Transition and Adaptability Policy

Responsible Office: Human Resources
Date Created: June 15, 2020; revised August 1, 2020, October 21, 2020, June 1, 2021
Next Review Date: June 1, 2022 or as guidelines and regulations are updated

Purpose
Webster University is committed to supporting the health and safety of our employees, comprised of faculty, staff and students, as part of our transition back to campus following the modified operations for COVID-19 pandemic response. Webster’s plan will be aligned and consistent with local orders and ordinances of the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County for the main campus and applicable laws within our jurisdictions throughout our extended and military campus locations. Webster’s plan will also be aligned with the state of Missouri reopening models. Webster will also follow recommendations from the federal government (opening guidelines), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the corresponding Department of Public Health by location. Our knowledge and understanding of the COVID-19 virus continue to evolve, our policies and plans will be updated as appropriate to support the Occupational Safety & Health Administration standards for a safe and healthy work environment.

Workplace Expectation & Guidelines
All employees are expected to fully comply with the policies, protocols and guidelines outlined for maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. Upon returning to work on campus, supervisors will hold a training meeting with employees to review these safety protocols and the expectation that they are followed.

Access Control
Access control will be instrumental in limiting the infiltration of COVID on campus. All portals to all buildings will require ID cards for entry. Certain buildings or sections of building may be closed to control large gatherings.

Any visitors to campus for business purposes must be pre-approved by the employee they are visiting. Visitors can gain entry by making application to Public Safety for temperature screening.

Personal Safety Practices
Face Masks/ Cloth Face Coverings:

For fully vaccinated employees, face masks or face coverings are not required unless otherwise directed by local regulatory or government agencies. Your vaccination status is on your honor, unless concern for safety may require confidential disclosure to Human Resources. For those who are not fully vaccinated, or for those who have been instructed for their own safety by their medical provider, face masks or face coverings
must be worn when in the presence of others and in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., common work spaces, meeting rooms, classrooms, hallways etc.). Face masks or face coverings are not required when outside on campus unless you are unable to maintain social distancing. Employees may remove masks when inside University facilities while participating in activities in which a face mask cannot practically be worn, such as eating and drinking or playing a musical instrument or singing as part of work duties.

When unvaccinated or where directed for self-protection by a medical provider, appropriate use of face masks or coverings is critical in minimizing risks to others near you. You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick. The mask or cloth face covering is not a substitute for social distancing.

Disposable masks will be provided by Webster. Disposable masks may only be worn for one day and then must be placed in the trash. You may also wear a cloth face covering, which will help reduce the need to purchase additional masks. The fabric design or pattern for cloth face coverings should be appropriate for the workplace. Cloth face coverings must only be worn for one day at a time and must be properly laundered before use again.

If an employee is unable to comply with this section of this policy, contact Human Resources to discuss alternatives.

**Personal Hygiene:** 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, including your eyes, nose and mouth. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Then throw used tissues in the trash and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

Maximum occupancy of restrooms will be limited to the extent allowed for appropriate social distancing.

**Social Distancing:** When unvaccinated, keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools we can implement to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus and slowing its spread. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms. Social distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk of getting very sick. Staff who are not vaccinated or others who are instructed for self-protection and are at work on-site must follow these social distancing practices:

- Always stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people.
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- Do not gather in groups of 10 or more.
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.

**Workspace configuration:** Workspace and office density will be assessed and addressed to ensure safety and proper distance from other co-workers who are unvaccinated or are instructed for self-protection and may require an accommodation where work is conducted in common workspaces.

**Meals:** Before and after eating, you should wash your hands thoroughly to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

If you are eating in your work environment (break room, office, etc.) and are unvaccinated or otherwise instructed by your medical professional, maintain 6 feet distance between you and others and individuals should not sit facing one another. Only remove your mask or face covering in order to eat, then put it back on.

**Cleaning/Disinfection:** Housekeeping teams will clean office and workspaces based on CDC guidelines for disinfection. Facilities Management will also maintain hand-sanitizer stations at major building entrances, elevator stops and high-traffic areas. Mechanical, electrical, plumbing, ventilation and monitoring systems will be assessed and readied prior to reopening of buildings.

Employees should wipe down commonly used surfaces before and after use with products that meet the EPA’s criteria for use against COVID-19 and are appropriate for the surface. This includes any shared-space location or equipment (e.g. copiers, printers, computers, A/V and other electrical equipment, coffee makers). The use of personal or disposable utensils is recommended for meals.

**Using Stairs/Elevators:** The use of stairs is encouraged to support distancing. The use of elevators should be limited to no more than two persons at one time to avoid proximity with others in a confined space. When unvaccinated, those using elevators are required to wear a mask or face covering regardless of traveling alone or with others. You should also avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers, if possible. Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers upon departing the elevator or use of a stairwell rail.

**Meetings:** Convening in groups increases the risk of viral transmission for those that are not yet vaccinated or require accommodation. Where feasible, meetings should be held in whole or part using the extensive range of available collaboration tools (e.g. email, IM, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, telephone, etc.). Committee chairs are encouraged to proactively schedule meetings virtually.
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**Signage:** Signage will be displayed near entrances/exits, common areas, gathering areas, stairwells, conference rooms, classrooms, labs, elevators and restrooms and other locations to communicate information on maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. This information should be reviewed and followed.

**Reasonable Accommodation**

Webster expects employees to return to our U.S. campus locations to the fullest degree possible. Employees are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated to provide the highest level of protection from COVID-19. However, we are still committed to evaluate requests from employees for a reasonable accommodation under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Webster’s Disability and Accommodation policy. The process of determining appropriate, reasonable work adjustments or accommodations is based on interactive communication between Human Resources, supervisors and those who are applying for accommodation. Determinations of whether requests for work adjustments/accommodations are reasonable are based on individual circumstances.

**Employees with COVID-19 Symptoms or with a Sick Family Member at Home with COVID-19 or at higher risk for COVID-19**

- Employees who have symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, or shortness of breath) should contact their immediate supervisor and complete an Employee Incident Report to notify Human Resources to help guide and monitor a safe return as directed by their health care provider or Public Health Department. Follow the CDC-recommended steps and refer to Webster’s Protocols for Employees.
- Employees with confirmed cases of COVID-19 or living with a sick family member with COVID-19 should follow CDC-recommended steps, should use available benefit time and should not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments. If a family member is at higher risk for COVID-19, employees should follow these CDC-recommended steps for supporting your and their health and safety.
- If a faculty or staff employee is absent for more than three days, contact Prudential to report absence by calling 1-877-367-7781 Monday – Friday 8AM to 11PM EST. The company control number is 52654. Please see FMLA Policy for details.
- All employees should contact Human Resources (faculty/staff) or Student Health Services (students) to authorize your return to work.
Mental and Emotional Wellbeing.

The coronavirus has caused unprecedented challenges for people around the globe. Prudential’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP), offered by ComPsych, helps faculty and staff and their family cope with those unexpected challenges. EAP is available to offer emotional support during this stressful period. Professionals are available 24/7 and 365 days a year.

ComPsych’s Website: [http://www.compsych.com](http://www.compsych.com)
Guidance Resources’ Website: [http://www.guidanceresources.com](http://www.guidanceresources.com)
Hotline: (800) 311-4327

Student employees can get more information support offered through Counseling & Life Development at [https://www.webster.edu/student-counseling.php](https://www.webster.edu/student-counseling.php), or can contact [counselingld@webster.edu](mailto:counselingld@webster.edu) or 314-968-7030.