

As we take methodical steps to reopen campus, the health and safety of our employees remains paramount.

Section I (Mitigation Protocol) details the operating procedures and guidelines for employees. **These mitigation steps are rooted in current strategies to reduce the likelihood of spreading COVID-19 and are subject to change and modification based on further instructions from local, state, and federal officials.** Section II (Reporting and Assessment) details the steps required when a COVID-19 case is suspected, and when probable or confirmed.

SECTION I – MITIGATION PROTOCOL

Preventive measures

COVID-19 is a severe respiratory illness caused by a coronavirus. It is characterized by cough, fever, and shortness of breath. This is a new disease, and we are still learning how it spreads, but it is believed to be through close contact with an infected person (through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes). It may also be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Knowing the facts and how to protect yourself is critical to help avoid infection.

1. Maintain social distancing
 - a. Avoid close contact (maintain distancing of at least 6 feet) with other individuals.
 - b. Limit occupants in vehicles. When multiple occupants are in a vehicle, all occupants should wear a mask.
 - c. Avoid sharing tools, phones, desks, and other objects in the workplace.
 - d. Where this is unavoidable, General Services will work with supervisors to develop a hard-surface cleaning procedure between uses with [EPA-approved products](#). For further information or guidance, contact General Services at generalservices@pct.edu.
 - e. Supervisors will evaluate alternative work arrangements, if necessary, for individuals who need to share workspaces (for example, rotate individuals coming on campus, modify work hours, or explore remote work arrangements).
2. Maintain good personal hygiene
 - a. Wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap.
 - b. Avoid touching your face and eyes with your hands.
 - c. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow.
 - d. Stay home when you are sick.

General health and safety measures

Utilizing OSHA guidelines, most Penn College employees are classified at a “Lower Exposure Risk” level. This category includes jobs that do not require contact with people who are known to be, or are suspected of being, infected with COVID-19, as well as those that do not require frequent close contact with (within 6 feet of) the general public.

1. College masking
 - a. Penn College employees are required to wear a mask as outlined in the [PDE COVID-19 Health & Wellness Safety Plan](#).
 - b. Please note, while masks will be available, employees are encouraged to provide their own. Additionally, N95 face masks and other critical supplies should be reserved for our health-care providers and first responders.
2. Shared work areas
 - a. Maintain social distancing, and follow all reduced-occupancy instructions.
 - b. Wash your hands often.
 - c. Establish cleaning procedures for common touchpoints with your supervisor.
3. Tasks requiring multiple individuals
 - a. Complete the task without touching your face.
 - b. Cover coughs/sneezes.
 - c. Immediately wash your hands when the task is complete.
4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - a. For employees in the “Lower Exposure Risk” level, additional PPE is not recommended, except for what would ordinarily be used as protection against routine hazards.
5. Questions or concerns
 - a. Employees may contact their supervisor or Human Resources.

Departmental cleaning

While routine cleaning will still be performed by General Services, individuals and departments are encouraged to clean and disinfect their work areas during the workday. Doing so will help minimize the risk of exposure and the spread of COVID-19. It is recommended to clean frequently touched surfaces with the appropriate EPA-registered disinfectants determined to be effective against the coronavirus. Contact General Services at generalservices@pct.edu for additional guidance or recommendations.

1. Always clean surfaces prior to the use of disinfectants in order to reduce general dirt and debris, which can reduce the effectiveness of the disinfectants. Follow the instructions on the specific product label and be aware of the requirements of the area being cleaned (for example, electronic cleaning without the use of liquids).
2. Employees are reminded to follow procedures for safe and effective use of all products (for example, disinfectants may require a certain amount of contact time). Safety instructions are listed on product labels and include the proper PPE needed when handling the material.

Guidelines for cleaning computer products

Computers and related products are often considered “high-touch” items, especially in commonly shared areas such as libraries and computer labs. As such, routine cleaning and disinfecting of computer surfaces in commonly shared locations is recommended. The guidelines below (adapted from Apple’s “How to Clean your Apple Products”) can also be used for the personal care and disinfecting of your individual computer products.

