

IIITH Campus Reopening for Spring-2021

Version-2 (19-Dec-2020)

Preamble: New semester will start soon; and we understand the dynamics of the COVID-19 spread quite well now. Campus has been under quite a stringently maintained bubble and has fared quite well. Additionally, in the current Unlock-7.0 in India, and Hyderabad as a city is managing to hold fort.

Document roundup: This document is a roundup of expectations keeping in mind:

1. Significantly greater number of people on the campus.
 - a. Faculty (in and out campus residents) will be coming to campus regularly, as much like other staff / housekeeping / security etc.
 - b. CIE and THub will also see more people
 - c. Visitors: academic/research visitors, and other personal visitors
2. Running of facilities like Quarantine and Isolation Facility, Mess, Canteen with large inflow of people
3. Efforts for screening/testing

Medical Advisory: for IIITH Community for Spring-2021 semester. The remainder of the document has following sections:

- A. Personal Precautions for ALL campus users
- B. Students wishing to return to campus and reoccupy their hostel rooms (and others)
- C. Hostel-life specific guidelines for hostel-resident students
- D. Students or faculty or staff who commute daily into campus
- E. Academic/Research interactions and meetings in campus
- F. Community-level Strategy for CoVID preparedness & response
- G. FAQ+++ [Will be continually expanded]

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A. Personal Precautions for ALL campus users: In highly dense community like ours, strict adherence to precautions will be crucial to minimize the transmission; please note that it may take upto 4-5 days after infection for the CoVID symptoms show up if at all, and many will be asymptomatic.

1. **Indoor interactions:** It is mandatory that all indoor interactions involving two or more people should have all participants adhering to the following strictly:

- a. A proper mask with good fit must be worn properly. The goal of face-mask wearing is two-fold: prevent you from getting infected by others and avoid passing on the virus to others.
 - b. Additionally, social distancing with minimum of 2 meters is also mandatory.
2. **Outdoor interactions:** It is advisable to always wear a mask inside campus at all times. It is mandatory to wear a mask for all interactions where social distancing (of 2 meters) is NOT possible, do not wear a mask; and if social distancing is not possible, please refrain from that form of interaction. This advice includes exercising, chatting in groups while walking/sitting.
3. Washing hands frequently is strongly recommended, especially before touching face
4. It is strongly advised to check for symptoms daily (fever, dry cough, tiredness, loss of taste etc) and approach Arogya Clinic
5. Keep active life for both body and mind: light exercise every day, interact with others safely, keep good diet

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B. Students wishing to return to campus and reoccupy their hostel rooms (also for project staff/mess/security/housekeeping for campus residence): Every person using hostel for full time residence (students / project staff / mess workers / security / housekeeping etc) will go through quarantine of up to 14 days, followed by testing and clearance by Doctor.

For this purpose, Arogya is operating a Quarantine and Isolation Facility (QIF) inside campus by taking over the following buildings of Parijat Hostel: Parijat Block A, B and C and Extension Block; with Block A reserved for use of CoVID positive patients for Isolation. For every person in quarantine or isolation in QIF, all needs (like food, sanitation, daily checkup by nurse, testing etc) will be taken care of the QIF staff and security. In mid-July 2020 in-campus QIF was started, it has hosted about 100 residents seeing them through their quarantine, and 6 coronavirus positive cases that required isolation. QIF Staff will endeavor to make the stay comfortable.

Currently, QIF can house about 100 students at one time, and if the demand is more, then students will be brought into campus in groups of about 100 separated by 12-15 days.

Detailed protocol is as follows:

1. Fill hostel residence information form, with "No objection" from parents (for undergraduate students only), Corona Specific Insurance details and suggested travel dates, and agree to participate in testing (Contact [@Sridhar Kora](#) or [@Manohar.Chp Chp](#) for this)
2. After reviewing the application, return dates will be approved. Internally QIF room assignment will be done by [@Bhagavan Surya](#)
3. Arriving students will go directly into quarantine at in-campus Quarantine and Isolation Facility (Contact: Mr. Nadeem Hussain [@Nadeem Hussain](#) of Hostel Administration) for quarantine up to 14 days. QIF has been running for the whole of Monsoon-2020 and about

100 people have used it; it is a well-greased operation with packed food from Mess and other amenities taken care on by Hostel Admin.

