

# Creating Our Strong UMS Community in New Times



**Return to Campus Guide for Faculty, Staff,  
and Student Employees**





*Education is essential. It unites us with shared understanding and the opportunities to learn about and from each other. Through education we build communities and futures; inspire and learn from one another; create knowledge; and provide opportunities that can shape and extend across generations.*

*To deliver on that charge the campuses of the University of Maine System will be open and operational this fall 2020 fulfilling our commitment to meeting students where they are with best possible access to scholarship, enrichment, flexibility, and support.*

*Working together and pledging to our collective care, health, and wellbeing, I can't imagine a better team of faculty and staff with whom to begin our reopening. As we start, please know I am here to support.*

Dannel Malloy, Chancellor

## Table of Contents

03	Guiding Principles
04	Phased Opening
05	Staffing Options & Minimizing Risk
07	Return to Campus – Challenges & Obstacles
08	Symptom Monitoring & What to Do
09	Re-Entry to our Workspaces
10	Personal & Collective Safety at the University
18	Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios
20	Our Collective Mental/Behavioral Wellness
22	Our Collective Care

*All faculty, staff, students and contractors/vendors are expected to comply with the guidelines outlined in this document, which are now considered part of UMS' Employee Policies and Procedures. All staff, faculty and students are asked to abide by the pledge to care for themselves and their campus community. Individuals will be coached and/or counseled as necessary. Repeated failure to meet this requirement may result in disciplinary action.*

*Please note that this Guide is not an employment contract nor is it part of an employment contract. It contains no express or implied promises or commitments. The UMS Policies and Procedures described here may change from time to time, and you should check the UMS Coronavirus – 2019 Health Advisory website regularly for updates.*

# Guiding Principles

Our goal in issuing this guidance is to explain how we are prioritizing the health and well-being of our students, faculty, staff and broader Maine communities and providing a great campus experience as we begin a gradual return to campus.

UMS is working closely with local authorities to ensure compliance with the latest health and safety requirements as well as best practices. This Guide is informed by available professional direction including local orders and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the Maine Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS). We also created an internal Science Advisory Board comprised of science/medical experts staying tuned to the latest research.

Maine.gov describes that *'Maine is keeping its COVID-19 infection rates and hospitalizations relatively low because we're keeping to the values that tie us together – working together, staying the course and remaining true to our spirit as a state.'* Building on this [Keep it Maine](#) campaign, our return to campus will be a deliberate and phased. As we implement the new mandatory workplace safety standards and sector-specific protocols for responding to COVID-19, each of us has an important part to play in this work.

For the latest guidance, please check the UMS COVID-19 website: <https://www.maine.edu/health-advisory/>. Per additional knowledge or guidance, our policies and plans may change. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and unwavering commitment to the University as we navigate these changes together to:

- Provide a safe working environment while preparing for and delivering an on-campus experience for students, delivering the mission of our universities, and meeting the needs of the constituents they serve
- Deliver academic offerings in person and via hybrid and online modalities
- Attend to the needs and preferences of individual employees by allowing for appropriate flexibility in work schedules and work locations and by adjusting workplace policies as needed to align with realities faced
- Align our approach with guidance and directives from local, state and federal agencies
- Anticipate and adjust workplace guidance swiftly as/if conditions change
- Enlist a community conscience mindset in providing for the health and safety of employees, students and our communities
- Remain mindful of those who are most vulnerable to serious illness and COVID-19 and make decisions with attention to equity

# Phased Opening

## UMS Timeline

Guided by Governor Mills’s framework for reopening businesses across the State, UMS will determine its own timeline for reopening each of its campuses and workplaces. Envisioning the end-in-mind, we can imagine that Fall 2020 will likely be a Hybrid Reopening\* to include a combination of online and in-person academic, co-curricular and administrative functions in order to maximize the campus experience and safety by virtue of lower density.

As of the initial publication date (July 1, 2020) of this Guide, UMS is beginning the process and communication around returning to campus, with each UMS University following a common set of guidelines and also differentiating based on unique parameters. In general, you can imagine that UMS is implementing a phased approach. As dates become clearer, communications will be provided:

**Phase 0** – Stay-at-Home Advisory (essential employees only)

**Phase 1** – Limited Access (essential employees plus limited faculty/staff to support certain labs and clinics)

**Phase 2** – Preparation for Hybrid Reopening\* (Phase 1 faculty/staff plus necessary support faculty/staff)

**Phase 3** – Hybrid Reopening\* (Phase 2 faculty/staff plus additional support faculty/staff)

**Phase 4** – New Normal (all faculty/staff)

## Return to Campus – Phased Staffing Plan

UMS plans to phase in the return of faculty and staff over time in a coordinated process to prioritize physical distancing, availability of face coverings, hygiene protocols, symptom screening, testing capabilities for COVID-19, isolation of positive cases and contact tracing. Additionally, where applicable, personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided.

Any employee invited to return to campus will receive specific, advance individual communication about returning.

**No employee currently working remotely should decide to return to work on campus or at other University locations unilaterally or independently.** Employees should only return once they have received a specific invitation or direction from their manager or supervisor or other appropriate University authorities.

UMS will expand on-site staffing based on an assessment of mission-critical operations, ability to control and manage specific work environments, and necessity of accessing on-site resources. Return-to-campus decisions, once approved, will be issued by your respective dean, vice president, or division leader.

The need to reduce the number of people on campus to meet physical distancing requirements will continue for some time. Pertaining to large gatherings (team meetings, committees, councils, etc.) that have typically been in person, please continue to work remotely until restrictions are eased for larger gatherings.

