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I. Introduction

Ball State University will continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in a manner that promotes the safety of employees, students, and campus visitors, while furthering the University’s mission and values. Ball State’s policies and plans will also be aligned with guidance from government agencies, public health officials, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

This pandemic presents a constantly-evolving and dynamic situation, and the University’s policies and plans will be reviewed and appropriately updated as more information becomes available.

II. Workplace Expectations

All employees are expected to abide by policies, protocols, and guidelines outlined in this Plan. Failure to do so places others at risk and may result in corrective action.

III. Staffing

A. Phased Approach

As of June 1, 2020, Vice Presidents began reintegrating their employees to campus in a deliberate way, taking into account factors such as the need to expand on-site staffing based on mission-critical operations, ability to control and manage specific work environments, protecting vulnerable workers, and necessity of accessing on-site resources. Beginning July 1, 2020, the University is resuming more of its regular on-site campus activities and operations, including preparing for students to return in August. Therefore, a meaningful increase in the employee population on campus will occur in July. Supervisors will communicate with employees directly as to when each employee is authorized to return to campus.

B. Alternative Work Options

Even though a larger number of employees will be engaged in on-site work going forward, a variety of mechanisms are available to facilitate physical distancing and reduce the density of employees within buildings and workspaces.

1. Remote Work (telework policy): The University has established a target of reducing the number of administrative employees regularly working on campus at any one time by at least one-third. As such, departments are encouraged to continue utilizing remote work for appropriate employees, as determined by supervisors and approved by the Vice President for that division. In addition, supervisors should give particular consideration to those in higher-risk categories (discussed more below) in assessing remote work arrangements.

2. Virtual Meetings and Communications: Even when collaborating with others present on campus, employees should, to the extent feasible, utilize the extensive range of available electronic communication tools (e.g., phone, email, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc.) to reduce in-person meetings.
3. **Alternating Days or Weeks**: Departments should consider scheduling on-site staffing patterns, such as alternating days or weeks, to help enable physical distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces.

4. **Staggered Scheduling within the Workday**: Departments should consider staggering work schedules within the workday to assist with physical distancing measures that aid in reducing congestion at the beginning and end of the workday and during break periods.

IV. **Building Access**

Beginning July 1, 2020, most campus buildings will be open. Employees should be aware of and abide by the signage and floor markings that have been utilized in buildings in order to promote physical distancing. Questions about specific buildings should be directed to those departments for information about access, hours, and operations.

V. **Employee Health Screening Process**

A. **General Principles**

   It is critical for employees to understand and be aware of COVID-19 symptoms. More information about COVID-19 symptoms is available on the [CDC’s Website](https://www.cdc.gov).

   If an employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (without a separate known cause, e.g., asthma, allergies, etc.), that employee should not come to campus. Similarly, if an employee has been notified of exposure to someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 14 days, that employee must stay home. In addition, if an employee develops symptoms while on campus, the employee should separate from others and leave campus in a manner that reduces any contact with others. **It is imperative for employees to communicate with their supervisors in situations like these.**

B. **Self-Certification Form Required to Return to On-Site Work**

An employee who has been authorized to return to work on campus will be required to complete a self-certification form prior to returning. Essential employees who have continued working on campus will also be required to promptly complete the form. This form asks certain screening questions about the employee’s health, including, among other items, whether the employee has had a recent fever or other COVID-19 symptoms or has been notified of exposure to COVID-19 within the last 14 days. All employees will commit on this form to performing daily symptom self-checks and to reporting any changes in the information provided. This form is stored separately from an employee’s regular personnel file in order to limit access to this confidential information. [Access the self-certification form](#).

An employee will again be required to complete the form prior to returning to campus if there is a change in circumstance, such as:

2. Having been advised by a health care provider or government official to stay home and self-quarantine.
3. Having close contact in the last 14 days with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who showed symptoms of COVID-19.
4. Experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (without a separate known cause, e.g., asthma, allergies, etc.).
5. Having been notified of exposure to COVID-19 within the last 14 days.
6. Traveling outside of the United States in the past 14 days (see Travel Standards below for more details).

C. Daily Symptom Self-Check

Employees working on campus must monitor symptoms every day before reporting to work. If an employee experiences symptoms of COVID-19 (without a separate known cause, e.g., asthma, allergies, etc.), the employee should not come to campus. The employee must stay home and contact their supervisor.

