



WKU Environmental Health and Safety

Policy EHS-002

**Protective Measures in Response to the
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic
(Updated – September 7, 2022)**

Policy Number: EHS-002

Policy Name: Protective Measures in Response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
Pandemic (Updated - Effective September 7, 2022)

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 encouraged to complete a daily health check prior to reporting to campus. Any person exhibiting symptoms consistent with the COVID-19 virus should self-isolate at their residence, notify their supervisor or professors, and get tested or consult with a healthcare provider.

- **Hand Hygiene**

- Understanding that viruses can be transferred from a person's hand into their bodies via their mouth, nose, or eyes, WKU will maintain appropriate facilities in all public restrooms to facilitate hand washing.

- **Masks**

For the purpose of this policy, "masks" are defined as cloth face coverings, disposable masks, and gaiters. Masking is optional for all persons entering WKU campuses/facilities or when riding in university-owned/operated vehicles, except when required for the defined period after testing positive for COVID-19 or following exposure to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

- **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 may include:

- Replace in-person meetings with video- or tele-conference calls.
- Provide student support services virtually, as feasible.

- Review options for telework for employees at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- 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, and a decision rendered 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, and a decision rendered 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 and manages the COVID-19 Assistance Line (270) 745-2019 and Covid.Help@wku.edu email.

- **Medical Direction**

Medical direction will be provided by healthcare practitioners from Graves Gilbert Clinic, Med-Center Health, or private physicians selected by individual faculty, staff, or students. Individuals with confirmed infections of COVID-19 may be asked by their supervisor or faculty to provide documentation of their isolation release date.

- **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-GGC location is open Monday-Friday; most other GGC locations in Bowling Green are open seven days per week. In addition, several local pharmacies and clinics provide COVID-19 testing services.

- **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 or attend classes at any WKU Campus or other WKU

locations are required to report to the WKU COVID Assistance Line if they receive a positive COVID-19 test result. Anyone who has been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 should take immediate steps to monitor their health status in accordance with CDC and state/local public health guidelines.

Persons receiving a positive test result are encouraged to notify everyone 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 WKU COVID Case Managers and fully disclose all close contacts during the interview process.

Persons receiving a positive COVID-19 test result must call the WKU COVID-19 Assistance Line at (270) 745-2019 within 4 hours of their receipt of a positive test confirmation.

Additionally, students residing in on-campus housing must follow the provisions outlined in this policy in addition to other requirements prescribed by WKU Housing and Residence Life (HRL). Students testing positive CAN NOT isolate in their regularly assigned room or apartment.

To be eligible for on-campus isolation, a student must:

- Be a resident of WKU's residential buildings during the current term.
- Have a permanent home address three or more hours of travel from WKU's Bowling Green campus OR
- Be too ill for immediate travel with a medical recommendation stating they do not require hospitalization and may isolate until able to return to their permanent address OR
- Be an international student with a permanent home address outside the U.S. OR
- Be an independent student, as defined by federal financial aid and WKU, where WKU is their residence of record.

A student requiring isolation and meeting the on-campus eligibility criteria will be assigned to an isolation facility by an HRL COVID team member.

A student or employee may seek assistance from a WKU COVID Case Manager in validating their isolation status to their respective faculty or supervisor.

Failure to make the appropriate notifications to WKU, failing to isolate, 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**

Designated WKU COVID Case Managers will perform case management and contact tracing following reports of positive cases to the COVID-19 Assistance Line or notifications from Graves Gilbert Clinic or other medical/public health entity. The identities of persons 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.

- **Isolation**

All WKU-affiliated faculty, staff, students, contractors, and vendors who have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been directed to isolate by a healthcare practitioner are required to isolate for the period prescribed. The specified duration of an individual's isolation period will be determined by their private healthcare practitioner, WKU-GGC, local Health Department, or WKU Case Manager.

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.

- **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 isolation; and sustaining in-person classes, athletics, and student and community activities that represent the core mission of WKU.

The primary initiatives to encourage compliance among all persons include clear communication of prescribed protective measures including requirements for mask usage, reinforcement of the implications of COVID-19, and the need to protect each other as members of the Hilltopper community.

The 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.

<https://www.wku.edu/academicaffairs/documents/wku-faculty-handbook-27th-edition.pdf>

- **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.

- **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 reported in an email to covid.help@wku.edu.

- **Visitors**

Visitors to the WKU campus must also comply with the provisions of this policy. 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.

Revised 9/7/2022