to research spaces and activities are listed below:

- For information regarding vaccination and research (including human participant research), please refer to: Vaccination Guidance for Human Participant Face-to-Face Research and the VPRI webpage. Researchers may use any Health Canada-approved rapid antigen screening kits. Kits that are part of the UofT At-Home Rapid Screening program should not be used for this purpose as participants must report their results via Ucheck.
- Please also refer to Appendix F to J for research related safety considerations and tools:
  - Appendix F: Lab Equipment Verification Checklist
  - Appendix G: Peroxide Formers
  - Appendix H: Lab Re-Entry Checklist
  - Appendix I: Lab Emergency Plan
- Face-to-Face (F2F) research: For more information, please refer to: Review Of Face-To-Face Human Participant and Off-Campus Research and Coronavirus (COVID-19) Research FAQ.
- Off-campus (OC) research: Please review the Guidance on Research and Travel During the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Off-Campus Safety Planning Record (Risk Assessment) is a planning resource that researchers may also use to planning their off-campus research. For more information, please refer to the EHS Off-Campus Safety webpage. During the pandemic, non-essential travel should be avoided where possible.
- All lab members must wear masks in research and collaboration spaces (including cold rooms). Please refer to Ch 6 on more information on the use of non-medical masks and other PPE.
Entering research spaces for the first time - survey for unsafe conditions

When re-entering your research space after an extended closure, enter rooms with caution. Look through entry-door windows to see if any materials may have been damaged or if water or liquids are present on the floor or surfaces. Listen for any local alarms indicating a safety or instrument issue. No work is to begin in the space until this inspection is completed.

1) Walk through all of your areas and complete a visual inspection looking for any evidence of problems: note any unusual odours (that are not directly associated with the space having no occupancy for a long period of time), look up at the ceiling and around the walls for signs of water leakage or other damage, look for broken chemical containers, old waste, leaks, failed equipment, spills, etc.

2) Mitigate any leaks, spills, or releases if you are capable of handling them safely. If not, contact Environmental Protection Services.

3) Review all safety equipment and PPE.

4) Check equipment that may have been affected by a power disruption as soon as possible. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed until temperature levels return to normal. Check for leaks that may have occurred if the temperature was compromised.

5) If any damage has occurred as a result of the closure, report the damage through your department.

Redesign research team members’ schedules for appropriate at least 2-metre physical distancing based on the available space, engineering controls, PPE availability and other required conditions so that all activities in the research space are performed safely. If 2-metre physical distancing cannot be achieved for some of the tasks, you may contact EHS for a risk assessment.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

This information will change based on government and public health directives. Please regularly refer to the university’s FAQs for updated information. For more information on the use of face masks for protection against COVID-19, please consult the UofT Policy on Face Masks, Joint Provostial and Human Resources Guideline on Face Masks – Division of the Vice-President & Provost and Ch 6 of the General Workplace Guidelines (GWG) for more information.

1 Use the Laboratory Inspection Checklist to document your visual inspection.
Note: When required to wear a mask while working with hazardous material (e.g. biological agents, flammable chemicals, radioactive agents), please speak to your supervisor/Principal Investigator on the safe use of masks.

Safety training

Ensure safety training is up-to-date. Please see the EHS training matrix.

All personnel working with SARS-CoV-2, including its RNA and DNA, must review the SARS – CoV-2 Biosafety Guideline available here and take the online EHS 620 – SARS-CoV-2 Biosafety Training course. You can find this new course on “My EHS Training.”

EHS-Approved COVID-19 Safe Research Space

The following are components of a COVID-19 Safe Research Space which EHS will monitor and confirm both through COVID-19 inspections and hazard specific lab space inspections:

- **COVID-19 related measures taken and reviewed** as per these COVID-19 Guideline (Mask Policy, Physical Distancing & Occupancy Numbers)
- Staff and students using UCheck before attending campus

Some Research spaces will also require the following to be EHS compliant:

- **Appropriate permits** in place and valid
- Staff and students completed **appropriate training** and up to date
- Safety equipment and **personal protection equipment (PPE)** available and trained on
- Proper **Hazardous Waste disposal procedures** in place and understood

Permits

Ensure your permits are up-to-date and accurate, including amendments for the use of new biological agents, and the list of authorized users. When transferring biological agents to external parties, ensure you have appropriate documentation i.e. Biological Transfer Notification and Material Transfer Agreement

Housekeeping
Cleanup: Clean up and put away chemicals, supplies, equipment, glassware, and other items left out during the shutdown.

