

Preliminary Guidance for Resuming In-Person Instruction at Postsecondary Education Institutions and Adult Education Programs

Introduction

The spread of COVID-19 disrupted the core operations of more than 300 postsecondary institutions in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (PA). These institutions were forced to scale down non-life sustaining operations and make a sudden pivot to distance and remote delivery of instruction to ensure continued learning for students. The field responded commendably to the aggressive mitigation efforts of the commonwealth and prioritized the health and safety of their students, faculty, and staff over continued routine operations.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) recognizes the role that postsecondary institutions play in the educational, economic, and social well-being of the commonwealth and is committed to supporting institutions as they transition back to in-person instruction while putting measures in place to protect their campus communities. PDE further recognizes that any determinations made about instruction, regardless of the modality, must acknowledge the interconnectedness of learning with the variety of operations, services, and activities that occur on campus. This includes the need for residential and student life facilities conducive to creating healthy, safe, and inclusive learning environments.

With this commitment in mind, PDE has developed guidance for safely resuming in-person instruction at colleges, universities, seminaries, trade schools, and adult basic education programs across PA. It considers the diversity of providers in the postsecondary sector and allows local, institution-led response teams to develop and coordinate each institution's unique path forward. The guidance includes general considerations to support healthy, safe, and inclusive learning environments when resuming in-person instruction, operations, services, and activities. Institutions should carefully review this guidance and determine the best strategies for their campus community.

This preliminary guidance is informed by what is currently known about COVID-19 and incorporates existing federal and state public health and safety recommendations directed at postsecondary institutions. It should also be noted that this guidance may change as new information becomes available. Lastly, it is imperative to point out that the PA guidance was informed by input and feedback from institutional leaders representing all sectors and regions of the commonwealth's postsecondary landscape.

SECTION I: Phased Reopening and Planning to Safely Resume In-Person Instruction

Plan For PA: Pennsylvania's Reopening and Recovery Plan

[Pennsylvania's reopening and recovery plan](#) is based on the designation of counties as red, yellow, and green. Each color designation signals how counties may implement social distancing and establish restrictions on work, instruction, non-essential operations, social interactions, and gatherings. Red, yellow, and green designations are data-driven and based on the following criteria established by the commonwealth¹:

1. Decrease in the Number of New Cases
2. Availability of Testing
3. Robust Surveillance and Monitoring Infrastructure
4. Adequate Health Care Capacity
5. Sufficient Supply of Personal Protective Materials

While the future of COVID-19 remains uncertain, decisions about designating counties as yellow or green and resuming non-life sustaining business operations are anchored in the principles of public health, safety, and economic vitality for all Pennsylvanians. With these principles in mind, the commonwealth continues to plan a path forward that will not only safely return its residents to work, but to a more resilient Pennsylvania.

Applying the Phased Reopening Plan to the Operations of Postsecondary Institutions

The red phase of the PA plan represents the most restrictive and aggressive mitigation efforts of the state and has the sole purpose of minimizing the spread of COVID-19 through aggressive social distancing, closure of non-life sustaining businesses, and building safety protocols. During the red phase, there is no provision for in-person instruction at postsecondary institutions in PA, with the exception of certain medical, nursing, and allied clinical health training programs. [Access information on these programs.](#)

In the yellow phase, limited in-person instruction may resume at institutions in PA. Additionally, clinical training and field experience for all individuals preparing for licensure and certification are also permitted. However, before resuming in-person instruction, operations, services, and activities, institutions must plan and implement strategies to support healthy, safe, and inclusive learning environments informed by guidance from the [Pennsylvania Department of Health](#) (DOH) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC).

¹ As new evidence and research emerge about the infectious and lethal nature of COVID-19, the commonwealth will assess these findings and adjust the gating criteria accordingly.

