# Guide to Returning to Work

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Dillard University's policies and protocols for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic are rooted in the well-being and safety of our staff, faculty, students, and community that we serve. The University's goal is to continue the essential mission of educating and preparing our students to be graduates who excel and are concerned with improving the human condition.

Dillard's plan is aligned and consistent with local orders and ordinances of the City of New Orleans, Orleans Parish, as well as the State of Louisiana Phased Reopening Model.

The University's plan also follows recommendations from the federal government (opening guideline), Center for Disease Control and Prevention, New Orleans Department of Public Health, and the Dillard University Return to Work Advising Teams.

The University's policies and plans are subject to change as information and understanding of the COVID-19 virus continue to evolve.
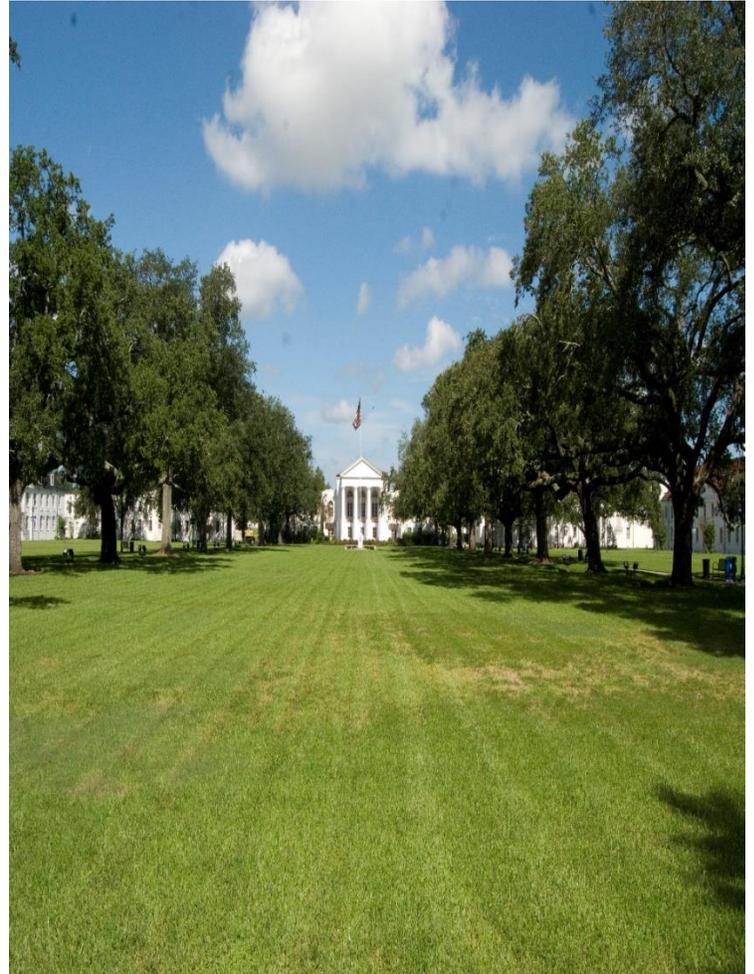
WORKPLACE

Workplace Expectations & Guidelines:

Employees are expected to fully comply with the policies, protocols and guidelines outlined in this document as part of Dillard's Workplace Expectations and Guidelines. Failure to do so may result in corrective action.

Requirements for Monitoring Symptoms:

Employees who have been instructed to return to campus must conduct symptom monitoring every day before reporting to work. Employees must be free of ANY symptoms potentially related to COVID-19 or have had evaluation and clearance by health care provider and/or Human Resources to be eligible to report to work.

Currently, these symptoms include one or more of the following:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Runny nose or new sinus congestion
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- New GI symptoms
- New loss of taste or smell

If you have any symptoms, you must notify your supervisor and/or call the Human Resources Benefits Specialist at 504-816-4741 or email cbrannon@dillard.edu. The Benefits Specialist will ask a few questions and provide guidance to next steps. In most cases, you will be instructed to self-isolate until cleared to return to work.

According to the CDC, individuals with certain conditions may have a higher risk for COVID-19 infection. Those conditions may include:

- Older adults (aged 65 years and older)
- People with immune compromised conditions
- Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
- Chronic lung disease
- Diabetes
- Serious heart conditions
- Chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis
- Severe obesity

Employees whose health condition falls within one of the CDC High Risk Categories or is pregnant may seek a temporary COVID-19 workplace modification by requesting Reasonable Accommodations. For more information contact the Human Resources Benefits Specialist at cbrannon@dillard.edu or call x4741.

Phased Staffing:

The University will phase in a return of staff over time in a coordinated process to ensure appropriate social distancing, availability of PPE (personal protective equipment), and monitoring of symptoms capabilities for COVID-19.

