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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Commission on Higher Education
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CHED Central Office
RECORDS SECTION
C.P. Garcia Ave., U.P. Diliman, QC

CHED MEMORANDUM ORDER

No. 09
Series of 2022

SUBJECT: UPDATED GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES TO PREVENT AND MITIGATE COVID-19 INFECTIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

I. RATIONALE

In light of the recommendation of the Advisory Panel, which is composed of representatives from the Department of Health, medical professionals, and infectious diseases experts, taking into consideration the high COVID-19 vaccination coverage in the country and higher education sector, classification of the country as low-risk, available studies on lower fatality rate and severity of cases for the Omicron variant, and benchmarking of policies with other countries as to the implementation of face-to-face classes, and pursuant to Commission En Banc (CEB) Resolution No. 442-2022, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) – Department of Health (DOH) Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 2021-004, or the *Guidelines on the Implementation of Limited Face-to-face Classes for All Programs of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Areas Under Alert Levels System for COVID-19 Response* is hereby updated to reflect major changes on the following areas:

- COVID-19 Vaccination
- Recommended Additional Health and Safety Measures
- Monitoring and Evaluation

This issuance shall now serve as a guide for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for their self-reopening of campuses for the conduct of face-to-face classes based on their capability to comply with the minimum public health standards set by the national government and to get the support of their stakeholders.

II. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

A. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

All State Universities and Colleges (SUCs), Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs), and Private HEIs, including all their campuses/branches, may conduct face-to-face classes for all programs.

B. Students/Teaching and Non-Teaching Personnel

All students/teaching and non-teaching personnel, regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status, may participate in the conduct of face-to-face classes.

HEIs shall inform vulnerable individuals and the unvaccinated of the risks of contracting COVID-19. HEIs are also advised to consider flexible learning/teaching

modalities, subject to CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 04, series of 2020¹ and CMO No. 06, series of 2022², for vulnerable individuals who opt not to or cannot participate in the conduct of face-to-face classes.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Cluster - is defined as a group of symptomatic individuals linked by time, geographic location, and common exposures, containing at least one RT-PCR-confirmed case or at least two epidemiologically linked, symptomatic (meeting clinical criteria of Suspect case definition A or B) persons with positive professional use OR self-test rapid antigen test.

COVID-19 - refers to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 which is caused by the virus known as the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

COVID-19 Alert Level System - refers to the new Community Quarantine Classifications for dealing with COVID-19 covering entire cities, municipalities, and/or regions; aimed to manage and minimize the risk of the disease through System Indicators, Triggers, and Thresholds determined by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) to specify the public health and social measures to be taken with the COVID-19 response, as may be updated based on new scientific knowledge, information about the effectiveness of control measures in the country and overseas, and its application.

Granular Lockdown - refers to a micro-level quarantine for areas identified as "critical zones" by the local government unit (LGU) which may be declared regardless of Alert Level.

Disease Surveillance - refers to the ongoing systematic collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of outcome-specific data for use in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of public health practice in terms of epidemics, emergencies, and disasters. A disease surveillance system includes the functional capacity for data analysis as well as the timely dissemination of these data to persons who can undertake effective prevention and control activities.

Flexible Learning - refers to the pedagogical approach allowing flexibility of time, place, and audience including, but not solely focused on the use of technology. It involves the use of digital and non-digital technology and covers both face-to-face or in-person learning, out-of-classroom learning modes of delivery, or a combination of modes of delivery.

Fully Vaccinated Individual - refers to someone who is at least two (2) weeks past having received the second dose of a two-dose vaccine or the first dose of a single-dose vaccine, or someone who received the recommended booster dose at least two weeks after. The vaccines against COVID-19 administered to the individual must be approved by the Philippine Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or included in the Emergency Use Listing (EUL) of the World Health Organization (WHO).

Isolation - refers to the separation of ill or infected persons from others to prevent the spread of infection or contamination.



¹ CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 04, series of 2020: Guidelines on the Implementation of Flexible Learning

² CMO No. 6, Series of 2022 – Sustaining Flexible Learning in Higher Education: An Addendum to CMO No. 4, Series of 2022

Limited Face-to-Face Classes – pertains to restricting the number of students who will attend face-to-face classes in-campus on any given day based on the cyclical student shifting/rotating schedule, observance of physical distancing, and other health and safety protocols.

