



# Healthy Clemson® UNITED AS TIGERS

**RETURN TO WORKPLACE GUIDANCE**

**JULY 1, 2020**

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## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Clemson University is closely monitoring the rapidly changing situation with the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). During this unprecedented time, Clemson will continue to focus on the safety of students, faculty, staff and the Clemson community. Clemson is committed to protecting the most vulnerable and minimizing the potential for an outbreak at any campus location.

Decisions are being made with health and safety as the top priority, using guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). Clemson University's plan establishes guidelines for the University to recover from COVID-19 in coordination with federal, state and local laws and guidance.

Clemson University has adopted protocols to manage COVID-19. As part of that effort, the Office of Human Resources has compiled the information in this guide to assist our staff, faculty and student employees in navigating the plan of reopening the University.

Clemson University leadership and the Emergency Operations Center leaders have developed business continuity plans for these types of scenarios. The University's leadership will continue to communicate to Clemson's community.

This is a fluid situation. Check the [University's Healthy Clemson United as Tigers](#) page frequently for updates to employee guidance.

# RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE

## SUPERVISOR TEMPLATE

The University's COVID-19 return to workplace may involve employees temporarily working staggered and alternating schedules, and consequently State HR and Clemson's Office of Human Resources strongly recommend you provide a minimum of seven calendar days' notice of your employee returning to a Clemson-owned facility.

Supervisors needing to communicate to the employees they supervise that they can return to the workplace may download this [template](#).

## WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

In order to protect the health and safety of Clemson's employees, students, visitors and contractors, all employees are expected to fully comply with the guidelines outlined in this document and other supplemental guidance documents. Failure to do so may result in corrective action.

## RETURN TO WORKPLACE TRAINING

Employees will be sent required training through the Tiger Training system. The training provides detailed instructions for all aspects of the return to the workplace. The Tiger Training system will provide employees reminders until the training is completed.

## **SYMPTOM MONITORING REQUIREMENT**

Prior to reporting to work each day, those faculty, staff and student employees instructed to return to the workplace must conduct daily symptom monitoring using the self-assessment tool — available on the [COVID-19 website](#) or available through the my.Clemson app — to quickly access the recommended path someone should take in the event they report symptoms of COVID-19. Access through the website requires users to log in through DUO.

Follow instructions on the [COVID-19 Quick Reference](#) if you are sick, if you've tested positive for COVID-19, if you think you may have been exposed to COVID-19 or if you've been exposed to someone who was exposed to COVID-19.

## **COVID-19 TESTING REQUIREMENT**

In an effort to provide initial data on positive cases in our population, and to minimize exposure on campus by identifying and isolating individuals prior to their arrival on campus, the University will require all faculty, staff and students to be tested for COVID-19 virus and, where possible, receive serologic testing for disease antibodies, prior to their arrival on campus in the fall.

### **Prior to returning to campus**

Anyone who works for, lives at or is enrolled in a Clemson University program or facility must secure a negative COVID-19 test result within five days prior to returning to campus or other University location for the Fall semester. Those who test positive will be required to self-isolate for 10 days before returning to a Clemson location. Details on testing locations and how to report tests will be provided in the near future.

### **After returning to campus**

Once the academic year begins, the University will conduct voluntary random-sample testing of students and employees on a regular basis to track prevalence and spread of the disease in the University community.

### Should You Return to the Workplace?

To help slow the spread of COVID-19, proactive measures to safeguard the health and safety of employees in the workplace are being offered based on the direction of South Carolina Department of Administration. Measures include extending telecommuting arrangements and/or other special considerations to eligible workers who may have a **higher risk** for COVID-19 infection as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in a revision communicated on June 25, 2020.

According to the CDC, people of any age with the following conditions **are** at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19:

- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Children who are medically complex, who have neurologic, genetic, metabolic conditions, or who have congenital heart disease are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 than other children.

Based on what the CDC knows at this time, people with the following conditions **might be** at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19:

- Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
- Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Hypertension or high blood pressure
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
- Neurologic conditions, such as dementia
- Liver disease
- Pregnancy
- Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues)
- Smoking
- Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder)
- Type 1 diabetes mellitus

Or if your concerns about returning to work include the following:

- You are the primary caregiver for someone with higher risk factors as defined by the CDC above.
- A member of your household has a serious health condition.
- You have household members who are front-line health care workers.
- You are facing difficulties due to school closings or a lack of access to childcare.
- You have anxiety or fear of returning to work.

Employees who are at a **higher risk** for COVID-19 based on the above risk factors or concerns should first discuss their concerns with their supervisor. You do not need to disclose any specific medical information or medical history with your supervisor — only that you or you as a caregiver or a member of your household meets the higher risk criteria defined by the CDC guidelines listed above.



