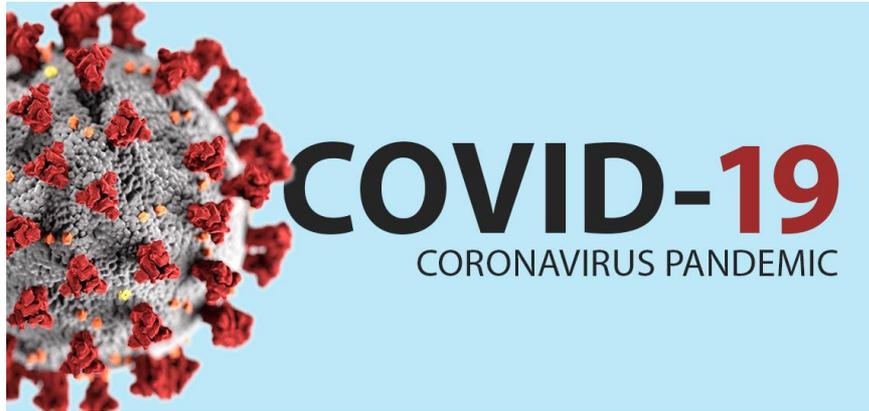


# COVID-19 Guide for Staff

Fall 2020





For the latest information check these websites:

[CDC: COVID-19](#)

[Massachusetts: COVID-19 Updates and Information](#)

[Williams College COVID-19 page](#)

[HR Info for Staff & Faculty](#)

# A Guide for Staff

We have attempted to curate the relevant policies and protocols for staff working on campus this fall. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all safety measures being put into place.

This experience has also shown us that information and guidance continue to evolve. We will make every effort to keep this as up to date as possible. Please continue to reference state resources and the CDC for the most up to date public health guidance.

# Community Expectations

All Williams faculty, staff, and students returning to campus are expected to sign a Community Health Commitment that affirms their understanding of procedures and policies, as well as their commitment to the Williams community.

This is an important step in affirming our shared responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of our community.

# Compliance and Conditions of Employment

The college has a legal obligation to provide a safe working environment and part of the responsibility lies with the workers themselves. Protection from COVID-19 is not something that the college, as an institution, can guarantee without the help of the entire college community.

Safety requires everyone to comply with the new rules such as testing, symptom monitoring, hygiene, and social distancing.

If an employee does not comply with these rules and protocols they will not be permitted to work.

# COVID-19 Workplace Training

In addition to safety standards for maintaining social distancing, hygiene protocols, cleaning, and disinfecting, the college has implemented a required training for **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Prevention in the Workplace** by Safety Skills.

Safety Skills uses your work email/Google login, so it should automatically log you in.

If you have any trouble logging in, contact the OIT help desk.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Christina Sanborn, Executive Director for Facilities Operations.

# Required Face Coverings

- Employees are required to wear face coverings at all times in college buildings, with the exception of when you are alone in your office.
- Multiple employees working in an open space, even with cubicle barriers, will be required to wear face coverings.
- Employees are required to wear face coverings outdoors on campus when social distancing of six feet or more is not possible.
- The CDC does not recommend face shields as a substitute for face coverings.
- Employees who cannot wear a face covering for medical reasons will be asked to wear a specialized face shield, which will be provided by the college. (medical documentation required)

Employees who willfully violate these requirements are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

# Campus Signage



The college has created health and safety signage including directionals, occupancy notifications and hygiene reminders. If your departments would like signage or has specific signage needs please contact Matt Sheehy at [ms18@williams.edu](mailto:ms18@williams.edu)

# Health & Travel Attestations

State regulations require employees working on campus to attest daily that they have no symptoms and have complied with state travel guidelines.

OIT is working with departments on tailored solutions for their respective area. Stayed tuned for more details.

# What Happens If Employee Attests “Yes” To Having Symptoms?

If the employee attests that they have symptoms, they will be directed to stay home and contact their health care provider.

Seasonal allergies are not considered a NEW symptom and do not warrant someone needing to leave work.

Additional resources: Berkshire Health Systems COVID-19 Hotline at 1-855-262-5465, or the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center COVID-19 Hotline at 802-440-8844.