Minimum Public Health Standards (MPHS) - refers to the national, local, and sector-specific guidelines on mitigation measures for its COVID-19 response across all settings by implementing non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs), consistent with the Department of Health (DOH) Administrative Order No. 2021-0043 or the Omnibus Guidelines on the Minimum Public Health Standards for the Safe Reopening of Institutions. This term shall also encompass specific NPIs of community mitigation strategies or public health measures that do not involve vaccines, medications, or other pharmaceutical interventions, that individuals and communities can carry out in order to reduce transmission rates, contact rates, and the duration of infectiousness of individuals in the population.

Quarantine - the restriction of movement, or separation from the rest of the population, of healthy persons who may have been exposed to the virus, to monitor their symptoms and ensure early detection of cases.

Retrofitting – pertains to the addition of new technology or features to the facilities of HEIs to ensure the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff while inside the campuses. Examples of these are mechanisms to effect social distancing, posting signages, modifying arrangements in rooms/communal areas, etc.

Surveillance Report - refers to the regular publication with specific information on the disease under surveillance. It contains updates of standard tables and graphs as well as information on epidemics. In addition, it may contain information on the performance of participants using agreed performance indicators.

Vulnerable Individual - refers to someone who is over sixty (60) years of age, with uncontrollable health risks, with an immunocompromised state, with comorbidities, or is pregnant.

IV. GENERAL GUIDELINES

A. Flexible Learning

Flexible learning in this context is defined as face-to-face learning, online learning, offline learning, or any combination of these three learning modalities.

It is at the discretion of the HEIs to choose which learning modalities they should operationalize, as long as there will be continuity of learning under any flexible learning modality. HEIs shall institute/implement the necessary mechanism so that students who cannot participate in the conduct of face-to-face classes shall not be prejudiced.

B. Implementation of Minimum Public Health Standards

HEIs shall develop and implement institutional policies and actions that revolve around and conform with the minimum public health standards as provided in detail in the issuances of the Department of Health (DOH). The following minimum public health standards must be followed.

1. Increase Physical and Mental Resilience

The health and well-being of students and teaching and non-teaching personnel shall be protected. Measures for this include proper respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, provision of general welfare services, and conduct of activities promoting physical and mental well-being.

2. Reduce Transmission

Administrative and engineering controls shall be developed to reduce transmission. HEIs must adhere to the relevant restrictions on mobility imposed by the IATF and/or the concerned LGUs, such as localized quarantines, curfews, and the like, as may be applicable to the corresponding Alert Level. Continuous education campaigns and provision of adequate sanitation stations among other controls shall be employed.

a. Hand Hygiene and Sanitation Facilities

Install/maintain hand hygiene and sanitation facilities in strategic places with the following:

- i. Adequate water supply;
- ii. Hand washing station or sink;
- iii. Soap and water or 70% Isopropyl (or Ethyl) Alcohol; and,
- iv. Hands-free trash receptacles.

b. Wearing of Face Masks

At all times, well-fitted masks shall be worn properly, except for the following instances:

- i. Eating and drinking in designated areas;
- ii. Participating in team and individual sports in venues where ventilation standards can be maintained; and,
- iii. Practicing outdoor activities where physical distancing can be maintained.

In case of any updates and changes in the guidelines for wearing of face masks by the national government, such shall be observed by the HEI.

c. Adequate Air Quality and Ventilation

Ensure adequate air quality and ventilation, to wit³:

- i. HEIs must maximize and improve natural ventilation in all rooms and common areas, and consider upgrading ventilation systems;
- ii. If possible, windows shall be open. Ensure, however, that spaces of open windows are free from toxic gases and pollutants. Whether windows may or may not be opened, supply only ventilation fans (i.e. floor, table, top, pedestal fans, are provided) and should be placed where airflow from these fans shall not be from person to person;

³ IATF Guidelines on the Nationwide Implementation of Alert Level System for COVID-19 Response as of June 04, 2022

- iii. Exhaust fans should be continuously operating while there are occupants in the area. Additional exhaust fans may be added to improve air exchange to achieve at least 6 air changes per hour. Increasing the number of exhaust fans can increase the number of air changes per hour;
- iv. If possible, HEIs are highly encouraged to conduct the following air quality measurements: Air Change per hour - recommend at least 6 air changes per hour; and/or,
- v. Carbon dioxide (CO_2) Levels recommend less than 1,000 parts per million or ppm.

d. Venue Capacity

The HEI shall follow the maximum allowable indoor and outdoor venue capacity as laid down in the issuances of the IATF. The HEI may, however, decide on a reduced capacity as they deem appropriate.

e. Visual Cues, Reminders, and Guides

Install visual cues or signages on mask-wearing, hand hygiene, DOH hotlines, and other health and safety reminders. Resources are downloadable from the Healthy Pilipinas Website at www.healthypilipinas.ph

3. Reduce Duration of Infection

Appropriate case detection, contact tracing, quarantine, and isolation measures shall be in place before reopening the HEI. Contingency plans, coordination with concerned LGUs for alignment of surveillance and referral protocols, and preventive suspensions shall be developed.