If additional accommodation is needed, visit Clemson's [ADA site](#) to review the guidance and request an accommodation by clicking on the orange banner entitled complete the [COVID19 Notice: Employee Guidance to Request Accommodations including Telecommuting due to COVID-19](#). Continue to maintain close communication with your supervisor.

Supervisors are encouraged to use flexibility and consult with HR when making decisions related to requests that do not fall under the protection of the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Pregnancy Discrimination Act.

### **Scared to Return to Work?**

During this unprecedented time, Clemson will continue to focus on the safety of students, faculty, staff and the Clemson community. Clemson is committed to protecting the most vulnerable and minimizing the potential for an outbreak at any campus location.

Supervisors should speak with team members to explore concerns and determine if the team member is able to return in a later phase. In addition, supervisors should discuss possible accommodations. Some considerations are staggered work schedules, rearranging or closing off workspaces, providing workplace barriers, limiting the sharing of supplies and common areas, etc.

### **Roles and Responsibilities for COVID-19 Illness and Exposure**

All members of the Clemson University community have a shared responsibility for a safe return to campus. Whether you are a supervisor needing to know what to do if one of your team becomes exposed to COVID-19, you are an employee who is ill with COVID-19 or someone with direct roles and responsibilities related to the University's response, follow instructions offered on the [COVID-19 Quick Reference](#).



## RETURN TO CAMPUS/STAFFING

Clemson's faculty, staff and student employees will return to University facilities over a period of time and in a coordinated process, ensuring appropriate physical distancing, the availability of cloth facial coverings and testing capabilities for COVID-19.

University leadership will monitor and assess opportunities for expanded staffing based on mission-critical operations and the ability to control and manage specific work environments. Your department head or supervisor will communicate return-to-workplace decisions.

For the foreseeable future, the University will reduce the number of people in your workplace in an effort to maintain safe physical distancing requirements. Support units able to effectively work remotely will likely continue to do so until restrictions are eased for larger gatherings.

Workplace staffing will be managed in an effort to mitigate risks and to ensure the safety of faculty, staff, students and the community. All employees should follow the protocols detailed in this guide for returning to their workplaces.

University leaders will closely monitor the potential spread of the virus and implement procedures to mitigate the spread. If localized outbreaks emerge, tighter restrictions and reduced staffing may result.

## **TEAM STAFFING OPTIONS**

The following work schedule types should be considered by supervisors in an effort to reduce the number of people reporting to a workplace:

### **Partial Remote Work/Alternating Days**

With a supervisor's approval, team members able to work remotely could be asked to continue to do so for all or a part of their work schedule. See the [Telecommuting Policy](#), which includes an agreement form on the last page.

### **Staggered Reporting/Departure**

Stagger the reporting and departure times of individual team members by at least 30 minutes to reduce traffic in common areas such as building entryways, lobbies and break rooms. Employees using public transportation may experience additional commute times due to physical distancing requirements and reduced capacities on buses.

### **Flexible Work Schedules**

Team members may be candidates for flexible work schedules to expand workdays into evening hours. Review the [Workweek Policy](#)

# HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE

## **Masks and Cloth Facial Coverings (Community Protective Equipment).**

Cloth face coverings are required while in all Clemson University buildings, in all University programs held in non-University buildings, in outdoor spaces on-campus, when using University mass transit and where appropriate physical distancing cannot be guaranteed.

Follow [these instructions](#) while driving or riding in shared vehicles.

Masks are not required when in private offices, in housing rooms, when not in close contact with another person such as walking alone outside, or when eating or drinking.

*Note: Cloth facial coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing.*

## **Your Cloth Facial Covering and Safety Steps for Use**

Clemson University provides two cloth facial coverings per team member upon their return to work. Cloth facial coverings may not be reused without proper laundering with detergent between workdays. You may use your own cloth facial covering if you choose.

### **Safety Steps**

- Wash hands/use hand sanitizer prior to using the cloth facial covering.
- Ensure your cloth facial covering fits over your nose and under your chin.
- Avoid touching the front of your cloth facial covering.
- When removing your cloth facial covering, do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
  - Handle only by the ear loops or ties.
  - Fold outside corners together.
- Wash hands/use hand sanitizer after removing your cloth facial covering.
- Cloth facial coverings should be replaced immediately if soiled, damaged (e.g. ripped, punctured) or visibly contaminated.
- For more information on using or caring for your cloth facial covering, visit the [CDC's website](#).

