



RETURNING TO RUTGERS

A HOW-TO GUIDE TO REPOPULATING RUTGERS SPACES
ACADEMIC YEAR 2021

ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Ready-for-Return Essentials

As Rutgers moves toward repopulation of its campuses and facilities, a number of primary focus areas will be applicable in most types of campus spaces. The university has a wide variety of space types, and spaces with research, healthcare, housing, and other specialized activities may have additional requirements and secondary areas of focus. But, for the university as a whole, the following Ready-for-Return Essentials have been identified:

1. **Prepare the Buildings and Campuses:** Many buildings and campus locations have had limited occupancy, or perhaps no occupancy, since late March 2020. Maintenance has not stopped, but may have been reduced to essential operating protocols. What needs to be checked and changed to allow for an increase in occupancy?
2. **Prepare the People:** The pandemic and its effects have created anxiety, confusion, and fear. Will there be a phased approach to increased occupancy? What can the university do to help its employees and students engage in a culture of cooperation and safety when at Rutgers?
3. **Enact an Operations Plan:** Public health concerns drive the need for social distancing, revised pedestrian circulation in buildings, schedule management, and cleanliness of people and places. What policy and protocol changes are required to meet the needs?
4. **Control Access and Circulation:** How will access for employees, students, visitors, and deliveries be managed?
5. **Communicate to the Community:** With all these changes thrust suddenly upon the Rutgers community, the need for clear communication is more important than ever. How will the university effectively manage communications?

Working Together to Return to the Campus

The health and safety of the people who come to Rutgers *is a shared responsibility*. The university will establish guidelines, assess policies, and communicate requirements and recommendations to employees and students, and in order to maximize health and safety, *all involved* must work collectively to take precautions, practice safe behavior, and observe social distancing measures. As recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and health professionals, each member of the Rutgers community needs to stay home if and when sick. *Each member of the Rutgers*

community has an obligation to protect his or her own health and welfare and that of the people they encounter.

PREPARING THE BUILDINGS AND CAMPUSES

The decision to significantly reduce occupancy of buildings came quickly, as epidemiological data and projections came into focus. While some buildings had occupancy levels dropped significantly, and other buildings were closed entirely, maintenance of facilities was never fully curtailed. Therefore, refilling utility lines and start-up of essential equipment and systems are not necessary prior to increasing on-campus presence.

University Facilities will undertake inspections, cleaning, and maintenance of buildings and grounds in the weeks leading up to repopulation of the campuses. Generally speaking, this will include the following work:

- Building tours to ensure that major systems are in working order and ready for increased occupancy
- Maintenance assessments and repairs incorporating Centers for Disease Controls, New Jersey public health, and ASHRAE guidance where practical and feasible thereby assuring that:
 - HVAC systems are in proper working order
 - Lavatory ventilation systems are in proper working order
 - Dormant water systems are flushed
 - Plumbing drainage systems are in proper working order
- Preventative maintenance measures in accordance with established schedules
- Grounds tours to ensure that sites and parking lots are in conditions suitable for increased occupancy
- Cleaning of public and high-traffic areas in buildings, including building lobbies, elevators, conference rooms, and lavatories
- Provision of hand sanitizer stations in selected locations in buildings
- Implementation of signage and graphics to promote health and safety measures, including social distancing measures, as described in the Operations Plan section of this Guide.

Department heads are responsible for assessing their respective spaces and noting what may need to be accomplished prior to return of employees. Department heads should:

- Ensure that equipment used for telecommuting is returned to the office, as people return
- Replenish/restock essential office supplies that may be needed
- Ensure that all spoiled/dated food from break room refrigerators is placed in appropriate trash receptacles

- Develop seating strategies that will support social distancing (see **Social Distancing** information in this Guide)
- Assess office environments and the potential need for guidance, signage, or other support from Institutional Planning and Operations (see **Working in Office Environments** in this Guide)
- Implement a visitor sign-in protocol, using the sign-in sheet template provided by REHS (see **Visitors** in this Guide) or an electronic file or method that captures the same information in the template

Additionally, department heads may purchase materials and supplies for use by employees to enhance separation, distancing, and cleaning efforts within departmental spaces. These materials are available through the University Warehouse (see **Toolkit**) in this Guide.

