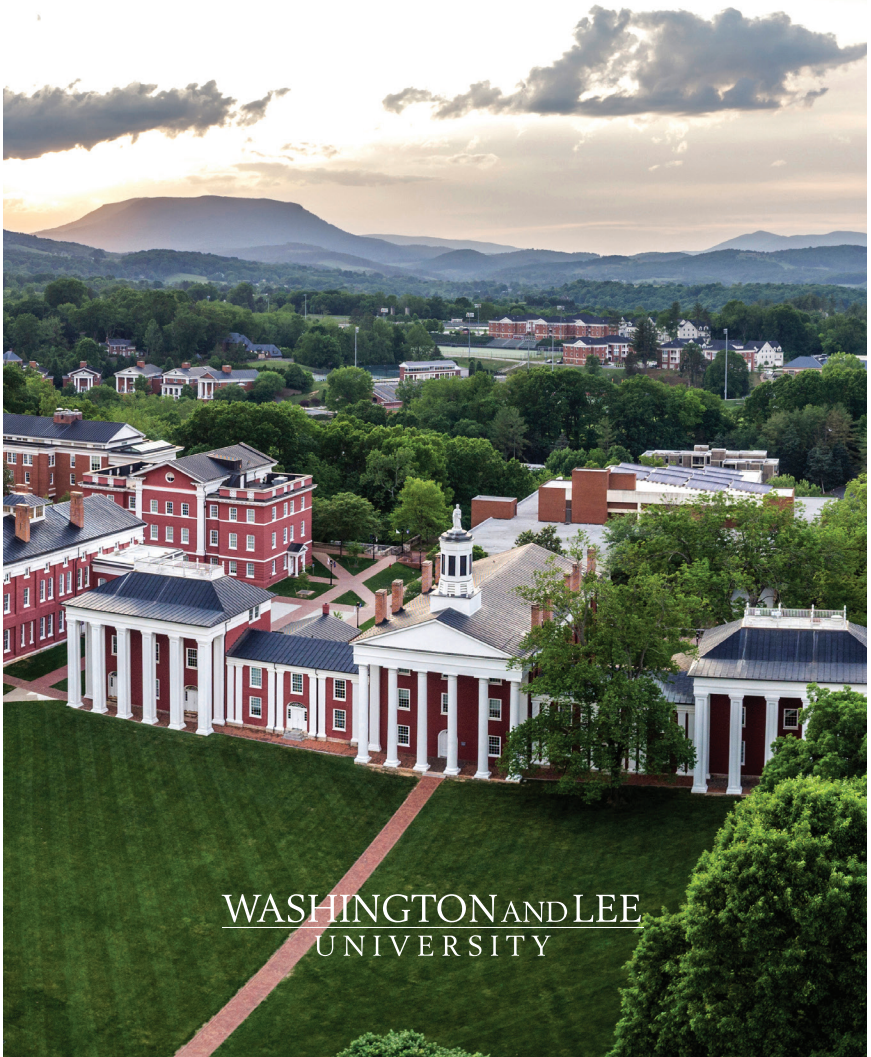


COVID-19 GUIDE

Returning  
*to the*  
Workplace



WASHINGTON AND LEE  
UNIVERSITY

For the most up-to-date information  
and answers to frequently asked questions,  
visit [go.wlu.edu/coronavirus](https://go.wlu.edu/coronavirus)

JUNE 1, 2020

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## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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Washington and Lee University is implementing a phased returning to workplace plan in response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Our priority is the safety and well-being of our campus and surrounding community. This plan applies to all employees including faculty, staff and administrators. The purpose of this document is to establish standards that allow employees to return to campus work spaces in a manner that protects their personal health and safety and that of those with whom they work.

Decisions about returning to the workplace and safety protocols will be aligned with and consistent with information from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Information about COVID-19 continues to evolve and our policies and plans will be updated as appropriate.

## PHASED RETURN

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Washington and Lee University will phase a return of employees over time in a coordinated process to provide for appropriate social distancing. The need to reduce the number of people on campus to meet social distancing requirements may continue into the academic year.

All phases will be implemented as planned unless there is a change in status from state/local/CDC officials that indicate we should not return to work on campus. Any change in guidelines, an employee testing positive who has been in direct contact with other employees or community spread being detected in Rockbridge County may result in a temporary return to working remotely for affected individuals/departments.

Nothing in this report prohibits employees from coming into their offices for short periods of time, provided they follow social distancing and health hygiene practices.

## BUILDING PREPARATION AND OPERATIONS

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University Facilities is in the process of a multi-pronged approach to meet the health and safety challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and to prepare buildings to welcome back faculty, staff and students to a sanitary and clean environment.

