



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Fond du Lac County
Health Department

GUIDANCE FOR REOPENING INSTITUTES OF HIGHER EDUCATION DURING COVID-19

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has released [considerations for institutes of higher education \(IHE\) reopening during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). These considerations will help assure students, faculty, and staff have an optimal process for supporting a positive and safe learning environment. IHE, working together with local health departments, have an important role in slowing the spread of diseases to help ensure safe and healthy learning environments.



Task Force

1. Develop a Task Force to Plan for a Safe Reopening

- Identify stakeholders and partners that should be part of the conversation for a safe reopening of the IHE. This may include representation from the local health department, law enforcement, staff, board members, health care providers, EMS, fire department, community partners, students, and more.



Operations Plan

2. Develop an Operations Plan Specific to COVID-19

- The operations plan should include: health screenings for staff and students, messaging to staff and students for [staying home/dorms when sick](#), process to isolate an individual who is symptomatic, plans to support social distancing, increased cleaning and disinfecting, personal protective equipment (PPE) if necessary, and considerations for students and staff who are at higher risk for contracting the virus.
- The plan should also address the use of facilities for athletics, clubs or rental to groups. Visit the CDC for guidance on [recreational facilities](#). Additional guidance will be shared as it becomes available.



Inform and Educate

3. Inform and Educate All Staff, Students and Families on the Plan

- Train all staff and faculty on health and safety protocols.
- Inform and educate students and families about the plans and process that have been put in place to protect their health and the health of others.
- Designate an administrator or office to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns.
- Put communication systems in place for when a student or staff member is exposed to someone with COVID-19 or test positive for COVID-19.



Healthy Hygiene Practices

4. Promote Healthy Hygiene Practices and Behaviors that Reduce Spread

- Display [hand washing posters](#) to encourage good hand hygiene and proper hand washing techniques.
- Encourage staff and students to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or use the inside of their elbow when coughing or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).
- Have [signs posted](#) in visible locations to promote everyday protective measures and ensure adequate supplies are available to support healthy hygiene practices.
- Encourage [cloth face coverings](#) among students, faculty, and staff, especially when physical distancing is difficult to maintain. Inform students, faculty, and staff on proper use of cloth face coverings.



6 ft apart

Social Distancing

5. Plan for and Support Social Distancing

- Encourage virtual learning options and activities. If classes meet in-person, individuals should stay spaced 6 feet apart. Pursue hybrid virtual and smaller in-person classes sizes if possible.
- Space seating/desks at least 6 feet apart where feasible and turn desks to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other).
- Do not allow congregating in common areas in dorms or other communal spaces. If the areas need to be used, stagger use and clean and disinfect between each use. Restrict the number of people allowed in at one time to ensure social distancing.
- Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, in areas where it is difficult to maintain social distancing.
- If transport vehicles are used, follow [guidance for bus transit operators](#).



On-Campus Housing

6. Considerations for On-Campus Housing and Food Service

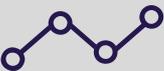
- Consider lowering capacity of residence halls and closing shared spaces to reduce risk. For more information on communal spaces in student and faculty housing (laundry rooms, shared bathrooms, etc.) see [CDC guidance](#).
- Provide grab-and-go options for meals. If a cafeteria is typically used, serve individually plated meals if possible. See additional [considerations by the CDC for food service](#).



Cleaning & Disinfection

7. Intensify Cleaning, Disinfection, and Ventilation

- Increase [cleaning with approved disinfectant](#) and pay special attention to common areas such as door handles, light switches, sink handles, drinking fountains, counters, tables, chairs, shared objects, and bathrooms.
- Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms) to individuals using the facility.
- Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use those areas until after cleaning and disinfecting occur.



Ongoing Monitoring

8. Develop and Implement Procedures for Ongoing Monitoring

- Implement flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable faculty, staff, and students to stay home or self-isolate when they are sick, have been exposed, or caring for someone who is sick.
- Regularly communicate and monitor developments with local authorities, employees, and families regarding cases, exposures, and updates to policies and procedures.
- Ask faculty, staff, and students, to conduct [self-checks](#) (i.e. temperature screening and/or symptom checking). See [CDC guidance on screenings methods in workplaces](#).
- Monitor student and employee absences.
- Be ready to consult with the local health department if there are cases in the facility or an increase in cases in the local area.
- Consider future needs for onsite testing during the school year. Consult your local health department for more details.

Sources and links to more information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/shared-congregate-house/index.html>

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