Return to Campus Policies and Procedures

Note: Given the evolving situation in New Jersey, this document will be revised to address the current situation. All policies and procedures are subject to change based on new guidance from the CDC, health departments or government.

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The health crisis caused by COVID-19 is the first pandemic of this magnitude since the Spanish Flu in 1918. As citizens of the United States, we are relying heavily on guidance from our public health departments as well as the federal and state government officials.

The content of this document is meant to provide policies and procedures for employees to support a safe return to campus. It is intended to provide the most current information available on all matters related to COVID-19. In recognition of the continuing evolution of the infection and resultant new information, SEU is committed to maintaining the currency of the material and recognizes that information provided by health and government public health officials and University leadership will, out of necessity, be modified based on updated information. Therefore, notice is provided that all University constituencies are responsible for knowing what is in the document and adhering to the policies and procedures as they evolve. Changes to the document will be noted as they occur.

State and Regional Directives
All public entities in the State of New Jersey are responsible for following the guidance provided by state and public officials. As the University begins the return of our employees and students to campus, the guidance provided by the Governor’s Office and the Center for Disease Control guides our actions.

The New Jersey Health Department makes the following statement regarding businesses in New Jersey. (www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/covid2019_schoolbusiness.shtml)

Businesses and employers can prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19. Employers should plan to respond in a flexible way to varying levels of disease transmission in the community and be prepared to refine their business response plans as needed. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), most American workers will likely experience low (caution) or medium exposure risk levels at their job or place of employment.

On August 11, 2021, the NJ Department of Health provided updated guidance for colleges and universities. Much of this guidance is reflected in the information contained in the following pages. The full text is available online.
What We Know
1. For the most up-to-date information on the COVID-19 pandemic please visit the CDC Website.
2. The virus is most commonly spread by close physical contact.
3. Spread most frequently occurs through airborne droplets.
4. Vaccination, the use of face coverings/masks, and social distancing significantly reduce the spread of COVID-19.
5. Handwashing/sanitizing and regular cleaning of high touch surfaces helps avoid spread.
6. Time from acquiring COVID-19 to the appearance of symptoms ranges from 2-14 days.
7. Quarantine and isolation work to decrease the spread of COVID-19, especially amongst unvaccinated individuals.
8. SEU is following the CDC Guidance regarding when to quarantine. Unvaccinated individuals should quarantine if they have been in close contact (within 6 feet of someone for 15 or more minutes in a 24-hour period) with someone who has COVID-19. Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine after contact with someone who has COVID-19 unless they develop symptoms. However, fully vaccinated individuals should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even if they don’t have symptoms, and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until they received confirmation of a negative test result.
9. No one is immune from the virus, but some groups are at a higher risk for severe illness.

Signs and Messaging on Campus
Consistent messaging on campus will remind all constituents of the importance of wearing face coverings/masks and personal hygiene in avoiding or slowing the spread of COVID-19.

Caring for Ourselves and Others
Because we are a community of mutual respect and caring, faculty, students and staff will be asked to acknowledge their understanding and commitment to the recommendations outlined in this document for safe operation of campus.

Personal Hygiene - A critical component of staying safe and healthy at this time is personal hygiene in the form of frequent handwashing and avoiding touching your face, nose and eyes. Proper hand-washing includes the following steps and can be seen in this video.
1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a paper towel or air-dry them.
6. Properly dispose of used paper towels in a trash receptacle.

Hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol) should also be used when handwashing is not possible or practical or in addition to handwashing. Hand-washing is particularly important after using the restroom, sneezing, coughing, blowing your nose, touching soiled materials or high touch equipment, eating, and is recommended anytime you move between rooms or activities.

**Social Distancing**
Though no longer required for individuals with vaccinations, maintaining social distancing remains one tool to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus and slowing its spread, especially among people who are at higher risk of severe illness or who are unvaccinated.

*Specifically, keep in mind the following as you interact with others if you are unvaccinated or if you are concerned about infection:*
- Avoid physical contact (handshakes, and hugs).
- Maintain six feet physical distance between yourself and others at all times.
- Wash/cleanse your hands frequently (especially after being around others); 20 second handwashing or use alcohol-based sanitizer (60% alcohol).
- Minimize face-to-face contact, especially without masks, to the greatest extent possible.