4. At the end of quarantine, an RT-PCR test and visit to doctor with the result will release the student to regular hostel. However, if the test is positive for coronavirus, based on doctor's assessment following can be outcomes:
 - a. For asymptomatic case, patient is enrolled in at-home-care Continental Plan and shifted to another Isolation wing of QIF
 - b. For mild/critical cases shifted to Isolation wing of Continental hospital. After treatment and recovery certified by Continental Doctor, student can reenter regular hostel. These will be managed by @Nadeem Hussain
5. After clearance by Arogya Doctor, @Manager Hostel will handle room assignment in regular hostel; Hostel Administration will endeavor to make campus life as comfortable as possible within the CoViD-19 pandemic medical restrictions.

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C. Hostel-life specific guidelines for hostel-resident students:

1. Travelling back to campus from home: Please assess the safety and follow all precautions relevant for the mode of transport.
2. Regular hostel residence only after quarantine of up to 14 days in in-campus QIF, followed by testing and clearance by Arogya Doctor/Clinic
3. Only the current hostel residents may enter hostels. All hostel non-residents will continue to be prohibited from entering inside the hostels, except with explicit permission of Hostel Manager.
4. Restrictions on the following to continue, but will be periodically reviewed (every 4 weeks):
 - a. Exit/Entry at Maingate
 - b. Food Deliveries
 - c. Non-food deliveries have almost no restrictions
5. Congregations of two or more people inside hostel premises (specifically inside hostel rooms) is strongly discouraged since social distancing is NOT possible.
6. For reasons of containing the COVID cluster, it is best if different hostels are thought of as forming different 'bubble'.
7. Mess: While eating, it is not possible to wear a facemask; such places where facemask is not a possibility like mess and canteen can easily become centers of transmission.
Please adhere to restrictions put in place for Mess Dining Halls:
 - a. number of seats at a table and
 - b. Total occupancy of a dining hall

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D. Students or faculty or staff who commute daily into campus: This section lists the various restrictions on the such out-campus resident community members.

1. Day-scholar students must get explicit permission from GAD (and faculty incharge of the lab) for entering campus on regular basis during office times (9am-6pm). All such Day-Scholars will be given assigned desks / workspaces. NO EXCEPTIONS.
2. For Staff, GAD has already assigned sitting spaces by expanding Admin office space to use Himalaya Class rooms.
3. Faculty may continue to use their assigned offices.
4. Out-campus resident community members (faculty/staff/students) are **prohibited** from entering hostels or using hostel dining halls or using of hostel facilities.
5. Out-campus resident community (faculty/staff/students) can use “Faculty Dining Hall” for their meals, within the rules prescribed by Mess Office.
6. Wearing facemask and following social distancing (2 meter) is mandatory for
 - a. Staff when outside the room with their desk, or when interacting with anybody else anywhere
 - b. Students when outside their assigned workspace/room, or when interacting with anybody else anywhere
 - c. Faculty when outside their office, or when interacting with anybody else anywhere
 - d. To reinforce the point, in Meetings / interactions with others it is mandatory to wear facemask properly and social distance (in both indoor and outdoor settings)
7. GAD has already earmarked toilettes for use for out-campus people in Vindhyas, Himalaya blocks, only these may be used.

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E. Academic/Research interactions and meetings in campus: Controlled and deliberate with social distancing and medical precautions in mind:

Campus will see several community members (faculty / staff / housekeeping / security) from outside the campus on the daily basis. etc). It is only natural that there will be need for organizing meetings and interactions as part of regular workday. It will be crucial that all such interactions are mindful of the current pandemic required medical precautions since they include in-campus and out-campus resident members.