4. Stay Home When Not Feeling Well

Students and teaching and non-teaching personnel who have COVID-19 symptoms are advised to stay at home and immediately report their conditions to their professors/supervisors. HEIs shall monitor their health status. For continuity of learning, HEIs shall implement the appropriate flexible learning mode for the affected students, if possible. Likewise, HEIs shall allow a work-from-home arrangement for affected teaching and non-teaching personnel, if possible.

5. Cleaning and Disinfection

HEIs shall conduct regular cleaning and disinfection of classrooms and conform to the guidelines of the DOH, as provided in detail in DOH AO No. 2020-0157⁴.

6. Waste Disposal

HEIs shall ensure the implementation of national protocols on the proper use, handling, and disposal of appropriate PPEs. HEIs shall train their students and teaching and non-teaching personnel on the proper disposal of waste according to type.

⁴ DOH Administrative Order No. 2020-0157 Guidelines on Cleaning and Disinfection in Various Settings as an Infection Prevention and Control Measure Against COVID-19

C. Recommended Additional Health and Safety Measures

HEIs, in the exercise of their administrative prerogative, may impose additional or stricter health and safety protocols. The following are other recommended health and safety measures:

1. COVID-19 Vaccination Program

HEIs are enjoined to continuously participate in the activities of the national government related to COVID-19 vaccination such as National COVID-19 Vaccination Days, DOH *PinasLakas* campaign, offering of facilities as vaccination sites, the conduct of information, education, and communication (IEC) campaigns, among others.

HEIs are encouraged to undertake a School-Based COVID-19 Vaccination Program, in coordination with the DOH and respective LGUs, to facilitate the vaccination of their students, faculty, and staff.

HEIs are advised to conduct strengthened information campaigns on the benefits of vaccination and counseling by school physicians on the risk for severe cases and hospitalization especially for those immunocompromised and with comorbidities.

2. Screening at Entry Point

- a. HEIs may put up a screening or triage area at different points of entry where students, teaching and non-teaching personnel, and visitors are assessed for the following:
 - i. Wearing of face mask and other PPEs as may be required by the IATF;
 - ii. Body temperature check. Individuals will not be allowed to enter the campus premises if they have a temperature of 37.5 degrees and/or above, even after a five-minute rest. This individual may temporarily be placed in the isolation room or a separate room until he/she is transported to his/her home or health facility. HEIs must develop a mechanism on how to ensure the student, faculty, and staff shall be attended to as provided under DOH guidelines on persons manifesting COVID-19 symptoms.
- b. HEIs must ensure there are no choke points at all entrance gates of their campuses. There must be an adequate number of screening stations to avoid long queues outside the school premises if needed.
- c. HEIs may coordinate with their LGUs on crowd management outside the school premises, if necessary.

3. Personal Hygiene Kits

HEIs may encourage their students and teaching and non-teaching personnel to bring their own personal hygiene kits which may contain: ethyl alcohol or hand sanitizer, cleansing wipes/tissue paper/toilet paper/hand towel, extra face mask, and/or hand soap.

4. Persons with Comorbidities

HEIs may require that persons, including unvaccinated individuals, declare if they have comorbidities, as defined by the DOH, so HEIs can provide mechanisms for their protection as may be allowed under existing IATF/DOH issuances.

5. Entry and Exit in the Campus

- a. HEIs may designate entrance and exit gates.
- b. HEIs may coordinate with their LGUs on crowd management outside the school premises.

6. Cyclical Student Shifting System

- a. To further reduce the COVID-19 reproduction number by limiting the number of students present on the campus on a given day, HEIs may adopt a cyclical student shifting system, as they deem appropriate for their particular situations, without prejudice to further adjustments, whenever necessary.
- b. The cyclical student shifting mechanism to be implemented shall be developed in consultation with the faculty and students.

7. Retrofitting of Facilities

- a. HEIs may re-engineer or re-design the layouts of the facilities.
- b. HEIs may determine the maximum number of students present inside the classrooms, laboratories, libraries, gymnasiums, covered courts, and other facilities which will be used for face-to-face classes following IATF-permitted maximum venue capacity.

8. Foot Traffic System

HEIs may implement a one-way foot traffic system to limit human intersection, contact, or interaction. There may be markings on the floors indicating the directions and proper distancing to follow from the entrance gate to the room and within the room. HEIs may employ other traffic systems as long as these may limit human intersection, contact, or interaction. HEIs may adopt other measures to limit the movement of students including measures to prevent students from moving from one room/area to another without proper reason.