Cleaning maintenance: Determine an appropriate lab cleaning protocol to disinfect high-touch shared equipment surfaces, e.g. using 70% ethanol. Ensure the proper workplace WHMIS label when preparing the disinfectant dispensers.

Hazardous waste: Secure, correctly label, and/or prepare for hazardous/chemical/biological waste disposal as appropriate.

Plumbing Traps: Run all taps over sinks and pour water in floor drains (if present) to prevent foul odours from entering the lab.

Emergency Plan

Given the current uncertainty in the trajectory of the COVID-19 situation, it is prudent for researchers to develop and update an emergency plan to prepare for the possibility of an orderly winding down of research activities. Prepare your laboratory including ensuring continuity and minimizing hazards, and ensuring lab users are aware of these activities by implementing a communication system:

1. Develop and maintain an up-to-date emergency contact list for personnel in laboratories and those responsible for specific equipment/facilities
2. Identify equipment/facilities that would require special attention (e.g. maintenance or shutdown, certification or calibration requirements) during a closure or reduced personnel situation, prepare Standard Maintenance Procedures, and have these available.
3. Identify and train personnel in the operation of essential and critical equipment or for general research project backup/maintenance to ensure these are performed safely
4. Plan for adjustments to research methodology where collaboration or research participation may be compromised due to illness or closure
5. Have written documentation in place detailing ongoing experiments and associated SOPs, critical steps, and how to interrupt/stop as appropriate
6. Ensure that necessary supplies are accessible and on hand e.g. liquid nitrogen, compressed gas. Have a plan in place of when supplies will be delivered, including contact numbers for suppliers
7. Plan for scaled down operations
8. Plan for start-up if necessary, after a shutdown
APPENDIX A: RESOURCES FOR COVID-19

For the latest information about U of T’s COVID-19 response, please see the University’s UTolgether2020 page and University’s Coronavirus page. Please take the time to review our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and the Human Resources & Equity page on COVID-19 (e.g. Return to Work Processes during COVID-19 Response document). If you or members of your unit have a question that is not covered, please consider using the Contact Us button located at the top of the FAQ section to submit your question.

HR-RELATED COVID-19 RESOURCES

- Working Remotely, Alternative Work Arrangement Guideline and the EHS Working at Home Checklist
- Divisional COVID-19 Materials
- For COVID-19 management resources, please visit the COVID-19 Leadership Toolkit at https://uoft.me/leadership-toolkit (site is UTORid password protected).

RESEARCH AND TEACHING

- Principles for Research Recovery and Adaptation
- University of Toronto Research COVID-19 webpage
- In-class (in-person) instruction and teaching guidelines
- EHS Off-Campus Safety

SPECIFIC WORKPLACES RESOURCES

- EHS Safety Plans, Guidelines (Events, Constructions), Procedures and Assessment Tools (GAT, SAT, SEAT)
- Tri-Campus Caretaking Strategy for Return to the University
- Tri-Campus HVAC Strategy for Return to the University
- COVID-19 Procedure for Non-Clinic Employees Working in Clinics
- U of T COVID-19 Contractor/External Acknowledgement Form
- COVID-19 Wastewater Monitoring at Large U of T Residences
- Rapid Screening Pilot Project for Public-Facing Roles with High Interaction
- Resources for congregate settings (note these are resources only and not all recommendations are applicable in the University environment):
  - Toronto Public Health: Guidance for Post-Secondary Institutions
  - Toronto Public Health: Homelessness Services & Congregate Living Settings
- Public Health Ontario: Cohorting in Outbreaks in Congregate Living Setting

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO POSTERS AND INFORMATION ON COVID-19

