



# UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND

INNOVATION FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET



## RETURN TO CAMPUS PLAN FOR EMPLOYEES

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

June 2020

## **INTRODUCTION**

The University of New England's ("UNE") return to workplace plan is grounded in concern for the health and safety of all members of the UNE community as we transition back to campus work. The goal of the transition policies and on-campus requirements outlined below are to promote the safety of our employees, students, and community as UNE continues its educational mission during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This plan aligns, and is consistent with, protocols and best practices recommended by OSHA, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Maine CDC, as well as the State of Maine and local governmental orders. Some of the policies we are implementing are more stringent than those recommended by the aforementioned agencies, out of an abundance of caution for the members of our community. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve and new information becomes available, this plan will be updated or rescinded as appropriate, and changes will be communicated to employees. Although it is impossible to guarantee that there will be no transmission of COVID-19 in the workplace, we believe that rigorous compliance with this plan will minimize such risks.

All employees (including students, when they are working as UNE employees) are expected to fully comply with the requirements in this plan. If there are questions about the plan, please contact your manager or Human Resources (HR) office. Failure to comply with this plan may result in corrective action.

Employees who work in certain departments or clinics may also be subject to more specific protocols. Employees in those departments or clinics are also expected to follow those more specific protocols in addition to the requirements of this general plan. Once finalized, these specific protocols will be found on the UNE website.

## **ON-SITE WORK, REMOTE WORK, AND HYBRID WORK ARRANGEMENTS**

President Herbert announced that UNE will be open for classroom instruction in Academic Year 2020-2021. In this case, most employees who work directly with and in support of students, and employees who perform functions essential to the student on-campus experience, will be working on campus.

Employees whose positions do not involve direct work and support of students and whose work can be fully performed remotely will be asked to continue to work remotely until further notice.

In other cases, employees may be in positions in which they can perform some functions remotely but will need to be on campus to perform other functions. Employees will be informed by their managers of any such expectations.

Employees who have been notified to return to work on campus and have concerns about doing so should contact Human Resources at [HR-COVID19Questions@une.edu](mailto:HR-COVID19Questions@une.edu).

## **WORK SCHEDULES AND SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE WORKPLACE**

In an effort to reduce density on campus and maintain appropriate social distancing while providing effective student services, managers whose departments have employees on campus may institute temporary work schedule changes. The final decision as to whether any temporary option is feasible will be made by Human Resources.

## RETURNING TO CAMPUS OR COMING TO CAMPUS

UNE has instituted a number of initiatives regarding cleaning, social distancing, and other measures designed to enhance the health and safety of our community while on campus.

All employees who return to work on campus, or who come to campus for work purposes, must comply with the following requirements.

### Travel

The travel restriction that UNE implemented in March 2020 is still in effect. As such, there is a halt until further notice. This includes both domestic and international travel. Employees who travel regularly as part of their job (such as medical directors) will typically continue to do so but should check with their deans or other unit directors. Your dean or senior administrator will determine if travel is essential. Ultimate approval will come from the Provost (academic areas) and the Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration (all areas).

### Daily Self-Monitoring

Early detection of illness can prevent the spread of COVID-19 to colleagues, students and others. UNE faculty and professional staff must monitor their health daily. Employees must stay home if they are sick and if any of the following symptoms or circumstances apply to them:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Cough
- Temperature exceeds 100.4 F when measured with a household thermometer
- New loss of smell or taste
- Sore throat
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Anyone in your household has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or has exhibited COVID-19 symptoms (listed above) within the last 14 days.
- Have had close contact (within 6 feet for 15 or more minutes) with anyone outside your home who has a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis or COVID-19 symptoms within the last 14 days.

Employees with any of these symptoms or circumstances must contact their immediate supervisors and Human Resources at [HR-COVID19Questions@une.edu](mailto:HR-COVID19Questions@une.edu) to inform them that they cannot report to work. Employees who become ill at work or exhibit any of these symptoms must also contact their immediate supervisor and Human Resources and leave work.

