



WKU Environmental Health and Safety

Policy EHS-002

**Protective Measures in Response to the
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic**

Policy Number: EHS-002

Policy Name: Protective Measures in Response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic

Policy Description: This policy is designed to define required protocols and practices focused on reducing the spread of the COVID-19 virus to protect WKU faculty, staff, students, and visitors.

Policy Guidance: This policy is based on directives and guidance documents from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Office of the Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and state and local health departments.

Scope and Application: This policy applies to all WKU faculty, staff, students, contractors, and visitors.

Protective Measures

The following measures are instituted at all WKU campuses and apply to all faculty, staff, students, and visitors:

- **Health Checks:**

- All persons are required to confirm completion of daily health check prior to reporting to campus. The health check will comply with the established procedure WKU EHS-20-001 COVID-19 Health Checks:
https://www.wku.edu/ehs/documents/covid19/wku_covid_ehs_20_001.pdf .
- Any person exhibiting symptoms consistent with the COVID-19 virus should self-quarantine at their residence, and consult with a healthcare provider.

- **Hand Hygiene:**

- Understanding that viruses can be transferred from a person's hand to their bodies via their mouth, nose, or eyes. WKU will maintain appropriate facilities in all public restrooms to facilitate hand washing.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be provided and maintained at the primary entrances to all university buildings.

- **Physical Distancing:**

In all areas of WKU campuses, and for university-led activities conducted at off-campus locations, provisions shall be made to encourage physical distancing of at least 6 feet between all persons. Examples include:

- Limit the numbers of persons in a given area or allowed to attend an event
- Reduce the number of available seats in classrooms and other spaces
- Develop event plans that include supervised queuing of persons entering or moving within the space to maintain 6 foot spacing
- Installation of Separation Barriers in situations where face-to-face interaction is required to conduct business transactions, physical barriers such as Plexiglas can be installed when it is not feasible to maintain physical distancing of 6 feet.

- **Cloth Face Coverings or disposable masks:**

All persons entering WKU campuses must wear a cloth face covering or disposable mask covering both the nose and mouth as follows:

- At all times when in public areas or shared spaces within buildings, including hallways, classrooms, laboratories, elevators, etc.
- Outdoors when near others where physical distancing of at least six feet cannot be maintained.
- When in a vehicle with other persons, including cars, vans and buses.
- Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms.

Exceptions to face covering requirements:

The following are examples of exceptions to the requirement for face covering requirement:

- Persons seated in a designated dining area, with physical distancing in place, actively eating.
- Persons actively engaged in physical exercise either outdoors or indoors within designated areas and with physical distancing in place.
- In laboratories or other specialized environments where conditions exist that preclude the wearing of cloth face coverings or disposable masks. In these situations a written operating procedure must be developed that details the protective measures employed to protect individuals from the transmission of COVID-19.
- Persons who have a condition that precludes them from wearing a cloth face covering or mask may not enter WKU buildings or otherwise violate this policy by not wearing a face covering. These individuals should follow the guidance outlined in the “Requests for Accommodations” section of this policy.

- **Face Shields as an Alternative to Face Coverings:**

Face shields may not be worn as an alternative to a required face covering or mask with the following exceptions:

- Persons in areas where cloth face coverings or masks cannot be worn as outlined in the previous section. The exception must be limited to periods of time and defined areas where hazards exist, with specific details included in a written operating procedure.
- Persons who have a validated medical condition or disability that precludes them from wearing a cloth face covering or disposable mask may request an accommodation as detailed later in this policy. Examples of possible accommodations may include wearing a scarf, loose face covering, or full-face shield instead of a face mask.

Face shields may be worn in addition to a face covering or mask to provide an extra measure of protection.

- **Alternative Work Arrangements / Operating Practices:**

Protecting employees from potential exposure to COVID-19 includes provisions for implementation of alternative work arrangements and modified operating practices in conducting the business of the university. All operational units should explore opportunities to employ practices applicable to their operations. Examples include:

- Review options for telework for as many faculty and staff as possible, especially employees at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- Replace in-person meetings with video- or tele-conference calls whenever possible.
- Provide student support services virtually, as feasible.
- Use of technological solutions to process business and academic transactions or deliver remote customer service to eliminate the need for face-to-face interactions or the direct handling of paperwork.