Please refer to the EHS COVID-19 webpage: https://ehs.utoronto.ca/covid-19-information/

POSTERS AND INFORMATION FROM PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS

- Toronto PH Strategies to Increase Physical Distancing and Spread Reduction for Community Partners
- Toronto Public Health poster on proper handwashing and TPH COVID-19 poster
- Toronto Public Health poster on using sanitizers
- Toronto Public Health Cough Etiquette and TPH COVID-19 poster
- TPH COVID-19 How to wash your hands and How to sanitize your hands
- TPH Physical Distancing Poster
- TPH How to protect yourself COVID-19 poster
- Ministry of Health's How to protect yourself
- Public Health Ontario’s Cleaning and Disinfection of Public Settings
- US Water Quality and Health Council posters on cleaning and sanitizing
- Centre for Disease Control's List of disinfectants for use against COVID-19
- TPH Strategies to Increase Physical Distancing and Spread Reduction for Community Partners
- Ontario Ministry of Health Screening for symptoms of COVID-19 poster
- Health and Safety Association Guidance Documents for Workplaces During the COVID-19 Outbreak
- Ontario Resources to Prevent COVID-19 in the Workplace

GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATION

- Guidance PHAC (individual/personal settings) for individuals who are partially or fully vaccinated
- Toronto Public Health
- Peel Region Public Health
- Ontario Ministry of Health
- Public Health Ontario
- A Framework for Opening our Province
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- World Health Organization
**SCHEMATIC OF COVID-19 GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS:**

If your workplace has special considerations, please contact gina.trubiani@utoronto.ca.

* If your workplace has special considerations, please contact gina.trubiani@utoronto.ca.

** For the student placement and practicum site readiness guides, please contact Bridgid McNulty (non-health science) or Heather Skelton (Health Science). For Divisions or programs partnering with TAHSN having a separate process not outlined on the VPS placement webpage page, contact Sarah G
APPENDIX B: COVID-19 RE-ENTRY CONTROL PLANNING

This is an optional template. If you complete the General Assessment Tool, you do not need to complete this. An EXCEL template is available at on the EHS Website: [http://ehs.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-19-Control-Template-excel.xls](http://ehs.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-19-Control-Template-excel.xls). Units can adapt the template to their operations.

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COVID-19 Re-entry Control Planning

Department name

Date, supervisor
APPENDIX C: COVID-19 STANDARD OPERATION PROCEDURES (SOP)

This an optional template for units to use if they wish to develop a task-specific procedure. You do not have to complete this if you have completed the General Assessment Tool.

This WORD template is available from the EHS website: http://ehs.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-19-SOPTemplate.docx.

This template is available to units who wish to develop a standard operating procedure based on the assessment tools in the prior appendices.

Screenshots of the pages:
APPENDIX D: PPE ASSESSMENT TOOL


We would request that your assessment be based on Step 1 and 2 staffing, with a view to a future updating of the assessment using your gradual re-entry plans, as confirmed with HRE. With this information, we will be able to plan for the phased procurement and distribution of PPE across the tri-campus. Please consider the above definitions carefully when assessing need.

*Research PPE Assessments: Please refer to Ch 9.*

### PPE Assessment Tool

**Instructions:** Complete this PPE Needs Assessment AFTER completing the COVID-19 General Assessment Tool and implemented other controls (e.g. physical distancing, workflow modification). PPE requests will be assessed by EHS to ensure that all mitigation measures have been considered in advance of relying on PPE.

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<td>Job Title</td>
<td>CAO, Faculty X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact Information</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@utoronto.ca">info@utoronto.ca</a></td>
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<td>Rm 107, 256 McCaul</td>
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<td>Surgical/Respirators</td>
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<td>Goggles</td>
<td>Gowns</td>
<td>Face Shields</td>
<td>Hand Sanitizer (bottles)</td>
<td>Disinfecting Wipes</td>
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APPENDIX E: UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO SAFETY PLANS

University of Toronto Safety Plans are located on the EHS webpage:

COVID-19 Safety Plan for General University Operations
COVID-19 Safety Plan for In-Class/Person Instruction and Teaching
COVID-19 Safety Plan for Athletic Centres
COVID-19 Safety Plan for Meeting Event Spaces Conference Centres and Performance
COVID-19 Safety Plan for Restaurants and Bars
APPENDIX F: LAB EQUIPMENT
VERIFICATION CHECKLIST

SAFETY EQUIPMENT AND PPE

Biosafety Cabinet: Review the certification date to ensure it is within one year and confirm that it is operating normally. Contact your certification provider if needed.