Procedures to increase personnel on campus who are essential to the provision of in-person instruction and other related operations are permitted as counties move across the various phases of the PA reopening plan. Figure 1 provides a list of allowable instruction, operations, services, and activities for postsecondary institutions and adult basic education programs that are organized within each of the three colored phases of PA's plan.

While institutions may choose to resume some level of in-person instruction and operations in the red, yellow, or green phases of the PA plan, the decision is ultimately an institutional one. Postsecondary institutions must consult state and federal guidance to inform their decision. It is possible that counties may transition from red, to yellow, to green, and back to yellow and red. Institutions should prepare for this possibility.

Figure 1. Overview of Allowable Instruction, Operations, Services, and Activities at Postsecondary Education Institutions and Adult Basic Education Programs by Phases Corresponding to Pennsylvania’s Phased Reopening Plan

Red Phase

- Telework required for all non-essential staff.
- Virtual-only instruction permitted.
- Clinical training and in-person instruction permitted for **selected programs** preparing individuals for licensure and that adhere to proper **social distancing guidelines**.
- Large gatherings are prohibited.
- Continue to adhere to **CDC, DOH,** and **PDE** guidance.
- Monitor **public health indicators** and adjust plans as necessary.

Yellow Phase

- Telework should continue for faculty and staff where feasible, especially for populations at higher risk for COVID-19.
- Limited in-person instruction that adheres to proper **social distancing guidelines** is permitted.
- Clinical training and field experience allowed for all individuals preparing for licensure and certification.
- Restrict gatherings of non-instructional activities to no more than 25 people.
- Continue to adhere to **CDC, DOH,** and **PDE** guidance.
- Monitor **public health indicators** and adjust plans as necessary.

Green Phase

- Institutions may more fully resume in-person instruction and other routine operations.
- Restrict large, non-instructional gatherings to no more than 250 people.
- Continue to adhere to **CDC, DOH,** and **PDE** guidance.
- Monitor **public health indicators** and adjust plans as necessary.

Considerations for Planning and Resuming In-Person Instruction

Pennsylvania's decisive action to respond aggressively to COVID-19 has reduced the spread of the virus and positioned the commonwealth to launch a measured and strategic approach to safely resuming in-person instruction and other routine operations on campus. However, any decision to resume the provision of these operations and services should mitigate risk to ensure a healthy, safe, and inclusive learning environment and mitigate community spread.

With this precaution in mind, **effective June 5, Pennsylvania will permit colleges, universities, seminaries, trade schools, and adult basic education programs in counties designated as yellow to resume limited, in-person instruction and other related operations**, provided they consult with the relevant guidance included in this document and informed by the [Pennsylvania Department of Health](#) (DOH) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC).

Postsecondary education institutions choosing to resume any of the in-person operations permitted during the various phases of PA's reopening plan are required to create their own Health and Safety Plan, or its equivalent, and make that plan available to the public before proceeding to resume in-person instruction, operations, services, and activities. The Health and Safety Plan must also be communicated to students, faculty, and staff. The plan should address, at minimum, the following set of strategies²:

- A strategy on how the institution will coordinate with local public health officials, or the equivalent of;
- A strategy to safely resume in-person instruction;
- A strategy to monitor health conditions on its campus community;
- A strategy to [mitigate and contain the spread of the virus](#) on campus, and to inform the DOH in the event that transmission occurs at the institution; and
- A strategy to communicate accurate and timely information to students, faculty, staff, and the communities it serves.

Additionally, the institution's plan should further address the following public health and safety measures³:

- Reinforce practices related to hygiene, sanitation, and face coverings on campus;

² Given the uncertainty related to the changing levels of community transmission of COVID-19, the commonwealth has initiated discussions with public health officials and other stakeholders about resurgence planning. The findings and determinations that emerge from these continued discussions will inform planning at all levels (i.e., state, county, local, etc.). Additional criteria to inform planning at the postsecondary level is forthcoming.

³ Specific guidance and considerations associated with each of these public health and safety measures are provided in Section II of this document.