1. Computer products are made with a variety of materials, and each material might have specific cleaning requirements; however, here are tips that apply to all products:
 - a. Use only a soft, lint-free cloth. Avoid abrasive cloths, paper towels, or similar items.
 - b. Avoid excessive wiping, which might cause damage.
 - c. Unplug all external power sources, devices, and cables.
 - d. Keep liquids away from the product, unless otherwise noted, for specific products.
 - e. Don't allow moisture into any openings.
 - f. Don't use aerosol sprays, bleaches, or abrasives.
 - g. Don't spray cleaners directly onto the item.
2. Approved disinfectants for coronavirus
 - a. Due to the sensitive nature of computer electronics, special consideration should be taken when cleaning these items to minimize the potential of damaging the computer with the cleaning product.
 - b. Using cleaning wipes supplied throughout campus or other appropriate EPA-registered disinfectants determined to be effective against the coronavirus, you may gently wipe the hard, nonporous surfaces of your product, such as the display, keyboard, or other exterior surfaces. Be sure to follow all of the manufacturer’s recommendations and warning labels when using any cleaning product.
 - c. Don't use bleach.
 - d. Again, avoid getting moisture in any opening, and don't submerge your product in any cleaning agents.
 - e. Don't use on fabric or leather surfaces.

SECTION II – REPORTING AND ASSESSMENT

Guidance to individuals experiencing flu-like symptoms (Suspected “COVID-19 Case”)

The following is guidance specific to individuals who experience flu-like symptoms and who are suspected of having COVID-19.

1. Note [COVID-19 symptoms](#). Most common symptoms include:
 - a. Fever or chills – temperature of 100.4 F or higher.
 - b. Cough.
 - c. Shortness of breath.
 - d. New loss of taste and/or smell.
 - e. Symptoms may appear two-14 days after exposure, based on the incubation period of the virus.
2. Self-Isolate.
 - a. Individuals who develop these symptoms in class or at work should leave immediately.
 - b. Individuals who develop these symptoms while away from class or work should stay home.
3. Individuals should contact their personal health-care provider or College Health Services for a phone-screen assessment for COVID-19. The individual should follow the guidance provided by their health-care provider.
4. If absence from work is necessary: Employees should first inform their supervisor and then contact Human Resources.
5. Supervisors should contact General Services to initiate any necessary cleaning protocols.

Employee reporting of probable or confirmed COVID-19 cases

Contact Human Resources at humanresources@pct.edu or 570.327.4770.

COVID-19 case assessment for impact on campus operations due to a probable or confirmed case

The College will isolate the area as long as practical from the last known date/time the individual was in the space prior to fully cleaning and disinfecting it, at which time the space can be returned to use.

Questions to ask when an individual is identified as a probable or confirmed positive COVID-19 case

1. Has the individual been in contact with students, faculty, or staff since becoming ill, as well as within the 48 hours prior to showing symptoms?
2. Has the individual been on campus since becoming ill, as well as within the 48 hours prior to showing symptoms?

If the answer is “No” to both assessment questions, then no further action required. If it is “Yes,” supervisors will need to assess if other employees may have worked in the same area or shared equipment, but otherwise, were not in “close contact” with the individual. (The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines “close contact” as being within approximately 6 feet of a COVID-19-positive individual for a minimum period of 15 minutes. Close contact can also occur while sharing office space, working on equipment together, traveling together in a vehicle, or having direct contact with infectious COVID-19 secretions, for example, from being coughed on.)

1. Work with General Services to identify and restrict access to work areas and equipment in “close contact” with a COVID-19 case.
2. As a general rule, restrict access to high-risk areas and equipment that have been considered to be in “close contact” with the COVID-19 case until the area/equipment can be fully disinfected.

REFERENCES

- [CDC Implementing Safety Practices for Critical Infrastructure Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19](#)
- [CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease](#)
- [2019 NIH News Release – New Coronavirus stable for hours on surfaces \(March 17, 2020\)](#)
- [Governor Wolf’s COVID-19 Order dated April 15, 2020](#)
- [PADOH – 2020-PAHAN-493-4-6-ALT ALERT: Notification of COVID-19 Test Results to Patients](#)
- [CDC – How Coronavirus Spreads](#)
- [CDC – Guidance for Institutes of Higher Education](#)
- [OSHA – Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)
- [EPA - Approved list of disinfectants effective against COVID-19](#)