

*Keeping the Campus Safe
Expectations and Guidelines
September 2021*

SUPERCEDED BY MARCH 2022 VERSION

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A Message from Human Resources,

I am pleased to share with you Westfield State University's "Keeping the Campus Safe: Expectations and Guidelines." The goals of this guide are to maintain focus and dedication to keeping WSU as safe as possible. As we carry forward into the academic year we proceed with an abundance of caution. It is important to note that the success of our efforts to safely remain on campus depends on the commitment of each employee to exercise good judgment and comply with the new guidance and directives outlined in this document.

The Office of Human Resources based this plan on the current guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Department of Higher Education with the guidance and direction from MSCA, AFSCME and APA Union Officials. Refer to your Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) sent to you by your Union Representative for further details.

As knowledge and understanding of the Coronavirus (Covid-19), the variants, the FDA approved vaccines and booster vaccines continue to evolve, institutional plans and guidance will be updated. Please take the time to carefully review the guide. If you have any questions, your supervisor, area vice president, or the Office of Human Resources will be happy to help you. We appreciate your flexibility and cooperation as we move through the fall semester.

The Human Resources team wishes all of you a safe, happy and successful fall semester.

Sincerely,

Donna DeCaro-Conley

Donna DeCaro-Conley
Interim AVP, Human Resources

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Workplace Expectations & Guidelines

Our goal is to continue all campus activities for the fall 2021 semester with a full complement of faculty and staff teaching and working on campus. The return to campus has been implemented with the utmost consideration given to protecting the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff. This *Keeping the Campus Safe Guide* provides information, expectations, and guidelines that all Westfield State employees are expected to follow.

Returning to the Workplace:

As of August 9th, all staff should have been working on campus 100% of their time. Faculty returned to campus at the start of the fall semester. Human Resources understands that each employee may experience different challenges as we transition back to a fully open campus for fall. We suggest that each employee work with his/her department head/supervisor if there are any concerns in returning back to campus full time. Human Resources will be providing the necessary training and outreach in the upcoming weeks to supervisors, to include guidance to work through employee challenges and circumstances regarding work schedules while also meeting operational staffing needs. Some positions on campus may be eligible to participate in the Hybrid Telecommute Pilot Program as described below:

Hybrid Positions:

Certain positions may be considered for a pilot hybrid work schedule to continue beyond summer 2021. The hybrid model will depend on the operational needs of the University/Department as well as the roles and responsibilities of each employee. Human Resources will work with each department head to identify such positions. Employees whose positions are identified as an appropriate hybrid position will be contacted by their immediate supervisor. Supervisors should complete the [Supervisor Questionnaire](#) for each employee who requests a hybrid work schedule and employees should complete the [Request Form](#).

Personnel Expectations:

Safeguarding the health and safety of the campus community is paramount. Therefore, employees are expected to notify the Covid-19 Manager by calling 413-572-5636, or emailing gpshechnaya@westfield.ma.edu, if they have been in contact with, exposed to, exhibiting symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19.

Vaccinated and unvaccinated employees reporting to the workplace are expected to inform the Covid-19 Manager (identified above) if they:

1. Have come in contact with or have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Based on the CDC's current knowledge, a close contact is: Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, *three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes*).
2. Are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19; or
3. Have tested positive for COVID-19.

When employees call in sick:

Consistent with existing University policy, employees are responsible for contacting their supervisor if they are unable to report to work for any reason. When an employee calls in sick, the employee should provide and/or may be asked if they are exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19. CDC states that symptoms include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and/or diarrhea. For the current list of symptoms, please visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

The University regards any responses from employees as confidential medical information and asks that employees contact the Covid-19 Manager if they are experiencing symptoms consistent with the virus. If a supervisor, manager, or

department head receives a call from an employee who discloses information about symptoms, they must immediately notify the Covid-19 Manager at 413-572-5636 or gshenichnaya@westfield.ma.edu. Supervisors, managers, and department heads are expected to direct employees to contact the Covid-19 Manager directly rather than discuss confidential medical information or collect confidential medical information from their employees.

