The University of Massachusetts Lowell is committed to providing guidelines and best practices that will help keep employees safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The University has developed the following Guide for Returning to the Workplace to assist employees returning to campus. This guide will be updated as federal and state restrictions are modified. This guide provides protocols for the general population. More specific COVID-19 work plans may be developed for specific departments, trades, tasks and evolutions.

Training Video (to come)

All employees are required to watch the COVID-19 Guide for Returning to the Workplace Video. Your supervisor may arrange for more specific training on any department specific plans applicable for your work.

Health and Safety Practices

A. Daily Self-Monitoring Requirement: The daily monitoring of one’s health and well-being aids in early detection of infectious disease and is one of the most effective measures to prevent community spread of COVID-19.

All staff are required to review the University’s COVID-19 Daily Self Checklist prior to reporting to work. If upon completing the self-check, you answer YES to any of the questions you MUST STAY HOME, notify your supervisor and call or email Kim Casey, Director of Compensation and Benefits at 978-934-3557 or COVID19HR@uml.edu.

If you start to feel sick during your shift, you are to notify your supervisor, go home and contact Kim Casey as indicated above.

B. Social Distancing: Until we have a vaccine or definitive treatment for COVID-19, social distancing is a very effective prevention strategy! It is important for everyone to practice social distancing to the greatest extent possible. Social distancing or physical distancing means staying at least 6 feet from other people at all times.

C. Face Coverings: Per Massachusetts order by Governor Baker face masks or cloth face coverings are required to be worn in when you can’t maintain social distancing (greater than 6 ft.). This applies to both indoor and outdoor spaces. It is recommended that face
coverings be kept on your person and be worn when it is possible that you may come within 6 feet of another person. Wearing a face covering helps to protect others by containing respiratory droplets when you cough, sneeze or speak. Since individuals can be contagious before the onset of symptoms, you may be contagious and do not know it. If you cover your nose and mouth, it can limit the spread of COVID-19. Another good reason to use face coverings is you touch your face less when your face is covered. Touching your face after touching something contaminated with COVID-19 increases your chances of getting sick with COVID-19. Please refer to the Face Coverings FAQ and Knowing the Difference of the Types of Face Coverings for more information.

D. Laboratory Environments: Specific resources have been developed for individuals working in laboratory environments. Please visit EH&S COVID-19 Information for Labs website.

E. Personal Protective Equipment: These guidelines are not meant to override existing requirements for use of Personal Protective Equipment that is required for your work on campus. Where there is a discrepancy between these guidelines and established Personal Protective Equipment requirements, seek further guidance from your supervisor and/or Environmental Health and Safety.

Personal Hygiene Guidelines

It is important that you continue to follow the CDC and public health guidance which includes:

A. Wash your Hands – use soap and water and wash for at least 20 seconds. To prevent the spread of germs, wash your hands often throughout the day, especially after coughing, sneezing, using or cleaning restrooms, and before handling food.
B. Use hand sanitizer when you are on the go and cannot wash.
C. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
D. Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash.
E. Don’t Share drinks, food, utensils, or similar items.
F. Clean shared equipment before and after each use.
G. If you are sick, stay home. Avoid close contact with others.

Workplace Settings

A. Staffing: Departments will evaluate and change the configuration of their spaces to ensure that social distancing 6 ft. can be maintained within the work area. Departments may also use a rotation of on-site and off-site employees, allowing staff who are able to do so to work from home during off-site periods. This may require staggering of on-site employee shifts or relocation of workstations.
B. **Working in Office Environment:** Departments should assess open work environments and meeting rooms to institute measures to physically separate and increase distance between employees, other coworkers, and visitors.

If you work 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.

If more than one person is in a room, face coverings should be worn at all times. A face covering is not required if you are working alone in a confined office space (does not include partitioned work areas in a large open environment).

Face coverings should be worn by any employee in a reception/receiving area. Face coverings should be used when inside any UMass Lowell facility where others are present, including walking in circulation areas such as corridors where others travel and in break rooms, conference rooms and other meeting locations.

C. **Meetings:** It is strongly encouraged to conduct meetings via web-based tools, such as Skype, Zoom or traditional conference calls. In person meetings will be limited in size to no more than 10 people. Meeting rooms must have chairs removed, and remaining chairs set up to provide at least 6 ft. social distancing between attendees.

D. **Campus Vehicle Usage:** Only one person is allowed per vehicle. Prior to initial daily entry, vehicle interior, steering wheel, high touch surfaces, and door handles should be cleaned with disinfectant wipes, or disinfecting spray approved for use against the COVID-19 virus.

E. **Elevator Usage:** When using the elevator maintain social distancing by staying 6 feet apart in the elevator if that is not possible ride solo or take the stairs.

F. **Hallway usage:** Wear face coverings in hallways when there is a possibility to come within 6 ft. of others.

G. **Breaks:** Lunch and intermediate breaks will be taken with standard social distancing practices of 6 feet of separation being observed. It may be necessary to stagger lunch periods and breaks to allow for this social distancing.

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**Cleaning/Disinfecting**

UMass Lowell has a trained and professional maintenance staff that is responding to the needs of campus in regard to the COVID-19 on a daily basis. In addition to the standard cleaning protocols, the university has implemented an enhanced cleaning frequency to clean and disinfect common areas and commonly touched surfaces.
All UMass Lowell 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, desks and tables, light switches, door knobs, etc.).

A. **Cleaning** can be done with soap and water, or by wiping down with disinfectant spray or wipes. It is recommended that EPA-approved disinfectants against COVID 19 be used for this purpose. Cleaning may be all that is necessary in your work area if surfaces and objects are not being touched throughout the day by multiple persons.

B. **Disinfection** must be done using EPA-approved disinfectants against COVID 19 complying with recommended contact times listed for these disinfectants. Disinfection is important for surfaces and objects touched by multiple persons through the day. Frequency of disinfection will be determined by the amount of exposure to touching by multiple people.

In the event that the University is notified of a positive COVID-19 Case with on campus exposure, Facilities Management have plans developed to clean, sanitize and disinfect the affected area as appropriate.

For more information about UMass Lowell’s response to the coronavirus pandemic, go to [https://www.uml.edu/alert/coronavirus/](https://www.uml.edu/alert/coronavirus/).

*The work practices established above are designed to provide protection consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidance.*