

## NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

# Employee Return-to-Campus Protocol & Process for Managing Positive COVID Cases

*Attention: This document is intended for internal communication only.*

**“This is a fluid document and is subject to change based on local, State or National conditions or requirements.”**

The Return to Campus Task Force reconvened to address the University’s protocol and process for managing identified positive COVID cases for employees, students and visitors. These recommendations are grounded with respect for the individual’s right to privacy and in keeping with HIPAA and FERPA requirements in a public health crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Names of individuals testing positive will not be released. Only the President may approve the release of NSU data containing the numbers of COVID -19 positive cases.

NSU follows the guidance of local, state and national health officials in our response to a positive diagnosis on campus. When we receive confirmation of an employee that has received a positive COVID-19 diagnosis, there are important measures that will be promptly taken including contact tracing, communication and facility disinfection.

NSU’s Emergency Management office will track, retain, and report to the health department COVID -19 positive case statistics.

All employees must have a signed COVID Acknowledgments on file in Human Resources.

## How You Should Respond to COVID-19

### Immediately if you become ill:

- If you are not feeling well quickly isolate yourself from others and notify your supervisor. **If you are suffering from COVID-19 symptoms** (those symptoms are fever; cough; shortness of breath; aching; loss of taste; loss of smell; sore throat) please leave the campus for testing.
- Your supervisor will contact **Emergency Management** at: [emergency\\_management@nsuok.edu](mailto:emergency_management@nsuok.edu).
- Emergency Management will notify the employee’s Vice President, as well as departments with a need to know such as Human Resources and Facilities Management.
- Faculty, should follow the [Course Delivery & Safety Procedures](#) established by Academic Affairs and work with their Dean and Department Chair.
- *The Emergency Paid Sick Leave and the Extended Family Medical Leave is no longer available as of March 31, 2021. Employees requiring leave due to COVID should utilize their accrued unused vacation and personal leave balances. In the event the employee has zero accrued leave available, they may contact Human Resources at 918-444-2230 to inquire about leave share.*
- The health department will lead all contact tracing efforts. NSU will provide assistance when called upon by the health department.

- Call one of these clinics based upon your campus location for testing:

**Broken Arrow Campus contact:** Tests (both diagnostic and antibody) are available at no cost. Call ahead to schedule an appointment. Persons with insurance coverage should bring their insurance card. If uninsured, the clinic has partnerships to help with covering the costs. Blue Cross Blue Shield will cover testing 100%.

**Arkansas Verdigris Valley Health Center 918-486-5564  
607 S. Broadway, Coweta, OK 74429**

**Muskogee Campus contact:** Persons with insurance should bring their insurance card. Blue Cross Blue Shield will cover testing 100%. Uninsured individuals will also be tested at no cost.

**NEO Health Muskogee 918-683-0470  
1328 S. York St., Muskogee, OK 74403**

**Tahlequah Campus contact:** Persons with insurance should bring their insurance card. Blue Cross Blue Shield will cover testing 100%. Uninsured individuals will also be tested at no cost.

**NEO Health Tahlequah- NSU Campus 918-444-2126  
529 N. Oak Ave., Tahlequah, OK 74464**

**Cherokee Nation Tribal Clinic – Free of Charge  
WW Hastings 918-458-3100**

- Individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 should seek medical advice for when it is safe to return to normal activities. Employees may return to campus when they have provided NSU with a medical release, a negative test result, OR when it has been 14 days from their positive test, whichever comes first.
- In all cases, individuals should take the medical advice given to them by their healthcare providers.

## **Health Provider and Health Department Notifications**

- Your health provider will notify you of your test results.
- If results are negative, you should remain home until you are no longer sick and you have met all requirements to return from quarantine.
- If you test positive, your health provider and your county health department will give you further instructions on mandatory isolation, as required by the State of Oklahoma.
- You will be required to provide documentation from a health care provider to your supervisor of your ability to return to work.
- Continue to answer daily calls from the health department in order to comply with state regulations and ensure your health and safety and the health and safety of others. Please provide as many details as possible at this time. You may call your health department if you have other concerns.
- The contagious period begins 2 days before symptoms begin, therefore, individuals who test positive will be asked to provide a list of individuals they have been in contact with from the beginning of your contagious period until the time you began isolation.

- Contact is typically defined as spending more than 15 minutes with someone, within 6 feet of that person, during the contagious period.
- You will be frequently contacted by the health department to discuss your symptoms. They will release you for public contact somewhere between 10 to 14 days if you are exhibiting NO symptoms.