The University will assess expanded staffing based on mission-critical operations, ability to control and manage specific work environments, and necessity to access on-site resources. These decisions, once approved, will be communicated through your respective a supervisor, dean, vice president or vice provost.

The need to reduce the number of people on campus (density) to meet social distancing requirements will continue for some time. Support areas may continue to effectively work remotely and/or return to face to face operations at a reduce capacity. This will likely continue until restrictions are eased for larger gatherings.

Expanded staffing will be tightly controlled and coordinated to mitigate potential risks and ensure the safety of faculty and staff, as well as the communities we serve. Departments must seek prior approval from their vice president and human resources before increasing staffing levels beyond the current need to support critical on-site. Once decisions to expand on-site staffing in certain areas have been made, staff must follow the policies and protocols detailed in this guide for returning to work on campus.

As staffing on-site increases and operations expand, officials will closely monitor and assess the potential spread of the virus, as well as existing policies and procedures to mitigate it. Ultimately, testing will be a critical part of assessing the impact of increased staffing. If localized outbreaks emerge, tighter restrictions and reduced staffing may need to be implemented again.

Staffing Options:

Once employees have been instructed to return to work on-site, there are several options the department may implement in consultation with Human Resources. A department's return to work goal is to maintain the required social distancing measures and reduce population density within buildings and work areas.

Remote Work: Those who can work remotely to fulfill some, or all of their work responsibilities may continue to do so to reduce the number of individuals on campus and the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus. These arrangements, which shall be approved by the immediate supervisor, can be done in on a full or partial day/week schedule as appropriate, and must be accompanied by a written telework agreement provided by the University. The telework agreement must be submitted to Human Resources for approval.

Alternating Days: To limit the number of individuals and interactions among those on campus, departments may schedule partial staffing on alternating days. Such schedules will help enable social distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces.

Staggered Reporting/Departing: The beginning and end of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting and departure will likely reduce traffic in common areas to meet social distancing requirements. (See Enter/Exit Controls for further details).

Guidance for Employees Unable to Telework: Employees who are ill for reasons unrelated to COVID-19 are required to take off work using normal sick leave procedures. The use of annual leave upon exhaustion of sick leave may be granted upon request to the Human Resources Department.

Employee Leave: The federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) became effective on April 1, 2020. It creates two new types of paid leave directly related to the COVID-19 crisis: (1) Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) and (2) Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion (EFMLA). **For all other employer leave options, see the University's Employee Handbook or contact HR for more information**.

Testing and Return to Work Clearances

If an employee has tested positive for COVID-19, then they must provide HR with medical clearance from their physician before they can return to campus. Employees that wish to be tested for COVID-19 before returning to campus, may contact the HR Benefits Specialist at 504-816-4741 or cbrannon@dillard.edu for more information.
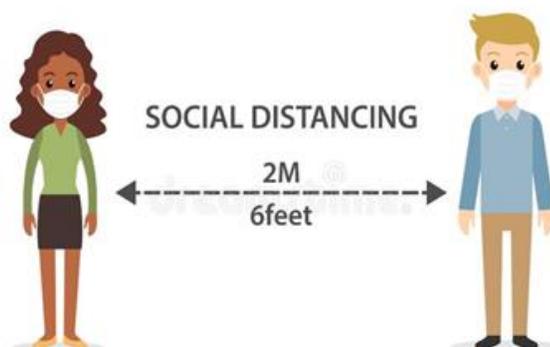
Personal Safety Practices

Face Masks/Cloth Face Coverings: Face masks or face coverings must be worn by all employees working on campus when in the presence of others and in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (*e.g., common work areas, conference rooms, classrooms, etc.*). Appropriate use of face masks or coverings is critical in minimizing risks to others near you. You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick. The mask or cloth face covering is not a substitute for social distancing. The CDC recommends double (2-ply) layers for cloth or homemade face coverings.

Disposable masks will be provided by Dillard, if needed. Disposable masks may only be worn for one day and then must be placed in the trash.

Employees may also wear a cloth face covering, which will help Dillard reduce the need to purchase additional masks, which are in short supply. Cloth face coverings must only be worn for one day at a time and must be properly laundered before use again. Having a week supply of cloth face coverings can help reduce the need for daily laundering.

Please remember your mask protects others and their masks protect you.