# What if I have had close contact with COVID?

If you have been in close contact with a confirmed positive COVID case, you are required to stay home. The employee should first contact their primary care physician (PCP) for guidance on possible self-isolation or testing.

Close contact is defined as having physical contact, or close contact (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more), shared environment (restaurants, offices), and sharing food and bathrooms.

If your doctor suggests self-isolation, employees should contact Danielle Gonzalez or Tammi Burnett in HR to discuss their situation.

Note: if you have not established a PCP and need care you can contact Beth Mantello, Practice Manager, at Community Health Programs 413-664-4088 ext. 1800

# Campus Testing Program

Employees coming to campus in high contact jobs are required to be tested weekly for COVID-19.

Employees in low contact jobs, are not required, but encouraged, to participate in weekly testing.

If you anticipate missing a week for any reason, please email us at [covid-info-facstaff@williams.edu](mailto:covid-info-facstaff@williams.edu) in advance. This will help with tracking and compliance reporting.

There is no cost for testing. Please note, the college cannot test spouses or dependents.

# Privacy & COVID-19

The college has implemented a robust testing program in an effort to create a safe work environment and comply with Massachusetts infectious disease preventative measures.

Employees will sign a consent and authorization form for testing.

Testing results will be kept confidential in HR as part of the employee health record in their benefits file.

Testing done through the college's testing program and contact tracing are not subject to Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) laws.

# In the event of a positive COVID-19 test

Faculty and staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 through the campus testing protocol will be notified by Dr. Marc Pettus, from Berkshire Medical Center, and will be directed to contact their primary health care provider.

Danielle Gonzalez, Director of HR:

- will be notified and will inform the individual supervisor or department head that they are ill and will be out of work. (Note: you are not required or expected to share your specific diagnosis.)
- will contact the individual regarding the applicable leave benefits.
- will also work with facilities to ensure campus spaces are appropriately disinfected.

The local Massachusetts contact tracer, Leslie Drager, will also be notified, and you will be expected to participate fully in all contact tracing efforts.

# Returning to work after a COVID illness

For safety reasons, and in accordance with applicable guidance from public health authorities, individuals who test positive for COVID-19 may not come to campus until permission is given by the college, which may require the individual to seek additional testing or provide other medical documentation releasing them to return to work.

Individuals will need to seek treatment through their primary physician. College insurance plans cover the cost of medically necessary COVID-19 tests performed off-site. Employees may still be responsible for a physician office copay.

Note: if you have not established a PCP and need care you can contact Beth Mantello, Practice Manager, at Community Health Programs 413-664-4088 ext. 1800

# Asymptomatic Testing Only

Please remember that the Williams testing program is for asymptomatic testing only. If you feel unwell or think you might have been exposed to Covid, don't come to campus but instead contact your medical provider directly.

You can also call the Berkshire Health Systems Covid-19 Hotline at 855-262-5465 or the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center Covid-19 Hotline at 802-440-8844.

# Determining the end of self-isolation

**If you test positive for COVID-19 or had COVID-19 symptoms** and were directed to care for yourself at home, you can leave home after these 3 things have happened:

- It has been at least 10 days since their symptoms first appeared and they are currently symptom-free; **and**
- They have been free of fever (temperature of 100.4 degrees fahrenheit) for at least 72 consecutive hours without the use of fever-reducing medications; **and**
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).

Typically a doctor's note is not needed to return to work.

# When to use sick time & COVID-19 time.

Employees should not report to work if they are sick, have COVID-19 symptoms, or have had close contact with suspected or confirmed case.

Supervisors may send an employee home if they come to work sick.

If the employee is waiting to be tested or is waiting for test results, or test positive and must be out of work, the employee will receive COVID-19 full pay.

Supervisors should contact [Danielle Gonzalez](#) or [Tammi Burnett](#) in HR with any questions.

# What if I get the flu or other illness?

If an employee is sick they should not report to work or for testing on campus.

They should contact their medical provider for advice and possible treatment.

They should not return to work until they have been free of fever for at least 72 consecutive hours without the use of fever-reducing medications.

If the employee is ill from non-COVID related illness, they are expected to use sick time.

# High-Risk & Immunocompromised Employees

Employees who are at high-risk for severe illness due to COVID-19, have an underlying health condition, or have a dependent child or an adult dependant with a disability who is immunocompromised and cannot perform their job remotely may seek an accommodation/exemption request through HR.