- Implement social distancing interventions and make the necessary modifications to facilities that may create an environment conducive to healthy, safe, and inclusive learning;
- Review and adjust attendance requirements, absentee policies, and non-essential travel for students, individuals at high risk of COVID-19, and personnel; and
- Modify course modalities, schedules, and academic calendars to adapt to changing transmission levels and community spread of the virus.

The commonwealth will set the conditions necessary for institutions to resume in-person operations safely by committing to the following:

- Developing guidance and considerations for institutions;
- Requesting that local public health and emergency management officials collaborate with postsecondary institutions and adult basic education providers in developing and implementing their plans, if possible; and
- Aligning commonwealth resources and technical assistance to support institutional planning efforts.

Considerations for Resuming In-Person Instruction on Campus

The infectious and lethal nature of COVID-19 requires a well-researched and detailed plan prior to resuming in-person instruction and other related operations and services on campus. While the commonwealth has responded to requests for guidance that will allow institutions to resume some level of in-person instruction during the red or yellow phases of the reopening plan, such decisions ultimately rest with the institution.

The process for making this determination must begin with an assessment of institutional preparedness to mitigate risk and ensure a safe, healthy, and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Once preparedness has been determined or established, then the institution can make a decision about the level and capacity in which it can safely resume in-person instruction and other related operations on campus.

In an effort to assist postsecondary institutions in their planning, PDE has developed a checklist (see Figure 2) to assist institution-led response teams and administrators in assessing their preparedness, risks, and capacity to resume some level of in-person instruction and other related operations and services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 2. A Checklist to Assist Postsecondary Administrators and Institution Response Teams in Determining an Institution’s Ability to Mitigate and Manage Risk and the Level at Which it May Resume In-Person and Other Related Operations on Campus

| STEP 1: DETERMINE YOUR INSTITUTION’S PREPAREDNESS TO MITIGATE AND MANAGE RISKS | STEP 2: DETERMINE YOUR INSTITUTION’S CAPACITY TO RESUME IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Is the decision to resume in-person instruction consistent with state and local orders? ✓ Have you developed a plan consistent with the minimum requirements and expectations put forth by PDE? ✓ Have you begun to coordinate with local public health or emergency management officials? ✓ Do you have a strategy for the monitoring health conditions on your campus? ✓ Are you able to communicate accurate and timely information on COVID-19 related developments to staff, faculty, and students? ✓ Does your plan include a strategy for quarantine and isolation in the event transmission occurs on your campus or the county is designated as being in the red phase? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do you have a plan and adequate supplies to reinforce practices related to hygiene, sanitation, and face coverings on campus? ✓ Have you begun to implement necessary social distancing interventions needed to safely resume in-person instruction and other related operations on campus? ✓ Have you made the necessary modifications to your facilities to help create an environment conducive to healthy, safe, and inclusive learning? ✓ Have you reviewed and made adjustments to attendance requirements, absentee policies, and non-essential travel for students, individuals at high risk for COVID-19, and personnel? ✓ Have you modified course modalities, schedules, and academic calendars to adapt to the changing transmission levels and community spread of the virus? |
| <p>If YES to all, your institution is prepared to consider resuming in-person instruction and other related operations as permitted by the Governor’s orders.</p> | <p>If YES to all, your institution is prepared to make determinations about the provision of in-person instruction and the possible number of students you can accommodate on your campus.</p> |

Note. Guidance and general considerations associated with some of the items in the checklist are provided in Section II of the *Preliminary Guidance for Resuming In-Person at Postsecondary Education Institutions and Adult Education Programs*.