Plans have been initiated for custodial crews to utilize **new cleaning technologies**, which includes electrostatic sprayers and use of EPA-approved one-step disinfectants. Additionally, **enhanced cleaning**



**protocols** will be implemented in accordance with the CDC's Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces. All custodial crews will be trained in the use of these technologies and appropriate personal protective equipment, and hazard communication will be provided to all custodial employees.

University Facilities is using guidelines issued by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA), the National Institute of Building Sciences, CDC, OSHA and other organizations to make decisions providing for a safe indoor working and learning environment for our campus community.

Recommendations for altering HVAC operations during the COVID-19 pandemic that are applicable on our campus include:

1. **Increase the volume of fresh outdoor air delivered through HVAC systems and keep HVAC systems running longer hours.**

Increasing the percentage of fresh air delivered to spaces helps reduce the load of airborne infectious particles. Campus HVAC systems have been designed in compliance with ASHRAE ventilation standards, which require relatively high ventilation rates and thus have the capacity to deliver more

fresh air than generally required. *Although Facilities has utilized new controls strategies to reduce equipment run-time and ventilation rates and gain energy efficiency for many years, systems will be adjusted back to higher ventilation rates and longer run-times.*

2. **High-efficiency air filtration in HVAC systems.** Air filters in central air-handling equipment have been proven effective at removing airborne viral loads. Recirculation of air through filters further reduces airborne loads. *Facilities already utilizes air filters which meet the rating recommended by ASHRAE.*

3. **Ultraviolet Germicidal Irradiation (UVGI)** of recirculated air damages the structure of airborne infectious particles, rendering them inactive. UVGI is a proven technology, and although testing on COVID-19 has not been completed to date, it is effective against similar strains of virus. *Facilities has installed and maintained UVGI air-treatment systems in the central air handling systems on campus since 2014.*

4. **Maintain temperature and humidity as applicable to the infectious aerosol of concern.** Humidity levels between 40% and 60% have been shown to

reduce the transmission of some airborne infectious organisms.

***Most central HVAC systems in campus buildings include provisions to control humidity between 40% and 60% relative humidity.***

In addition to these measures, Facilities performs an ongoing program to clean internal components of central air handlers and replace all air filters.

***In academic buildings, windows should not be opened to increase ventilation rates in response to COVID-19. These buildings are provided with a controlled quantity of fresh, filtered ventilated air which will be increased in response to COVID-19. Per ASHRAE recommendations: "Ventilation and filtration provided by heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems can reduce the airborne concentration of SARS-CoV-2 and thus the risk of transmission through the air." Introduction of uncontrolled outdoor air can, in some cases, worsen occupant health due to allergens present in raw outdoor air.***

## **PERSONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES**

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Everyone in the university community must follow public health recommendations consistently to minimize the risk of exposure to and transmission of the virus

that causes COVID-19 illness.

Individuals who are infected may spread the virus, even if they have no symptoms (asymptomatic) or for 2-3 days before they become ill (pre-symptomatic). The virus spreads mainly from person to person through droplets that are produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, sings or talks. Those droplets travel through the air, usually for no more than 6 feet, and can cause infection in another person who inhales them. Those droplets settle on surfaces that may be touched by another person, and the virus can then be transferred by touching the face or mouth.

***There will be a system in place for every employee (faculty and staff) to attest to any symptoms of possible COVID-19 or exposure history on a daily basis. Employees will be required to maintain a daily workplace contact log in the event the university needs to trace employee contacts for public health infection exposure investigation. Information about contact tracing will be provided to department directors.***

These actions, taken by everyone, will help reduce the risk of contact and spread in our community:

- **Physical distancing** (staying at least 6 feet from other people) will reduce the risk that you will come in contact with infectious

droplets in the air.

- **Universal use of cloth face coverings or masks** protects the whole community by reducing the spread of the virus through respiratory droplets that are generated when we speak, sing, laugh, cough or sneeze. Masks or other cloth face coverings will be required inside university buildings whenever you may come within 6 feet of other people.
- All employees will be required to **monitor and attest on a daily basis** to fever/illness symptoms, as well as close contact with anyone who has symptoms/is being tested for COVID-19 or is confirmed positive for COVID-19. A list of symptoms can be found [here](#).
- **Frequent handwashing**, frequent cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces, and not touching your face protects the whole community by reducing the chances that you will come in contact with the virus on surfaces and transfer it to yourself or others that way.



- **Reducing the number of people you have close contact with** every day to the smallest number possible will reduce the chances that you will be exposed to someone who is shedding the virus and the risk you might spread the virus to multiple people before you are aware you have it. All employees will be required to keep a log of close contacts every day. This will make it easier for public health authorities to identify and notify people who may have been exposed if you do become ill.