PREPARING THE PEOPLE

As stated previously, the health and safety of the people who come to Rutgers *is a shared responsibility*. Rutgers will communicate revised policies, protocols, and practices, and all employees and students are expected to comply with requirements published. Information regarding appropriate sanitization and social distancing practices and protocols and communications regarding limiting the spread of COVID-19 will continue to be shared with all employees and students. Compliance is a key factor in maintaining acceptable levels of public health and Rutgers community safety.

Training

Prior to the resuming in-person instruction, Rutgers will provide training for students and employees that will:

- Describe medical concerns regarding COVID-19
- Explain how the university has updated procedures and protocols in response to public health concerns caused by the virus
- Describe safety protocols and behavioral changes that will reduce the spread of the virus.

Phased Staffing

Rutgers will phase in a return of employees over time in a carefully considered and coordinated manner. The university will assess expanded staffing based on mission-critical operations, ability to control and manage specific work environments, and the need to access on-site resources.

The need to maintain a controlled number of people on campus to meet social distancing requirements will continue for some time. Staff who can continue to effectively work remotely will continue to do so until restrictions are eased for larger gatherings or increased density.

Expanded staffing will be tightly controlled and coordinated to mitigate potential risks and ensure the safety of employees and students, as well as the communities served by Rutgers. No unit or department should increase staffing levels beyond current needs to support critical on-site operations without approval from the appropriate dean, vice president, or chancellor. Once decisions to expand on-site staffing in certain areas have been made, staff must follow the policies and protocols detailed in this Guide for returning to work on campus.

As on-site population increases and operations expand, the university will continue to closely monitor and assess the potential spread of the virus, as well as existing policies and procedures to mitigate it. Testing may be a critical part of assessing the impact of increased staffing. If public health needs dictate, tighter restrictions and reduced staffing may need to be implemented again.

Staffing Options

Once employees have been instructed to return to work on-site, there are several options departments should consider to maintain required social distancing measures.

Remote Work: Those who can work remotely to fulfill their work responsibilities may continue to do so to reduce the number of individuals on campus and the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus. These arrangements, which must be approved by the department head, can be done on a full or partial day/week schedule as appropriate.

Alternating Days/Flexible Work Hours: In order to limit the number of individuals and interactions among those on campus, departments should schedule partial staffing on alternating days, or allow flexible work hours. Such schedules will help enable social distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces.

Staggered Reporting/Departing: The beginning and end of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting and departure times will reduce traffic in common areas to meet social distancing requirements.

Reasonable Accommodations: According to the Centers for Disease Control, individuals with certain conditions may have a higher risk for COVID-19 infection. Those conditions may include:

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

Employees who are expected to return to the workplace and who have a medical condition that place them in a higher risk group or those who are pregnant who wish to seek a reasonable accommodation related to returning to the workplace should speak to their supervisor to review telecommuting options that may be available. If there are no telecommuting options suitable, the employee should contact University Human Resources' Office of Employment Equity.

Mitigating Workforce Anxiety

While phased staffing, workplace design, and revised policies and safety protocols are critical pieces of the puzzle, they do not touch on perhaps the most important aspect of return to work – the readiness of the workforce physically, emotionally, and psychologically. Mitigation of employee fears and concerns is important, as people are worried about their personal health and the health of those they care about; they have anxieties about their jobs and perhaps even the future of higher education.

Rutgers is committed to supporting employee and student overall health and well-being, and offers many resources for employees and students. In the immediate future University Human Resources will release a survey to employees to better understand specific concerns of faculty and staff. Survey responses will inform and guide existing programs and resources.

