



COVID-19 Procedures for Social Distancing and Face Masks

I. Purpose

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Buffalo State College has adopted a Social Distancing and Face Mask procedure. This procedure highlights the protections that are required and implemented to ensure the health and safety of our campus community including students, faculty, staff, visitors, and contractors. To protect the health of classmates, colleagues, friends and families, members of the Buffalo State community must commit themselves to wearing a face mask when appropriate and in compliance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and SUNY.

II. Units and Persons Affected

Everyone, including all employees, students, Auxiliary Organizations (Research Foundation, Chartwells Dining Services, Barnes and Noble), contractors, volunteers, lessees, and campus visitors.

III. Procedure Statement

In the event of an outbreak of a highly infectious and/or deadly disease, including a pandemic, Buffalo State College may implement measures aimed at limiting the transmission of highly infectious disease through social distancing. Decisions regarding social distancing for an outbreak of influenza or other highly contagious diseases will be guided by such factors as the epidemiology of the disease, its response (if any) to anti-viral or other medications, the availability of effective medications, specific at-risk groups, proximity of confirmed infection to a particular locale, and other factors.

The College President, in consultation with the Vice President for Finance and Management, Environmental Health and Safety, and the Assistant Vice President of the Weigel Wellness Center, will determine the appropriate level of social distancing measures or other corrective measures to employ. Federal, state, and local governing authorities may provide guidance in making the determination, and those authorities are likely to follow Center for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines. In addition to social distancing, additional measures such as donning of personal protective equipment (PPE) may be implemented.

IV. COVID-19 Pandemic Specific Procedure:

- A. As recommended by the CDC all campus community members are required to:
- Adhere to social distancing restrictions, and
 - Cover their nose and mouth with a face covering at all times, including inside all buildings, classrooms, conference rooms and other spaces, even when six feet of social distancing exists.
 - Effective April 27, 2021, individuals who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (i.e., those who are two weeks past their final dose of an authorized vaccine) **no longer** need to wear a mask outdoors on campus while alone or in small

outdoor groups and gatherings. Masks are still required in crowded outdoor settings and venues.

Additional instances when mask-wearing is not required:

- When students are:
 - In their private residential or personal space
 - Eating meals on-campus while seated and social distancing is appropriately enforced, or by themselves.
- When faculty and staff are alone in their office or other space.

Employees who are unable to wear face coverings due to a medical or other health condition should consult with Human Resource Management to discuss reasonable accommodations.

B. Cloth face masks should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

C. Failure to Comply

Interactions with those failing to comply should be viewed as a public health educational opportunity. Persons not wearing a face mask or maintaining social distancing should be asked to comply.

Failure to comply may result in the following actions:

- For students, it may result in a disciplinary referral to the Student Conduct Office for further action and/or removal from on-campus housing.
- For employees, it may result in referral to Human Resource Services for review and resolution.
- For visitors, lessees, revocable permit holders and contractors, it may result in removal of authorization to be on campus property and/or termination of the applicable lease/permit/contract.

D. Reporting and Enforcement

- Criteria for violations of this procedure are subject to a continued New York State Disaster Declaration and Executive Orders of the Governor of the State of New York. Violations may be reported as indicated above. Subsequent violations may result in referral for discipline as further described herein.
- This procedure will remain in effect until further notice.

E. Definitions

- *Social Distancing*: "physical distancing," means keeping space between yourself and other people by staying at least 6 feet from other people, not gathering in groups, staying out of crowded places and avoiding mass gatherings of any size.
- *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*: is equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses. Personal protective

equipment may include items such as gloves, safety glasses, respirators, or face masks.

F. Responsibilities

All campus community members (students, faculty, staff, visitors, etc.): Each individual has a personal responsibility to adhere to this procedure to ensure community members are safe. Being personally responsible means you take ownership of what you do and how it may impact others.

G. Related Procedures

Public Space Implementation: Facilities, Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Environmental Health and Safety, and Events Management offices are responsible for the implementation of this procedure.