The re-population of our campuses will be tightly controlled and coordinated to mitigate potential risks and to prioritize the health and safety of all faculty and staff, as well as the communities we serve. No unit or department should increase on-site staffing levels beyond current needs to support critical operations on campus without approval from your respective dean, vice president, or division leader.

As on-site staffing increases and operations expand, the UMS will closely monitor and assess the potential spread of the virus. If localized outbreaks emerge, tighter restrictions and reduced on-site staffing may need to be implemented again.





# Staffing Options (p. 1 of 2)

Once faculty and staff members have been advised it is safe to return to campus, departments will need to establish a [Work Plan](#) to ensure that there is adequate staffing on campus to provide necessary services to students, staff and faculty. Those Plans will be subject to appropriate campus-level approvals. A Work Plan description and template are included in the [Return to Campus Training in UMS Academy](#). Managers may consider a number of alternative work arrangements in support of necessary physical distancing requirements and prioritizing the student and work experience:

**COVID-19 Work Plan: The Why Behind It**

Hello,

We are in unprecedented times:

- Experiencing a world pandemic
- Making choices as a nation, state and University to isolate our workforces
- Experiencing closures of our K-12 public and private schools and other businesses, which is bringing our families home, even as we may be setting up shop there depending on the nature of our University work
- Sending our residential students home and transitioning to on-line class delivery
- Considering whether our departments have work in these new circumstances
- Staying tuned to decisions by the Chancellor and Presidents
- Operating through a time and space where our Chancellor provided us pause to regroup and settle into adjustments
- Keeping apprised of federal and state legislative and process changes being put in place to speed support for employees and organizations, and
- We can imagine there may be more change.

You are a manager or supervisor with care, compassion and responsibility for supporting your team and the University's direction. You oversee employees becoming familiar with new workforce options at the same time you are. They may be analyzing their workload, wanting clarity and seeking answers.

- If you're a manager, you oversee all the resources for which you have functional oversight – your team members, budget, materials like tools and equipment and your physical spaces – which can be buildings or virtual sites
- If you're a supervisor, your role is the oversight of a person or team's daily work; work important for serving the university's students, research and community stewardship

Working together on decisions you make will be important in ensuring an aligned, team-equitable process.

## PHYSICAL ALTERATIONS TO WORK STATION, OFFICE SPACE OR CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT:

There may be factors in the areas where you conduct your work that prevent physical distancing practices. An option to consider is altering situations to support the safety guidelines set forth by the CDC related to physical distancing, environmental cleaning, face covering and hygiene practices. In some cases, this could include specifically fitted personal protective equipment (PPE). Please speak with your supervisor if you have questions regarding PPE.

**REMOTE WORK:** Those who can work remotely to fulfill some or all of 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 should be approved by the immediate supervisor, may be made based on a full- or partial-day/week schedule as appropriate with a focus on supporting the student experience and business operations of the department.

**ALTERNATING DAYS:** Departments may have the flexibility to offer partial staffing on alternating days, such as Tuesday through Saturday instead of Monday through Friday. Such schedules may help maintain physical distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces.

**ASSESSING ON-SITE HALF-SHIFTS:** Employees may be scheduled to work 50% of their time on-site and 50% of their time at home in such a way that allows for additional physical distancing and optimizes use of office space for necessary on-site work. Supervisors and employees can explore these options together in consultation with Human Resources.

# Staffing Options (p. 2 of 2)

**STAGGERED SHIFTS:** The beginning and end of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting and departure times by at least 30 minutes will reduce traffic in common areas to meet physical distancing requirements.

**COMPRESSED WORK WEEKS:** In some cases, where work is measured primarily in deliverable outcomes rather than working on campus/being available during certain hours, a department may choose to offer compressed work weeks such as three day work weeks with four days off or four-day work weeks with three days off, where practical. Because these arrangements can impact payroll processing, consult with Human Resources for guidance.

**MUTUAL REDUCTION IN HOURS:** Based on their individual circumstances, employees may request a temporary reduction in their work hours per week. Such reductions are subject to supervisor approval and contingent on departmental needs.

**PERSONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE:** Employees may request an unpaid personal leave of absence during which they would retain benefits eligibility. Personal leaves of absence are subject to supervisor approval and contingent on departmental needs.

All of these options can provide flexibility and opportunities for collaboration and creativity; other options may also exist. All also require advance planning and clear communication. These arrangements should be approved by the immediate supervisor in consultation with the HR Partner to ensure successful implementation and clear expectations. Managers, please feel free to contact your HR Partner for assistance in determining which arrangements will work best for you and your team and to discuss any considerations of the appropriate collective bargaining agreement.

## Minimizing Risk

Staffing Options provide employees and their managers options to support work circumstances. Also, many increase safety by reducing the chance of COVID-19 spread. The next section of this Guide will cover additional steps UMS is taking and expecting of all its employees and students.

The University consistently seeks to take steps to minimize the risk of COVID-19 infections (or any other spread of disease) in accordance with applicable law, regulation, and guidance provided by health authorities. These efforts may include policies and safeguards implemented by the University such as symptom checks, physical distancing, use of facial coverings, and isolating and quarantining when required. Despite these efforts, the University cannot categorically guarantee that any person entering University campuses or facilities will not contract COVID-19 or any other communicable disease and any such person must assess and accept the risks of illness or injury for themselves.

# University of Maine System – Return to Campus

## Return to Campus – Challenges and Obstacles

### Personal Circumstances (non-medical)

We understand that childcare, household situations and higher risk factors like age and health may be influencing. We also recognize that until the K-12 school systems communicate their plan for the next academic year, you may only know your summer availability. Some K-12 schools have already communicated a plan for a face-to-face/remote alternating day schedule, plus we can imagine schedule changes or multiple children in school could add extra challenge.