Section 1 of the **Toolkit** included with this Guide provides links to a number of web-based resources available to Rutgers employees.

Updated Policies and Practices

Policies are important in setting the expectation for employees. In response to the emergent and evolving pandemic Rutgers allowed flexibility in some requirements of policy and protocol, especially those related to time off, remote working, and flexible work schedules. Upon determining the new framework for returning to the campuses, Rutgers must consider what policies need to be revisited. Communicating the importance of university policies, including any recent updates, and how they map back to the organization's vision will be critical in establishing a climate of employee awareness and compliance.

The following considerations will be reflected in updated policies and practices:

- Telecommuting/Working remotely
 - When employees should return to work
 - Considerations around at-risk groups
 - Exceptions and processes for parents/caregivers when schools are closed or other caregivers are unavailable
- Policies related to remote work environments

- May include ergonomic instructions, accommodations for remote work tools and equipment
- Employee screening
 - Daily self-screening
 - Onset while at work
 - Reporting requirements
- Guest and visitor policies
 - Limiting access to certain categories of site visitors such as vendors, contractors, and consultants with specific business purpose
 - Restricting the general public's access to the worksite
 - Restricting access to only certain workplace areas
 - Requiring guests and visitors to adhere to face covering and social distancing requirements
- Employee travel policies

Shared Responsibilities

The health and safety of the people who come to Rutgers *is a shared responsibility*. All employees will now play an even more important part in ensuring high levels of safety in the workplace. Employees must understand the contents of this Guide, know where to turn for resources, and know what to do in the event that a worker or student in the workplace presents with signs or complains of symptoms of COVID-19.

Also, supervisors and managers will need to be cognizant of the need to monitor space use for appropriate distancing, coach employees to critically evaluate the requirement for in-person meetings, and advocate for personal safety practices described in this Guide.

Employee Screening

The shared responsibility for the health and safety of the Rutgers community during the pandemic begins each day with every employee undertaking a self-assessment – monitoring for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 before reporting to work. If an employee does not feel well or is sick, *the employee must stay home*.

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these signs and symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain

- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

This list is not all-inclusive. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html> for details.

If signs and/or symptoms are identified through the daily self-assessment, *the employee must not come to the workplace*. If signs and/or symptoms develop while at work, the employee must leave work and notify their supervisor. In either case, employees should continue to monitor their condition and seek consultation with their primary care physician or local urgent care center.

It can be anticipated that some people could exhibit signs of illness while at work – coughing or sneezing, for example. It must be understood that these signs could be caused by allergies, the common cold, a pre-existing condition, and perhaps COVID-19.

If an employee is ill and/or displaying signs of COVID-19 and the signs are a new onset and not attributable to a known existing condition (e.g. allergies) or are different from the usual presentation (e.g. “I have allergies but this cough feels different”), the employee should leave the workplace immediately and contact their personal physician. A supervisor or manager who notices a potentially ill employee, or who is informed of symptoms exhibited by an employee, should speak to the employee, contact Occupational Medicine if guidance is needed, and, if the signs/symptoms are of new onset or are different than the usual presentation, then the employee should leave the workplace immediately and contact their personal physician.

If any person on campus or in a Rutgers building presents in significant medical distress, University Public Safety should be called using 9-1-1.

If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19 (physician-diagnosed or laboratory-confirmed positive), or is out sick with signs and symptoms of the virus, the employee will be required to provide clearance by a medical provider to UHR OneSource to return to the workplace.

If an employee or supervisor has any questions about an employee with symptoms at work, self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms, or return to work after COVID-related illness, they should contact the Occupational Health office for their respective campus/school below:

Rutgers University New Brunswick, Newark, and Camden Campuses:
848-932-8254

RBHS Newark Campus:
973-972-2900

RBHS New Brunswick/Piscataway Campus and UCHC:

848-445-0123 ext. 2

RWJMS Faculty and Staff:
732-235-6559

ENACTING AN OPERATIONS PLAN

Public health concerns drive the need for screening, testing, and contact tracing in addition to social distancing, revised pedestrian circulation in buildings, schedule management, and cleanliness of people and places. The Guide provides general requirements that shall be adapted for specific buildings.