Section II: Considerations for Resuming In-Person Instruction and Other Operations at Postsecondary Institutions

This section provides a set of considerations to assist institution-led response teams in developing plans for resuming in-person instruction, operations, services, and activities in accordance with [Pennsylvania's phased reopening plan](#). These considerations are informed by guidance provided by the [Pennsylvania Department of Health](#) (DOH) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and organized around a set of general considerations related to the following⁴:

- Reinforcing practices related to hygiene, sanitation, and face coverings on campus;
- Implementing social distancing interventions and the necessary modifications to facilities to create an environment conducive to healthy, safe, and inclusive learning;
- Reviewing and adjusting attendance requirements, absentee policies, and non-essential travel for students, individuals at high risk for COVID-19, and personnel;
- Modifying course modalities, schedules, and academic calendars to adapt to changing transmission levels and community spread of the virus; and
- Establishing mitigation and containment protocols to reduce the spread of the virus if transmission occurs on campus.

Evidence pertaining to the infectious nature and severity of COVID-19 continues to emerge. Institutions must determine their best path forward amid this uncertainty. PDE recognizes that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to resuming in-person instruction and postsecondary education institutions each possess their own unique set of circumstances. While the PA reopening and recovery plan allows for local, institution-led response teams to develop and coordinate each institution's path forward, this guidance provides general considerations to support healthy, safe, and inclusive learning environments when resuming in-person instruction, operations, services, and activities. Institutions should carefully review this information to determine the best strategies for their campus community.

Institutions can expect to begin planning at different starting points—red, yellow, or green phases—of commonwealth's reopening and recovery plan. However, yellow or green does not mean that there is no cause for diligence to keep students, faculty, and staff on campus safe from this virus. It is important for institutions to consider their reopening priorities as people-first. Collaboration will be key to developing a plan for keeping campus communities safe from this virus, and institutions are expected to collaborate with public health officials and experts, if possible, and other available networks for resource sharing. PDE will continue to support the postsecondary community when planning to reopen higher education institutions.

⁴ DOH and the CDC have various infographics, signs, fact sheets, and flyers that may also serve as useful resources and are available on the [DOH COVID-19 resource page](#). These [materials are also available in Spanish, French, Chinese, and Nepali](#).

In closing, PDE encourages all postsecondary institutions to continuously monitor federal and state guidance and adjust their operations and planning to reflect updated guidance. Any future updates and changes to policy, guidance, or considerations will be available on [PDE's website](#).

Hygiene and Sanitation Protocols

Hygiene, Sanitation, and Face Coverings on Campus

Public health experts continue to emphasize the importance of personal hygiene, cleaning protocols, face coverings, and personal protective materials (when warranted) as a way to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and health and safety risks on campus. PDE recommends the following guidance and practices related to hygiene, sanitation, and face coverings to help inform institutional planning.

- Provide students with hygiene information and clearly post information in places that have high student traffic on campus.
- Place signs in key areas and reminders in restroom facilities to encourage handwashing.
- Supply appropriate hand sanitizer, hand wipes, or hand soap for students, staff, and visitors.
- Conduct regular cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and objects that are frequently touched. This includes cleaning objects or surfaces not ordinarily cleaned regularly (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, etc.).
- Disinfectant supplies should meet [EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\)](#).
- Follow additional [CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfecting community facilities](#).

Face Coverings and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Face coverings should be worn by all students, faculty, and staff in all classrooms, public shared spaces on campus, or in areas where social distancing cannot be observed.
- Institutions may require students to provide their own face coverings but must make their best effort to ensure an adequate supply of face coverings. The [DOH has provided guidance on how to make a homemade mask](#).
- Individuals unable to wear face coverings due to a health condition or disability should be encouraged to be extra cautious about maintaining proper social distance and observing all other hygiene protocols.
- Communicate face covering and hygiene practices to individuals on campus.
- When warranted, ensure the availability of personal protective materials, such as masks, face shields, or gloves required for a specific program or co-curricular activity.
- Institutions can acquire personal protective materials using the [Pennsylvania COVID-19 PPE & Supplies Business-2-Business \(B2B\) Interchange Directory](#).

