

NMSU Employee and Administrative Protocols for Return to Campus — FALL 2020

The protocols in this document were developed to reduce the transmission of the virus and the occupational risk of infection to workers as the level of on-site activities increase. These protocols are supported by the NMSU Administration and are based on information from local, State and Federal agencies. The document is divided into four sections:

1. NMSU Employee Expectations
2. NMSU Administrative Protocols for Qualifying Pandemic Event
3. NMSU Supervisor Guide to Evaluating and Reducing Worker Risk
4. Managing staff who have Elevated Risk Factors and Essential Employees.

NMSU Employee Expectations

All employees are expected to follow the following workplace standards and behaviors regardless of job title, position, or work location.

1. Stay home if you are sick
2. Call NMSU Aggie Health & Wellness Center for telehealth advice and referral if you reasonably suspect that you have been exposed to SARS-CoV-2 virus
3. Be aware of who you have contact with in the workplace environment
4. Practice social distancing
5. Wear a courtesy face covering when social distancing is not possible and when required by Department of Health Public Health Order, such as for retail sales work, and contact your supervisor to discuss access to face coverings that are reasonably necessary
6. Wash your hands frequently
7. Take personal responsibility to keep your work area clean, as well as any office or breakroom equipment you may use (e.g. copiers)
8. Take care of yourself through healthy practices regarding nutrition, sleep, exercise, and ergonomics
9. Assume others act with the best of intentions; be kind to others
10. Maintain privacy of NMSU information you have at home
11. Use resources wisely
12. Support and comply with the decisions, guidelines/rules of the Administration
13. Align with LEADS 2025 Goals

NMSU Administrative Protocols for Qualifying Pandemic Event

These procedures and actions for employees, supervisors and administrators will help protect the health and safety of NMSU faculty, staff, students and visitors by reducing the risk of infection and transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus at NMSU. These protocols apply to all NMSU personnel.

Individual protocols

1. Sick employees must stay at home. Supervisors must enforce this requirement and immediately send home any employee exhibiting signs of any illness.
2. All employees must practice social distancing (6 feet minimum distance between people); when social distancing is not possible, courtesy face coverings or other types of controls designed to reduce the risk of virus transmission will be used as described in "Use of Courtesy Face Coverings.". Supervisors must enforce this requirement.
3. Supervisors have an obligation to report positive cases of COVID-19 to NMSU Aggie Health & Wellness Center and provide work location information that may be used in contact tracing. An Aggie Health & Wellness medical provider will provide instructions.
4. All employees must attend staff training on COVID-19 risk factors, protective behaviors, and NMSU policies, procedures and resources related to the virus. **(Attachment 1 and hyperlink to training). (This will be online in English and Spanish)**
5. Only one person at a time is allowed in university vehicles. When this is not possible, all people in the vehicle will wear a courtesy face covering or respirator. Personal vehicle use may be allowed following established approval protocols. An employee who uses a university vehicle has responsibility to keep that vehicle's interior clean as part of that employee's work area.

Space and scheduling protocols

6. Common areas and publicly accessible areas will be clearly posted with university-approved signs and markings that reinforce social distancing requirements. University approved signage is available through Facilities and Services (hyperlink to approved signs). Departments and other administrative units are responsible for posting their own areas and Building Monitors post public areas such as lobbies.
7. Rearrange workspaces to facilitate social distancing requirements between co-workers. Institute procedures for entering and exiting high traffic areas to reduce opportunities for contact. Departments will initiate work requests for facilities support to accomplish major changes.
8. To reduce occupancy density of buildings and work areas, departments are expected to develop operational plans that promote the least number of on-site staff and allow for social distancing without compromising operational effectiveness and productivity of department. Some examples of this include:

1. Establish alternating on-site work and telework days.
2. Schedule extra or alternate shifts, in consultation with Human Resource Services.
3. Allow staff to telework, where possible, as long as it does not disrupt or diminish the quality of required services or operations
4. Essential personnel may be exempt
9. Departments and administrative units must establish entry and exit logs for all areas under their control. These may be used for contact tracing by any applicable health authority.
10. Use virtual communication tools to minimize face-to-face contacts such as meetings and training sessions whenever possible
11. Limit in-person class sizes and schedule class space large enough so that all attendees can easily maintain social distancing requirements. University approved signage is available through Facilities and Services ([hyperlink to approved signs](#)).
12. Limit the number of people allowed at university-sanctioned gatherings and reserve meeting spaces large enough so that all attendees can easily maintain minimum social distancing requirements. **(This could depend on guidelines and restrictions implemented by the governor of NM).**
13. Reduce the number of areas in university facilities that are accessible to the general public. Use signage to identify restricted areas.