By assessing circumstances on a case-by-case basis, UMS will make a good faith effort to find flexibility for those individuals who need it. As you and your manager discuss the department's needs and your availability, please consult with your Human Resources Partner if you need assistance.

### Personal Circumstances (medical)

If you or a family member have a medical condition that places you in a higher risk group for COVID-19 and that you anticipate may complicate or delay your return to the workplace, you should discuss those concerns with your supervisor at your earliest opportunity. UMS can offer resources including reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), family and medical leave options, and other benefits in the case that a risk factor (like age alone) does not qualify under the ADA.

According to the CDC, older adults and people of any age with serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Based on information from the CDC, those at high risk may include:

- People 65 years/older (CDC cite: [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/covid\\_weekly/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/covid_weekly/index.htm))
- People living in a nursing home/long-term care facility
- People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, especially if not well controlled, including those who:
  - Have chronic lung disease and COPD
  - Have moderate-to-severe asthma
  - Have serious heart conditions
  - Are immunocompromised
  - Are obese (Body Mass Index  $\geq$  40)
  - Are diabetic
  - Have chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
  - Have liver disease
  - Active cancer treatment or hematological cancers



By: George Pfeuger. [https://unsplash.com/photos/eO\\_jhqaB5Y0](https://unsplash.com/photos/eO_jhqaB5Y0)

By: CDC. <https://unsplash.com/photos/4tQoqo7IyA>

By: Phillip Goldsberry. <https://unsplash.com/photos/8FOH1WQGPyQ>

**What to Do:** Anticipating a variety of unique circumstances, our commitment is to both the spirit and practice of equity. As such, please complete this Return to Campus [Request for Discussion Questionnaire](#) by July 15, 2020 IF YOU:

- Are/may face a personal obstacle (medical/non) in returning to work on campus for the Fall 2020 semester
- Have a proposal that has been denied by your supervisor or anyone else
- Or if your institution has not assessed your needs yet

It provides your HR Partner (only) information to use confidentially with you to consider solutions.

Also as you consider your options, as a reminder the **Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)**, which is in place through December 31, 2020, allows the University to provide eligible employees with emergency paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. Please feel free contact your Human Resources Partner if you or if you know you would [like to apply](#), you can do so as well.

# Symptom Monitoring & What to Do

## Symptom Monitoring

Faculty and Staff who have been advised that the campus is reopening, and that it is time to return to the workplace *must* conduct symptom monitoring every day before reporting to work. You must be free of any symptoms potentially related to COVID-19 to report to work. The presence of one/more of these symptoms is not definitively indicative of COVID-19 infection, and symptom profiles may shift as we learn more about the virus. For now, we ask all staff and faculty remain vigilant in monitoring for symptoms of potential COVID-19 infection.

Relative to a fever, we know everyone is a little bit different. We also know that many of these symptoms can be due to allergies or other causes and may not be COVID-19. You know your bodies/health, as you monitor your symptoms, thank you for taking the time to distinguish these symptoms from what may be your known hay fever symptoms, for example. The question to consider is whether your symptoms are new or worsening.

## Self-Reporting Symptoms & COVID-19 Exposure

We can imagine three scenarios:


1. You are feeling sick while working at home
2. You are reporting to work on campus and develop symptoms
3. Come into close contact with a person who has or is suspected to have COVID-19

## Yes – Let’s Shift the Culture!


*It will take a culture shift for many people to accept that one should not come to work if you feel mildly sick. Most of us don’t want to let students or colleagues down, especially if we think it is “nothing”. We have been trained to just “walk it off”. Let’s change our view – please protect others. – UMS Employee*

### Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)


**Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:**




Cough




Fever




Chills




Muscle pain



Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing\*



Sore throat




New loss of taste or smell

**Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.**

**\*Seek medical care immediately if someone has emergency warning signs of COVID-19.**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)

## Please take the following steps:

- If you are home, stay home.
- If at work, alert your supervisor immediately and go home. We know you’ll be concerned for yourself/ others. Alerting your supervisor will initiate UMS taking appropriate steps to clean and disinfect our workspace and alert coworkers to any potential exposure
- In both instances, please practice exposure safety precautions for yourself/others including handwashing, face covering and physical distancing. It also means driving straight home instead of stopping anywhere
- Please consult with a medical provider

Please do not return to work until you have:

1. Been Covid-19 Tested showing no infection
2. Followed all other medical provider guidance
3. Alerted your supervisor that you are cleared to return



# Re-Entry to our Workspaces (p. 1 of 2)

## Workplace Safety – For Everyone

Knowing you are safe is critically important to us, and is why we are taking steps to anticipate and address your workplace safety concerns. From basic infection prevention measures to engineering controls, our plan to return to campus is informed by all available safety measures such as the latest guidance from OSHA on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19. The health and safety measures we deploy in your particular workspace will depend on a variety of factors, including the building where you work, the type of work you do, and the nature of the work being performed all around you. Outlining what those changes may look like for each individual office and desk-space across the University is beyond the scope of this **Guide**. Information about the particular safety measures being implemented in your workspace will be provided as they become available and will be updated as they evolve.



**Pedestrian Foot Traffic:** In some areas, pedestrian traffic will be differentiated by direction. This may include designating areas of 1-way foot traffic, enter-only and exits-only classroom and building access points (except in the case of emergency situations (e.g. an evacuation) then please evacuate through the nearest safe exit), using physical separation devices or other tools.