### Physical distancing

Maintaining a distance of no fewer than 6 feet (two arm lengths) between you and others is key to minimizing the potential spread of the coronavirus and your exposure to it. People can spread the virus before they know they are sick, so it's important to stay away from others.

Team members at Clemson facilities must follow physical distancing practices during the reopening plan, especially for those considered to be at higher risk per CDC guidance.

### Handwashing

Team members should wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after time in a public place, after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching their face. If soap and water are not readily available, a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol should be used. See the [CDC's When and How to Wash Your Hands](#).

Handwashing should occur on the following occasions:

- Before, during, and after preparing food.
- Before eating food.
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea.
- Before and after treating a cut or wound.
- After using the toilet.
- [After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet.](#)
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- After touching an animal, animal feed or animal waste.
- After handling pet food or pet treats.
- After touching garbage.

### Gloves

Depending on your work duties, gloves may be part of your Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Most employees do not use gloves for their assigned work duties, and gloves are not recommended in the prevention of coronavirus. According to the CDC, gloves are not necessary for general use and do not replace good hand hygiene. Washing your hands often is considered the best practice for common everyday tasks.

### **Cleaning/Disinfection**

Teams from University Facilities will clean high-touch/high-traffic office and workspaces based on CDC guidelines for disinfection and Occupational and Environmental Safety (OES) protocols. Because of the significant increase in their cleaning requirements across campus, Facilities will provide limited office space cleaning, and you and your team members should wipe down commonly used surfaces before and after use with products that meet the EPA's criteria for use against COVID-19 and that are appropriate for the surface. This includes any shared-space location or equipment (e.g. copiers, printers, computers, A/V and other electrical equipment, coffee makers, desks and tables, light switches, doorknobs, etc.). Supervisors may want to consider checklists for cleaning shared spaces, like meeting rooms, and assign employees to rotate cleaning these spaces.

Facilities and Procurement Services will be working together to obtain additional cleaning materials to provide to individual departments. However, individuals are allowed to supplement cleaning efforts in their individual areas where possible with self-provided supplies.

Work with your supervisor to determine if there are department funds that can pay for additional cleaning supplies. A supervisor may contact Facilities to request additional cleaning supplies.

### **Cough/Sneeze Hygiene**

Team members should cover their sneeze or cough with their elbow or by using a disposable tissue. Cloth facial coverings further prevent the spread of the virus. Immediately after sneezing or coughing, team members should wash their hands for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer.

**No team member should report to work if they are sick. Any team member experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should follow instructions on the COVID-19 Quick Reference.**

## **GUIDANCE FOR SPECIFIC WORKPLACE SCENARIOS**

### **Public Transportation**

If you must take public transportation or use the CatBus Transit, you are required to wear a cloth facial covering before entering the bus or while waiting in confined areas for a bus. Avoid touching surfaces with your hands while on the bus. Maintain a distance of no fewer than 6 feet between you and other passengers. Upon disembarking, wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater than 60 percent ethanol or 70 percent isopropanol before removing your cloth face covering.

### **Working in the Office**

If you work in an open environment, even if partitions are constructed, be sure to maintain at least 6 feet of distance from co-workers. If possible, have at least one workspace separating you from another team member.

Break areas, conference rooms, etc. should have measures in place to reduce the number of people in an effort to support physical distancing.

If you work in a closed office, no more than one person should be in your office unless the required 6 feet of distancing can be consistently maintained.

If more than one person is in any room, cloth facial coverings must be worn by all team members and at all times. A cloth facial covering is not required if you are working alone in a confined office space, but partitioned work areas are considered open environments.

A cloth facial covering must be worn by any team member in a reception/receiving area. Cloth facial coverings must be worn when walking in narrow hallways where others travel and in break rooms, conference rooms and other meeting locations.

When present, follow safety signage and directions posted throughout Clemson University facilities.

Keyboard covers, which are able to sustain routine disinfecting, should be employed on keyboards in shared spaces such as lobbies and kiosks in an effort to prevent damaging equipment while maintaining safety efforts.

Remove communal area items such as magazines and pens.

### **Using Restrooms**

Use of restrooms should take into consideration any limits based on restroom size to ensure at least 6 feet of distance between individuals. Cloth facial coverings are required in restrooms that have space for more than one person. Wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds afterward to reduce the potential transmission of the virus. If paper towels are available, use a clean one to turn off the water and a clean one to open the door. Dispose of paper towel(s) when exiting the restroom.

### **Using Elevators and Stairs**

Avoid elevators and use the stairs whenever possible because stairs are more open areas. If use of the elevator is needed, limit the number of people using the elevator at the same time.