D. Higher-Risk Populations

According to the CDC, individuals with certain conditions may have an increased risk for COVID-19 infection. Those conditions may include:

1. Older adults (aged 65 years and older);
2. People with HIV;
3. Asthma (moderate-to-severe);
4. Chronic lung disease;
5. Diabetes;
6. Serious heart conditions;
7. Chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis;
8. Severe obesity; and

Employees who have been authorized to return to work on-site and have concerns about doing so due to a condition that places them in a higher-risk group, those who are pregnant, or those who wish to seek disability accommodations related to returning to on-site work should contact University Human Resource Services.

VI. Testing and Contact Tracing

The University will coordinate readily available COVID-19 testing for students and employees, in cooperation with local public health authorities, and support efficient and effective contact tracing. To these ends, negotiations are currently occurring with a healthcare provider to make testing accessible on our campus for anyone who is symptomatic. Details will be shared when the plan is finalized. As part of this plan, it is expected that the University will require anyone who tests positive to self-isolate for an appropriate period of time, and contact tracing will be conducted consistent with the procedures established by the Indiana State Department of Health.
VII. **Influenza Vaccination**

Public health experts have advised of a potential increase in COVID-19 cases later this year at the same time the seasonal flu returns, with a correlating risk that healthcare providers will not be able to treat all of the ill patients. To help minimize this risk, employees are strongly encouraged to get a flu vaccination this Fall. To encourage this responsible behavior, the University will expand access to and the availability of annual flu vaccinations for all students and employees. More information will be provided on this topic later this year.

VIII. **Safety Practices**

One of our Enduring Values is Social Responsibility; that is, acting for the benefit of society at large. Consistent with this value, employees are asked to be considerate of others on campus and to consistently participate in the safety practices described below, as they are intended to help make our campus safe.

A. **University Face Mask/Shield Policy**

i. **Requirements**

Effective July 1, 2020, all people on campus—including faculty, staff, students, vendors, contractors, suppliers, and visitors—should wear face masks/shields (covering nose and mouth) while inside campus buildings. Face masks/shields are specifically required in the following situations:

1. When in the presence of others (indoors or outdoors) and physical distancing is difficult to maintain, such as in hallways, elevators, stairs, public spaces, and common areas;
2. When in a classroom or laboratory if physical distancing is difficult to maintain;
3. When using campus transportation (such as a shuttle bus);
4. When multiple individuals are in a University vehicle; and
5. When it is determined by an employee’s supervisor that wearing a mask/shield is necessary for specific job duties. Environmental Health and Safety will determine if particular types of face masks/shields are required for particular job settings, and this will be communicated through supervisors.

Wearing a face mask/shield is not required when alone in a private office or work space, nor is it required when working behind a plexiglass barrier. This would include, for example, a faculty member teaching behind a plexiglass barrier in a classroom or laboratory setting.

ii. **Accommodations**

If an individual has a health condition that prevents them from being able to wear a face mask/shield, University Human Resource Services should be contacted, or, in the case of a student, the Office of Disability Services.

iii. **Non-Compliance**

If an employee declines to wear a face mask/shield as required, the supervisor is responsible for addressing it with the employee. Employees should refrain from addressing non-compliance or perceived non-compliance directly with other employees, and should instead report issues to
their supervisors.

If a student declines to wear a face mask/shield as required, the student should be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students. If the situation occurs in a classroom or other academic setting, it is considered a classroom management issue, and the faculty member should remind the student of the requirement and give the student a chance to comply with it prior to referring the matter to the Office of the Dean of Students.

Members of the public who are not abiding by face mask/shield requirements will first be offered a disposable face mask, if possible. If they refuse to comply with face mask/shield requirements, they will be asked to leave and given options of how they can be served virtually.

The University Police Department (UPD) is not responsible for enforcing face mask/shield requirements and should not be contacted regarding such issues.

iv. Other Guidance

Individuals may supply their own mask/shield for general use. In addition, the University will provide up to two washable and reusable face masks to every faculty, staff, and on-campus student who requests them. To obtain a face mask from the University, employees should contact their direct supervisors.

The Office of the Dean of Students will provide additional information to students about where to obtain face masks prior to the start of the Fall 2020 semester.

Proper use and care of face masks/shields are the responsibility of the individual. For additional guidance on the use and care of face masks, visit the CDC Website and World Health Organization (WHO) Website.