- **Requests for Disability or Medically Required Accommodations:**

Exceptions to any provisions of the policy from WKU Faculty and Staff will be reviewed, approved or denied by WKU office of Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action/University ADA Services (EEO) joshua.hayes@wku.edu . Exceptions to any provisions of the policy from WKU Students will be reviewed, approved or denied by the Student Accessibility Resource Center sarc.connect@wku.edu .

Case Management

- **Environmental Health and Safety / Emergency Management**

The Department of Environmental Health and Safety / Emergency Management is focused on supporting multiple aspects of the university's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The EH&S staff leads the healthy at work initiatives including management of the COVID-19 phone line (270) 745-2019 and Covid.Help@wku.edu email.

Reports of confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19 will be referred immediately to the Barren River District Health Department (BRDHD) for investigation and potential contact tracing.

- **Medical Direction**

Medical direction will be provided by physicians from Graves Gilbert Clinic, Med-Center Health, or area personal physicians selected by individual faculty, staff, or students. Individuals with confirmed infections of COVID-19 may be asked by their supervisor or a Healthy at Work Officer to provide a clearance from their healthcare provider or Graves Gilbert Clinic prior to returning to regular campus activities.

- **Medical Emergencies**

Anyone experiencing or witnessing a medical emergency should immediately dial 9-1-1.

WKU police will respond to the Bowling Green area Campuses including South Campus, Center for Research and Development and the Farm. Local police, fire and EMS will respond to the extended campus as needed.

- **Access to COVID-19 Testing**

Graves Gilbert Clinic will provide both antibody and live virus testing for faculty, staff, and students. The WKU location is open Monday-Friday, other GGC locations in Bowling Green are open seven days per week from 7:30a – 7:30p. GGC physicians are available for consultation and tele-health consultations after hours.

- **Mandatory Reporting of Positive Test Results and Close Contacts**

To help control the spread of the COVID-19 virus it is mandated that all faculty, staff, students and contractor employees who physically work, attend classes at any WKU Campus or other WKU locations are required to report if they received a positive COVID-19 test result, or are aware that they have been a close contact with someone (within 6 feet for 15 minutes) who has received a

positive test result. In addition, these persons must also take immediate steps to self-quarantine in accordance with CDC and public health guidelines.

Persons receiving a positive test result are encouraged to notify anyone they have been in close contact with near the date of their test or onset of symptoms. In addition, it is required that WKU faculty, staff, students and contractor employees cooperate with inquiries from public health officials and fully disclose all close contacts during the interview process.

Persons receiving a positive COVID-19 test result, or who are close contacts with someone confirmed positive must call the WKU COVID-19 Assistance Line 270-745-2019 or email covid.help@wku.edu within 4 hours of their receipt of a positive test confirmation or becoming aware of being a close contact.

Additionally, students residing in on campus housing must follow the provisions outlined in this policy in addition to other requirements proscribed by WKU Housing and Residence Life. Students testing positive or who are a close contact to a positive case CAN NOT quarantine in their regularly assigned room or apartment. Appropriate quarantine space has been identified and students who elect to remain on campus to quarantine will be given an alternative room assignment.

Failure to make the appropriate notifications to WKU, failing to quarantine, or committing other acts that place other persons at risk from the COVID-19 virus, will result in enforcement actions as noted later in this policy document, or as noted in other university policies and practices.

- **Contact Tracing**

All contract tracing will be conducted by the Barren River District and Kentucky State Departments of Public Health. WKU will cooperate fully with contact tracers, case investigators, and other public health officials as appropriate to expedite identification and notification of all contacts.

WKU personnel will not make notifications of potential contacts with COVID-19 infected persons. The identities of persons voluntarily notifying WKU officials of potential exposures or positive COVID-19 test results will remain confidential and will only be shared with medical or public health professionals directly involved with the case.

- **Quarantine:**

All faculty, staff, students, contractors, vendors, or others who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, have tested positive with a live virus test, have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for the virus, have been contacted by public health and directed to quarantine, or have traveled to a state or country that is covered by a travel restriction issued from the Office of the Governor, are required to self-quarantine for the period prescribed, typically 10-14 days, and contact GGC or your personal healthcare provider for guidance.