If you are using the elevator, you must wear your mask or face covering and avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers, if possible.

Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers upon departing the elevator or using railings in stairwells.

### **Meetings**

Meetings should continue to be held using remote platforms such as Zoom, WebEx or another video conferencing tool. Additionally, you are encouraged to communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed by email, instant message, telephone or other available technology rather than in person.

If you use a shared meeting place, be sure to maintain the 6-feet physical distance and you must wear your mask or face covering. In addition to returning the room to its proper order, please clean the table surfaces and any equipment used such as a keyboard, mouse, phone, etc. Assign an individual to clean the area with disinfectant before and after each meeting. Try to only meet members of the public by appointment, and do not accept walk-in meetings if possible. Members of the public should be instructed to call a designated number upon arrival for the meeting to gain access to the building. All visitors are required to wear a cloth facial covering and to practice physical distancing.



## **Meals**

Before and after eating, you should wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds using soap and water to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

When dining on campus, follow all physical distancing guidelines and safety signage in the dining facility. Cloth facial coverings are required. Team members are encouraged to take food back to their office area or eat outside.

If you are eating in your work environment (break room, office, etc.), maintain 6 feet of distance between you and others. Cloth facial coverings are required. Only remove your mask or face covering in order to eat, then put it back on. Break rooms should be rearranged to allow for proper physical distancing. Follow any safety instructions on signage. Wipe all surfaces, including table, refrigerator handles, coffee machine, etc. prior to leaving the common area.

Replace reusable kitchen items (flatware, dishes and cups) in break rooms with sustainable, single-use options. Replace shared appliances with single-use or no-touch options (coffeemakers, ice/water dispensers) whenever possible.

## **Illnesses of Team Members**

Supervisors can ask a team member if they are experiencing symptoms of an illness but should not ask any questions that are likely to elicit information about a disability. For example, asking a team member about symptoms or how they are feeling is not likely to elicit information about a disability.

Supervisors should encourage employees to stay home when they are sick until they've been fever free or symptom free for 24 hours.

All concerns about COVID-19 should be referred to the [Sullivan Center](#), and team members who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 should contact the Sullivan Center prior to returning back to work.

## Laboratory Work

As essential research operations continue and more research activity is phased in, it is important to continue to minimize the potential for transmission of COVID-19. Part of this practice is regular sanitization of research laboratories. Sanitization of laboratory surfaces should be conducted on a regular schedule several times each workday. Sanitization should be conducted using a disinfecting solution / wipe approved by the CDC or EPA. A 70% solution (v/v) of ethanol or isopropanol and water can also be prepared in most labs and used with paper towels. Some common surfaces for disinfecting include:

- Doorknobs and cabinet / drawer handles.
- Benchtops and desks.
- Chair backs and armrests.
- Light switches.
- Keyboards.
- Other commonly touched surfaces.

In laboratories, many surfaces are frequently touched that may not be thought of when sanitizing surfaces. Some examples include:

- Fume hood / BSC sashes.
- Refrigerator / freezer handles and doors.
- Analytical instrument control surfaces and accessories.
- Microscopes, incubators, centrifuges.
- Frequently shared items such as pipettors, multimeters, tools, etc.
- Whiteboard pens and markers.
- Scales / balance control panels.
- Frequently handled optics, mirrors, detectors, etc.
- Glassware and other labware.
- Flow control knobs, faucets, regulators, etc.
- Glove box gloves.
- Other commonly touched objects / surfaces as determined by the group.

A plan for regular lab sanitization should be designed and implemented at the lab level, and responsibilities should be delegated as needed. In all cases:

- Any personnel who are ill (or have an ill household member) should not report to work. Supervisors should be notified immediately.
- Continue to observe proper physical distancing, wear your required cloth facial covering and practice good hygiene.

## Guidance for Essential Research Activities During Modified Operating Conditions

The intent of essential research activities during modified operating conditions is to minimize the number of individuals working in proximity at any one time and to conduct only research that is deemed critical.