B. Physical Distancing

Employees on campus are expected to maintain appropriate physical distancing in order to avoid being exposed to or spreading COVID-19. To that end, the University has implemented the following physical distancing/separation measures:

1. Employees should maintain at least a distance of 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people at all times;
2. Employees should avoid crowded places and avoid mass gatherings;
3. Employees should refrain from entering other employees’ offices and cubicles, utilizing electronic communication, where possible.
4. Employees should avoid physical contact with others, such as hugging and handshakes.
5. Employees should avoid those who appear to be demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19.
6. To assist with physical distancing in dining halls, furniture has been removed and additional signage, floor markings and stanchions will be utilized.
7. Signage has been placed throughout campus in every building, including on display boards, at time clocks, and in other highly visible locations. This signage includes CDC guidelines and other safe practices.
8. Plexiglass barriers are being installed for employee work stations in high density, public areas that involve regular face-to-face contact with others (e.g., Library help desk, office administrative coordinators, etc.)

9. Additional signage will be posted in all public places on campus, both interior and some exterior. This includes elevators, restrooms, conference rooms, lounges, and other places that individuals can congregate, as well as entry ways, benches and other exterior gathering places. Signage will encourage physical distancing and include capacity limitations.

10. Additional floor markings will be placed at locations where lines or groups potentially can form or need to form in order to facilitate physical distancing.

11. Physical spaces (e.g., classrooms, conference rooms, restrooms, break rooms, etc.) are being further analyzed to determine if any adjustments should be made to promote physical distancing while still complying with any applicable building code requirements.

12. Additional measures may be implemented by the supervisor of an assigned work area.

C. Personal Sanitation Measures

Employees should maintain good personal sanitation/hygiene, keeping the following in mind:

1. Frequent hand washing is the first line of defense against the spread of COVID-19. Employees should wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public places, or after coughing, sneezing, blowing their nose, or touching their face. If soap and water are not readily available, employees should use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

2. Employees are encouraged to carry their own hand sanitizer and keep some at their work stations.

3. Employees are encouraged to bring their own water to minimize use and touching of water fountains (and to use the hands-free, bottle filling stations where available).

4. Employees should minimize or avoid sharing personal items and work supplies with others.

In addition, the University has implemented the following measures in order to encourage people on the University’s campus to practice good sanitation/hygiene.

1. Hand sanitizer is available in various locations around campus.

2. Gloves will be made available to employees based on category of employment and job duties.

3. Hand washing and hygiene posters have been displayed in various locations around campus, including academic buildings, administrative buildings, and residence halls.

4. Supervisors will continue to remind employees of good hygiene practices, such as:
   a. Frequent hand washing;
   b. Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in the trash; if a tissue is unavailable, the cough or sneeze should be covered with the inside of an elbow, not the hands;
   c. Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth;
   d. Cleaning frequently touched surfaces often; and
   e. Keeping tissues and hand sanitizers easily accessible.

5. Additional measures may be implemented by the supervisor of an assigned work area.
D. Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

While, as discussed further below, the University has implemented significant cleaning and disinfecting measures, employees and departments will also be expected to assist with cleaning their workspaces and other high touch surface areas in their physical work environments. Cleaner and disinfectant will be provided in high traffic areas, as needed.

As it relates to cleaning and disinfecting the campus, the University has implemented the following protocols.

1. Deep cleaning has occurred in all academic buildings as well as other facilities around campus. It will also occur at regular intervals once areas open based on occupancy and use.
2. Open buildings are cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis at regular intervals, and as necessary based on occupancy and use.
3. Cleaning and disinfecting of high touch surface areas (such as controls, door handles, elevator panels, railings, copy machines, etc.) occurs on a regular basis.
4. Individual offices are/will be sanitized prior to an employee reoccupying the space, with a sign noting that this has occurred. After returning to campus, assistance with cleaning of personal workspaces then becomes the responsibility of the occupants, though routine cleaning by the University will occur as before.
5. Portable ultraviolet lights are used in spaces considered higher risk areas.
6. An electrostatic disinfecting sprayer is utilized where appropriate, such as locker rooms, shower areas, shuttle buses, etc.
7. Additional cleaning measures will be taken if the University is notified that an individual is/was on campus with a positive diagnosis of COVID-19.
8. Additional measures may be implemented by the supervisor of an assigned work area.

IX. Library Access

Beginning July 6, 2020, the University Libraries will be open, with some adjustments to operations. More details are available in the University Libraries COVID-19 Operations Plan.

X. Dining Services

In-person dining areas will be adjusted in order to promote physical distancing and abide by state and local capacity guidelines. In addition, all meals will be available as to-go options in take-out containers along with individually wrapped utensils. More information is available on the Dining Services Webpage and in the Dining Services Plan.