See below details regarding mask use and care.

|	Type and Intended Use of Face Coverings/Masks			
Type	**Cloth Face Covering-2 ply**	**Disposable Mask**	**Medical-Grade Surgical Mask**	**N95 Respirator**
Description	Home-made or commercially manufactured face coverings that are washable and help contain wearer's respiratory emissions	Commercially manufactured masks that help contain wearer's respiratory emissions	FDA-approved masks to protect the wearer from large droplets and splashes; helps contains wearer's respiratory emissions	Provide effective respiratory protection from airborne particles and aerosols; helps contain wearer's respiratory emissions
Intended Use	Required for campus community use in non-healthcare settings (office spaces, general research/work settings, shops, community areas where 6' social distancing cannot be consistently maintained. Must be replaced daily. (While likely necessary for ingress and egress, not required when working alone in an office).		These masks are reserved for healthcare workers and other approved areas with task-specific hazard determined by Risk Management in accordance to OSHA.	

Use and Care of Face Coverings

For details regarding cloth face coverings, including how to create, wear and care for home-made face coverings, visit the CDC website.

Putting on the face covering/disposable mask:

- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to handling the face covering/disposable mask.
- Ensure the face-covering/disposable mask fits over the nose and under the chin.
- Situate the face-covering/disposable mask properly with nose wire snug against the nose (where applicable).
- Tie straps behind the head and neck or loop around the ears.
- Throughout the process: Avoid touching the front of the face.
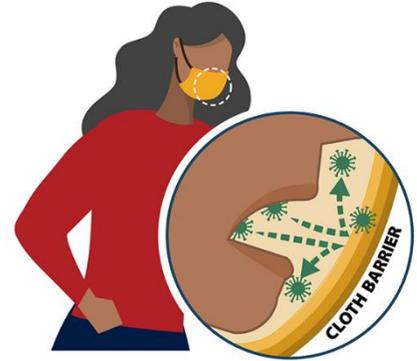
Taking off the face covering/disposable mask:

- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth when removing the face covering/disposable mask.
- When taking off the face covering/disposable mask, loop your finger into the strap and pull the strap away from the ear, or untie the straps.
- Wash hands immediately after removing.

Care, storage, and laundering:

- Keep face coverings/disposable mask stored in a paper bag when not in use.
- Cloth face coverings may not be used more than one day at a time and must be washed after use. Cloth face coverings must be properly laundered with regular clothing detergent before first use, and after each shift. Cloth face coverings must be replaced immediately if soiled, damaged (e.g. ripped, punctured) or visibly contaminated.
- Disposable masks must not be used for more than one day and must be placed in the trash after your shift or if it is soiled, damaged (e.g., stretched ear loops, torn or punctured material) or visibly contaminated.

Social Distancing: Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools we have to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus and slowing its spread. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms. Social distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk of getting very sick. Staff at work on-site must follow these social distancing practices:

- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people at all times
- Do not gather in groups of 10 or more
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings

Handwashing: 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.

Gloves: Service workers (food services, housekeeping, cashier, student wellness) and others employees in high-risk areas must use gloves as part of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), but according to the CDC, gloves are not necessary for general use and do not replace good hand hygiene. **Washing your hands often is considered the best practice for common everyday tasks.**

Goggles/Face Shields: Staff do not need to wear goggles or face shields as part of general activity on campus. Good hand hygiene and avoiding touching your face are generally sufficient for non-healthcare environments.

Cleaning/Disinfection: Housekeeping teams will clean office and workspaces based on CDC guidelines for disinfection and Occupational and Environmental Safety Office (OESO) protocols. Facilities Management will also maintain hand-sanitizer for high traffic areas, offices, etc. Employees can also help to maintain a safe and healthy environment by frequently wiping their workstations, phones, and equipment.

Building occupants must also wipe down commonly used surfaces before and after use with products that meet the EPA's criteria for use against COVID-19 and are appropriate for the surface. This includes any shared-space location or equipment (e.g. copiers, printers, computers, A/V and other electrical equipment, coffee makers, desks and tables, light switches, doorknobs, etc.).

Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene: If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Then throw used tissues in the trash. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as the preferred form of hand hygiene in healthcare settings.

Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios

Public Transportation/Dillard Shuttle Transit: If you must take public transportation or use University shuttle transit, wear a mask before entering the bus and avoid touching surfaces with your hands. Upon disembarking, wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as the preferred form of hand hygiene in healthcare settings as soon as possible and before removing your mask.

Working in Office Environments: If you work in an open environment, be sure to maintain at least 6 feet distance from co-workers. If possible have at least one workspace separating you from another co-worker. You must wear a face mask or face covering at all times while in a shared workspace/room.

Departments should assess open work environments and meeting rooms to institute measures to physically separate and increase distance between employees, other coworkers, and customers, such as:

- Place visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, or signs to indicate to customers where they must stand while waiting in line.
- Place one-way directional signage for large open workspaces with multiple through-ways to increase distance between employees moving through the space.
- Consider designating specific stairways for up or down traffic if building space allows.