Sanitation protocols

14. Cooperate with and support Facilities and Services as they implement university-wide actions in response to the pandemic event ([Attachment 2](#)).
15. Departments and other administrative units are responsible for increased level of sanitizing common areas (meeting rooms, break rooms, etc.) and equipment (copiers, printers, etc.) under their control ([Products and Procurement link](#)).
16. Employees are responsible for increased level of sanitizing personal equipment (keyboards, computer mouse, phones, desktops, hand tools, etc.) in their offices and workspaces ([Products and Procurement link](#)). Contact Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) to discuss and medical limitation that restricts your ability to do so.

Information and travel

17. Supervisors should keep up to date on the latest pandemic event information and NMSU protocols (see attachment 3).
18. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that protocols for employees are communicated and followed
19. Restrict nonessential business travel. If travel is required,
 1. Follow [NMSU Travel Approval Requirements](#)
 2. Check [CDC Travel Warnings](#) and [U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories](#) before scheduling travel.

NMSU Supervisor Guide to Evaluating and Reducing Worker Risk

Supervisors must evaluate and develop appropriate protocols to reduce staff exposure to the SARS-CoV-2 virus. To help determine appropriate workplace precautions, OSHA has provided [guidance](#) that categorizes jobs into four exposure risk levels:

1. Very High Risk
2. High Risk
3. Medium Risk
4. Lower Risk

Most NMSU positions fall into the lower and medium risk exposure categories. The Aggie Health & Wellness Center (AHWC), NMSU Fire Department and NMSU Police Department have their own protocols to ensure worker safety. For additional information on very high and high risk workers, see the [OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#).

The remainder of this section focuses on determining the risk category for workers and the appropriate protocols for low and medium risk categories.

Contact EHS&RM if you need help with worker risk assessments or help evaluating appropriate protocols and engineering controls.

Positions with Lower Exposure Risk (Use Caution)

Definition: Lower exposure risk (caution) jobs do not require contact with people known to be, or suspected of being, infected with SARS-CoV-2 nor frequent close contact with (i.e., within 6 feet of) the public. Workers in this category have minimal occupational close contact with the public or other coworkers.

Administrative and Engineering Controls for Low Risk Workers

1. Follow [NMSU Administrative Protocols for Qualifying Pandemic Event](#) listed above
2. Additional engineering controls designed to reduce exposure to the virus are generally not required. Other controls already in place to reduce worker occupational hazards should continue to be used.

Personal Protective Equipment for Low Risk Workers

1. OSHA does not recommend personal protective equipment (PPE) beyond what is normally required for the job for this worker classification.
2. When social distancing requirements cannot be maintained, NMSU requires workers to wear a courtesy face covering. Resources and guidance for face coverings are located on the EHS&RM web site under the [Essential Worker Safety](#) page.

Positions with Medium Exposure Risk

Definition: Medium exposure risk jobs include those that require frequent or close contact (i.e., within 6 feet of) with people who may be infected with SARS-CoV-2 but who are not known or suspected COVID-19 patients. Workers in this risk group may have frequent close contact with the general public, other co-workers or contact with travelers who may be coming from locations with widespread community transmission. Examples may include workers with frequent face-to-face interactions such as a cashier at dining services or Accounts Receivable or a Facilities and Services employee who makes repairs in an occupied housing unit.

The first response should be to find a way to drop a worker's risk from Medium Risk to Lower. Many of the strategies identified in the basic NMSU Administrative Controls may be used to lower the risk category of a position. If reclassifying a position to a lower risk category is not feasible, the supervisor must identify and implement protocols appropriate for a Medium Exposure Risk position.

Administrative Protocols for Medium Risk Workers

1. Follow NMSU [Administrative Protocols for Qualifying Pandemic Event](#) listed above.
2. Limit the number of people in direct contact with the worker by using signage and floor markings to remind customers and coworkers about social distancing requirements, if applicable. ([standards and procurement options link here](#))

Engineering Controls for Medium Risk Workers

1. Install physical barriers between the worker and public, such as clear plastic sneeze guards, where feasible. ([standards and procurement options link here](#))
2. Install high-efficiency air filters in the room.
3. Increase the ventilation rate in the work environment.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Medium Risk Workers:

Whenever possible, supervisors will use administrative and engineering controls first and personal protective equipment as a last or supplementary control, as appropriate, for the work being performed.

The type of PPE required for a worker in the medium exposure risk category will vary by work task, the successful implementation of administrative and engineering controls, and the types of exposures the worker may encounter on the job. In general, the worker may need protection from possible exposure via airborne (droplets) hazards, and contact hazards.