XI. Recreation Services

Beginning July 6, 2020, Recreation Services will resume operations, with adjustments to locations, hours, and programming. More information is available in the Recreation Services Plan.
XII. Campus Events and Community Engagement

This pandemic has caused disruption to the University’s regular campus events and community engagement opportunities. However, it is expected that these types of experiences will begin again later this summer. When they do continue, they will be conducted in accordance with established guidelines, the specifics of which will be communicated at a later date.

XIII. Campus Visitors

Visitors on campus—including vendors, contractors, suppliers, guests, and members of the general public—are expected to abide by face mask requirements, physical distancing guidelines, and personal sanitation/hygiene measures, as described in this plan. Additional information is available in the Campus Visitors Plan.

XIV. Travel Standards

The following travel standards have been put in place in response to the ongoing pandemic and shall remain in effect until an express directive from the President revises or discontinues them.

A. University-Sponsored/Funded Travel

The following standards apply to University-sponsored/funded travel:

1. International Travel: All University-sponsored/funded international travel, including Study Abroad, is suspended. An employee can request an exception from the President, but exceptions will only be granted in rare circumstances.

2. Domestic Travel-Outside the State of Indiana: University-sponsored/funded domestic travel outside the State of Indiana for faculty, staff, and students is suspended. An exception can be requested from the appropriate Vice President or Dean. When making decisions regarding requests for exceptions, Vice Presidents and Deans will consider the destination, reason for travel, duration, and how important it is to the University’s mission.

3. Domestic Travel-Within the State of Indiana: University-sponsored/funded travel within the State of Indiana is allowable in a manner consistent with standard University and departmental policies and practices. However, alternatives to physical travel is encouraged where practicable (e.g., having a phone conference instead of traveling off campus for a face-to-face meeting). In addition, based on future governmental directives and guidance, the University may further restrict University-sponsored/funded travel to higher-risk areas within Indiana as the pandemic progresses.

4. Reimbursements for Cancelled Work-Related Travel: For information regarding employee travel that has been cancelled by either the traveler or the host due to COVID-19, and how to proceed with refunds and reimbursements, visit the Travel Website.
B. Personal Travel

Employees must abide by CDC travel recommendations for personal international travel, including staying at home and monitoring their health for 14 days after returning to the United States. Information about the CDC’s recommendations for international travel can be found here.

The CDC does not generally issue advisories or restrictions for travel within the United States. However, cases of COVID-19 have been reported in all states, and some areas are experiencing community spread of the disease. Crowded travel settings, like airports and airplanes, may increase chances of getting COVID-19 if there are other travelers with coronavirus infection. Employees are strongly encouraged to review the factors identified by the CDC when considering whether it is safe to travel domestically. Information about the CDC’s recommendations for domestic travel can be found here.

Finally, consistent with the self-certification process, every employee must monitor for symptoms related to COVID-19 before coming to work and this must be done on a daily basis. This is particularly important after traveling.

C. New Self-Certification Form Required after International Travel

An employee who has traveled outside of the United States since last completing a self-certification form, as described in the Employee Health Screening Process section of this plan, will again be required to complete the form. The form will prompt the employee to contact University Human Resource Services if the international travel occurred within the past 14 days, in which case the employee will be advised as to whether or not a self-quarantine period is advisable, based upon the circumstances and destination of the travel.

XV. Procurement

For more information regarding the coordination of the University’s procurement needs during this time, please review the COVID-19 Procurement FAQs.

XVI. Wellness

This pandemic can be stressful both personally and in the workplace. Employees should be mindful of their well-being and take steps to cope with this situation in a positive way (e.g., eat healthy, exercise, get sleep, talk with a trusted acquaintance, take breaks from the news and social media, etc.). The CDC has published information about Coping with Stress during this time. In addition, employees are encouraged to visit the BSU Working Well Website for more information about resources available through the University.
XVII. General Resources

Please consult the University's COVID-19 Website for more information on the University's response to this pandemic. In addition, other general resources include:

1. CDC Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
2. World Health Organization information on COVID-19
3. Prevention and Treatment tips (CDC)
4. Indiana State Department of Health
5. Latest guidelines and updates from the CDC
6. Delaware County Coronavirus Hub

XVIII. Requests for Leave or Disability Accommodations

If an employee has or may have a need for leave or disability accommodations related to COVID-19, the employee should contact University Human Resource Services.

XIX. Questions or Concerns

If an employee has questions or concerns regarding safety on campus in light of the pandemic or this plan, those issues should be discussed with their supervisor and, if not resolved, Employee Relations or Environmental Health and Safety should be contacted.