### **Immediately if you have come in contact with someone that tests positive.**

- Notify your supervisor that you have come in contact with someone who tested positive for Covid-19.
- Be aware you may be contacted by a contact tracer from the health department.
- The CDC guidelines state “Do not leave your house or have guests over. Try to self-isolate within your home so that you don’t infect other members of your household. Monitor yourself for symptoms like fever, cough and shortness of breath. If you develop any symptoms, call your healthcare provider for further instruction.”
- Get tested. Contact your healthcare provider to ask about getting tested because of your exposure. Call ahead and wear a cloth face covering when you leave home. If you test negative during your quarantine period, you will still need to complete quarantine requirements before it is safe to go back to work or be around others.
- Individuals should quarantine for 10 days from last known exposure. If they have tested negative and have had no symptoms, they may return to campus after Day 7 from last known exposure. A negative test result OR release from a physician will be required prior to returning to campus. In both cases, employees and students should continue to monitor for symptoms, wear a mask, and maintain social distancing.
- Stay home and away from others (“self-quarantine”). Avoid contact with others to avoid spreading the infection to others. Do not go to work.
- Monitor your health. Take your temperature with a thermometer two times a day (once in the morning, once at night) and watch for fever. Also, watch for other signs and symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough, shortness of breath, chills, muscle pain, sore throat or new loss of taste or smell.

### **Supervisor Responsibilities**

- Stay calm. If you remain calm, this will help your employees stay calm also.
- Maintain confidentiality of your employee’s personal health information (PHI). This means other employees do not need to know who confirmed positive. A representative from the health department will notify individuals who have come in contact with an employee who tested positive.
- Reinforce the need to complete the daily Pre-shift Questionnaires.
- Stress the importance of staying or going home when employees do not feel well or believe they are experiencing symptoms or after exposure to someone who is believed or confirmed to have COVID-19.

- Evaluate the potential of an employee's ability to telework after being confirmed as positive for COVID-19 and obtain approval from appropriate vice president.
- Continue to evaluate office space to ensure social distancing capabilities exist.

## **Critical University Communications**

University Relations will lead campus notification efforts in collaboration with Emergency Management and Human Resources. Communications will *not* include information regarding the person's identity as that information is more than likely protected either through HIPAA and/or FERPA or other privacy guidelines.

## **Personal Health Responsibility**

- Daily Pre-shift Questionnaire must be completed prior to coming on campus.
- Maintain social distancing guidelines.
- Per CDC guidelines, NSU requires and will reinforce use of face coverings among students, faculty and staff. Face coverings should be worn as feasible and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult.
- Individuals should try not to touch their face covering and should wash their hands frequently. Hand-washing guidelines and protocols are posted in each restroom and breakrooms. If hand washing is not feasible, make use of the hand sanitation stations.
- Cover your cough and/or sneeze with a tissue, then discard, then wash your hands. If a tissue is unavailable, cough or sneeze into your bent elbow.
- Refrain from touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limit elevators to single occupancy when possible. If not possible, you should wear a mask.
- Use stairs as the primary method of travel between floors when/possible.
- Use video conferencing as an alternate choice to in-person meetings when possible.
- *NSU highly recommends that students and employees are vaccinated for COVID-19.*

## **Face Coverings**

- Per CDC guidelines, NSU requires and will reinforce use of face coverings among students, faculty and staff. Face coverings should be worn as feasible and are most essential in times when physical distancing is difficult.
- It is important to our employees and students that NSU remains a safe place to work. Wearing a face mask improves the health and safety for everyone.
- The NSU Return to Campus Task Force continues to monitor state and local requirements for face coverings and guidance from the Oklahoma State Department of Health and Center for Disease Control.
- Employees may wear their own clean, well-maintained and *professional* face mask from home instead of the NSU-branded mask if you choose.

## **Environmental Health Protocols of Personal Working Space**

- Remove unnecessary items in your personal work space.
- Disinfect keyboards, office phone, fax machines, printers and copiers in common areas after each use and in your own office daily/weekly.
- Disinfect all high-touch places in your work space daily/weekly.

## **Cleaning of University Facilities**

NSU Facilities Management provides daily cleaning and disinfecting of campus buildings in all common areas. Facilities Management is also focused on high use and higher risk areas for additional disinfecting multiple times per day. Facilities Management has been able to secure an appropriate amount of disinfectant product and cleaning supplies and will continue to monitor and procure additional resources as needed.

Facilities Management has also obtained electrostatic vapor disinfection equipment for applying disinfectant. This equipment will be used in both preventative and treatment applications. In order for the disinfecting vapor to work correctly, it is critical for personal work spaces to be free of unnecessary items and clutter.

In the event of an emergency, Facilities Management has also partnered with on-call cleaning professionals to treat or remediate buildings and/or spaces as necessary.

*Facilities Management follows all CDC sanitation guidelines.*

## **University Sponsored Travel**

- All out-of-state and international travel plans by employees requires the approval by the division Vice President before the travel may occur.

## **Employee Personal or Vacation Travel**

- Employees planning to travel out of state while on vacation shall obtain preapproval directly from their supervisor by completing the [Absence Request Report](#).
- All vacation travel requests approved may be revoked at any time by the direct supervisor when the travel is to and from a high-risk state, based upon the published risk within that specific state.
- All employees when traveling out of state for personal or vacation travel must comply with all existing quarantine/isolation rules in the state they are traveling to and the requirements within the state of Oklahoma.

## **Guidance for Planning & Organization of Campus Events**

Please follow the [Campus Events guidelines](#) when planning for your next event by completing the [Campus Events Safety Plan form](#).