1. Typically, workers in this category may need to wear some combination of gloves, facemask and safety glasses, goggles or face shield. They may also need a gown or disposable coveralls if there is a risk of contamination to the worker's clothing.

2. The Supervisor may contact EHS&RM to assist in identifying the appropriate PPE for the medium risk tasks being performed.
3. Supervisors should select the combination of PPE that best protects worker specific to the task being performed.
4. When selecting PPE, consider factors such as function, fit, decontamination ability, disposal, and cost. When PPE will be used repeatedly for a long period of time, a more durable and washable type of PPE may be less expensive overall than disposable PPE.
5. In the rare situation that a worker in the medium risk category needs a respirator for protection against the SARS-CoV-2 virus, contact EHS&RM for guidance. Employees needing a respirator for protection will be provided with appropriate equipment, training, medical approval and fit testing.
6. The [voluntary use of N-95 respirators](#) is allowed if supplies are available. Voluntary use is a personal choice and is not required for the work or position.

Contact EHS&RM if you need help with worker risk assessments, evaluating appropriate protocols and engineering controls.

Managing staff who have Elevated Individual Risk Factors

Some workers are at higher risk based on individual risk factors (e.g., age; chronic medical conditions, including immunocompromising conditions; pregnancy). These cases will be taken into consideration for pandemic event accommodation when declared. ([link to procedure here](#))

1. Controls to reduce the risk of exposure in the workplace may require accommodations for some employees. Options for accommodation may include:
 - a. Delivering services remotely
 - i. Teleworking
 - ii. Online instruction delivery
 - b. Private office space and increased sanitizing of multi-use areas
 - c. Staggered work shifts
 - d. Downsizing operations
 - e. Providing and training on proper use of Personal Protective Equipment

Attachment 1. Staff Training Topics

(HRS / EHS&RM, HRS — Lead with support from AHWC)

To consistently communicate essential information, the University will implement training on “NMSU Employee and Administrative Protocols for Return to Campus “. This will minimize burden on supervisors, provide a consistent message and guide individuals to other resources. This training should be available as an online offering before start of Fall 2020 semester ([hyperlink to training here](#)). In the interim, this document provides protocols and guidelines for supervisors to communicate to employees. Worksite-specific protocol training to reduce risk in specific operations will be the responsibility of the supervisor. Other safety training such as respiratory protection and personal protective equipment will be delivered per established NMSU safety trainings.

The “NMSU Employee and Administrative Protocols for Return to Campus “training will be completed before employee returns to work on-site. Topics will include the following.

1. Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 illness and steps to take when an infection is suspected; the importance of staying at home when sick.
2. Use of social distancing and, in public settings where other social distancing measures may be difficult to maintain, use of courtesy face coverings; close contact avoidance strategies; techniques for avoiding face to face contact.
3. Difference between personal protective equipment (PPE) and courtesy face covering for COVID-19 risk reduction
4. When to use other personal protective equipment (PPE) and respiratory protection (N95mask).
5. Managing Workers with Elevated Risk Factors
 - a. [CDC Guidance on People Who Need to Take Extra Precautions.](#)
 - b. University notification requirements and procedures for accommodation (i.e. Supervisors, Human Resource Service, Office of Institutional Equity, etc.).
 - c. Workplace strategies and methods and to reduce risks
 - d. Other leave options
6. Respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
7. Proper handwashing techniques. Proper use of hand sanitizers; sanitizer (must be at least 60% alcohol).
8. Employee workplace cleaning and sanitizing procedures.
9. What and how to communicate to visitors on the safety requirements in the office.
10. How to manage personnel situations involving Qualifying Pandemic Event, such as employees who fail to comply with risk safety guidelines.

Attachment 2. Institution-Level Cleaning and Sanitizing Actions

(Facilities and Services lead)

1. Facilities and Service building and room sanitizing program
 - a. Increase the level and frequency of custodial cleaning in common areas such as bathrooms and breakrooms. Establish regular cleaning schedules based on area level of use.
 - b. Distribute extra sanitizing stations and disinfecting wipes throughout the campus, especially at entrances to buildings.
2. Establish a university-wide distribution system of courtesy face coverings, sanitizing wipes and restocking program.
3. Shut down drinking fountains in common areas or replace with bottle filling stations.
4. Establish protocol for disinfecting facilities when contamination is suspected.

Attachment 3. University COVID-19-Related Communications

1. [University Leadership Town Hall and FAQ Web Page](#)
2. [Coronavirus Information – central location for updates and guidance from the NMSU System](#)
3. [COVID-19 Corona Virus Disease – Aggie Health & Wellness](#)
4. [COVID-19 Health & Safety Resources – Environmental Health Safety & Risk Management](#)
5. [Update Your Continuity of Operations Plans \(CoOP\)](#)