1. All meetings will have to be in
 - a. well-ventilated discussion rooms without using air conditioning; all such discussion rooms will have a occupancy chart and maximal occupancy posted on the door.
 - b. All participants to wear facemask and follow social distancing (of atleast 1.5 meters)
 - c. A list of all participants be prepared and kept by organizer to be used for Contact Tracing

2. In any interaction between out-campus and in-campus residents, social distancing and wearing face mask is mandatory.

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F. Community-level Strategy for CoVID preparedness & response:

Summary of the strategy as presented and discussed in Faculty Meeting on 16-Dec-2020 are below, with each point discussed in detail in the rest of this section:

- a. Campus Bubble and strong community participation
- b. Campus-wide testing: proactive 'screening'
- c. Contact Tracing: Effective use of GoCoronaGo app
- d. Social Distancing by design: Monitoring Team
- e. Compulsory Corona Insurance by each individual: Financial stability

Detailed version:

1. **Continual community wide active participation** in fighting CoViD-19 pandemic is a basic requirement for the community to see through safely. Community should resolve that all will actively participate in keeping the campus safe and bear with inconveniences in the right spirit, see specifically Point-6 below for facilities usage.
2. **Periodic Campus-wide Testing** is being explored (for example: see <https://www.tapestry-pooling.com/> with a possibility of 10x reduction in cost of testing per sample, which means that we can start routine campus-wide screening!), @Campus Committee will be responsible; an email with all details will be communicated as soon as plans become concrete. Testing pool will consist of all members of the community: hostel-resident students, day-scholars, faculty, staff, security, housekeeping and other support staff.
3. **Effective Contact Tracing:** Institute will use the GoCoronaGo App (from IISc) for contact tracing; Institute had constituted a committee to investigate all aspects of this App. This committee (headed by Dr. Anil Kumar) has met with the IISc group and gave a go ahead of its usage for IIITH. GoCoronaGo App does not store any personal information of its users, can be set to use Bluetooth and/or location services on smartphone to collect proximity information; based on this information, a contact map can be generated by using IISc's dashboard, and used for identifying people to be screened. This will be a huge help in minimizing the COVID cluster sizes.
4. **Monitoring Team** will be responsible for monitoring and reporting any violations (specifically CoViD-19 precautions) @Ramana VV (Deputy-Registrar) will manage the team
5. Every hostel-resident student is required to take a Rs. 3.0 lakh **Corona specific insurance** coverage (cost of Rs 1200/- the student can procure one)
6. **Management of facilities** inside the campus:
 - a. Separate workspace rooms and toilets for in-campus and out-campus residents
 - b. For all spaces, GAD will pre-announce the schedule for housekeeping and monitor the work to see that all precautions are followed.

- c. Separate Mess dining halls for different groups: (a) hostel-residents (b) housekeeping /security (c) faculty/staff
- d. Canteen: No seating, only take away. Facemask must in Canteen premises. No cash transactions.
- e. In-hostel facilities restricted to in-hostel residents only
- f. Scheduled and supervised entry of housekeeping into hostels and inside labs/workspaces

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G. FAQ+++ [Will be continually expanded]

1. What is Coronavirus that I keep hearing about? How is it transmitted?
 - a. SARS-CoV-2 is a novel virus with humans having no immunity against its infection. It is transmitted primarily by virus present in the respiratory droplets from an infected person; respiratory droplets are generated while speaking, breathing, coughing, sneezing etc. Other modes of transmission are thought to be less probable but should be watched out for: oral-fecal transmission and touch, requiring more care while using shared toilets and frequent sterilizing objects/hands respectively. For more details visit the WHO website at: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-covid-19#:~:text=symptoms>
2. What is the news on the CoViD-19 vaccine? When can I get it?
 - a. Several groups (upto 4 companies) worldwide have reported successful vaccine development and few of them will receive 'emergency usage approvals' by various countries; however, likelihood of India (and the age-group profile specific to campus community like ours) will be able to access it by end of Summer of 2021 is almost non-existent due to priority-based access envisioned by national level health policy makers and the amounts of vaccine available. So, we must keep the guard up till that time.
3. Why do large clusters of CoViD-19 keep coming up in news? Why cannot we stop before it spreads to such a large group.
 - a. An infected person may show symptoms from 5th day of infection, or remain asymptomatic until complete recovery; but, by 3rd-day of infection he/she can become source of infection to others, i.e viral shedding in respiratory droplets, touch etc. This time gap, and that there is no immunity due to it being novel coronavirus, is the main reason for large clusters of infection are seen suddenly during this pandemic. To reiterate, an infected person can be source of virus spread for about two days before showing any symptoms, if any symptoms show up at all: this should be kept in mind with in-person interactions at close distance.
4. How is the Institute deciding whom to recall back to campus?

