



RMU READY PLAN

**PROMOTING A SAFE AND HEALTHY
RETURN TO CAMPUS**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Robert Morris University (RMU) is committed to promoting a safe and healthy environment for our students, faculty, staff, and visitors. This RMU Ready Plan outlines the university's plans for in-person instruction, residential living, and related operations during the Spring semester in accordance with the requirements and guidance of Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), and the Allegheny County Health Department. **The governmental requirements and public health guidance related to mitigating the spread of COVID-19 continue to evolve. This plan will evolve accordingly, and updates will be shared with the campus community.**

The PDE requires colleges and universities resuming in-person operations as permitted by Governor Wolf to publish a health and safety plan. Our RMU Ready Plan balances our primary concern for the safety of all members of the RMU community with our mission of providing an engaging on-campus living and learning environment for the students we serve. The plan addresses RMU's strategies for:

- Establishing and implementing modified in-person instruction and residential living;
- Monitoring health conditions in our campus community;
- Implementing a comprehensive strategy to mitigate and contain the spread of the virus on campus, and to inform the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Allegheny County Health Department in the event that transmission occurs at RMU;
- Communicating accurate and timely information to students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders

The requirements set forth in this plan apply to all RMU students, faculty, and staff. Your compliance with the plan is essential to your own personal health and safety as well as the health and safety of the entire RMU community. We appreciate your compliance and your partnership in this important effort. If you have any questions about this plan, please contact:

- Dean of Students Office, 412-397-6483 (for questions from students or parents)
- Human Resources, 412-397-6270 (for questions from faculty or staff)

II. IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AND RESIDENTIAL LIVING

A. In-person Instruction

The start of 15-week classes for the Spring semester – both on-ground and online – will begin on Tuesday, January 19, 2021. Eight-week classes – both on-ground and online – will begin on Monday, January 11, 2021. ISCM Doctoral courses will begin on Monday, January 4, 2021. **Instruction for all students and courses will be delivered remotely through Friday, January 22, 2021.** RMU's regularly scheduled Spring Break holiday has been cancelled, but all other university holidays remain in place. Final exams will be conducted remotely. Unless we receive different instructions from governmental authorities at a later date, the residence halls will remain open until the end of the semester.

In order to decrease density and to allow for adequate physical distancing on campus, we will offer an increased number of online courses in Spring 2021. Some face-to-face instruction will be available for every student enrolled in an on-ground program while taking all steps possible to have a safe and healthy instructional environment, including masking of all students and instructors in classrooms and hallways, instructor station plexiglass shields, physical distancing, and reduction of congestion during student ingress/egress between classes.

The University Registrar and Facilities Department have established new classroom capacities based on recommended physical distancing guidelines (classes will generally have 35 or fewer students in a classroom). The department heads and deans identified on-ground courses already approved for fully online instruction which allowed us to identify courses that could be moved online easily and immediately decrease campus density (allowing for open times between classes to decrease congestion during ingress/egress of students) and determine if we had classrooms available at scheduled times with adequate physical distancing capacity for smaller course sections.

Utilizing large instructional spaces such as Massey Theater, Hopwood Hall, the UPMC Events Center large conference room, and Yorktown large conference rooms, will allow us to physically distance classes of 30 to 40 students. Enrollment in larger course sections will be decreased by creating additional online and on-ground sections. This, in turn, will create smaller course sections which can then be scheduled with appropriate physical distancing into the available large instructional areas. RMU has invested in new classroom technology that will allow us to increase the number of courses that allow students some face to face contact with instructors while also decreasing classroom density. RMU will continue to offer an instructional option called Virtual Rotation. This method allows for smaller groups of students to rotate physically attending class with virtual attendance. For example, students may have a Tuesday/Thursday schedule which will allow them to attend class in person on Tuesday and virtually on Thursday while half of their peers do the opposite. These courses will be marked on the student schedule. A code will let the student know which days to attend the class in person. In this way, an adequate number of face-to-face learning experiences will be maintained.

Information regarding instructor responses to issues regarding masking in the classroom, appropriate physical distancing, and reports of illness were addressed in a faculty-specific FAQ, which will be reiterated at Spring Convocation and/or School meetings.

Virtual or remote department and committee meetings, student advising, and faculty office hours will be encouraged per PDE and CDC guidelines.

B. RMU - Library

Library services will be delivered remotely through January 22, 2021. Library signage addressing physical distancing, floor-placed spacing and directional needs, mask wearing, and other policies related to COVID-19 health and safety will be placed at appropriate locations. Wipes and/or disinfectant products will be available at the Library Help Desk for users to wipe down keyboards and computer mice before use. The consumption of food of any kind will not be permitted anywhere in the library. Also, moving chairs, tables, or any other furniture will not be permitted. Other policies may be required and will be

developed in coordination with campus officials. Information regarding librarian responses to issues regarding masking in the library, appropriate physical distancing, and reports of illness have been addressed in a faculty-specific FAQ that will be reiterated at Spring Convocation and/or Library meetings.

There will be restrictions in library space:

- The Instructional Resource Center will be open only by appointment with a maximum of two people practicing physical distancing at one time.
- The study rooms on the 3rd floor of Patrick Henry will be closed and posted as unavailable.
- The main print book collection on the 3rd floor of Patrick Henry as well as the reference, serials, and oversized collections on the 2nd floor will remain open to public use. Signage will be placed on the endcaps indicating the need to practice physical distancing in this space. Unidirectional foot traffic signage will be placed on the floor and end caps in the aisle between the first and last stack corridor so there is a marked entry and exit for library traffic.