**Classrooms:** Analyzing UMS classrooms and considering research provided by the UMS Science Advisory Board, the vast majority of our in-person classes will be  $\leq 15$  people and up to no more than  $\sim 30$  people (final decision will be informed by the Science Advisory Board). This is based on ensuring spaces support physical distancing, smart ingress/egress, and optimal air ventilation.



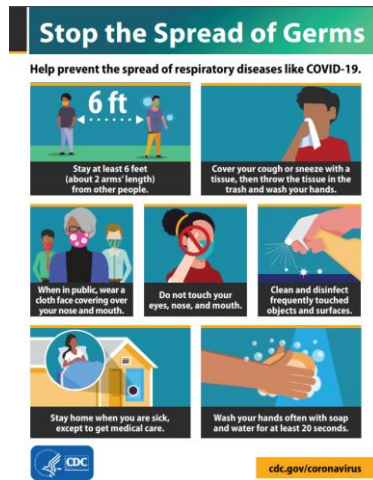
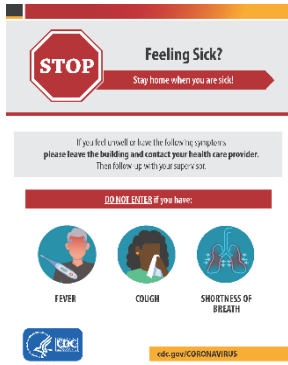
**Physical barriers:** Various kinds are being installed to shield individuals from the respiratory droplets of others in many areas where person-to-person interactions occur.

**Disposable Mask Depots:** The Incident Command teams on each campus are setting up locations across their campuses where vendors, employees or students can pick up a disposable mask to use if they need one. We recognize that there can be times when we forget or lose or drop ours. We want to ensure it is an easy and positive experience to get one. These locations will also have signage about the campus' safety expectations to help people be successful.

**Community Pledge:** UMS seeks to have all employees, students and visitors pledge to adhere to the various safety protocols in place. UMS' approach will be to support engagement and alignment, *seek first to understand* in situations where there may be concerning actions, and collaborate to resolve those circumstances quickly and supportively.

# Re-Entry to our Workspaces (p. 2 of 2)

**Signage:** There will be signs posted to remind all of us of the various changes in practices and the actions we can all take to help ensure that in-person education can continue. Being produced internally by a UMS print shop, each campus has been branded these for their own campus. Below are general samples of most of the signage that will be common messages across UMS campuses:



# Personal & Collective Safety at the University

## Face Coverings (as of 6.16.2020 guidance on the UMS Health Advisory – Coronavirus Disease 2019 page)





To support UMS’ expectation around this, UMS will provide all employees two face coverings. If employees have personal surgical masks or N95 respirators with one-way valves, they can certainly choose to wear those if preferred. Face coverings are required at all times on University of Maine System campuses, property and facilities, both indoors and outside, with just six exceptions:

1. When a person is alone in an office or other room with a closed door
2. When a person is alone outside in a space where and when they can reasonably expect to be alone and they have a face covering available in the event it is needed
3. When eating or drinking
4. When a medical or disability situation requires an exemption
5. When a situation (i.e. childcare settings) or a person (i.e. children younger than 2) are specifically exempted by Maine civil authorities
6. In other special circumstances as may be determined by campus leadership

**Note:** Exceptions for the purposes of effective, reduced-class-size, in-person instruction or presentations are pending the broader determination regarding the return to such instruction and are not addressed here at this time. UMS is developing specific standards for cloth, disposable, and surgical masks by the UMS Science Advisory Board. Please check in with your supervisor/manager about what mask will be most appropriate for your workplace. Face Coverings are not considered Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Appropriate use of face coverings or higher level protection is critical in minimizing risks to others near you, especially since we can spread COVID-19 to others even if we do not feel sick. Cloth face coverings and other higher-level protection are not a substitute for physical distancing. Cloth face coverings should be worn for one day at a time and must be properly laundered before use again.

### Type and Intended Use of Face Coverings

Type	Cloth Face Covering	Disposable Mask	Medical-Grade Surgical Mask	N95 Respirator with one-way valves.
				
Description	Commercially produced or improvised. Washable. Designed to contain the wearer’s potentially infectious respiratory droplets.	Commercially manufactured masks. Used to protect workers against droplets containing potentially infectious materials. Help contain the wearer’s respiratory droplets	FDA-approved masks to protect the wearer from large droplets and splashes; help contain wearer’s respiratory emissions. Most are disposable.	Provide effective respiratory protection from airborne particles & aerosols; help contain wearer’s respiratory emissions. The use of a N95 requires additional steps to wear.
Intended Use	Required for campus community use as noted above.		These masks are reserved for health-care workers and other approved areas with task-specific-hazards determined by UMS Safety Management (SM), OSHA, the CDC or Public Health Authorities	

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/covid-19-faq.html#cloth-face-coverings>

# Use and Care of Face Coverings

## PUTTING ON THE FACE COVERING:

- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to handling the face covering
- Ensure the face covering fits over the nose & under the chin
- Situate the face covering properly with nose wire snug against the nose (where applicable)
- Tie straps behind the head and neck or loop around the ears
- During the process: Avoid touching the front of the face covering

## REMOVING THE FACE COVERING:

- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth when removing the face covering
- When taking off the face covering, loop your finger into the strap and pull the strap away from the ear, or untie the straps
- Wash or sanitize hands immediately after removing

## CARE, STORAGE, AND LAUNDERING

- Keep face coverings 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 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 should 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

### HOW TO CLEAN

**Washing Machine:** You can include your face covering with your regular laundry. Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used to make the face covering.