Eyewash station: Flush eyewash stations for 3-5 minutes to remove sediment and stagnant water noting clarity of water and appropriate tepid temperature, and document this on the weekly inspection sheet. Check that flow is still at 1.5 l/min and ensure that the flow pattern is adequate to rinse both eyes. Report problems to your building manager.

Fire extinguishers: Ensure they have been checked and the arrow indicates ready for use – ensure clear access.

First aid kits: review the first aid kit and ensure its completeness.

Fume hood: Review the certification date to ensure it was within one year; if it has been longer than one year, please contact ehs.office@utoronto.ca. Confirm that the hood is operating normally (with appropriate draw) and check the proper function of the fume hood alarm using the test function.

Gas cabinets: Confirm that the cabinet is operating normally and check proper functionality per specifications of manufacturer.

Gloves: Ensure adequate stocks of gloves are available to conduct your research (of appropriate materials and sizes). You may try using reusable gloves where appropriate considering the limited supply and critical needs of health care workers.

Glove box: Check for leaks and integrity of gloves.

Respiratory protection: Consider the use of engineering controls first (e.g. fume hood) or reusable respiratory protection when required for your research or when physical distancing is not achievable at any given time. Limit the use of N95 masks to preserve supplies for healthcare workers as much as possible. Refer to Section A. of this document.

Safety devices: Check all safety devices; for example, test interlocks and emergency stop buttons for functionality.

Soap dispensers: Ensure they have adequate content and are working properly.

Spill Kit: Review your spill kit and ensure completeness of all supplies.
LAB EQUIPMENT AND INSTRUMENTS

Walk through your lab area and check any electrical equipment that remained plugged in (freezers, fridge etc.) for appropriate temperatures.

Computers and controllers: Check for software security updates, licence renewals.

Equipment and instruments: Review equipment manuals for safe start up instructions; review all SOPs and safety procedures.

Ionizing and Non-Ionizing Radiation Equipment

- Read the equipment’s operating manual and the standard operating procedures (SOPs) of your experiment to regain familiarity.
- If planning to work in shifts, develop a procedure for shift changes and keep a logbook indicating the status of the equipment at the time of the shift change.

Lasers:

- Before starting the laser read the manual for "Cold-start" situation.
- Check the alignment. Take all precautions: reduce power if possible, use low power visible light to align high power IR systems, use safety googles with appropriate OD, beam stoppers, etc.
- Water cooling system must be checked before starting the laser. It is a good moment to have the water changed.
- Mirrors and other optical elements may have dust on their surfaces. Dust particles can produce dangerous diffuse reflections in class 4 laser systems and damage the optics. Check all your optics before unblocking the beam.
- For high power enclosed lasers used for cutting plastics or other materials, check the exhaust system.
- Contact the Laser Safety Officer if you have further questions.

Open source radionuclides:

- Review the SOPs, the safety precautions specific to the radioisotope, the shielding, and the PPE.
- Run the experiment without the radioisotope to regain expertise.
- Check the proper functioning of the monitoring equipment (the GM detector or the Liquid Scintillation Counter).
- Contact the Radiation Safety Officer if you have more questions.

Other equipment: Review start up procedures, ensure all safety devices work properly.

Sealed sources and Irradiators: Review the operating procedures and for “Cold-start” situation.
X-Ray devices: Review start up procedures and test for leaks as appropriate.

