The University of Minnesota is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all members of our community. Our faculty, staff, and students are our most important assets. Our priority is to enable all to work in the safest place possible, knowing that may vary depending on each employee’s responsibilities and situation. We recognize that the threat from COVID-19 is not over, and continues to affect our community in different ways, including how, when, and where many of us are able to work.

Most University employees should continue to work from home. The University has developed this Sunrise Plan (the Plan) to assist University employees in determining if they qualify to work on site, what the steps are to achieve permission, and what requirements must be met if employees are working on campus or another University worksite. All University employees share responsibility for implementing the Plan by following its requirements. The goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 on University campuses and in other University-owned or managed facilities, and that requires full cooperation among everyone—leaders, managers and supervisors, and faculty and staff. Only through a cooperative effort can we maintain the safety and health of our University community.

The Plan will:

- Assist you in determining if your job duties qualify you to work on site. Importantly, if you can work from home today, this Plan does not pertain to you. Remain working from home until instructed otherwise.
- Inform you about the approval process you must follow to work on site. There are no exceptions; all employees who qualify to work on site must adhere to the requirements of this Plan.
Who qualifies for consideration under this Plan?

Until further notice, the University expects that any faculty or staff who can work from home will continue to do so. However, this Plan anticipates that some number of faculty and staff may need to return to their respective campus or another University work location (either regularly or intermittently), not because of personal preference, but to effectively complete their work. Some categories of faculty and staff may include:

- Researchers and their supporting staff whose research requires their physical presence to advance research goals or grant requirements;
- Faculty whose work requires their physical presence to complete;
- Extension educators who may require access to offices or other equipment to accomplish their duties; or
- Administrative functions that are not otherwise possible if working from home.

Employees who were already designated as “Essential On-Campus” employees or those who have been approved to conduct essential research and have been working on-site already, will continue to do so without the need to seek additional approval through this process.

It is important to note that this Plan will evolve as necessary in response to the public health conditions in Minnesota and guidance from Governor Tim Walz, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). We fully expect that, over time, the Plan will allow more and more faculty and staff to return to campuses and other University facilities until we achieve full, in-person operations at a date in the future. University leaders will continue to revise this Plan and communicate updates to all faculty and staff systemwide as the COVID-19 pandemic evolves.
Individual faculty or staff members who have work that cannot be performed remotely may request a return to their worksite under this Plan. Any requestor must discuss their situation with their supervisor before initiating a request. Requests must be submitted through the Request for Return workflow process (and will require two steps of approval, which will be managed through the following routing process):

1. **Research**: needs approvals by unit head and Dean / Associate Vice Chancellor for Research or similar official as communicated by your leader.
2. **Teaching and Outreach**: needs approvals by unit head and Dean or similar official as communicated by your leader.
3. **Administrative Activities**: Vice President / Vice Chancellor or senior leader who oversees your unit or similar official as communicated by your leader.

**No member of the University community may return to work on site until they have received the appropriate approval(s) from one of these three processes, and they have acknowledged their personal responsibility to comply with this Plan.** Failure to receive approval will result in immediate on-site work stoppage.

**Screening and policies for employees exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19**

[An overview of the actions all on-site employees must take](#) is provided by the University’s Office of Academic Clinical Affairs. This overview and the following detailed instructions are based on guidance from [MDH](#), [the CDC](#), and the University’s own medical and public health experts. **If you believe you may have COVID-19, contact your primary health care provider. As with any illness, stay home and report your absence using the standard process for your unit.**

**Employee Self-Screening for those Working On-Site**

- Take your temperature in the morning and when you return home from work. Log those results and report any fever to your supervisor.
- Report any exposure to COVID-19 positive individuals, respiratory symptoms, sore throat, or dry cough to your supervisor.
• If the employee indicates any of these conditions, the supervisor must require that the employee stay home, and the employee should seek guidance from their healthcare provider.

In the Workplace

• Staff members must be at least six feet away from each other.
• Per CDC guidelines, employees will wear cloth masks in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
• In-person meetings are discouraged. If a meeting must be in-person to accomplish the purpose of the meeting, it must be in a large room with attendees six feet away from each other and wearing cloth masks.
• Break rooms / lunchrooms and gathering areas are closed for gathering. They may still be utilized for food preparation (one at a time, or multiple people if 6-foot social distancing can be maintained). This does not include large residence hall dining areas where social distancing is practiced.
• Visitors who are not directly related to the individual’s or unit’s work are not allowed.
• Sick employees must stay home.

Continue Good Health Habits

• Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Keep a supply of hand sanitizer (as possible).
• Cover your cough or sneeze.
• Clean all high touch areas in your home and workplace.
• Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

Consistent with our longstanding compliance with HIPAA and patient privacy in the health sciences, the University protects the privacy of faculty and staff health status and health information. Managers and supervisors are reminded that they have an obligation to protect the privacy of employee health information.