*Hand Signal “Stop” - If a person is violating physical distancing; a simple raised hand with palm outward will signal the violation of spacing.*

**Mandatory Face Coverings/Masks**
Effective August 5, 2021, SEU returned to mandatory masking for all employees and students – vaccinated and unvaccinated with medical/religious exemptions – while inside all campus buildings. It is anticipated this requirement will run through September 30, although it may be extended depending on prevailing conditions. Employees and students may remain unmasked while working alone in enclosed spaces. All guests of the University are required to meet the mandatory masking requirement as well.

There will be no exceptions to the mandatory masking and the following consequences will apply for failure to comply with this policy: verbal warning on first violation, written
warning on second violation and a five-day suspension without pay upon the third violation. Further violations could result in termination of employment.

Anyone wishing to reduce further their risk may consider double masking or wearing face shields in addition to masks or gloves, but under usual circumstances, these are not required. Disposable masks are meant for short-term use. Cloth masks need to be washed on a regular basis. For information on cleaning face coverings/masks, go to www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/.

**Mandatory Daily Self Checklist and Contact Tracing**

All employees must complete the [Daily Self Checklist](#) an hour before arriving on campus and the daily [Contact Tracing](#) forms before leaving campus.

**Mandatory Vaccinations**

SEU has made the difficult, but necessary, decision to require all employees to have at least the first dose of any one of the three currently available COVID-19 vaccines by the close of business on August 18. If an employee has the first shot or obtains the first shot on August 18, employees will have until September 27 to provide proof of the second shot (in the case of Pfizer or Moderna) or they will be considered out of compliance with this mandate.

The vaccination requirement allows for exemptions in two instances:

- when an individual is able to provide evidence that their physician or healthcare provider has advised against receipt of the COVID-19 vaccine for medical reasons,
- when the receipt of the COVID-19 vaccine violates an individual's practice of a religious or faith affiliation which restricts use of the vaccine by its beliefs, tenets or teachings.

To request a medical/religious exemption, a request should be mailed to **hr@steu.edu** using the [exemption form](#).

All exempted unvaccinated individuals will be required to abide by the following university policies and practices when on campus:

- Provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test, at their own expense, on a weekly basis to hr@steu.edu. As a convenience to exempted students and employees, Bergen New Bridge Hospital will be offering PCR tests on Tuesday from 4 - 6 p.m. (subject to change) in the Ward Dining Room in Saint Joseph Hall. While the University will not pay for these tests, the cost will be billed through your insurance. A negative PCR test from any provider submitted in a timely manner will meet the testing requirement.
• Continue to practice proper hygiene through frequent and thorough hand washing/sanitizing, etc.
• Maintain a minimum distance of six feet from others with whom you come into contact.
• Obtain food from Grab and Go station to be consumed in a socially distant manner without entering Rose Dining Hall.

Employees
Richard Wall, Director of Bi-Campus Security, is the COVID-19 Compliance Coordinator. He has been empowered to ensure both the University and its constituent groups adhere to all safety protocols. Concerns about community members not wearing face coverings/masks or adhering to COVID-19 health and safety policies should be directed to the COVID-19 compliance officer, Richard Wall at rwall@steu.edu who will refer the concern to the Human Resource Officer (employees) or the Student Conduct Officer (students) for additional follow-up.

As noted in the Employee Handbook, SEU employees are expected to comply with the University's standards of behavior and performance. Any non-compliance with these standards will subject the employee to disciplinary action, including in the event of “threat to the safety or security of the University Community, a program chair/supervisor in consultation with the Office of Human Resources may suspend or terminate the employee immediately.”

While disciplinary action is one outcome of violation of the policies and procedures related to COVID-19 prevention, the University’s objective is focused on promoting awareness of the reasons for these policies and procedures.
References

Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes:


Interim Guidance for Administrators of US Institutions of Higher Education:

Considerations for Institutions of Higher Education
Considerations for Institutions of Higher Education | CDC

CDC COVID-19 Website

New Jersey Department of Health - COVID-19 Interim Guidance for Local Health Departments for Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)

SEU Coronavirus Information
https://www.steu.edu/student-life/health-services/coronavirus-information