9. School Canteen and Dining Area

- a. In case that the school canteen or cafeteria will not open, the HEI shall inform students to bring their food and drinks.
- b. In case the school intends to open its canteen/cafeteria, it shall follow DTI-DOTr JMC No. 21-02⁵ for the health and safety guidelines on the operation of food establishments.

⁵ Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Department of Tourism (DOTr) Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 21-02 on the Health and Safety Guidelines Governing the Operations of Indoor and Outdoor Dine-in Services Under the Alert Levels System for COVID-19 Response

- c. Students are encouraged to eat at their assigned seats inside their respective classrooms. However, HEIs may also set up a dining area. This extra precautionary measure may be taken because face masks will be removed to enable the students to eat and drink.

10. Break Time Period

- a. There may be staggered break times to lessen the number of possible occupants in the school canteen and dining area.
- b. HEIs must determine the maximum time an individual can stay in the school canteen/dining area as well as the maximum number of occupants in a period.
- c. Students are not allowed to eat in laboratory rooms where activities that involve the use of chemical and biological agents are being done. They shall eat in a designated dining area.

11. Library Services

- a. If books/journals/library materials are borrowed and brought home or taken outside the library facilities, there must be a dedicated dropbox for their return. These books must be properly cleaned/disinfected before they are included again for circulation.
- b. Commonly shared computer units shall be cleaned and disinfected.
- c. The HEI shall encourage their students and teaching and non-teaching personnel to use online library services instead of physically going to the library. The HEI shall also promote the use of PHL CHED Connect for free access to instructional and learning resources or materials.

D. Physical Education (PE) Classes

Contact and non-contact sports activities for PE classes may be allowed depending on the Alert Level System where the concerned HEI is situated. Maximum venue capacity must be consistent with the IATF issuances on the conduct of sports activities.

E. Off-Campus Activities

Off-campus activities for the completion of course requirements (i.e. National Service Training Program [NSTP], internship/practicum/training, fieldwork, etc.) are allowed subject to the approval of the LGU, where off-campus activities will be held.

The HEIs are encouraged to coordinate with their partner institutions to allow unvaccinated students to participate in OJT/internship/fieldwork/practicum.

F. Co-curricular and Extracurricular Activities

In-person and group-based co-curricular and extracurricular activities such as sports events, musical events, competitions, seminars, conferences, in-person graduation rites, ceremonies, among others, may be allowed subject to the concerned LGU/IATF issuances and resolutions.

V. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. Procedure for the Reopening of Campuses for Face-to-face Classes

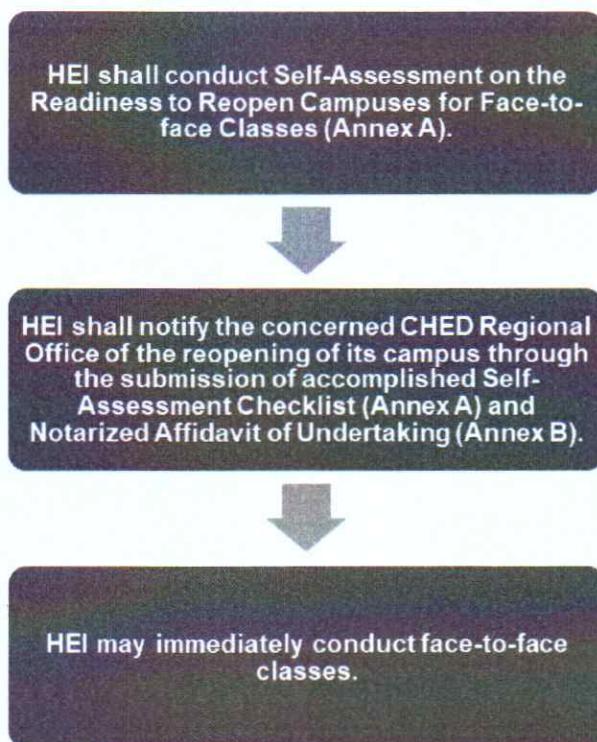


Figure 1. Procedure for the Reopening of Campuses for Face-to-face Classes in Higher Education

For HEIs with existing submissions of Annexes A and B of CHED-DOH JMC No. 2021-004, re-submission is not necessary. Annexes A and B of this CMO may be downloaded at bit.ly/CMO9s2022Annexes.