Screening, Testing, and Contact Tracing

Development of a program for self-screening, testing, and contact tracing continues. Self-screening is an important component of keeping members of the Rutgers community healthy, and details can be found in the **Toolkit** section of this Guide. The university will partner with local and State officials in this effort.

Testing protocols are currently being developed by medical teams at RBHS and will be designed to maximize impact of this important function.

The university will partner with public health officials to support contact tracing. Contact tracing is part of a comprehensive strategy being developed and enacted by the state Department of Health.





Community Safety Practices

Employees should note that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is not required to practice community safety in the fight against COVID-19. Certain positions and environments at Rutgers require use of PPE (*i.e.* medical-grade masks, gloves, goggles, gowns). However, use of a face covering to protect others from the employee must not be confused with use of PPE, which protects the employee from others.

Face Coverings: Face coverings must be worn by all persons on campus when in the presence of others (within six feet) and in buildings in non-private enclosed settings (e.g., common work spaces, workstations, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Appropriate use of face coverings is critical in minimizing risks to others, as a person could spread COVID-19 to others even if the person does not feel sick. Note that the face covering is not a substitute for social distancing, and the primary purpose of masks is to protect others, not self.

There are four types of Face Coverings/Masks – see the table below for use and care. Note that medical-grade masks and N95 respirators are reserved for healthcare workers, employees in specific environments, or employees performing specific job duties.

If a cloth face covering is used, the material, use, and cleaning must comport with recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control – see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.

TYPE AND INTENDED USE OF FACE COVERINGS/MASKS				
TYPE				
	CLOTH FACE COVERING	DISPOSABLE MASK	MEDICAL-GRADE SURGICAL MASK	N95 RESPIRATOR
DESCRIPTION	Home-made or commercially manufactured face coverings that are washable and help contain wearer's respiratory emissions.	Commercially manufactured face coverings that are washable and help contain wearer's respiratory emissions.	FDA-approved masks to protect the wearer from large droplets and splashes; helps contain wearer's respiratory emissions.	Provide effective respiratory protection from airborne particles and aerosoles; helps contain wearer's respiratory emissions.
INTENDED USE	Required for campus community use in non-healthcare settings (office spaces, general research/work settings, shops, community areas where 6' social distancing cannot be consistently maintained). Must be replaced daily. (May be removed when working alone in an office.)		These masks are reserved for healthcare workers and other approved areas with task-specific hazards determined by REHS.	

A number of cloth face coverings will be made available to employees by Rutgers, or employees may choose to provide their own cloth or disposable face coverings. Disposable masks may only be worn for one day and then must be placed in the trash; cloth face coverings must be cleaned as described below. Regardless of type or source, face coverings must be worn properly and comply with CDC guidelines.

Use and Care of Face Coverings:

- Putting on the face covering/disposable mask:
 - Wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to handling the face covering/ disposable mask.
 - Ensure the face-covering/ disposable mask fits over the nose and under the chin.
 - Situate the face-covering/ disposable mask properly with nose wire snug against the nose (where applicable).

- Tie straps behind the head and neck or loop around the ears.
 - Throughout the process: Avoid touching the front of the face covering/ disposable mask.
- Taking off the face covering/ disposable mask:
 - Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth when removing the face covering/ disposable mask.
 - When taking off the face covering/ disposable mask, loop your finger into the strap and pull the strap away from the ear, or untie the straps.
 - Wash hands immediately after removing.
- Care, storage and laundering:
 - Keep face coverings/ disposable mask stored in a paper bag when not in use.
 - Cloth face coverings may not be used more than one day at a time and must be washed after use. Cloth face coverings should be properly laundered with regular clothing detergent before first use, and after each shift. Cloth face coverings should be replaced immediately if soiled, damaged (e.g. ripped, punctured) or visibly contaminated.
 - Disposable masks must not be used for more than one day and must be placed in the trash after your shift or if it is soiled, damaged (e.g., stretched ear loops, torn or punctured material) or visibly contaminated. Do not place disposable masks in recycling receptacles.