## **Cloth Face Masks/Coverings and Other PPE**

Cloth face masks/coverings must be worn by all employees working on campus, except in the circumstances specified below. Appropriate use of face masks/coverings is critical in minimizing risks to others, according to federal and state CDC guidance. Individuals can spread COVID-19 to others even when they do not feel sick. Wearing a face mask/covering alone is not sufficient, however. It is still critical to maintain social distancing and practice good hygiene as described later in this plan. The only exceptions to when face masks/coverings must be worn are the following:

- An employee is alone in a private office/confined space;
- An employee is performing work outside (landscapers, security, etc.) and is able to maintain social distance at all times (if in proximity to others, a face mask/covering must be worn);
- An employee with approval from Human Resources as a result of reasonably accommodating a disability in accordance with federal and state law.

UNE will provide a cloth face mask to each employee (employees whose positions require the use of specific PPE will provided any such PPE). Employee who feels they need additional PPE should consult with their manager, who will review the request with Human Resources.

## **Social Distancing**

Social or “physical” distancing is a critical element in preventing the spread of COVID-19, according to CDC guidelines. This means keeping at least six feet (about two arms’ length) away from other people outside your own home and avoiding gathering in large groups or crowded places.

At UNE, all members of our community will be required to adhere to social distancing guidelines. This means not shaking hands and maintaining appropriate distance from others anywhere on campus. In many areas of campus there will be directions and/or signage to assist individuals in social distancing, and employees are required to adhere to any such directions and signage.

Outside of the workplace, employees are also asked to maintain appropriate social distancing at all times.

## **Hand Hygiene**

Employees are expected to wash their hands on a regular basis throughout the work day, particularly when arriving and leaving work, after touching their face, touching communal surfaces, coughing or sneezing, or using bathroom facilities. Handwashing (at least 20 seconds of washing with soap and water) is preferred. Hand sanitizer stations are also available and will be maintained across the campus.

## **Cough Etiquette**

Like other respiratory viruses, COVID-19 is transmitted through droplets that are spread into the air when speaking, sneezing, or coughing. Employees should cough or sneeze into their elbow or use a tissue, covering both their mouth and nose, and then immediately wash their hands as described above.

## Meals and Breaks

To minimize the risk of transmission of COVID-19, managers may institute measures to maintain appropriate social distancing during meal and break times, such as staggering meal/break times. Employees are required to wear a face mask/covering when they are not actively eating; practice social distancing; and wash their hands before and after meals.

## Keeping Work Areas Safe

Campus common areas, such as restrooms, elevators, and reception areas, and frequently touched surfaces are being cleaned at increased intervals by our Campus Services professional staff.

We require employees to clean and disinfect their personal work area daily. Any frequently touched areas should be cleaned with a household disinfectant or 70 percent alcohol cleaner. This includes your computer workstation, keyboard, mouse, desk, phone, door handles, and any other frequently touched areas. For your convenience, sanitation stations with equipment, supplies, product information, and usage guidelines will be located in centralized areas of each building. Anyone may request proper sanitation training through Housekeeping Services. Trash receptacles should be placed in the hallway, outside your office/work area, and they will be emptied.

## Meetings

Group meetings increase the risk of transmitting COVID-19. Accordingly, meetings should continue to be held in whole or part using the extensive range of available collaboration tools (e.g. Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, etc.). For informal discussions, employees are encouraged to communicate with colleagues and supervisors by email, instant message, telephone, or other available technology rather than face-to-face. If face-to-face meetings are absolutely necessary, such meetings should be limited to essential participants, and social distancing of six feet between participants is required.

## Elevators

No more than one person may enter an elevator at a time, so please do not use them for convenience. Instead, use the stairs whenever possible so that others who require the use of the elevator are allowed to do so. Whether taking the stairs or the elevator, wear your face mask/covering and avoid touching the elevator buttons with your hands or fingers, if possible. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer upon departing the elevator or stairwell.