B. Crisis Management Committee

1. HEIs shall establish a Crisis Management Committee (CMC) or an equivalent committee whose major functions are to:
 - a. Assess the readiness of HEIs to reopen for face-to-face classes;
 - b. Disseminate appropriate and relevant information to stakeholders;
 - c. Lead the creation of institutional COVID-19 Response Protocols;
 - d. Oversee the implementation of health and safety protocols;
 - e. Conduct of School-based COVID-19 Surveillance Program;
 - f. Monitor and evaluate the compliance of HEI with this CMO; and,
 - g. Take appropriate measures and interventions when risks and impacts of COVID-19 may exist in the campus or surrounding communities.
2. The CMC shall be comprised of the following members:
 - a. School Head - Chair of the CMC;
 - b. Institutional Health Officer - shall regularly monitor the implementation of health protocols;
 - c. Institutional Safety Officer - shall regularly monitor the implementation of safety protocols;

- d. Institutional Planning Officer - shall take care of the engineering controls to be installed;
 - e. Institutional Information Officer - shall handle the communication plan;
 - f. Institutional Surveillance Officer/s - shall lead the School-Based COVID-19 Surveillance;
 - g. Health and Safety Marshall (at least one [1] per building) - shall monitor the compliance of students, teaching and non-teaching personnel, and visitors with minimum public health standards;
 - h. Head of the clinic of the HEI; and,
 - i. Representatives from the faculty association and student association.
3. The CMC shall set a regular forum/meeting to discuss ongoing gaps, issues, and concerns and provide appropriate solutions thereof. The CMC is encouraged to set up a mechanism or system to monitor and analyze data and information in HEIs to determine patterns or trends of COVID-19 infection as the basis for the implementation of appropriate interventions.
 4. The CMC shall determine the areas where students and teaching and non-teaching personnel tend to congregate or congest and recommend measures to be undertaken by the HEI to avoid such occurrences.
 5. The CMC shall recommend and implement the suspension of limited face-to-face classes if there will be clustering of unconfirmed cases in the classrooms, laboratories, libraries, cafeterias, dormitories, or other communal areas.
 6. HEIs applying for a safety seal to conduct face-to-face classes on more than one campus shall establish a CMC for each campus/branch.

C. School-Based COVID-19 Response Protocols

The CMC shall create and implement relevant policies, guidelines, and procedures in relation to COVID-19 response, consistent with the issuances of the national government, such as but not limited to the following:

1. There are policies, guidelines, and procedures to facilitate notifications, referrals, and coordination with LGUs, DOH, and other appropriate government agencies when there are COVID-19 suspect or confirmed cases found on the campus. Whenever deemed necessary, the HEI shall conduct testing and contact tracing in compliance with DOH protocols;
2. There are policies, guidelines, and procedures mandating students, faculty, and staff to inform their respective HEI if they test positive for COVID-19. There are policies, guidelines, and procedures for reporting cases following Republic Act No. 11332 otherwise known as the "Mandatory Reporting of Notifiable Diseases and Health Events of Public Health Concern Act" and coordinating with the appropriate public health authorities whenever necessary;
3. There is a contingency plan which shall include coordination with the local government and health care provider networks, management of staff and visitors with COVID-19 symptoms, processes for establishment lockdown and disinfection, and alternative processes in case of escalation of Alert Level status;
4. There are policies, guidelines, and procedures for contact tracing. The HEI may use a paper-based and/or digital/electronic contact tracing form. The HEI may

also use an application of its choosing or use an application sanctioned by the LGU; and,

5. For suspected, probable, and confirmed COVID-19 cases, there are policies, guidelines, and procedures on how to reintegrate them back into the campus community after they recover or have undergone isolation and/or quarantine. Updated isolation and quarantine protocols for the general public & healthcare workers and authorized sectors shall be consistent with DOH Department Memorandum No. 2022-0013 otherwise known as the "Updated Guidelines on Quarantine, Isolation, and Testing for COVID-19 Response and Case Management for the Omicron Variant" and succeeding issuances.