Implementing Social Distancing Interventions and Modifying Facilities to Create an Environment Conducive to Safe, Healthy, and Inclusive Learning

Postsecondary institutions are places of congregation that assemble both large and small cohorts of students. Nearly half of all PA postsecondary institutions have residential programs and most all enroll students who commute or live off-campus, complicating risk management. COVID-19 requires that postsecondary institutions rethink the ways in which they conduct learning and other activities on campus. Therefore, PDE recommends the following guidance and practices related to social distancing, structural modifications, and repurposing of facilities to help inform institutional planning.

Social Distancing

- Students, faculty, and staff should maintain a safe social distance of at least 6 feet apart when feasible. This includes offices, classrooms, laboratories, hallways, restrooms, common areas, and outdoor spaces.
- Install plastic partitions or barriers into places where social distancing cannot be observed (e.g., student service counters, cash registers, dorm spaces, bathroom sinks, etc.).
- Provide guidance such as tape on floors or sidewalks to enforce social distancing.
- Limit appointments with student service offices (e.g., financial aid, registrar, etc.) to scheduled appointments for non-emergency issues.
- Encourage alternative methods of contact such as email, chat, and telephone calls.
- Other social distancing strategies include grouping students into cohorts that live on campus, use shared facilities, and attend courses together to minimize the frequency of contact.

Limit Large Non-Instructional Gatherings or Congregation in Communal Spaces

- While large gatherings are prohibited in the red phase, non-instructional gatherings should not exceed more than 25 people in the yellow phase and 250 in the green phase.
- Reduce common seating areas on campus, in classroom buildings (including the library), and in dining facilities.
- During periods of increasing or high community transmission, schools should consider further restricting gathering size of spectators for large events such as athletic games, socials, parades, homecoming activities or festivals.
- Student groups should be advised to host remote group events, gatherings, or meetings, to the extent possible.
- Stagger the use of gyms, game rooms, and lounges, and restrict the number of people allowed in at one time to ensure safe social distancing. Clean and disinfect between uses.
- Guidance on collegiate sports is forthcoming.

Limit Number of Students in the Classroom

- Consider limiting class size to accommodate appropriate social distancing of 6 feet between individuals when feasible or implement other social distancing strategies that reduce risk of transmission between students in the classroom.
- Consider taping off seats or rows to ensure social distancing.
- Consider holding smaller classes in larger spaces.
- Consider repurposing spaces such as gyms and large ballrooms as classrooms or labs to facilitate social distancing.
- Consider holding classes outside.

Control Entrance and Exits to Buildings

- Consider providing touchless entry to buildings where possible.
- Consider designating limited entrance points without prohibiting access for students and staff with disabilities.
- Post and communicate changes to building entrance procedures.

Space Accommodations

- Consider limiting occupancy in buildings to enable social distancing.
- Consider reconfiguring dining facilities and operations to ensure that students are 6-feet apart or that partitions are in place that provide added protection. Further, consider reducing seating and offering carry out and delivery options.
- Ensure that strategies and interventions implemented do not prohibit access for students with disabilities, including physical locations/spaces, instruction, student services, and activities if they are limited.
- Ensure all space accommodations follow ADA laws and regulations.

Residence Halls

- Develop guidelines for the use and cleaning of residence halls consistent with [CDC guidance](#).
- Decisions about residence hall capacity should be made in the best interest of the health and safety for students and in consultation with public health officials, if possible. Follow the [guidance provided by the CDC for Living in Shared Housing](#) to inform your planning.
- Encourage social distancing and urge residents to wear face coverings in any public shared spaces, except for roommates in individual dorm rooms.
- Communicate regularly with residents on the seriousness of COVID-19 and make them aware of institution policies and protocols related to COVID-19.
- Remind students not to congregate in communal areas.
- Consider any special needs or accommodations for special needs populations or populations most at-risk for COVID-19 who need to take extra precautions.
- Limit visitors and non-essential staff entering living quarters.

