



Medicine & Health Sciences

Date: July 28, 2020

To: All Faculty and Staff

RE: GW SMHS On Campus Update

As noted in school-wide communication from June 26th, the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) is following all available university and local government guidance regarding employee telework and return to on-site instruction. As you are all aware, epidemiologic knowledge about Covid-19 continues to mature. This update communicates our current plans based on current knowledge and you should expect our plans will continue to evolve.

RETURN TO CAMPUS: The university announced on Monday, July 27 that all undergraduate courses will be conducted online for the fall semester, with limited exceptions. However, SMHS is continuing to plan for a modified return to on-campus instruction this fall.

We have re-opened some research labs, and a limited number of faculty members with on-campus clinical skills teaching responsibilities are returning to campus. However, we do not have a timeline for when additional employees will be called back to on-site work. We will continue to provide updated information and guidance to our community members as GW receives more information regarding the re-opening of the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland. *[NOTE: Specific guidance on how to craft re-opening plans is being sent to managers and chairs today.]*

Unless otherwise instructed, please continue to telework until further notice.

COVID-19 TESTING: While the [university currently expects](#) to offer COVID-19 testing for on-campus students, faculty, and staff upon their return to campus, SMHS is not mandating this policy for our faculty, employees or students. If you wish to participate in the university surveillance testing program, you have that option. Testing will also be available for all members of our on-campus community who report a potential exposure to COVID-19 or are experiencing symptoms. The university should be announcing further details regarding testing availability and logistics soon.

COVID-19 DIAGNOSES & EXPOSURES:

If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, you should seek medical attention from your healthcare provider and NOT report to work.

If you have been *diagnosed* with COVID-19, you should notify your supervisor that you are sick. Please be advised you are not required to disclose your health condition and/or provide medical documentation directly to your supervisor. You can inform your HR representative of your medical condition. The university reserves the right to request medical documentation.

****If you believe you or someone you know may have been exposed to COVID-19, [please complete this form](#).****

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT: In accordance with the District of Columbia's [mask order](#), GW requires that all faculty, employees and students on campus wear masks when in public spaces, in our buildings, and walking around campus. Outside of clinical settings, cloth face masks are recommended for most members of the campus community. GW has created a [video](#) on how to wear and properly care for all face coverings. If you are interested in making a face covering at home, the CDC has provided a [guide](#) on how to construct your own face covering.

If you have additional questions regarding SMHS PPE guidance or need assistance sourcing PPE, please contact Erica Grant (esgrant@gwu.edu).

CLEANING & ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS: GW facilities staff have been working to prepare a safe environment for students, faculty and staff by following the guidelines set forth by the [CDC](#) (e.g. disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and placing hand sanitizer stations in public areas.) For more information regarding building use, safety, and hygiene guidance within SMHS spaces (including 2000 Penn, the Watergate, and VSTC), please see the [SMHS Reopening webpage](#).

We are also conducting air-flow/ventilation analyses of our spaces across campus. Within Ross Hall, we are currently performing preventive maintenance on all air handler units, including a full inspection of all units, adjusting belts, greasing fittings and changing filters. The building functions on 100% outside air (no recirculation), and there are 8 air changes per hour (ACH), due to the fact that Ross Hall is a research building. Other commercial buildings, including the Watergate, 2000 Penn, and several on the VSTC campus have an average ACH of 4 - 6, which meets national building code.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: For additional information regarding university policy and procedures related to COVID-19, please refer to GW's [coronavirus site](#). GW's live-answer Information Line for COVID-19-related questions is also available from Monday through Friday (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and can be reached at 1-855-GWU-INFO (855-498-4636).

You can also contact SMHSNews@gwu.edu with additional questions or comments.