What to do if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms:

- If an employee is experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, the employee should remain out of the workplace and use their leave accruals to cover their absence. Symptomatic employees are encouraged to get tested for COVID-19, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated.
- If an employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and has worked on campus, within the last 10 days of experiencing symptoms and/or diagnosis, the employee should contact the Covid-19 Manager and remain out of the workplace for a minimum of 10 days, or when a medical clearance allows them to return. Providing this information to the Covid-19 Manager will help the University with the notifications for contract tracing.
- Employees diagnosed with COVID-19 will not be able to return to the workplace before receiving approval from Human Resources. The University reserves the right to require medical documentation before an employee is permitted to return to work.
- During this time, employees may be eligible for Massachusetts Emergency Paid Sick Leave (this program is in effect until 9/30/2021). Employees should [complete the request form](#) and submit it to Logan Taylor at 413-572-8476 ltaylor@westfield.ma.edu.
- If employees have exhausted all accrued leave, eligible APA and MSCA employees shall be allowed to use the sick leave bank. AFSCME employees who have exhausted their accrued leave may apply for an extension of sick leave, provided they have been employed for a minimum of twelve (12) consecutive months prior to the commencement of such request for an extension of sick leave.
- Employees must contact their supervisor, prior to their shift start, if they are unable to report to work.

What to do if you have been in close contact to someone who tested positive:

Before reporting to work, all employees are expected to contact the Covid-19 Manager at 413-572-5636 or gshenichnaya@westfield.ma.edu. The Covid-19 Manager will provide instructions on any necessary quarantine time, testing, and when to return to work. Employees must contact their supervisor, prior to their shift start, if they are unable to report to work.

Human Resources asks that the employee follow-up with the Covid-19 Manager if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

When an employee in the workplace has COVID-19:

When an employee has contracted COVID-19, the employee will be asked by the Covid-19 Manager to leave the workplace and use sick leave or other available accrued leave. Should the employee not have available accrued leave to cover their absence, Human Resources will discuss with the employee available leave options or possible alternative work arrangements.

The University will follow the guidance above (see section: “When Employees Call in Sick”).

Symptom Monitoring:

Before coming back to work, employees who have been quarantined must be free of any symptoms potentially related to COVID-19. Employees are encouraged to take their temperature every day before returning to work.

More information can be found in the Fall 2021 FAQs under the category “employee-specific FAQs for vaccine and mask requirements”—[click here](#).

For a list of symptom updates, employees should go directly to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Inquiring about travel:

In our efforts to lessen the risk and protect the well-being of our campus community while following state guidance, Human Resources requests that you continue to follow the [Massachusetts travel advisory](#).

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

In a time of crisis, such as COVID-19, it's not unusual to experience emotional and psychological disturbances. You might find that you feel more anxious, depressed, angry, as well as have times when you have difficulty sleeping, eating, focusing or enjoying life. These may be reactions to the stress the virus brings to your life. At times like these, it may be helpful to see someone for help in managing the feelings you're having. You wouldn't be alone in the need for extra help; many people are turning to mental health providers to assist in taking care of their mental health.

Community resources include:

- [Behavioral Health Network: The Carson Center \(413-568-1421\) in Westfield:](#)
- [National Suicide Prevention Hotline:](#) 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for English, 1-888-628-9454
- [National Domestic Violence Hotline:](#) 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522; and
- [The Eldercare Locator:](#) 1-800-677-1116 – TTY Instructions.
- [Child care:](#) visit https://eeclead.force.com/apex/EEC_ChildCareEmergencyProcedure
- [Wellness During COVID-19](#)

The following resources have been made available through Human Resources:

The Albert and Amelia Interfaith Center

Fr. Warren J. Savage, Campus Clergy and Spiritual Advisors
Director and Catholic Chaplain (413) 572-5567 wsavage@westfield.ma.edu

AllOne Health, Westfield State's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), offers services and support to employees and their family members in need of guidance. Free confidential telephone or video counseling is available, as well as online courses and a broad a range of self-assessment tools to guide you to healthy learning-and-decision making. If you need to speak with a counselor, or have questions about the program, call the EAP at 800-451-1834, or visit its website at mylifeexpert.com. *As a first time user, you will need to sign up. Please select create a new account with your company code. The company code is westfield.*

Mass4You, the State Employee Assistance Program provided by the Group Insurance Commission (GIC), is a friendly, confidential service that provides a range of resources for any life situation. Need a rental car? Meals delivered to your home? Mass4You will search and verify services to help you and your family, and will provide support when times are tough. For information and assistance, call 1-844-263-1982, or visit liveandworkwell.com and use the access code mass4you.