- Consider reserving a residence hall, a portion of a residence hall, or some other housing to quarantine exposed individuals or confirmed cases.
- Develop protocols for quarantine and containment for students living in residence halls.

Ventilation

- Ensure that ventilation and exhaust systems are properly operating and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible.
- Open windows if possible.

Bathroom Facilities

- Develop guidelines for the use and cleaning of bathrooms consistent with [CDC guidance](#).
- Practice 6 feet of social distancing, or other physical distancing strategies, when using bathroom facilities, including showers, sinks, toilets, and urinals.
- Consider separating shower stalls with physical barriers, where feasible, and clean regularly. If no barriers are in place, consider other social distancing practices like using every other shower stall or limiting the number of students at any given time.
- Consider assigning students to bathrooms and other facilities by zones, or other criteria, to limit cross contamination and to control traffic flow.

Clinical Health Services

- Plan to enhance your provision of health services, if possible.
- Campus health personnel and administrators should establish a protocol for reporting exposures, cases, and outbreaks of COVID-19 on campus to DOH.
- Encourage faculty and staff to access health services with their health care provider.
- Establish and publicize COVID-19 specific protocols.
- Establish protocols for limiting in-person visits and transitioning to telehealth when possible.

Mental Health Services

- Provide regular mental health services to students. Encourage faculty and staff to access mental health services through their health care provider.
- Establish and publicize provisions for walk-in emergency situations.
- Reinforce and update training for staff as needed, including residence hall advisors and resident assistants.
- Provide reminders of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefits for faculty and staff or consider signs for the national distress hotline: 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746.
- Promote wellness strategies to ensure all individuals on campus have opportunities to support their physical, emotional, and mental health, including eating healthy, exercising, getting sleep, and finding time to unwind and relax.

- Encourage everyone to take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media, when they are feeling overwhelmed.

Counter Stigma

- Self-reporting of symptoms and exposure by students, faculty, and staff is imperative to contain an outbreak of COVID-19 on campus and stigma can discourage self-reporting and self-quarantining.
- [Establish efforts to counter the stigma of getting the virus and self-quarantining](#). This could include posters, reminders by faculty in classes, and electronic communication.
- Develop policies that support self-quarantine and mitigate any negative impact of quarantine on grades, tenure, promotion, or employment status.

Accommodations for Faculty, Staff, and Students

As institutions gear up to bring more students and personnel back to campus, it remains critical to keep the workforce safe and mitigate fears they may have regarding getting sick or transmitting the virus to members of their family. Where possible and feasible, personnel should be allowed to telework or to combine telework with on-campus presence. The needs of vulnerable populations and the mental health of personnel should be considered when establishing return-to-work protocols. PDE recommends that plans developed by postsecondary institutions to resume in-person instruction and services adhere, to the extent possible, to the following standards, practices, and guidelines for personnel.

Vulnerable Populations

- Consider policies and practices to provide accommodations for individuals at higher risk of COVID-19 and individuals with disabilities.
- Ensure any accommodations for people with disabilities are consistent with ADA laws and regulations.
- Consider providing opportunities to telework for employees over 60, employees with underlying health conditions, or for employees who are experiencing a mental health crisis as a result of COVID-19.

Teleworking

- Continue telework whenever possible, even when in-person instruction, operations, services activities continue.
- Consider rotating schedules of employees on campus to limit the number of personnel on campus at one time.
- Consider implementing flexible attendance and leave policies.
- Avoid non-essential travel for students and employees.

General Considerations for a Phased Return to Campus, Course Modifications and Accommodations to Academic Calendars

PDE recognizes the challenges institutions face in balancing the continued learning and development of their students with the changing circumstances and disruption of the virus. The inability to provide students with opportunities to complete their programs will have lasting effects on the social and economic well-being of Pennsylvania.