Wear a Mask

If you work in an office, no more than one person can be in the same room unless the required 6 feet of distancing can be consistently maintained. If more than one person is in a room, masks/face coverings are required to worn. A mask or face covering is not required if you are working alone in a confined office space (does not include partitioned work areas in a large open environment).

Masks/face coverings must be worn by any staff in a reception/receiving area. Masks/face coverings must be used when inside any Dillard facility where others are present, including walking in narrow hallways where others travel and in break rooms, conference rooms and other meeting locations.

Using Restrooms: Use of restrooms must be limited based on size to ensure at least 6 feet distance between individuals. Wash your hands thoroughly afterward to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

Using Elevators: Use of elevators must be limited where possible to avoid close proximity with others in a confined space. Those using elevators are required to wear a disposable face mask or face covering regardless of traveling alone or with others. You should also avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers, if possible. Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as the preferred form of hand hygiene in healthcare settings upon departing the elevator.

Meetings: Convening in groups increases the risk of viral transmission. Where feasible, meetings must be held in whole or part using the extensive range of available collaboration tools (e.g. Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, Telephone, etc.).

In person meetings are limited to the restrictions of local, state and federal orders and must not exceed 50% percent of a room's capacity, assuming individuals can still maintain 6 feet of separation for social distancing requirements. Departments must not remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in meeting rooms to support social distancing practices between attendees. All attendees must wear a mask or face covering while sharing space in a common room.

In most instances, you are encouraged to communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed by email, instant message, phone or other available technology rather than face-to-face. You can also use a range of available collaboration tools (e.g. Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, Telephone, etc.).

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

If dining on campus, you must wear your mask or face covering until you are ready to eat and then replace it afterward. The University will take initial steps to ensure that all dining areas meet requirements to allow at least 6 feet of distance between each customer, including lines and seating arrangements. Individuals should not sit facing one another. Staff are encouraged to take food back to their office area or eat outside if this is reasonable for your situation. Staff shall not reorganize or move furniture in the dining area.

If you are eating in your work environment (break room, office, etc.), maintain 6 feet distance between you and others. Individuals should not sit facing one another. Only remove your mask or face covering in order to eat, then put it back on. Departments are not to remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in employee break rooms to support social distancing practices between employees. Wipe all surfaces, including table, refrigerator handle, coffee machine, etc. after using in common areas.

Laboratory Work: Specific criteria have been developed for faculty and staff working in laboratory environments. See Academic Affairs Guidelines for Faculty Instruction.

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

Employee Assistance Program: (EAP) has created a COVID-19 Resource Center to help you and your family members. The University offers two Employee Assistance Programs: AXA EAP and Humana EAP (open to participants of Dillard's Humana Medical Insurance).

- Simply go to: (Humana) www.humana.com/eap or call 866-440-6556; (AXA) http://www.guidanceresouces.com or call 866.641.3178.

- As always, we're here to help you. And if you are feeling overwhelmed at this stressful time, remember your EAP is just a phone call away.

EXIT CONTROL

Departments will coordinate with the University's Facilities team to identify usable building access points and will coordinate arrival and departure times of staff with the Office of Human Resources to reduce congestion during typical "rush hours" of the business day. If necessary, staff arrival and departures may be scheduled in increments to reduce personal interactions at building access points, hallways, stairs/elevators, etc.

Once you have been instructed to return to the workplace, you must report to work or depart work through the designated building access and at the designated time to limit the number of people entering and exiting buildings at any one time.

Visitors

All visitors must receive authorization to be on campus. While on campus, all visitors must adhere to the proper hygiene, PPE and/or social distancing protocols as outlined in this guide. Unauthorized visitors are not allowed in employee workspace.

Accountability

While the University understands that these are trying times, it is vital that each staff member play his/her part in ensuring a safe working/learning environment. Bearing this in mind, any violation of the guidelines contained in this document puts others at risk and may result in corrective actions up to and including termination.

Signage and Posters

Building occupants are expected to follow signage on traffic flow through building entrances, exits, elevator usage and similar common use areas.
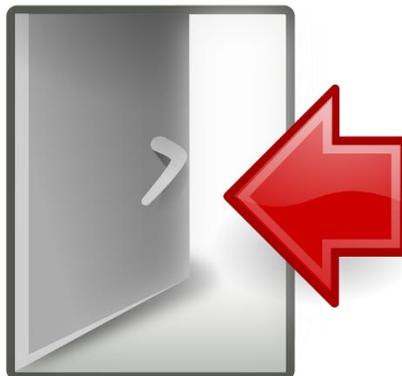
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following resources are provided for your information:

- [Return to Work Algorithms (Mapping)](#)
- [Telework Policy](#)
- [Sick Leave Policy](#)
- [At Risk Employee Policy](#)
- [FAQ's](#)