**Hand Washing:** Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:

- 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) household bleach per gallon of room temperature water or
- 4 teaspoons household bleach per quart of room temperature water

Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection. Some bleach products, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing, may not be suitable for disinfection. Ensure the bleach product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Soak the face covering in the bleach solution for 5 minutes. Rinse thoroughly with cool or room temperature water.

### HOW TO DRY

**Dryer:** Use the highest heat setting and leave in the dryer until completely dry.

**Air Dry:** Lay flat and allow to completely dry. If possible, place the cloth face covering in direct sunlight.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wash-cloth-face-coverings.html> CDC - How to Wash Cloth Face Coverings.



# Special Circumstances

**Laboratories and Clinic Settings:** Employees working in lab settings are subject to additional guidance regarding the use of face coverings or higher level protection. Reusable cloth face coverings are being widely used in research environments across UMS. Based on the setting, employees may also need to change into a mask upon entering a laboratory setting. For additional information regarding the appropriate use of face masks in laboratories and other research areas, check with the appropriate Research/Science Leadership on campus.

## Need for Visual View:

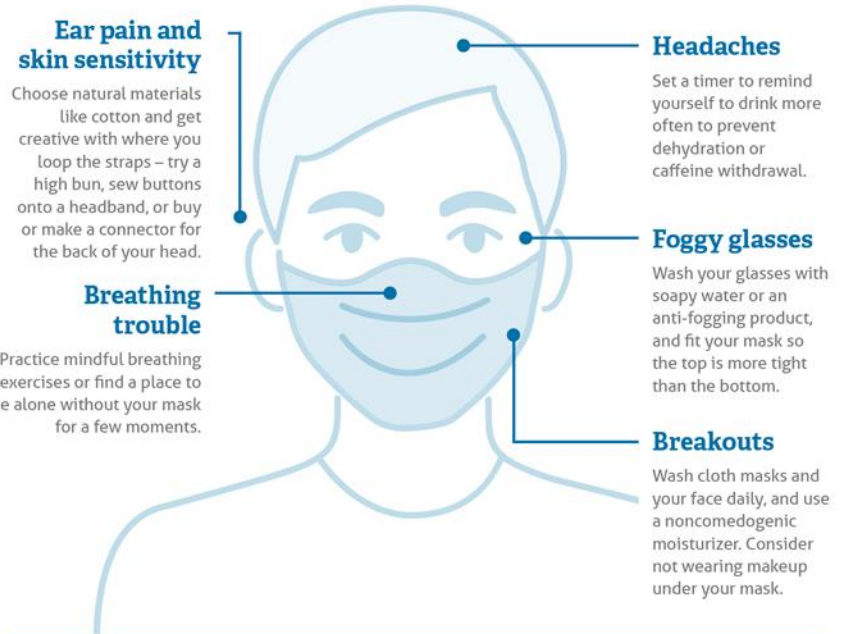
There are certain education settings where one person needs to read the lips of another. As well, we are preparing to fully support individuals who have a medical accommodation need whether to read lips or otherwise be able to view people’s reactions. For these situations, clear, disposable face masks will be available by contacting the UMS Equal Opportunity Office to speak with the ADA Coordinator supporting American with Disabilities Act support work.



**Face Shields:** Campuses are also being provided a supply of face shields which shall only be used in conjunction with other workplace controls and as an additional layer of safety. Face shields cannot be used to replace face coverings. Please speak with your supervisor if you have questions regarding the use of face shields. In situations where a face shield is being considered, other workplace controls such as distance, engineering controls and other administrative controls must be considered first.

## Face Covering Frustration Fixes

Face masks protect you and others from disease, but long-term use can cause discomfort. These tips should help alleviate the most common frustrations.



**Remember, wearing a mask is an act of kindness.**  
Even if you don't have symptoms, you can shed viruses to those around you.



Visit [OhioHealth.com/Blog](https://OhioHealth.com/Blog) for more tips to stay healthy!

# Special Circumstances (cont.)

## Filtering Facepiece Respirators (n95s):

Only certain groups such as healthcare, high and very high risk category work activities should be wearing N95 Filtering Facepiece Respirators (FFRs) due to restricted supplies and CDC / OSHA direction. Only those with appropriate training, medical clearance, and fit-tests, or training, completed 1910.134 Appendix D paperwork and department approval may wear FFRs.

## Vendor Requirements:

Vendors will be required to follow UMS on-campus protocols outlined in this Guide as well. Departments hiring/utilizing vendors/contractors will be responsible for communicating expectations. Contact Safety Management or Procurement for further details or questions.



## Daily Work Life:

Members of the UMS Science Advisory Board offered a sense of the practical, highlighting what may be a typical situation for many of us, especially when we first return to campus in the summer heat. Those of us not in offices where we can remove our masks find themselves connecting via zoom for several meetings. The temperature in the office space is rising. We feel like this return to campus is all new because we are enacting new behaviors – actions many of us have never had to consider doing in our work space, let alone make regular and consistent.

The breathing gets tough after a bit – we’re not used to wearing the face coverings and it may get muggy or hot or constricting feeling. What can we do?