## EMPLOYEES UNABLE TO WORK ON-SITE DUE TO COVID-19 ILLNESS OR EXPOSURE

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Employees required to be in quarantine or isolation at home will be monitored by phone by a Human Resources representative. Return to work will depend on completion of recommended days of quarantine after exposure, negative COVID-19 testing at an appropriate point in time, clearance to return to work by a health care provider and/or completion of an appropriate period of isolation for COVID-19 infection.

**Anyone with a fever (100.5° F or higher) or other possible COVID-19 symptoms (such as cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, muscle aches, headache, chills or new loss of sense of taste and/smell) must remain at home and notify his/**

**her supervisor.** Any employee who develops a fever or other symptoms while at work must leave immediately and go home. Any employees with fever or other symptoms should stay away from others and contact their health care provider by telephone or utilize the VDH website for advice about assessment and COVID-19 testing, if indicated. Supervisors must notify Human Resources immediately should an employee develop possible symptoms.



## **GUIDANCE FOR WORKSPACES**

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As employees return to campus, the need to encourage social distancing will remain a priority. Office spaces may need to be rearranged, meeting spaces closed off and clear circulation patterns for high-traffic areas considered and identified. Hugh Latimer, the campus architect, is available to consult with department directors on arrangement of office space and the need for alterations.

### **Offices and Work stations –**

Departments should assess work environments and meeting rooms to institute measures to physically separate and increase distance between employees. If an employee works 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. Open work areas require the use of face masks. Plexiglass shields will be provided by Facilities upon request from the department and installed in areas where needed.

**Using Restrooms** – Use of restrooms should be limited based on size to ensure at least 6 feet distance between individuals. Wash hands thoroughly afterward to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

**Using Elevators** – Use of elevators should be limited where possible to avoid close proximity. Wash your hands or use sanitizers upon departing the elevator.

## **MEETINGS**

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Convening in groups increases the risk of virus transmission. Where possible, meetings should be held using either Zoom or Microsoft Teams. In-person meetings are limited based upon the posted social distancing capacity of the room. Departments should rearrange chairs and tables to support social distancing practices. All attendees must wear a face mask while sharing space in a common room.

## **TRAVEL**

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All non-essential university business travel is restricted. Meetings and conferences are considered non-essential unless presenting



scholarship or recruiting and must pre-approved by the appropriate dean or vice president. For all other travel, deans and vice presidents will determine if travel is essential to meeting the business needs of the university. For essential business travel, public health guidelines for travel should be followed. Use of air, train and public transportation (including ride-sharing companies such as Uber, Lyft and taxis) should be limited to circumstances where there is not a reasonable alternative.

Upon return from domestic travel, employees should self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms but may return to campus. Upon return from international travel, employees must self-isolate for 14 days before coming back to campus.

## TRAINING

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Mandatory safety training will be provided to custodial employees on the proper use of personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies and methods, and to department and office staff where they are asked to assist with wiping down of surfaces in common spaces, printers, copiers, conference phones and other department equipment and conference spaces. The COVID-19 website will provide safety training resources for all employees.

## REPORTING SAFETY CONCERNS

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Employees who have a concern regarding a possible COVID-19 health or safety issue should report them immediately to University Facilities Service Center (540) 458-8490 or [facilities@wlu.edu](mailto:facilities@wlu.edu). University Facilities will try to respond to all concerns within 72 hours.

## PHASED STAFFING OPTIONS

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Administrative departmental staffing plans during phased return should be approved in advance by the executive director of Human Resources. There are several options departments may consider to maintain social distancing measures.

**Remote Working:** Those who can work remotely, either full or part-time, may be asked to continue to do so. Remote working can be done on a full or partial day/week schedule as appropriate and must be approved by the department director in advance.

**Alternating Days:** In order to limit the number of individuals and interaction among those in departments, department directors may consider scheduling partial staffing on alternating days.

**Staggered Reporting/Departing:** The beginning and end of the workday typically brings many people together. Consider staggering reporting and departing time by 30 minutes to reduce contact.

## TEMPORARY MODIFIED WORK ARRANGEMENT FOR EMPLOYEES IN A HIGH-RISK CATEGORY

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Employees who are in a high-risk category for severe illness from COVID-19 (see high-risk categories at [go.wlu.edu/high-risk](https://go.wlu.edu/high-risk)) may request a temporary modified work arrangement, which could involve special personal protective equipment, modifications to work stations or spaces, partial or full remote work, or other temporary modifications. Such a request will require completion of a simple medical certification form regarding the high-risk status without medical details and will be reviewed and considered by Human Resources. If a modified work arrangement is not feasible given the employee's position duties or the university's operational needs, the employee may be approved for unpaid Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) if his/her circumstances qualify for FMLA and if the employee has FMLA available.