Training for COVID-19 Protocol

Westfield State will continue to offer training to its faculty and staff about hygiene protocols. The training for faculty and staff will continue to be administered through Human Resources, and the Division of Student Affairs will continue to administer the appropriate training for students. Supervisors are expected to continually remind employees of safety precautions, hygiene protocols, and other measures aimed at reducing virus transmission.

Campus training will include:

- Supervisory responsibility around COVID-19 policy and procedures;
- Self-screening at home, including temperature-and-symptom checks;
- Importance of not coming to work if experiencing Covid-19 symptoms;

- When to seek medical attention if symptoms become severe

Supervisors who conduct training should know that the training does not need to include in-person training. Training can be done through virtual means or providing this document for discussion with teams. Departments may request a representative from Human Resources to join their department meeting to discuss/clarify specific health and safety or workplace/personnel matters.

Health and Safety Guidance

Continued Personal Safety Practices

Handwashing: Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching your face. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and wash your hands after touching your face.

Facemasks: All WSU employees, regardless of vaccination status, must wear a mask covering their mouth and nose in non-private spaces inside campus buildings, or indoor facilities or university transportation.

All employees are expected to supply their own masks, unless the department supplies the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), based on the nature of their work. Masks should be worn for only one day at a time, and properly laundered before use again.

Employees seeking exemption from wearing a mask due to medical reasons may seek accommodation through the university's ADA process by contacting Tina Bonés lbones@westfield.ma.edu / in HMC, Room 209. or by phone at 413-572-5274.

Employees who are not exempted from the mask requirement and refuse to comply with the mandate will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Vaccinations:

MSCA faculty teaching during the day are required to receive a FDA authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccine by **September 1, 2021**, and a second dose, if required as part of the vaccine regimen, by **October 1, 2021**. MSCA Faculty not reporting to campus on or before September 1, 2021, due to authorized leave, shall be required to be fully vaccinated prior to returning to campus. *This does not apply to MSCA Faculty teaching exclusively in the CGCE.*

APA unit members, NUP, NUC, and Contracted Employees are required to receive a FDA authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccine by **September 7, 2021**, and a second dose, if required as part of the vaccine regimen, by **October 5, 2021**.

AFSCME members are required to receive a FDA authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccine by **September 15, 2021**, and a second dose, if required as part of the vaccine regimen, by **October 13, 2021**.

Vaccine Exemptions:

Employees may seek a medical or religious exemption from Human Resources. These exemption forms are linked below: [Employee Medical Exemption Request](#) & [Religious Exemption Request](#).

Employees must file a request form and provide medical documentation for a medical exemption or a written statement for a religious exemption. Requests should be sent to Tina Bones in Human Resources (lbones@westfield.ma.edu). Human Resources will also be able to assist you with any questions.

Testing:

Employees approved for a medical or religious exemption are required to wear masks at all times per DPH guidelines and are required to participate in the University's weekly surveillance testing. Weekly asymptomatic (surveillance)

testing is offered at the University (New Hall, 141B) on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., or an employee can provide the Covid-19 Manager weekly proof of a test conducted at an external site.

Additional Operational Practices at Westfield State

Dining Services has reopened and will continue to follow all applicable guidelines from federal, state, and local agencies.

Identification: All WSU employees are still required to possess their WSU employee ID while on campus.

Guidance for Specific Workplace Consideration

Public Transportation: Wear a mask before entering any shared transportation vehicle (bus, ride-sharing service, carpool, etc.) and avoid touching surfaces with your hands. Upon disembarking, wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater-than 60% alcohol as soon as possible and before removing your mask.

Meals: Before and after eating, thoroughly wash your hands to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

Resources and References

Employees may visit the CDC, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and/or Westfield State University's websites for more information and updates regarding COVID-19.

The following resources are available to employees to check symptoms:

Buoy Health – Symptom Checker

[https://www.buoyhealth.com/symptom-checker/?configuration=ma %20covid&concern=coronavirus](https://www.buoyhealth.com/symptom-checker/?configuration=ma%20covid&concern=coronavirus)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

Tips for at Home Quarantine or Self-Monitoring

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/10-tips-for-at-home-quarantine-or-self-monitoring/download>

Note: This document was prepared using resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts state government executive orders, Memorandums of Amendment from Union Contracts, and guidance and memorandums from the Office of the Governor.