Goggles/Face Shields: Employees do not need to wear goggles or face shields as part of general activity on campus. Good hand hygiene and avoiding touching the face are generally sufficient for non-healthcare environments.

Gloves: Employees do not need to wear gloves as part of general activity on campus areas. Gloves are not necessary for general use and do not replace good hand hygiene. Washing hands often is considered the best practice for common everyday tasks.

Handwashing: Employees must wash hands often with soap and water for at least twenty (20) seconds after being in a public place, after blowing nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching the face. If soap and water are not readily available, a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used. Cover all surfaces of the hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth at all times.

Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene: Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or use the inside of your elbow, even if wearing a mask. Throw used tissues in the trash immediately after use. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or if soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Personal Work Area Cleanliness: Custodial crews will focus efforts on high-traffic areas such as entrances, elevators, lavatories, conference rooms, and other gathering areas. In accordance with

CDC recommendations, University Facilities has increased routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces in all buildings, including doorknobs, elevator buttons, and other surfaces. Employees should be mindful of cleanliness in their individual work areas, including frequently touched surfaces such as light switches, door knobs, drawer handles, phone sets, and keyboards.

Social Distancing: Keeping space between individuals is one of the best tools to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus and slowing its spread. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms. Social distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk of getting sick. Employees and students on campus should follow these social distancing practices:

- Maintain a minimum of six feet of space between people whenever feasible
- Do not gather in groups
 - When in a meeting or gathering, ensure that the room used allows for adequate distancing
 - See the Workplace Scenarios section of this Guide for additional information
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings

Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios

Getting to Work: Employees who use public transportation to get to work, or those who use ride-sharing services, should wear a mask prior to entering the vehicle, bus, or train and avoid touching surfaces with hands. Upon disembarking or arrival, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer as soon as possible. Follow occupancy recommendations and other requirements as posted on web site of the ride provider.

Working in Office Environments: If you work in an open environment, be sure to maintain at least six feet distance from co-workers. In areas of open or unassigned seating have at least one workspace separating you from another co-worker. You must wear a face mask or face covering at all times while in a shared work space/room.

Department heads must assess open work environments and meeting rooms to institute measures to physically separate and increase distance between employees, other coworkers, and customers, such as:

- Place visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, or signs to indicate to customers where they should stand while waiting in line.
- Place one-way directional signage for large open work spaces with multiple throughways to increase distance between employees moving through the space, if there is a substantial number of employees in the space.

If you work in an office, no more than one person should be in the same room unless the required six feet of distancing can be consistently maintained. If more than one person is in a room, masks/face coverings must be worn at all times. Masks/face coverings must be worn by any staff in a reception/receiving area. Masks/face coverings should be used when inside any area where others are present, including walking in hallways and stairs where others travel and in break rooms, conference rooms, and other meeting locations.

Deans, directors, vice presidents, or their appropriate representatives may request assistance with space and occupancy assessments, temporary signage and graphics, furniture rearrangements, and environmental health and safety matters from Institutional Planning and Operations. On-site consultation will be provided at no cost. Safety measures covering public areas will be provided at no cost to building occupants. The cost of additional materials and supplies that may be ordered will be borne by the requestor.

To request assistance, call the University Facilities Service Call Center at 848 445-1234 (this number covers all university locations) or visit <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/facilities> and click on Submit a Maintenance Request.