***Note:** Nothing in these guidelines restricts the ability of faculty in high-risk categories, in collaboration with deans and department chairs, to exercise flexibility in their pedagogical methods in the interest of mitigating their risk of COVID-19, consistent with the understanding that instruction should be delivered primarily in-person where feasible. The university recognizes that a hallmark of a W&L education is the personal relationships between faculty*

*to students. These relationships are typically fostered through the in-person classroom experience, and to the extent that students are able to return to campus, in-person instruction is the preferred method of delivery. However, as has always been the case, all faculty may alter their pedagogical methods to include a range of strategies that ensure an interactive and high-quality offering. This flexibility is not altered by these guidelines. If uncertain, faculty should continue to consult with their department head and dean on such approaches.*

## RETURN TO WORK: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

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ITS will continue to cover critical technology needs for those remaining in remote work environments for the foreseeable future.

Security updates and patches are required and overdue on some equipment, and loaned equipment may be required to be returned to campus to prepare for academic use during Fall Term (details provided below). Regardless of each employee's return-to-work scenario and timing, **please contact the ITS Information Desk ([help@wlu.edu](mailto:help@wlu.edu), 540-458-4357) to either coordinate the return of loaned equipment or schedule time for managing remote updates and swap-out if equipment needs to be recalled.**

## Security Updates and Patching

- During the remote work period, equipment may not have received these critical services due to not being directly connected to the campus network and depending on the user/device configuration.
- Equipment will automatically update upon connecting to the campus network.
- Equipment not returning to campus must be managed remotely by ITS.
- ITS is actively working to deploy a solution to manage off-network machines in the future.
- These updates are a security requirement and will help better protect your credentials and university data.

## Loaned Equipment Required to be Returned

- Many items loaned were repurposed from areas across campus including laptop/iPad carts and Help Desk check-out inventory reserved for academic use.
- ITS must obtain these devices by early summer to allow time to refresh the software in preparation for the Fall Term and student use.

For any questions related to your computing needs or the information above, please contact the ITS Information Desk ([help@wlu.edu](mailto:help@wlu.edu), 540-458-4357).

## RETURNING TO WORK PHASES

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### Phase One – June 11, 2020 to July 13, 2020

- This is a preparation phase in which we will make plans for returning employees to the workplace. Department directors should make staffing plans which will effectively maintain social distancing and protection hygiene. ***All workplace plans must be submitted to the executive director of Human Resources in advance of employees returning.***
- Prior to the return of employees, Facilities Services staff will prepare buildings for the return of employees.
- Departments may identify who is successfully working from home against who would benefit from being back on campus. Identify key activities, and associated staff, that need to be on campus.
- Use prioritization for incrementally bringing staff back. Employees with school-age children may not have daycare/summer camps and should be allowed to continue working from home until school resumes, which coincides with Phase Three.
- External building doors will remain key card access only. No non-essential visitors will be allowed in campus buildings.

- For any meetings over 10 people or where social distancing is not possible, Zoom or Teams meetings will be required.

## Phase Two – July 13, 2020 to August 10, 2020

- We will return to campus operations by slowly bringing back personnel where we can continue to effectively maintain social distancing and protection hygiene.
- Approximately 35%-60% of employees may return to work during Phase Two, provided the staffing plan has been approved by the executive director of Human Resources.
- External building doors will remain key card access only. No non-essential visitors will be allowed in campus buildings.
- For any meetings over 10 people or where social distancing is not possible, Zoom or Teams meetings will be required.

## Phase Three – August 10, 2020

- Phase Three is a return to full operations. Department directors may determine that some employees who can work remotely should continue to do so.

- Approximately 60%-100% of employees may return to work during Phase Three. Some employees may be asked to continue working from home in order to reduce social contact within a department.
- External building doors will remain key card access. No non-essential visitors will be allowed in campus buildings.
- For any meetings over 50 people or where social distancing is not possible, Zoom or Teams meetings will be encouraged.

## RESOURCES

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For return-to-workplace questions, department staffing and COVID-19 questions, contact Mary Main, executive director of Human Resources, at [mmain@wlu.edu](mailto:mmain@wlu.edu)

For questions about physical space and alterations and enhancements to space to meet COVID-19 guidelines, contact Hugh Latimer, campus architect, at [hlatimer@wlu.edu](mailto:hlatimer@wlu.edu)

For questions about office cleaning, contact Debbie Weinerth, director of Facilities Services, at [dweinert@wlu.edu](mailto:dweinert@wlu.edu)