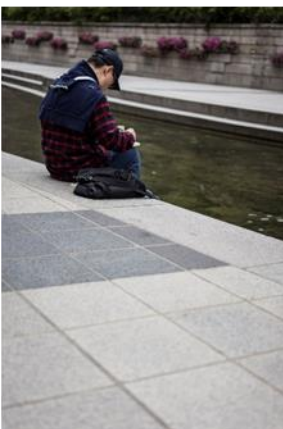


**Managers:** We ask that you and your team members talk about the physical spaces you are in and what options could work for you to provide breaks for each other. Being intentional as a team allows clarity and a sense of support/permission for taking action when we might otherwise be hesitant or feel vulnerable that we may do something incorrectly

We encourage that you take breaks. Operating on Zoom has created a whole new sense of work and tiredness. We can inadvertently forget to take breaks. When you feel the need to step away/break, we encourage that you do so

The University guidance is to wear your face coverings as outlined on the prior pages. The Science Advisory Board recognizes you may need to take off your face covering for a short time. So, their guidance:

- Go outside if you can or to a large, sanitized indoor space with good air ventilation
- Staying a recommended 15-20 feet away from any other person, you can take off your face covering
- Even in a situation at that distance, the recommendation is to turn away from the direction that another person may be breathing



# Collective Care given Face Coverings

**Empathy Perception with Face Coverings:** Research demonstrates that even in situations where we might expect someone to be wearing a mask - like at a physician’s office, the negative impact on perceived empathy is significant. In fact, it’s even more pronounced in established relationships.

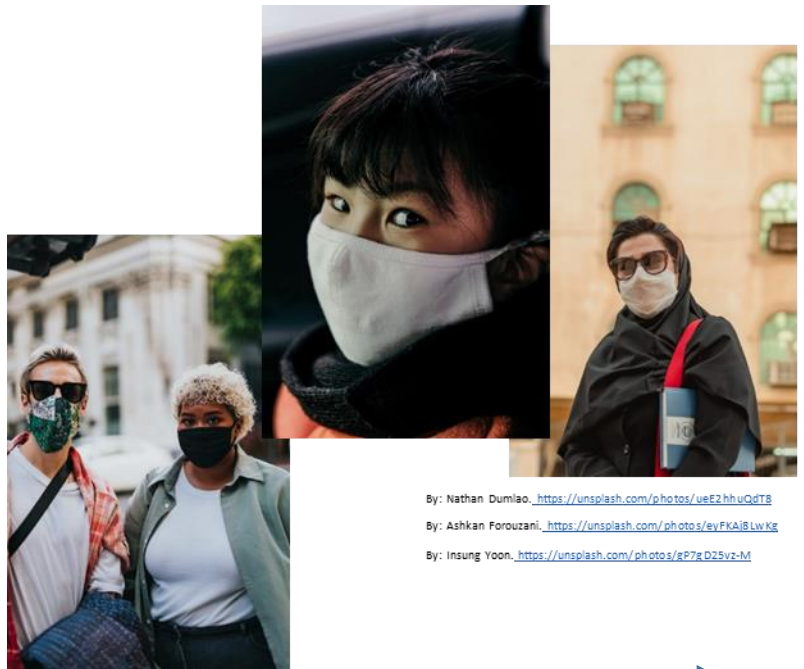
**Implicit Bias Associations:** These masks designed to keep us medically safe can inadvertently also prompt dynamics that could lead to psycho-social harm. As noted in the AP News article [Losing Face: The rise of the mask, and what’s lost behind it](#), *“Masks [often] suggest something surreptitious and nefarious. Covering pieces of the face is often presented as shorthand for mistrust or menace across modern culture, from historical literature (The Man in the Iron Mask) to comic books (Batman), from TV (The Lone Ranger) to movies (The Mask) to music (The Stranger).*

The challenge - *Such potent cultural cues can be activated, however subconsciously, when we cover our faces — even for the most legitimate (and protective) of reasons. A mask, in short, can be alienating no matter who is behind it — and particularly when there’s a power imbalance in the conversation.* We need to be conscious of this dynamic and realize that our ability to read social cues is minimized even as our implicit biases are likely to include ‘danger messages’ just by virtue of the mask. We can imagine that different mask designs could impact this, too.

**Grief:** Dr. David Kessler, who co-authored books with the renowned grief expert Elisabeth Kübler Ross, described in a recent podcast that with COVID-19, *people are grieving the loss of the world as we had known it.* With anger being stage two in the five stages of grief, many of us are finding that the significant changes in our lives prompt us to emotion more quickly. Returning to campus is likely to bring about the mixed emotions of joy and familiarity even while coupled with other emotions that can be related to change and what our nation is facing.

**The Recipe:** **One could arguably say that *reduced empathy + distrustful implicit bias associations + grief-associated anger* is a recipe that absolutely needs to be mixed with caution, respect, and collective care for each other. Keeping that in mind, please:**

- Commit to your personal and our collective physical and relational/social health
- Resist the urge to judge, shame or punish others you may see who are doing behaviors you may not understand or agree with; offers of assistance or support will serve so much better
- Remember that people cannot fully read all the usually available social cues you might be communicating
- Recognize that usual implicit biases you have may be made exponential by the addition of mask associations; check your facts before engaging
- Be considerate as you select your face covering designs. Even the best intent for a humorous or appealing design may have cultural implications of which you may not be aware



By: Nathan Dumlaio, <https://unsplash.com/photos/ueE2hhUQdT8>  
 By: Ashkan Forouzani, <https://unsplash.com/photos/eyFKAi8LwKk>  
 By: Insung Yoon, [https://unsplash.com/photos/gP7R\\_D25vz-M](https://unsplash.com/photos/gP7R_D25vz-M)

# Physical Distancing

Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools there is to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus and helps to slow its spread. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to maintain physical distance from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms. Physical distancing is important for everyone and helps to protect people who are at higher risk of getting very sick. Staff at work on-site should follow these physical distancing practices:

1. Always stay at least six feet (about two arms' length) from other people
2. Do not gather in groups of 10 or more people at this time. We have been advised this is likely to increase to 50 later possibly as early as late July 2020. Groups can be classes, departments, clubs, common purpose gatherings and more
3. Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings

## Working in Office Environments

If you work in an open environment, be sure to maintain at least 6 feet of distance from co-workers or guests. Six feet is the minimum with risk reducing further the greater the distance. If possible, have at least one empty workspace separating you from another co-worker. You should always wear a face covering or mask while in a shared workspace/room. Departments must assess open work environments and meeting rooms to physically separate and increase distance between employees, other co-workers and third parties. Departments may institute workplace controls such as:

- ❑ Place visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, or signs to indicate where people should stand while waiting in line
- ❑ Place one-way directional signage in large open workspaces with multiple thruways to increase distance between employees moving through the space
- ❑ If you work in an office, no more than one person should be in the same room unless the required 6 feet of distancing can be consistently maintained. If more than one person is in a room, face coverings should always be worn
- ❑ Temporary structures to better define private workspaces may be necessary. Consult with your department head for guidance
- ❑ Face coverings should be worn by any staff in a reception/receiving area. Face coverings should be used when inside any UMS facility where others are present and likely to be in close proximity, including walking in narrow hallways where others travel and in break rooms, conference rooms, and other meeting locations



Any employee can seek a safety site review in the case they feel workplace controls are not providing the necessary level of safety. Employees should start with their supervisor and can contact their HR Partner or Safety Management if they feel like their concerns are not addressed.



# Hygiene Practices and Environmental Services

## Handwashing:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching your face
- If hands are visibly dirty, you must wash with soap, not just sanitize
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. UMS-provided hand sanitizers do meet this criteria. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and wash your hands after touching your face
- Hand washing is recommended before eating or touching high-touch surfaces like door knobs, using the bathroom, etc.
- We recognize that different faucet designs can make ease of washing difficult. You may choose to wash followed by sanitizing

**Gloves:** Health-care workers and others in high-risk areas should use gloves as part of PPE (personal protective equipment). The CDC does note that gloves are not necessary for general use and do not replace good hand hygiene. Washing your hands often is considered the best practice for common everyday tasks. Please speak with your supervisor if you have questions regarding the use of gloves or personal protective equipment (PPE).

## Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene:

- If you are in a private setting and are not wearing your face mask or covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with tissues when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Then, ventilating your area is recommended before having another person enter the space where you cough/sneeze
- Throw used tissues in the trash
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- If soap/water are not readily available, clean your hands with hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol

**Workplace Disinfection:** While custodial crews will continue to clean office and workspaces based on CDC and other public health guidelines, additional care should be taken to wipe down commonly used surfaces. Before starting work and before you leave any room in which you have been working, you must wipe down all work areas with EPA-registered solution. This includes any shared-space location or equipment (e.g., hand-held equipment, copiers, printers, computers, A/V and other electrical equipment, coffee makers, desks and tables, light switches, doorknobs, etc.). Proper cleaning materials will be supplied by your department. Please note that solutions require different contact durations to fully disinfect, meaning that they need to stay on the surface being cleaned for a certain duration. Please follow approved guidelines and manufacturer’s specifications. Also, recognizing that this represents a cultural shift at UMS, where we have always been advised that doing cleaning duties removes work from our facilities/auxiliary staff, please note that this guidance is in partnership with union leadership and is to support our collective wellness.



# Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios

## Public Transportation

We recognize you may take public or University-provided transportation vehicles to campus. We encourage you follow the same safety protocols, as feasible, in these circumstances or follow the guidance recommended by the transportation provider.



## University Travel

Guidance pertaining to University Travel is maintained on the UMS Health Advisory website. Because we anticipate this may change regularly, we encourage that you view that site for the most recent guidance.

## Non-University Travel

We encourage you follow the same safety protocols, as feasible, when you travel. Also, please know that if you travel outside the State of Maine, currently civil authority guidance denotes that you are required to self-quarantine for 14 days upon your return back into the state. The other option is to take a COVID-19 test showing proof of no infection. Currently, if you are asymptomatic (showing no symptoms), a COVID-19 Test is not covered by UMS' health provider, Cigna. You would need to pay an out-of-pocket cost that is ~\$350. If your job role allows for remote work for the 14-day quarantine and your manager supports it, that is an option.

## Using Restrooms, Elevators and Other Close Quarters

Use of restrooms, elevators, and other close quarters should be limited to ensure at least six feet of distance between individuals. For most elevators, this equates to one person per ride. Using stairs where available and accessible can help to alleviate queuing issues. Wear your face covering at all times and be sure to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol after using such spaces. Consult with your department head for specific guidance about managing access to restrooms, elevators, and other close quarters.

## Meetings

- Where feasible, hold meetings using the extensive range of available collaboration tools (e.g. Zoom, Google Meet, Telephone, etc.). This can pertain to student office hours based on your University's priority for campus-based presence
- Restrict in-person meetings based on local, state, and federal orders
- Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in meeting rooms to support physical distancing practices between attendees
- During time on-site, communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed by email, Google Chat, telephone, or other available technology rather than face-to-face



# Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios

## Meals

- ❑ Before and after eating, wash your hands thoroughly to reduce the potential transmission of the virus
- ❑ If dining on campus, you should wear your face covering until you are ready to eat and then replace it on your face immediately afterward
- ❑ Our campus dining areas will meet requirements to allow at least six feet between each diner, including lines and seating arrangements. Individuals should not sit facing one another. Employees are encouraged to take food back to their office area or eat outside, if this is reasonable for your situation
- ❑ Our campus dining areas will also be implementing mechanisms for food pick-up by individuals to maximize convenience and safety in your dining experience
- ❑ If you are eating in your work environment (break room, office, etc.), maintain six feet between you and others. Only remove your face covering 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 physical distancing practices between employees
- ❑ Wipe all surfaces, including table, refrigerator handle, coffee machine, etc. after using in common areas



<https://unsplash.com/photos/e028fGPP1fQ>. By Richard Buriton



<https://unsplash.com/photos/8Vc3dYBQGc>. By Maria Vernigora



<https://unsplash.com/photos/j8fxh9tJ0U>. By the CDC

## Laboratory Work

Specific criteria has been developed for faculty and staff working in laboratory environments. For information for research/laboratory environments please contact your campus' Research/Science Leadership for direction.