Using Restrooms: Use of restrooms should be limited based on size to ensure at least six feet distance between individuals. Toilets with standard height partitions can be used simultaneously, but urinal areas with side-by-side fixtures should be used on an “every other in use” basis. Wash your hands thoroughly after using the restroom to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

Using Elevators: When possible, avoid elevators and use stairs. When elevator use is unavoidable, no more than two people should be in an elevator at a time; the two people should be facing forward and at opposite corners to maximize distance between people, and speaking/sneezing/coughing should be avoided. In high-rise buildings or high-traffic buildings where very limited use of the elevator is not practical, do not crowd into the elevator cab and be aware of social distancing requirements while waiting for the elevator. If you are using the elevator, wear your mask or face covering, face forward, do not speak/sneeze/cough, and avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol upon departing the elevator.

Using Stairs: Where possible, designate stairs for “up” traffic or “down” traffic to minimize crossing traffic. Where this is not possible, wait on a floor or landing and allow cross traffic to pass.

Meetings and Events: Convening in groups increases the risk of viral transmission. Where feasible, meetings should be held in whole or part using available collaboration tools.

In-person meetings are strongly discouraged and shall not exceed 50 percent of a room’s capacity, assuming individuals can still maintain six feet of separation for social distancing requirements.

Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in meeting rooms to support social distancing practices between attendees.

The number of people at and procedures associated with indoor and outdoor meetings and events are, at time of publication, governed by Executive Order(s) and are subject to change. Meetings and events must comply with requirements of current Executive Orders or other applicable regulations.

During your time on campus, you are encouraged to communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed by email, telephone, or other available technology rather than face-to-face.

Meals: Before and after eating, you should wash your hands thoroughly to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

If dining on campus, you should wear your mask or face covering until you are ready to eat and then replace it afterward. While eating, individuals should not sit facing one another.

If you are eating in your work environment (break room, office, etc.), maintain six feet distance between you and others. Individuals should not sit facing one another. If in an open area, only remove your mask or face covering in order to eat, then put it back on. Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in employee break rooms to support social distancing practices between employees. Wipe all surfaces, including table, refrigerator handle, microwave, coffee machine, etc. after using in common areas.

CONTROLLING ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Access Control System: Buildings will continue to be secured given the reduced on-campus population. See the **Planning for Public Safety** section of this Guide for details.

ID Cards: Given that face coverings will be commonplace, Rutgers ID cards must be worn at all times while on campus and/or in Rutgers buildings.

Visitors: Visitors with no legitimate business purpose and guests are not allowed in workplaces; this includes visitors who may be friends or family of employees. Department heads must carefully consider the need for in-person meetings, and invite visitors with legitimate business purpose selectively. All visitors must sign in using the host department's sign-in log.

Department heads must implement a visitor sign-in log, using the template provided in the **Toolkit** section of this Guide or an electronic version that captures the necessary information. Records must be retained and be readily accessible.

Building Entry/Reception, High-Traffic Buildings: Where crowding of entrances may occur, departments and building coordinators should be flexible on employee arrival and departure times to reduce congestion during typical “rush hours” of the business day.

Some high-traffic buildings may have designated building access and egress doors, and floor markings designating travel routes and/or distance markers, and employees shall obey all directional signage that may be in place.

Reception areas in high-traffic buildings may have clear screening materials installed between the security/reception staff and the traffic area. Seating in lobbies or waiting areas may be removed to promote social distancing and clear lanes of travel.

Building lobbies may have signage installed describing required face covering use, social distancing, and gathering protocols. Building lobbies may have hand sanitizer stations in strategic locations (to the extent that supply is available) as well as added trash receptacles to encourage appropriate mask disposal behavior.

Shipping and Receiving Areas: In buildings that have designated shipping and receiving areas, the area shall be limited to deliveries and appropriate staff, to minimize cross-circulation and to ensure that employees use the appropriate building entrance.