The University has leave policies that encourage faculty and staff to stay at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when they are required by a healthcare provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household. These policies include:

• Emergency Leave for COVID-19
Pay Provisions During Emergency Closings or Reduced Operations
Family Medical Leave Act
Family First Coronavirus Response Act Emergency Paid Sick Leave (federal)
Sick Leave: Civil Service -- Labor Represented -- P&A
Vacation Leave: Civil Service -- Labor Represented -- P&A -- Vacation Donation for Civil Service and Labor Represented employees
Comp Time: Civil Service -- Labor Represented
Short-Term Disability (if applicable, employee-elected benefit)

For faculty and staff with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions, the following policies, resources, and supports are available:

- Board of Regents Policy: Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action
- Employees should contact their unit HR Lead, who are available to consult with the campus Disability resource/service office and/or Return to initiate the University’s process. This process considers accommodation(s) that can be put in place. (It is important to note that telework may no longer fall under the “undue burden” category.)

The University will work with MDH to inform workers if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 in the workplace, and MDH will require them to self-quarantine for the recommended amount of time.

Handwashing

Faculty and staff are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially at the beginning and end of their time on-site, prior to any mealtimes, and after using the toilet. Hand sanitizer dispensers are also available and can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water if hands are not visibly soiled.

- The MDH “Clean Your Hands!” poster, located in all restrooms, provides proper hand washing methods.
- In occupied areas, custodial staff are checking and replenishing soap dispensers, paper towels, and hand sanitizer stations at a minimum of once per day, and more often in heavily trafficked public spaces.
Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

Everyone is asked to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching their face—in particular their mouth, nose, and eyes—with their hands. Tissues should be disposed of in the trash and individuals should wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. Respiratory etiquette reminders appear on posters and tissues and trash receptacles are readily available.

- The CDC “Stop the Spread of Germs” poster has been posted in all building lobbies and other common areas. The poster is also displayed on digital boards across our campuses where available.
- Individual departments are responsible for providing tissues in common areas, including reception areas and conference rooms. Tissues are ordered through U Market Services.
- Employees are expected to wear cloth face coverings (masks) in public settings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Individuals may bring their own mask, or campuses/units may order them at no cost from U Market Services (masks are limited to two per employee at no cost).
- University Health and Safety staff are available to provide training on respiratory etiquette for units or individuals who are at a heightened risk of exposure.

Social distancing

Social distancing has been implemented across University campuses and facilities:

- Faculty, staff, and visitors will avoid gathering in groups and in confined areas, including elevators.
- Faculty, staff, and visitors will avoid using anyone else’s personal protective equipment, phones, computer equipment, desks, cubicles, workstations, offices, or other personal work tools and equipment. There are some situations where work tools must be shared. In those situations, employees should take precautions to sanitize them between use.
In areas where hoteling workspace is in use, sanitizing wipes will be made available by the individual unit (wipes can be ordered from U Market Services when the supply chain recovers). Employees are expected to wipe down a hoteling workspace prior to using it and dispose of the wipe in the trash.

Where workstations do not permit at least six feet between employees, employees will wear cloth masks at all times.

Common spaces such as break rooms, study spaces, and conference rooms will have furniture rearranged or restacked to promote social distancing. As noted above, break rooms / lunchrooms will be limited to food preparation only. When possible, employees are encouraged to bring meals that do not require refrigeration or heating.

**Housekeeping**

Regular housekeeping practices are being enhanced by the University, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, tools, and machinery, and areas in the work environment, including restrooms, break rooms, lunchrooms, and meeting rooms. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted in high-touch areas, such as controls, door handles, elevator panels, railings, etc.

- All custodial staff and their supervisors have been provided refresher training on proper cleaning techniques, as well as background information on COVID-19.
- All cleaning products meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements.
- If there is a confirmed positive case reported to the University, Environmental Health and Safety will coordinate cleaning and disinfecting of that individual's work space.
- Facilities management teams will clean public spaces such as building lobbies, restrooms, door handles, handrails, and elevator buttons at least once daily, and more frequently if deemed necessary.
- Departmentally owned spaces such as labs will continue to be primarily serviced by the lab occupants, as they had been doing prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. MDH guidelines should inform cleaning frequencies.
• For shared departmental equipment, such as phones, keyboards, and copiers, individual users will be responsible to clean these surfaces prior to individual use. Units can order the necessary cleaning supplies from U Market Services or can call their campus facilities contact.

Communication

The most up-to-date version of this Plan will remain posted at the Safe Campus/Public Health Alert webpage. It is also being communicated via a systemwide email from President Gabel, on MyU, in Brief, and it will be reinforced through direct communication to campus leaders, HR Leads, and managers/supervisors. Additional communication will be ongoing as circumstances surrounding the pandemic require. Managers and supervisors are to monitor how effective the program has been implemented by reporting observations and concerns to their unit HR Lead. This Plan has been adopted by the President’s Emergency Management Policy Committee and was first distributed to all University faculty and staff systemwide on May 1, 2020. It will be updated, as necessary.

Downloadable Resources

Request for Return form

Guidance for Essential and Returning Employees

MDH “Clean Your Hands!” poster

MDH "When to Return to Work after COVID-19" poster

CDC “Stop the Spread of Germs” poster