SUPPLIES

Availability of material: Prepare for supply chain disruptions and limited availability of materials:

- Recognize that order placement may be slower as the volume of requests increases
- Plan for limited sales of high demand items

Hazardous material inventory: Conduct a hazardous material inventory to ensure that there was no loss of materials such as chemicals, radioactive materials, toxins, controlled substances, etc. Report missing highly hazardous chemicals or regulated materials such as radioactive materials and biological agents to the appropriate EHS safety officer.

Chemicals: Assess chemicals that may have become unstable during the closure and manage any expired, outdated, peroxide-forming, self-reactive, or other reagents with a limited lifespan appropriately. Also look for chemical containers that are bulging or have imploded. Submit a chemical waste pickup request for chemicals in these categories.

Reagents: Review all reagents in stock and ensure you have enough to conduct your experiments, and reorder as required. Consider micro-scaling as much as possible to minimize the use of reagents and solvents and avoid potential substantial delivery delays and limited availability.

Disinfectant: Make sure you have disinfectant available to wipe frequently touched surfaces in your lab.
APPENDIX G: PEROXIDE FORMERS

The below is quoted from The CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics, Internet Version 2019 100th Print Edition, 2019, http://hbcponline.com (accessed April 2020). Note that the easiest way to test for peroxides is with commercially available peroxide test strips/sticks. Because some compounds form peroxides more easily or faster than others, prudent practices require testing the supply on hand in the laboratory on a periodic basis. The following list provides guidelines on test scheduling. The peroxide hazard of the compounds listed in Group 1 is on the basis of time in storage. The compounds in Group 2 present a peroxide hazard primarily due to concentration, mainly by evaporation of the liquid. The compounds listed in Group 3 are hazardous because of the potential of peroxide-initiated polymerization. When stored as liquids, the peroxide formation may increase, and therefore these compounds should be treated as Group 1 peroxidizable compounds.

Group 1 – Test Every 3 Months

- Divinyl acetylene
- Isopropyl ether
- Potassium
- Sodium amide
- Vinlylidene chloride

Group 2 – Test Every 6 Months

- Acetal
- Cumene
- Cyclohexene
- Diacetylene
- Dicyclopentadiene
- Diethyl ether
- Dimethyl ether
- 1,4-Dioxane
- Ethylene glycol dimethyl ether (glyme)
- Methyl acetylene
- Methyl isobutyl ketone
- Methyl cyclopentane
- Tetrahydrofuran
- Tetrahydronaphthalene (tetralin)
- Vinyl ethers

Group 3 – Test Every 12 Months

- Acrylic acid
- Acrylonitrile
- Butadiene
- Chloroprene
- Chlorotrifluoroethene
- Methyl methacrylate
- Styrene
- Tetrafluoroethylene
- Vinyl acetate
- Vinyl acetylene
- Vinyl chloride
- Vinyl pyridine
APPENDIX H: RE-ENTRY CHECKLIST

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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| Is there a plan in place for physical distancing? 
  e.g. staggering work hours, working in separate areas                   | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Have all options for telework been explored?                            | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Have lab staff and students been instructed on infection control/prevention? | Yes    | N/A See COVID-19 General Workplace Guidelines for details on reporting, infection control and prevention |
| Have public health posters from Appendix A been posted?                  | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Is all safety training up to date?                                      | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Are safety permits up to date?                                          | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Has a visual lab inspection been conducted?                              | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Has equipment been checked for issues due to power failures or other issues? | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Has the Lab PPE assessment Tool been used to look at PPE requirements for the next few months? | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Check eyewash                                                           | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Check fume hood                                                         | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Check biosafety cabinets                                                | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Check glove boxes                                                       | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Check/refill spill kit and first aid kit                                | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Check fire extinguishers’ stickers                                     | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Check all lab equipment and review applicable SOPs                      | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Assess chemicals for stability, especially peroxide formers             | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Ensure supplies of surface disinfectant                                 | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
| Run taps to fill plumbing traps to prevent odours                       | Yes    | N/A                                                                      |
## APPENDIX I: LABORATORY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Date: __________

### EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

#### A. Principal Investigator Information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Investigator Name</th>
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<th>Room Number(s)</th>
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#### B. Lab Contacts

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<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Contact</td>
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#### C. Complete List of Lab Users

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