Lobbies/Common Areas/Amenities: Elevator lobbies may have hand sanitizer stations in strategic locations (to the extent that supply is available) as well as floor markings to encourage social distancing when queuing. Seating in lobbies, amenity spaces, or waiting areas may be removed or rearranged to promote social distancing and clear lanes of travel. Amenities spaces such as fitness facilities will remain out of service. Cafeteria and dining areas may have tables and chairs removed, to restrict the number of people in the room and encourage social distancing. Medium- and large-sized conference and meeting rooms may have revised maximum occupancies posted, and furniture removed or rearranged accordingly.

COMMUNICATING TO COMMUNITY

The measures described in this How-to Guide will certainly change over time, as additional information becomes known and as the public health situation in the tri-state area changes. However, the overall theme and importance of clear messaging will not change – the details behind Returning to Rutgers will need to be shared with a wide range of internal and external constituents.

Goals:

- Instill confidence in the university's ability to responsibly manage the ongoing operations of the institution and the safe return of our community to campus.
- Convey that Rutgers is committed to the health and safety of all members of its community.
- Convey that Rutgers is committed to providing the best possible educational experience.

Strategy:

- Communicate timely and accurate information through multiple sources and at all levels to ensure audiences receive consistent and useful information about operations, academics, and personal safety.
- Link communications under an overarching university-wide theme that can be customized locally and easily adapted for messaging by units and departments across the institution.

Primary Audiences:

- Students
- Parents
- Faculty
- Staff
- Alumni
- Governing Boards
- Government leaders
- Visitors (vendors, contractors, etc.)

Messages:

All messaging will evolve as the situation demands. The following are examples:

- Health & Safety
 - Rutgers is committed to providing students, faculty staff and visitors with the safest environment possible to work, learn, and visit.
 - Our health and safety is a shared responsibility and we will help you meet that responsibility by practicing safe habits: washing hands; wearing face coverings; social distancing.
- Facilities
 - University facilities will be inspected and cleaned before staff, faculty, and students return to campus.
 - Constant and continued cleaning and sanitizing will occur at Rutgers. Custodial crews will focus on high-traffic areas such as entrances, elevators, lavatories, conference rooms, and gathering areas. Employees should take care to clean their individual work areas.

- Employees
 - Rutgers will phase in a return of employees to safe working environments over time based on mission-critical operations and the ability to control and manage specific work environments.
 - If public health needs dictate, tighter restrictions and reduced staffing may need to be implemented again.
- Visitors
 - Only visitors on campus for a legitimate business purpose and invited guests are permitted in workplaces.

Messages associated with instruction, student life, research, and Athletics will be closely coordinated with appropriate departments.

Channels and Tactics:

1. Email
 - University-wide email messages will convey the broad messages and overall approach and will direct audiences to the web site or other information locations.
 - Tailored emails from chancellors, deans, and leaders of units (i.e. student affairs, residence life) will provide details and area-specific information and guidance.
2. Web
 - The existing university-wide COVID-19 web site will be reoriented to provide information about Fall 2020 operations. It will continue to be the primary source for university-wide information.
 - Campus-level and unit-level webpages will provide additional information and details.
 - The Rutgers.edu homepage will continue to maintain a vibrant sense of place and strength of the Rutgers brand.
3. Social Media
 - Targeted communications on university-wide social channels and local channels that reach students and other key audiences
4. News Media
 - Maintain transparency about university efforts through proactive engagement with targeted news outlets.
 - Engage them as partners in reaching target audiences.
5. Rutgers Today
 - Human interest stories; news about the return to Rutgers; info on health and safety

6. Interior and exterior campus message boards
 - o Info for students to aid in their return to Rutgers and about health and safety
7. Signage
 - o Health & safety – reminders about hand washing, face coverings, etc.

REVISION OF GUIDELINES

These guidelines will be reviewed regularly to respond to changing conditions and new information. These guidelines may be revised, suspended, or terminated as the COVID-19 pandemic permits. Suggestions for revisions and questions may be sent to EOC@rutgers.edu with “Returning to Rutgers” in the Subject line.

Ver 1.1