## Teaching

Specific criteria is being developed for faculty and staff teaching in person on campus. Information for teaching environments will be available through your Campus Provost's Office.



# Our Collective Mental/Behavioral Wellness (p. 1 of 2)

Research on Grief is describing that we are collectively mourning the loss of life before COVID-19 and experiencing the grief and other emotions associated. As we prepare for future changes, our commitment is to communication, care and support.

- Your campuses will continue practices they have been implementing through this change already to keep you informed
- Chancellor Malloy will keep our community apprised
- You can always reach out to your Campus HR Leader. Human Resources is represented on each campus' Incident Command Team and is therefore apprised related to campus actions and resources.

If you are experiencing *emotional or medical distress*, two helpful resources:

**Make health and well-being a priority.**  
**EAP National Wellness Seminars:** Take part in monthly seminars year-round on topics that apply to real-life concerns. Watch live or on-demand from a computer, smartphone or tablet at: [www.Cigna.com/EAPWebCasts](http://www.Cigna.com/EAPWebCasts).  
**Behavioral Awareness Series:** Cigna offers free monthly behavioral health awareness seminars on autism, eating disorders, substance use and children's behavioral health issues. For more information, visit: [www.cigna.com/personal/health-and-well-being/behavioral-awareness-series/](http://www.cigna.com/personal/health-and-well-being/behavioral-awareness-series/)  
 Have questions? Don't see what you're looking for? Contact us to get the assistance you need.

For the employees of University of Maine System and their household members.

HELP WITH THAT programs and services available to you.

**UMS Employee Assistance Program (EAP),** a resource to all UMS employees and their families:  
**For initial registration:**  
**Call: 1.877.622.4327**  
**Log in to: [www.myCigna.com](http://www.myCigna.com)**  
**Employer ID: ums**

**Coronavirus Resource Center**  
 Find information on your benefits and learn what you can do to stay healthy.  
 Visit our COVID-19 Resource Center

**Insurance Plans and Products**

**Buying your own coverage**

- Health Insurance for Individuals and Families
- Dental Insurance Plans
- Medicare Plans
- Medicare Supplement Plans
- Other Supplemental Insurance
- International Health Insurance

**Insurance through employers**

- Employee Plans and Policies
- Employer Group Solutions

[www.cigna.com](http://www.cigna.com)

**Check Your Symptoms and Risk for the Coronavirus**  
 If you're experiencing symptoms, answer a few simple questions about your health care coverage so we can help guide you to the care you may need.  
 Get Started



# Our Collective Mental/Behavioral Wellness (p. 2 of 2)

Also, it can be helpful to know that stress is a part of this new normal. Registering all this change/challenge prompts our instinctual Fight and Flight responses. More than that, given the duration of the pandemic, we have been feeling this Fight/Flight for a longer duration than really is usual. In Fight or Flight, please know that:

Our emotions can take hold. We rely on our ‘reptilian’ brain and can under perform in our usual self monitoring. It’s in these moments where many of us can escalate in our emotions and responses.

As one wise research group that focuses on crucial conversations describes – ***If we don’t talk it out, we will typically act it out.*** In these moments, research recommends several steps to shift into a healthier state:

1. **Initiate some tactical breathing** – inhale, hold, exhale, hold (all for 4 seconds each). Repeat 6 times.
2. **Identify the facts of the situation** – any occurrences that can be proven via observation or measurement. Facts are different than the stories our brain can tell us almost immediately per its practice of seeking to translate all the information we take in. With a subconscious operating behind the scenes, we can be crafting judgements, conclusions and attributions without even knowing it. In fact, three really clever stories likely to be hiding: Victim, Villain, Helpless. Keep an eye out
3. **Parse apart the situation** - Using CPR (Content, Pattern, Relationship), consider what’s happening that has you reacting?
4. **Build and maintain maximum safety for all**– When we feel safer, we are willing to be vulnerable and let our guards down. When we don’t, we shift to Fight or Flight.
5. **Live BIG** (as Dr. Brené Brown says): Consider that people in the situation are all doing the best they can. We are all stressed and strained, we are all adapting to new actions/behaviors and struggling with it, we may even be making mistakes in how we do it. Employ Boundaries, Integrity and Generosity.
6. **Aim for the most fruitful motives:** There are healthy motives (To Learn, Find the Truth, Produce Results, Strengthen Relationships) and there can be unhealthy motives (Be Right, Win, Punish/Blame, Avoid Conflict). With our lizard brain, we are likely to flit to the unhealthy motives. In exercising your intent, we encourage all of us to seek compassion in our responses and curiosity in our hearts – for ourselves and others



## Our Collective Care



**Maine State’s motto *Dirigo* notes that just as a star guides a sailor home from seagoing adventures, we guide each other in citizen leadership.**

**These are challenging times—for everyone. We are all managing as best we can and appreciate the unique challenges that people are facing. UMS is committed to working with all members of our community as they navigate the new realities posed by COVID-19.**