Operational Practices

- **Food Service Operations Areas:**

Food and vending service areas provided under the university Aramark or Canteen contracts will be operated and maintained in accordance with prescribed food service general and COVID-19 specific requirements by the vendor personnel.

- **Cleaning and Disinfection of Public Operational Spaces:**

The Department of Facilities Management will clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains, grab bars, hand railings, bathroom stalls, etc.) within facilities at least daily or between uses as much as possible.

The University will coordinate acquisition of supplies of cleaning materials for each department for their use in cleaning and disinfecting of commonly touched surfaces in office areas, classrooms, etc.

- **Private Offices and Other Individually Assigned Workspaces:**

Disinfection of private offices and individually assigned workspaces will be the responsibility of the employee assigned to the space. Cleaning and disinfecting supplies will be available in the various departments to aid in completing disinfection of surfaces.

- **Other Areas Not Specified:**

Operational areas not specified in this document that have regular occupancy by people will follow the guidance for Public Operational Spaces.

- **Reconfiguration of areas to maintain at least 6 feet or more:**

Arrange tables and chairs to allow for physical distancing to maintain 6 feet or more from others.

- **Enforcement of Compliance:**

Compliance with all protective measures by all persons is of paramount importance in preventing the spread of COVID-19, reducing the need for quarantine, and sustaining the university's return to in-person classes, athletics, student and community activities that represent the core mission of WKU. (is there a reason that this paragraph is indented?)

The primary initiatives to encourage compliance among all persons include clear communication of prescribed protective measures including requirements for usage, reinforcement of the implications of COVID-19 and the need to protect each other as members of the Hilltopper community. To facilitate the wearing of cloth face coverings they will be readily available in the University Book Store, Bates Shop POD, snack vending machines, and within academic departments and other offices.

The drastic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic require the university take compliance actions when necessary to minimize transmission of the virus, and allow members of the campus community to live, work, and learn in a healthy setting. These actions may include:

Staff (Non-Faculty):

Non-Faculty Employees who knowingly fail to comply with the protective measures applicable to their work areas or assigned job functions or the reporting mandates outlined earlier in this document may be subject to disciplinary actions as prescribed in Policy 4.8501 Disciplinary Actions for All Non-Faculty Employees. <https://www.wku.edu/policies/docs/index.php?policy=292>

Faculty:

Faculty Employees who knowingly fail to comply with the protective measures applicable to their work areas or assigned job functions or the reporting mandates outlined earlier in this document may be subject to disciplinary actions as prescribed in the Faculty Handbook.

Students:

Students who knowingly fail to comply with protective measures or the reporting mandates outlined earlier in this document may be subject to disciplinary actions as prescribed in the Student Code of Conduct. <https://www.wku.edu/studentconduct/student-code-of-conduct.php>

Additionally, students residing in on campus housing may be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including removal from housing for violations of this policy, or other policies and procedures established by WKU Housing and Residence Life.

Faculty are authorized to take immediate actions within their classroom and laboratories and other in-person teaching environments, to assure that all students comply with the requirements for wearing of face coverings and maintaining physical distancing. These actions may include directing a student to leave the area to secure a face covering or mask, or for repeated incidents the administrative removal of the student from the course.

Contractors/Vendors:

Employees of contractors or vendors that provide services to WKU campuses who fail to comply with the protective measures or the reporting mandates outlined earlier in this document are subject to penalties ranging from a written notification of violation of campus policy to termination of contracts. Incidents of non-compliance involving contractors or vendor should be detailed in an email to covid.help@wku.edu .

Visitors:

Visitors to the WKU campus must also comply with the provisions of this policy. Visitors who fail to wear cloth face coverings are not allowed in university buildings, or within 6 ft of other persons outside. If the visitor is a guest of a university department or employee, the host is responsible for enforcement of this policy.

If the visitor is attending an athletic event or performance the event staff shall act to enforce the policy. Visitors outside these categories that fail to comply should be reported via email at covid.help@wku.edu .

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