



New Items

Limiting the Spread of COVID-19 Omicron Variant: Immediate Steps

The federal and provincial governments have made a series of announcements regarding efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in light of the new Omicron variant of concern. Please see [this December 15 memo](#) from Trevor Young, Acting Vice-President & Provost and Kelly Hannah-Moffat, Vice-President, People Strategy, Equity & Culture and review subsequent memo sent on December 31, 2021 and January 4, 2022 to see how this affects U of T.

Legionella and Ventilation Testing

We encourage interested JHSCs to regularly check the [Water Testing Schedule](#) for the most up-to-date information on legionella testing in their building and to contact [EHS JHSC](#) if a JHSC worker member is interested in attending the beginning of legionella and/or ventilation testing.

Invitation to Open Consultation Sessions

The Co-Chairs of the Review of the Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment invite all members of the University community to attend open consultation sessions to provide feedback on the Policy. Separate virtual sessions for students, faculty, librarians, and staff are available to ensure there is an opportunity for everyone to share their unique perspectives and experiences. Session details and registration information can be found on the consultation website. For more information, see [Review of the Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#).

General Workplace Guideline

Please note, the In-Class Instruction and Teaching Lab Guideline and the Events Guidelines have merged with the [General Workplace Guideline](#). Please refer to the General Workplace Guideline for guidance relating to in-class instruction and teaching lab as well as events.

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Ventilation Information Request (by building)

As mentioned in previous communications, the University has developed and implemented a [Tri-campus HVAC Strategy](#) as part of an overall ventilation approach for both instructional and non-instructional spaces and buildings. As part of the [Strategy](#), where applicable, measures have been taken to increase ventilation (e.g. performing air flushing two hours before occupancy every morning and upgrade filtration) and upgrading ventilation. The upgraded filters, which meet public health and other experts' recommendations, are rated MERV-13, up from MERV-8 previously. Same as before the pandemic, the University continues to maintain our ventilation systems on a regular basis. If additional information on ventilation is required, please contact your JHSC with the request. Please note that such requests may require **weeks** to complete depending on the size and complexity of the ventilation system.

COVID-19 Self-Assessment via UCheck

As a reminder, Public health guidance requires a self-assessment 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 can be completed online via [UCheck](#) or a [paper-based self-assessment](#) for those who are unable to access the UCheck online self-assessment or do not have a UTORid.

The University monitors compliance and provides ongoing reminders and educative tools, etc. As per the provisions in the [General Workplace Guideline](#).

COVID-19 Reminders

EHS COVID-19 Audits

EHS will be performing regular audits in coordination with scheduled JHSC inspections to ensure COVID-19 related measures are in place and will be accessing unit/departmental spaces with the assistance of Campus Safety. If you have any questions, please contact [EHS JHSC](#).

Supplemental Checklist during COVID-19

As a reminder, please ensure your unit completes the [Supplemental Checklist during COVID-19](#) during your rounds of inspections and forward a copy along with the inspection report to [EHS JHSC](#).

COVID-19 Resources

UTogether is a one-stop hub of information on how the University is responding to the pandemic, as we work toward a safe return to our campuses in Fall 2021. UTogether: A Roadmap for the University of Toronto covers some important ways the University is promoting health and safety, advancing academic excellence and meeting the needs of our community as we navigate COVID-19. For all the latest information please check the UTogether and Roadmap websites.

The University of Toronto continually updates our frequently asked questions related to COVID-19 and our community.

University of Toronto's General Workplace Guidelines

The University's [COVID-19 General Workplace Guidelines](#) (GWG) was sent out to JHSC co-chairs on July 10, 2020. Ongoing updates are made to this document to align with provincial and public health guidelines. While drafting, reviewing and approval of institutional guidelines is an employer responsibility, we encourage the JHSCs to read the document and welcome you to engage with management through your usual channels on any queries or recommendations you may have with respect to the application of the Guideline to worksites within your JHSC's jurisdiction.

You may access the most updated version of the GWG and General Assessment Tool (GAT) on EHS [COVID-19 Information](#) webpage. We encourage JHSC members to review and submit any questions or considerations to [EHS JHSC](#).

UCheck Ambassador Program

Introducing the UCheck Ambassador Program, a friendly and educative way to remind members of our community to complete their UCheck health screening each and everyday they are on campus. The program, which began in October, uses small teams of UCheck Ambassadors to visit high traffic locations across U of T campuses. For more information, please see [UCheck Ambassador Program](#) and [U of T's UCheck ambassadors remind community members to complete COVID-19 self-screening](#).

Ongoing Reminders

JHSC Newsletter Webpage

For your reference, all previously sent JHSC newsletters can be accessed [here](#).

JHSC Minutes & Inspection Reports

As a reminder, please send all minutes and inspection reports to [EHS JHSC](#). If you have not submitted your minutes/workplace inspections for 2021 yet, please do so as soon as possible.

Health and Safety Boards

EHS is conducting its annual audits of health and safety boards on campuses, and updating/removing applicable items. Please inform EHS when boards have been installed, relocated, or removed. [A list of required postings](#) and links for download is available from the EHS webpage.

Type 3 Asbestos Abatement Work

Type 3 asbestos abatement air sampling results are available on the Asbestos Date website. For more information, please see [Type 3 Asbestos Abatement Information](#).

Important Policies

We encourage the JHSCs to review the following policies regularly: [Policy with Respect to Workplace Harassment](#), [Policy with Respect to Workplace Violence](#), and [Health and Safety Policy](#).

EHS JHSC SharePoint & Tutorial

The EHS JHSC SharePoint is now available to all committee members as the JHSC Module has been phased out. JHSC members should have received an invitation email on November 8, 2021 to access their account along with a step-by-step guide. **Please note, all JHSC members will automatically receive an email once minutes/workplace inspections are uploaded to the JHSC SharePoint.** For more information or questions, please contact [EHS JHSC](#). Please [click here](#) for a tutorial on how to use the new EHS JHSC SharePoint.

CUPE3902 Unit 1 and Unit 3 Reimbursement

To request for reimbursement for JHSC related activities, please complete the [CUPE3902 Unit 1 and Unit 3 Pay Request Form](#), obtain approval from the manager co-chair and forward a copy to ehs.jhscautoronto.ca and ilo@cupe3902.org.

Interested in joining a Joint Health and Safety Committee?

Please contact [your JHSC](#) for any vacancies. As a reminder, in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, worker members are appointed by their respective union. For more information, please see [JHSC FAQs](#) or contact [EHS JHSC](#).