D. School-Based COVID-19 Surveillance Program

1. The CMC shall establish a School-Based COVID-19 Surveillance led by the Institutional Surveillance Officer with the following responsibilities:
 - a. Facilitate the collection of pertinent data about suspect, probable, and confirmed cases identified in the school during the conduct of face-to-face classes;
 - b. Maintain a case-based listing for students and teaching and non-teaching personnel with the following variables at a minimum in a database (database can be a password-protected Excel spreadsheet):
 - i. Name of HEI
 - ii. Name of Program
 - iii. Student/teaching personnel/non-teaching personnel identifier (e.g. ID No.)
 - iv. Sex
 - v. Age
 - vi. Vaccination status
 - vii. Presence of any comorbidity or disability
 - viii. Date symptom detected
 - ix. Date of testing
 - x. Date of release of the result
 - xi. Result of test
 - c. Secure a list of identified close contacts of a suspect, probable, or confirmed case in the HEI facility;
 - d. Provide surveillance report to inform decision-making at the HEI level;
 - e. Determine and monitor case clustering;
 - f. Report case clustering to the concerned CHEDRO and to the Regional and Local Epidemiology and Surveillance Units (RESUs/LESUs); and,
 - g. Coordinate with the head of the local epidemiology and surveillance unit for activities related to but not limited to surveillance.
2. The Institutional Surveillance Officer should attend training/s on basic surveillance and other related topics.
3. The CMC shall regularly coordinate with the appropriate government agencies or entities for regional-level guidelines on resurgence protocols.

E. Simulations and Drills

1. Prior to the reopening of campuses for face-to-face classes, HEIs shall conduct simulations and drills of their human traffic system, crowd management, classroom management, and implementation of their health and safety protocols.
2. HEIs shall also plan how to conduct drills on fire, bomb threats, earthquakes, and other emergencies adherent to health and safety protocols.
3. HEIs may have health and safety marshalls, at least one (1) per occupied building/area, roaming around the campus to monitor implementation and observance of the health and safety protocols at all times.

F. Safety Seal Certification Program

HEIs are encouraged to apply and maintain their Safety Seal Certification to ensure their compliance with the minimum public health standards. The CHED Safety Seal Portal is a website dedicated to the application, issuance, and renewal of Safety Seals for HEIs. The website can be accessed through www.safetyseal.ched.gov.ph. The details on this program are outlined in CMO No. 04, series of 2022⁶.

VI. PREVENTIVE SUSPENSION AND REOPENING PROTOCOLS

The implementation of face-to-face classes shall be preventively suspended and then reopened based on the following scenarios:

Scenario	Preventive Suspension Protocol	Reopening Protocol
The locality of the HEI is reclassified to Alert Level 4 or 5.	Automatic preventive suspension for the entire HEI. ^{**}	Reclassified to Alert Level 3 or better.
School/building/classroom lockdown for case clustering.*	The preventive suspension will be based on the assessment and decision of the CMC of the HEI and upon consultation with the Local Task Force against COVID-19.	Continue face-to-face classes after completing contact tracing and disinfection activities and quarantine period for the concerned individuals.

*A cluster is defined as a group of symptomatic individuals linked by time, geographic location, and common exposures, containing at least one RT-PCR-confirmed case or at least two epidemiologically linked, symptomatic (meeting clinical criteria of Suspect case definition A or B) persons with positive professional use OR self-test rapid antigen test. Building lockdowns should be done when clustering is reported in two (2) or more rooms of the building.

**For medical education programs, CHED DOH JMC No. 2021-002⁷ will apply.

⁶ CMO No. 04, series of 2022: Guidelines on the Safety Seal Certification Program for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

⁷ CHED-DOH Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2021 – 002: Amendment of Article IV-B of CHED DOH JMC. No. 2021-001 entitled "Guidelines on the Gradual Reopening of Campuses of Higher Education Institutions for Limited Face-to-Face Classes during the COVID 19 Pandemic

VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

HEIs must report case clustering to their respective CHEDRO.

For monitoring, as may be requested by their respective CHEDRO, HEIs must participate in any data collection activities of CHED related to the implementation of face-to-face classes and updates on the COVID-19 vaccination of their students/non-teaching and teaching personnel.

The CHED Composite Team may conduct random inspections in order to determine compliance of HEIs with these guidelines.

VIII. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Higher Education Institutions shall:

1. Conduct consultation/s with students, teaching and non-teaching personnel, LGUs, and other relevant stakeholders regarding their action plans for reopening their campuses while mitigating the risk of COVID-19 transmission;
2. Inform all participating students, teaching and non-teaching personnel of COVID-19 response protocols of the institution;
3. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of health and safety protocols in compliance with the issuances of the national government, through the DOH and IATF, and concerned LGUs, by virtue of ordinances/orders;
4. Create a database for the list of programs, courses, and year levels as well as the number of students and HEI personnel who will participate in the limited face-to-face classes;
5. Conduct School-based COVID-19 Surveillance Program;
6. Ensure the reporting of suspect, probable, and confirmed COVID-19 cases and their close contacts to the LGU and the DOH within the 24 hours;
7. Notify the contacts of suspect cases and advise them to self-monitor and adhere to stringent MPHS. If the suspect case turns out to be probable or confirmed, their contacts shall be instructed to undergo quarantine or isolation, whichever is appropriate;
8. Report case clustering to the concerned CHEDRO and to the Regional and Local Epidemiology and Surveillance Units (RESUs/LESUs);
9. Participate in the data collection activities of CHED related to the implementation of face-to-face classes and updates on the COVID-19 vaccination status of the members of the HEI; and,
10. Continuously make improvements in their institutional policies and guidelines.