General safety guidelines for essential University research activities include:

- Any personnel who are ill (or have an ill household member) should not report to work. Supervisors should be notified immediately.
- At least two persons should be in the lab at a time to ensure safety and security. Be sure to observe physical distancing, wear your required personal protective equipment and observe hygiene guidelines. No more than three individuals should be in a lab space at a time if possible.
- Work should only be conducted during typical business hours (8 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and during the specific times indicated in the essential research proposals that have been approved.
- Building access is provided only to those listed as approved personnel. No unapproved personnel shall be provided building access. No undergraduate students are permitted access.
- Ensure communications are in working order and emergency contact information is up to date.
- Update and discuss emergency procedures with your research group.
- Ensure all laboratory safety equipment is available and in proper working order (e.g., safety shower/eyewashes, fire extinguishers, spill kits, first aid kits, etc.).
- Ensure all local ventilation systems are functioning (i.e., fume hoods, snorkels, etc.).
- Avoid conducting high-risk operations such as the use of pyrophoric or air-sensitive reagents, previously untried hazardous operations, large-scale reactions, etc.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times.
- Chemical, biological and radioactive waste for essential activities should be collected and stored according to established protocols. Waste pickup will be conducted on a case-by-case basis and may be delayed. Effort should be made to minimize the generation of waste during this period.
- Restrict required vehicle ridership to one person per vehicle whenever possible and provide adequate ventilation/air flow. Follow [these instructions](#) while driving or riding in shared vehicles.
- Continue to observe all prudent laboratory practices.

- Anticipate the potential for further restrictions, including a University wide shutdown of all research operations. Under such conditions only maintenance and monitoring operations of critical infrastructure and living specimens will be approved.
- During modified operations, no laboratory equipment, chemicals, apparatuses, etc. may be transported home for use.

If there are questions or concerns regarding essential research functions, contact your supervisor or department leadership. [Occupational and Environmental Safety](#) is also available to assist during this period.

## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

### Employee Assistance Program

Clemson is committed to supporting your overall health and well-being and offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to all faculty and staff. This benefit even extends to your spouse, dependents and other household members. EAP offers emotional, work/life and wellness support during this stressful period. Telephone or video counseling is available, and you can access this service using most smartphones, tablets and computers.



You may contact EAP Deer Oak Services by calling 866-327-2400 24 hours a day, seven days a week or by visiting the Deer Oaks website at [clemson.edu/human-resources/eap/index.html](https://clemson.edu/human-resources/eap/index.html).

### Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Stress and anxiety related to COVID-19 is normal. The fear of the unknown can feel overwhelming. During this trying time, taking care of your mental health is essential. See below for resources, information, tips and strategies on how to best manage stress and anxiety.

The University offers COVID-19 Mental and Well-being tips to manage stress related to COVID-19. Visit [clemson.edu/campus-life/healthy-campus/mental-health/covid.html](https://clemson.edu/campus-life/healthy-campus/mental-health/covid.html).

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, a statewide support line for individuals in need of mental health or substance use services can be reached 24/7, toll-free at 1(844) SC-HOPES (724-6737).

### **Sullivan Center**

Clemson University's Joseph F. Sullivan Center will continue to provide virtual clinic visits to University employees, alumni and families, and any resident of Oconee County — even those unaffiliated with the University. This service will be offered as a free service through July 31, 2020 and will continue as a service with a fee thereafter.

Secure virtual visits with one of the Sullivan Center's nurse practitioners to address non-COVID-19 issues. If clinical problems cannot be fully addressed in a virtual visit, the Sullivan Center will schedule a follow-up, onsite visit at the Sullivan Center's Clemson or Walhalla Clinic with heightened precautions against COVID-19 transmission. Normal billing will apply for onsite visits.

To schedule a virtual clinic appointment, call (864) 656-3076. To learn more about the Sullivan Center virtual clinic, visit [clemson.edu/virtualclinic](https://clemson.edu/virtualclinic).

# FACILITY ACCESS CONTROL

## BUILDING AND FACILITY ACCESS

Whenever possible, use your ID card/badge and not a key to enter the building. You may not hold or prop open exterior doors under any conditions. Always ensure the door closes and locks behind you while entering and exiting the building.

Departments and building coordinators should identify usable building access points and coordinate arrival and departure times of staff to reduce congestion during typical “rush hours” of the business day. If instructed to return to the workplace, enter and exit through the designated building access and at the designated time to facilitate physical distancing.

If you have not received approval to access your workplace but think you have a legitimate need, request access via your supervisor. Access for research purposes should follow the prescribed process outlined [here](#).

Employees approved to be on campus will be able to access the appropriate building. However, in the event you have difficulty accessing your workplace, contact your [Building Security Coordinator](#).

## SIGNAGE

Departments are asked to display signage throughout the workplace reminding employees of guidance from the CDC on entering the workplace. Team members reporting to a Clemson facility are expected to comply with safety signage.

Signage will be available for employees to download on the [COVID-19 website](#) and to print to office computers. More permanent signage will be available for on-demand printing at a later date.

## COMMUNICATION

University Relations will oversee sending out key messages to the University related to COVID-19 and return to workplace guidelines.

*Adapted from Duke University’s Guide for Returning to the Workplace.*