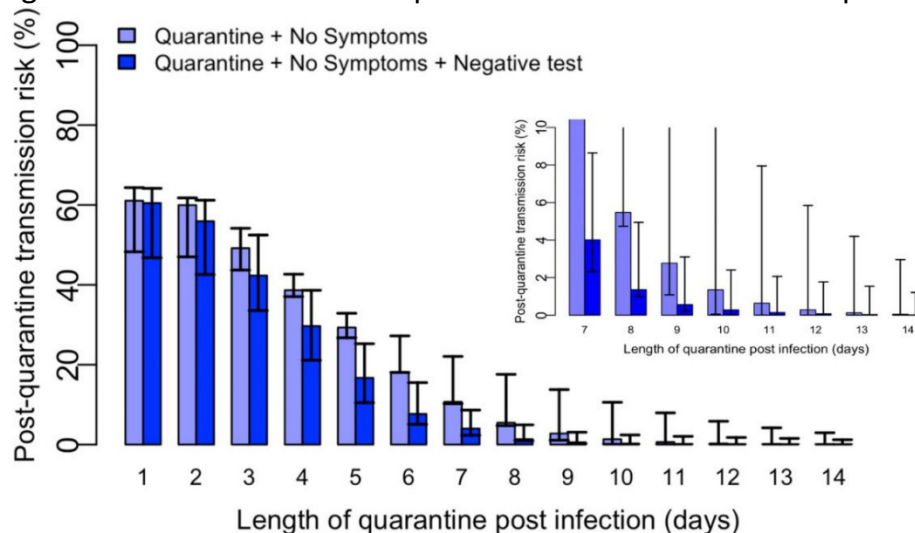
- a. Two major factors: Institute's capacity to maintain social distancing and other medically mandated precautions and need/necessity of student to be on campus.

Specifically, Hostels are highly dense spaces by design: social distancing is not possible if every student is back in campus; similarly other facilities like Mess, labs are not amenable for social distancing. In fact, that failure to follow social distancing protocols in Mess is suspected to be reason the recent CoViD-19 cluster at IIT-Madras.

For example, a large fraction of research students need to be in campus to work on their projects. Student may have severe hindrances at home precluding participation in academic activities (lack of electricity, internet, private space etc). Due to such considerations, campus has allowed about 20 students sitting for placements permission to return to campus. And some undergraduate students.

5. Can the quarantine period be shorter for me?

- a. Below graph is from CDC website (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html#:~:text=CDC%20currently%20recommends%20a%20quarantine,been%20reported%20during%20daily%20monitoring.>) and shows the “Modeled estimates of post-quarantine transmission risk quarantine duration. The light blue bars indicate the daily post-quarantine transmission risk if there is no clinical evidence of COVID-19 elicited during daily symptom monitoring. The dark blue bars indicate the post-quarantine transmission risk with the addition of a negative RT-PCR result from a specimen collected 24-48 hours prior.”



This

clearly shows that reducing the quarantine to 7 days will mean that even with a negative test there is about 5% (up to 12%) probability that a person will turn positive later and hence pose transmission risk. However, QIF will

explore the possibility of reducing quarantine to 10-11 days in the near future after taking inputs from medical and public health policy experts.

6. Can I leave the campus for few days?
 - a. While we strongly suggest that students stay back and finish the semester and avoid any breaks, we understand that sometimes it may become unavoidable for some students to leave campus. You will be allowed to leave, but after returning will have to quarantine at QIF afresh before returning to regular hostel.
7. Can I leave the campus for unavoidable short-time visits?
 - a. We are allowing hospital visits, doctors' appointments, bank visits, visa interviews etc if all precautions are followed; students need not quarantine after returning to campus. Permissions for such visits are managed by Hostel Administration.
8. What facilities are functional inside campus?
 - a. All research labs will be open for anybody residing in hostel. Library is currently closed, but its opening will be reviewed. Only Kadamb mess is currently operational. Library Canteen is expected to be opening by 1st week of January 2020; and other canteens are not expected to open because of the low population inside campus. Hostel facilities like Gym, playground have been since Nov 2020. Arogya Clinic is fully functional with doctors' visits etc. back to normal pre-lockdown levels.