B. Students, teaching personnel, and non-teaching personnel attending face-to-face classes shall:

1. Strictly adhere to the health and safety protocols of their respective HEIs; and,
2. Be transparent in declaring health conditions and vaccination against COVID-19 status.

C. CHED Central Office shall:

1. Disseminate these guidelines to the CHEDROs and HEIs;
2. Conduct orientation for CHEDROs and HEIs on this CMO;

3. Assist the concerned CHEDRO in the investigation of non-compliance of HEIs and recommend preventive and immediate suspension on the conduct of face-to-face classes, as may be required by the situation; and,
4. Provide data analytics at the national level from the submitted reports of the CHEDROs.

D. CHED Regional Office (RO) shall:

1. Closely monitor the conduct of face-to-face classes by HEIs;
2. Immediately report any violation or complaint and results of the investigation to the CHED Central Office;
3. Order preventive and immediate suspension of HEI for the conduct its face-to-face classes for violations of this CMO;
4. Submit a status report on the implementation of face-to-face classes and a consolidated monitoring report on case clustering in HEIs to the CHED Central Office through the Office of the Executive Director (OED); and,
5. Implement the Safety Seal Certification Program.

E. CHED Composite Team shall:

1. Conduct inspection of HEIs who will apply for safety seal⁸ in order to check for compliance with the minimum public health standards set by the national government and to verify the submitted application documents;
2. Investigate reported violations and complaints; and,
3. Recommend actions to be taken for HEIs that were proven non-compliant with this CMO.

F. Local Government Units shall:

1. Provide advice/recommendation to HEIs for the safe reopening of their campuses, pertaining to but not limited to referral and coordination protocols for surveillance, detection, contact tracing, isolation, quarantine and treatment, and monitoring and evaluation of contingency plans and corresponding simulation exercises;
2. Designate its health and safety officer to join the Ad-hoc Team/Body that shall be created by the CHEDRO to investigate violations of this CMO or complaints on the implementation of health and safety protocols; and,
3. Assist HEIs in crowd and traffic control, whenever needed.

G. Department of Health shall:

1. Provide technical assistance such as updates regarding public health standards to be followed in education settings, the institutionalization of healthy settings in the school, and assistance in the inspection of HEIs in the conduct of epidemiological surveillance, as may be necessary; and,
2. Provide learning and development interventions, and informational and advocacy materials on strategies or measures, through the provincial, city, and/or municipal health offices and its local health boards (LHBs), in partnership with the Sangguniang Kabataan Federations and its local youth development councils (LYDCs), to ensure that minimum public health standards are met for dissemination to HEIs.

⁸ CMO No. 04, series of 2022 on the Guidelines on the Safety Seal Certification Program for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

IX. VIOLATIONS

Any violation of these guidelines shall be a ground for suspension of the conduct of the face-to-face classes without prejudice to such other sanctions as may be imposed. If public interest demands such as, but are not limited to, national security, public safety, and public health, CHED may, without notice, order an HEI for a preventive and immediate suspension of the conduct of its face-to-face classes.

X. REPEALING CLAUSE

CHED-DOH Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 2021-004, or the *Guidelines on the Implementation of Limited Face-to-face Classes for All Programs of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Areas Under Alert Levels System for COVID-19 Response*, and other issuances inconsistent with or contrary to this CMO are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly. All other provisions of existing issuances which are not affected by this CMO shall remain valid and in effect.

XI. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

Should any provision of this CMO or any part thereof be declared invalid, the other provisions, insofar as they are separable from the invalid ones, shall remain in full force and effect.

XII. EFFECTIVITY

These Guidelines shall take effect immediately.

Quezon City, Philippines, 29 August 2022.