If the employee can work remotely, they will be allowed to do so.

If there is no remote work, the employee will be asked to report COVID-19 time. FMLA may be initiated in some cases.

# Travel

College business travel has been suspended for the duration of the calendar year. Exceptions for essential business travel must be approved by your respective senior staff member.

Should an employee travel for personal reasons (not related to medical appointments or regular commute to campus), they must use vacation or personal days to cover all time, including the possibility of self-quarantine imposed by state regulations after their trip.

Effective Aug. 1st, the new travel order requires a Massachusetts Travel Form and Quarantine for 14 days or produce a negative COVID-19 test result that has been administered up to 72-hours prior to your arrival in Massachusetts.

# Working Parents and Schools

Many areas schools have not made their decision for fall yet and childcare coverage may not be existent or full time. We recommend that employees begin conversations with their supervisors now as to what flexibility there is in meeting work requirements.

We encourage everyone to be open-minded to flexible solutions, these may include:

- Working remotely
- Changing shifts
- Reducing hours
- Staggered days
- Changing work locations

If an individual has lost childcare due to COVID and cannot perform their job remotely they may seek an accommodation/exemption request through HR.

# Remote Work

In an effort to lower density on campus, staff who can successfully do their work remotely should continue to do so through the end of the calendar year. We recognize this will vary by department and job.

Department heads will need to analyze critical services needs and staffing levels to determine what is appropriate for their needs. We encourage departments to think creatively and flexibly to meet short and medium-term needs. Any long-term or formal telework arrangements should follow the college's Remote Work Policy.

Permission to continue to work remotely is subject to review on an ongoing basis.

# Remote Work Setups & Supplies

Consistent with the telecommuting policy, the college is not responsible for expenses associated with working at home, such as heat, electricity, internet service provider subscription, phone, etc.

OIT has assisted many staff already in setting up their office computers at home. The college can not provide two computers for employees.

Individuals should work with their manager on the use and purchase of basic office supplies typical in office supply closets.

Tips for setting up your home office can be found under COVID-19 Information and Resources for Staff on the HR website.

# Managing Remote Employees

**Review technology needs and resources:** Review the technology your team will need to effectively work remotely. Consult with OIT staff for any possible solutions, email [itsupport@williams.edu](mailto:itsupport@williams.edu) to start.

**Review work schedules:** Be sure to provide guidance to your team about expectations for work schedules. Will work hours be the same? Due to the current COVID-19 situation, be aware that more flexibility may be necessary if employees are juggling school closures, child care, and/or elder care responsibilities.

**Communicate:** Develop a communication plan for keeping in touch with your team. Clearly communicate specifics about accountability with your team. For example, if you used to visit your employees at their desks every day, you can still do this with a call or instant message/chat. It is also a good idea to keep a list of back-up telephone numbers for each of your team members in case of emergency.

# Managing Remote Employees cont'd

**Maintain meetings:** Maintain department meetings and one-to-one check-ins, altering the schedule, if needed, to accommodate any alternative schedules that have been approved.

**Check-ins:** Conduct regular check-ins with your employees to see how they are doing. It can be challenging to feel engaged or connected in a remote set up.

**Maintain positivity and trust:** Evaluate work performance based on results and reaching agreed upon objectives.

# Visitors, Vendors, & Contractors

Visitors are restricted from coming into campus buildings. Visitors includes our spouses, partners and children.

Should a visitor enter a building accidentally, you may ask them to leave.

Visitors may use outdoors spaces that are traditionally open to the public.

Vendors and service provider coming to campus must demonstrate that they will comply with state regulation. [Forms for submitting their plans can be found on the facilities website.](#)

# Animals in the Workplace

At this time, there is no evidence that animals play a significant role in spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low.

A small number of pet cats and dogs have been reported to be infected with the virus in several countries, including the United States. Most of these pets became sick after contact with people with COVID-19.

Treat your pets as you would humans and keep them away from infected individuals.

## Future updates

Updates will continue to be provided as guidance changes. We will post daily message to highlight any new updates or changes to this guide.

We welcome questions or comments via the [COVID comment portal](#).

**Thank you for contributions to Williams and for helping keep our community healthy and safe!**