Moreover, institutions rely heavily on clinical experiences and internship opportunities that require in-person instruction and training experiences. Institutions must balance decisions to resume in-person instruction and services with the need to ensure a safe learning environment. Institutions should consider a phased approach to repopulating the campus and incorporate varying levels of flexibility to account for changes in rates of local transmission of COVID-19 or concern by students and faculty about being on campus due to unique circumstances that are cause for concern.

Therefore, PDE recommends postsecondary institutions' plans to resume in-person instruction and other related services adhere, to the extent possible, the following best practices and standard related to returning to campus, course modifications, and accommodations to academic calendars.

Phased Return to Campus

- Consider a phased-in return to campus for students, faculty, and staff to meet the educational needs of students.
- Consider student cohorts (e.g., first-year students, living/learning communities, etc.) when bringing students back.
- Consider majors and disciplines for a phased-in restart (e.g., healthcare students, those with clinical requirements, etc.).

Course Modifications and Adaptations

- Identify opportunities for course modifications and adaptations conducive to various learning modalities and remote platforms.
- Consider varying in-person vs. remote learning course offerings creating options for those who need to be on campus and those who can continue remote learning for some portion of their credential.
- Consider hybrid models of teaching.
- Consider aligning practicum, clinical, field experience, and other forms of applied learning with changing opportunities as a result of COVID-19.
- Consider opportunities for synchronous learning through remote platforms at co-locations.

Accommodations to the Academic Calendar

- Consider an early term start and an early completion.
- Consider avoiding breaks in the middle of the term.
- Consider modules (2 eight-week models).
- Consider adjusting hours of operation (such as staggered start times).

Expectations Surrounding Voluntary Reporting and a Protocol for Handling a Confirmed Case on Campus

As campuses resume their operations by bringing back faculty and staff to campus and gear up for in-person instruction, postsecondary institutions must remain diligent regarding the presence of COVID-19 on their campus communities and the potential for a resurgence of the virus in the future. It is important that campuses continue to monitor the spread of the virus, and should someone on campus become infected, it is important to have a protocol in place contain and minimize the effects to others. PDE recommends that plans developed by postsecondary institutions to resume in-person instruction and other related services adhere to the following standards, practices, and guidelines for implementing mitigation efforts and containment protocols.

Monitoring, Surveillance, and Voluntary Reporting

- Students, faculty, and staff should report if they have visited an area of high prevalence (domestic or international) in the previous 14 days.
- Students, faculty, and staff should report if they know they have been exposed to anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Institutions should screen for [symptoms of COVID-19](#), including temperature checks, where high volumes of students reside, where prior COVID-19 exposure has occurred, or when levels of community spread increase. Individuals exhibiting symptoms:
 - Must not be permitted to enter campus buildings.
 - Must self-quarantine on campus, if possible, or at home.
 - Must not report to work, class, clinical assignments.
 - May not participate in any institution-sponsored events or activities.
 - Should consult with their medical provider about options for testing and necessary treatment.
- Institutions and individuals can utilize the [CDC's "Self-Checker"](#) to assist in making decisions in regards to seeking medical care.
- If a student, faculty, or staff has been exposed, they should be asked to self-quarantine (on campus, if possible, or at home) for 14 days and to follow additional [state guidance](#).

Protocol for a Confirmed Case on Campus

- Notify DOH or local health officials and emergency management personnel.
- Determine if a temporary suspension (2-5 days) of in-person instruction is warranted.

- Clean and disinfect all areas thoroughly per [CDC guidance](#).
- Communicate case or exposure information with students, staff, and faculty.
- Ensure continuity of education and research for all those impacted by any temporary suspension of in-person operations.
- Ensure continuity of safe housing for affected students.
- If individuals were in close contact with someone who became infected with the disease, follow [CDC guidance](#).
- Work with local public health officials, if possible, to determine when routine operations can resume on campus.
- [Access additional CDC guidance on dealing with confirmed cases on campus.](#)