J. PROSPERO E. DE VERA III, DPA
Chairman
Commission on Higher Education



ANNEX A

TEMPLATE FOR THE SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST ON THE READINESS TO REOPEN CAMPUSES FOR FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

(HEI Letterhead)

SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST ON THE READINESS TO REOPEN CAMPUSES FOR FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES IN HIGHER EDUCATION	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Crisis Management Committee (CMC) There is a CMC or equivalent in charge to oversee the implementation and monitoring & evaluation of compliance with this CMO on the conduct of face-to-face classes. The CMC favorably recommended the conduct of face-to-face classes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Stakeholder Consultation The students, parents/guardians, faculty, and staff have been consulted on how to safely reopen the campus for face-to-face classes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Information, Education, and Communication Plan Stakeholders have already been oriented and given Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials detailing institutional policies, guidelines, and procedures on the safe conduct of face-to-face classes and health & safety protocols in the campus. There is a communication plan to provide timely and updated information to all students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Contingency and Catch-up Plan There is a contingency and catch-up plan for learning when face-to-face classes are suspended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Database for the Implementation of Face-to-face Classes The HEI has a database for the list of programs, courses, and year levels as well as the number of students and HEI personnel who will participate in the face-to-face classes. The HEI has identified the buildings, classrooms, laboratories, and other facilities to be used per program in the conduct of face-to-face classes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. School-Based COVID-19 Response Protocols , including but not limited to: a. There are contact tracing and physical distancing protocols, as may be required by the corresponding Alert Level. b. There are screening and detection, containment, and lockdown protocols. c. There are emergency transfer protocols if needed. d. There are referral system protocols for COVID-19 cases and psychosocial services if needed. e. There are quarantine and isolation protocols in line with the recent issuances of the DOH. f. There is a standby set-up of a single-person isolation room inside the campus. This school-based isolation room shall be used to temporarily hold an individual who will develop COVID-19 symptoms while inside the school premises. g. There are maintenance, cleaning, sanitation, and disinfection protocols. h. There is a facility for the proper storage, collection, treatment, and disposal of used facemasks and other infectious waste. i. The school canteen, cafeteria, and other food establishments have health and safety protocols.
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. School-based COVID-19 Surveillance Program There is a School-based COVID-19 Surveillance Program for the monitoring of COVID-19 cases
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Compliance with Minimum Public Health Standards a. There are protocols on the appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs). b. There are handwashing facilities and an adequate supply of sanitation products installed or placed in strategic areas. c. There are visible, readable, and adequate numbers of signages, signals, and reminders on health and safety protocols placed/posted in strategic and conspicuous places inside the campus. d. There is adequate air exchange and ventilation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Additional Health and Safety Protocols (optional/ as may be required by the corresponding Alert Level) a. There is a screening or triage area at different points of entry, as may be needed. b. There is a cyclical student and employee shifting implementation plan, as may be applicable. c. The HEI has determined the maximum venue capacity.

Certified Correct by:

Name and Signature of the Chair of the Crisis Management Committee

ANNEX B

TEMPLATE FOR AFFIDAVIT OF UNDERTAKING

Republic of the Philippines)
_____) S.S.

AFFIDAVIT OF UNDERTAKING

I, <<Name of Head of Higher Education Institution (HEI)>>, of legal age, Filipino, and a resident of <<Address of Head of HEI>>, after being duly sworn to, under oath and in accordance with the law, do hereby depose and state that:

1. I am the <<Position / Designation as Head of HEI>> of the <<Name of HEI>>, a CHED recognized Philippine Higher Education Institution.
2. I am cognizant, willing, and accepting of the roles and responsibilities of the <<Name of HEI>> as stated in *CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 09, series of 2022: Updated Guidelines on the Implementation of Face-to-face Classes to Prevent and Mitigate COVID-19 Infections in Higher Education*, including those to be issued in the future.
3. The <<Name of HEI>> duly complied with the health and safety protocols imposed by the IATF, DOH, LGU, and as provided in CMO No. 09, series of 2022.
4. The <<Name of HEI>> was able to inform all the participating students of the risks involved and the pertinent provisions of these guidelines.
5. I am aware that any violation of the aforementioned guidelines shall be a ground for suspension of the conduct of the face-to-face classes without prejudice to such other sanctions as may be imposed. If public interest demands such as, but not limited to, national security, public safety, and public health, CHED may, without notice, order an HEI for a preventive and immediate suspension of the conduct of its face-to-face classes.
6. I fully understand the consequences of not giving correct and truthful data and I am aware that non-disclosure of material information as required will put me under the pain of perjury by executing this document.
7. This affidavit is being executed to attest to the truth of the foregoing facts and for whatever legal purpose and intent it may serve.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto placed my signature this _____ day of
_____, at _____.

<<NAME OF HEAD OF INSTITUTION>>
<<DESIGNATION / POSITION OF HEAD OF INSTITUTION>>
(Signature over printed name)

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this _____ day of _____, _____ at
_____, affiant having exhibited to me his/her
with nos. _____.

Doc. No. _____
Page No. _____
Book No. _____
Series of _____