The following areas and spaces will adopt the listed practices while social distancing:

- General Building Occupancy - Occupancy will be adjusted to limit the number of people allowed on an academic building floor at one time and so no more than an appropriate number of classes are scheduled on the same floor at one time.
- Classrooms, Lecture Halls, Science Labs, and Other Meeting Spaces - The maximum occupancy will be adjusted to accommodate social distancing. Occupancy changes will be coordinated with the Registrar to appropriately adjust maximum course attendance.
- Dining Areas - Maximum occupancy will be adjusted accordingly and carry out services will be provided only until restrictions have been modified.
- Residence Halls - Common areas of residence halls where social distancing cannot be maintained will require the wearing of face masks. Additional housing conditions may be imposed as part of the housing agreement.
- Elevators - Use of elevators will be limited to one person where possible, and persons should don a face mask at all times.
- Stairwells - Campus building stairwells will be evaluated to determine the adoption of one-way traffic. If deemed necessary, signage will be posted indicating this.
- Entrances/Exits - Campus buildings will be evaluated to determine if separate entrance and exits doors are feasible.
- Reception Areas - Where physical barriers are not already in place, such as glass partitions, visual aids may be present to mark a 6 feet distance.
- General spaces - Maximum occupancy will be adjusted accordingly, and furniture will be limited to single seating only.
- Rest rooms - Occupancy will be modified to either single occupancy or every other sink, urinal, and stall.
- Recreational and athletic venues - Spaces will be evaluated to determine how students can safely exercise while maintaining social distancing. Athletic competitions (both recreational and NCAA Division III) will be determined in concert with NCAA, SUNYAC, and health officials.

Department and Unit Implementation: Supervisors are responsible for implementation of the following modifications to protect the health of their employees.

1. Offices (single occupancy) - Space will be evaluated to ensure that at least six feet of

distance exists between the entrance and the occupant while seated at their workstation.

2. Offices (double occupancy or more) - Space will be evaluated to ensure that at least six feet of distance exists between: the entrance and any occupant; and between each occupant while seated at their workstation. In instances where the workstation cannot be reconfigured to accommodate six feet from the entrance, Environmental Health and Safety should be consulted.
3. Restrooms (single occupancy) - No modifications are required for the single occupancy restrooms. However, the waiting area outside of a single occupancy restroom will be evaluated to determine if signage is required to promote social distancing.
4. Meeting spaces - Conduct meetings remotely using existing campus technologies such as Blackboard Collaborate, Zoom, Google Meet, the telephone, etc.

Break Rooms and Common Areas: Social distancing and cleaning will be performed by Custodial Services.

H. Additional Considerations when Social Distancing is Not Possible

In instances where physical distancing is not possible, face masking is mandatory and establishing further corrective action must be done by seeking approval for modifications in this order: the employee consults with supervisor, supervisor submits needs assessment to Dean or division's vice president. Deans and VP will submit needs assessment to Environmental Health and Safety. Any modifications or physical barrier needs must be provided by the Department.

I. Personal Protective Equipment

When wearing face masks is required in response to a pandemic or other health emergency the following guidance will be followed. Face Masks will be made available to faculty, staff or students upon request. Requests may be made by emailing Environmental Health and Safety at: whicojm@buffalostate.edu

J. Use of Cloth Face Masks

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advise the use of simple cloth face masks to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others.
 - a. Wearing cloth face masks in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain will help slow the spread of the virus.
 - b. It is critical to emphasize that maintaining 6-foot social distancing **EVEN WHILE WEARING A MASK** remains important to slowing the spread of the virus.
- Each employee will be provided two cloth masks. Individuals may wear their own store bought or [homemade masks](#) if they so choose.
- Cloth masks are preferred over disposable masks since they can be easily washed and reused. This will also cut down on the demand for a critical resource that is used by healthcare workers and first responders.

- If in receipt of a disposable face mask, it is important to understand that they are intended to be worn only once. However, due to supply shortages extended use of disposable masks are encouraged.
- Disposable masks should be replaced after 5 days of continuous use or if it becomes damaged or soiled. Proper guidelines should be followed when extending the use of the mask.
- [CDC guidance](#) states that a face shield does not take the place of a mask and should be worn only in conjunction with a mask if one is needed. Masks with vents or valves are also strongly discouraged by the CDC.

K. How to Put on a Face Mask

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If the mask has ear loops, put one loop around each ear.
- If the mask has ties, pick up the mask by the ties and tie the upper ties behind your head with a bow.
- If the mask has a lower tie, then once the mask is fitted to the bridge of your nose, tie the lower ties behind your head with a bow.
- Make sure the mask is completely secure. Make sure it covers your nose and mouth so that the bottom edge is under your chin
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

L. How to Remove a Face Mask

- Wash your hands before removing the mask.
- Do not touch the inside of the mask (the part over nose and mouth). It may be contaminated from your breathing, coughing or sneezing.
- Untie or remove the ear loops and remove the mask by the straps.
- Wash after every day of use in the washing machine with hot water and completely dry on medium or high heat.

M. Forms

[Environmental Health and Safety Office: Request for Assessment Related to COVID-19](#)