The library will continue to provide many of its services principally online. Beginning on January 23, 2021, librarians will staff the research help desk, process print books, and conduct library instruction sessions for on-ground classes. Some research assistance will be offered during pre-identified/communicated hours and the remainder of the research assistance will be provided through established virtual or remote procedures.

At the primary service desk, plexiglass shields will be installed around the circulation point and the research help area. Librarians may be seated at the help desk for research help during peak usage times, but most research help will be available remotely. Physical distancing will be maintained at all times. The Textbook Reserve service will continue through eBook purchase/subscription and scanning/electronic delivery of textbooks.

C. Residential Living

1. Housing Contracts and Related Documents

Before new residential students can move-in, they will be asked to review and agree to the terms of the RMU Code During COVID-19 (discussed under “Communicating with Students, Faculty, Staff, and Other Stakeholders”), an Acknowledgment of Risk and Responsibility, and a Housing Contract Addendum. These documents communicate certain additional expectations and restrictions necessary to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the campus community. These documents may be found on the RMU website at rmu.edu/coronavirus. Supplemental awareness materials will be provided to students identified as high risk either due to personal health issues or those who work in healthcare facilities. Returning residents executed these documents for the academic year in the Fall 2020, and are strongly encouraged to review these documents before arriving on campus.

- Only new residential students will be required to successfully complete a pre-screening by the MyHealth@School Center before they are permitted to move into residence halls. Pre-screening

will include a review of current health history, verification that all required immunizations are on file, documentation of COVID-19 testing if mandated, and confirmation of emergency contact information.

2. Requiring Student Safety Plans

All new resident students will be asked to provide a “Safety Plan” to Residence Life prior to arrival on campus, to be activated in the event that quarantine or isolation measures, or closures of campus residence halls, become necessary. Returning residents completed this form in the Fall 2020 and can request to update it by contacting the Residence Life Office. The student’s personal Safety Plan must include answers to the following questions:

- Where will the student go in the event that they must leave campus?
- What transportation options exist for the student?
- Does the student have access to a vehicle?
- Do they have a registered vehicle on campus?
- Are they dependent upon public transportation?
- How quickly can a student get to their designated location given their transportation options?
- Who are the student’s emergency contacts?

3. Operational Guidelines to Enforce Physical Distance

- Masks in residential common area spaces including restrooms, laundry rooms, and hallways
- Hand sanitizing stations at designated building entrances
- A single approved configuration for double occupancy rooms (where assigned) to maximize physical distancing. (No bunking permitted.)
- Reduced capacity in elevators and installation of physical distancing floor indicators
- Room checks by Residence Life staff members will be increased as will on-call responsibilities for Residence Life and Community Advisors
- Spatial indicators and signage in restrooms and laundry rooms indicating limits in the number of occupants
- A No Guest Policy will be enforced at all times. This policy applies to visitors from off-campus, as well as to commuter students and students from other on-campus residence halls
- Enhanced cleaning protocols and/or self-service for shared areas and bathroom spaces
- Alterations in Residence Life programming to comply with physical distancing guidelines and established policies
- Residential students will be grouped into “social pods” in relation to their housing assignments and encouraged to share activities, meals, programs, and restrooms for the purpose of building community, socializing, accountability, and health monitoring.

4. Guidelines for Move-in / Move-Out

To adhere to best practices, our move-in and move-out plan for this academic year will include:

- Expanded days and times to allow physical distance

- Enhanced cleaning during move-in and move-out times
- Only two people may accompany each new resident or resident moving rooms
- Returning students' families are asked to stay in their vehicles when dropping off their student
- Temperature checks completed at check-in for all students and their support persons (if applicable)
- Designated move-in day and time
- Dedicated entrances and exits with foot traffic guides at all residence halls
- Designated stairwells and elevators for single-family use

5. Self-Quarantine Prior to Returning to Campus

RMU is strongly encouraging all students to self-quarantine for 14 days prior to their return to campus. This means that students should stay within their residence and limit contacts in order to lower their risk of exposure to COVID-19.

In the case of resident students, this would be two weeks before their scheduled move-in date. For commuters, it would be two weeks before the date of their first in-person class. All residential students are asked to adhere to the following:

- Utilize the Campus Clear App to monitor your health daily for symptoms such as fever or chills, persistent cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea;
- Wear a face mask and maintain a safe physical distance around any household member who is not self-quarantining.

As described under "Testing, Symptom Checking & Contact Tracing" in Section III(D), RMU will provide mandatory reentry testing for all students who are taking one or more on-ground courses. Students will be required to quarantine in their residences until they have received their test results.

6. Guidelines for COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation Housing

RMU has identified facilities for the temporary housing and care of residential students who cannot go home and must be either quarantined or isolated on campus when they are suspected or confirmed to be infected with COVID-19. Related procedures are described in the COVID-19 Response Protocol discussed under "Communication with Students, Faculty, Staff, and Other Stakeholders" in Section V(C).

D. Other Campus Services and Activities

1. Guidelines for Dining Operations

All Parkhurst dining facility staff are required to wear face masks and gloves at all times while working and interacting with the public. Employees are required to follow infection prevention guidelines including:

- Staying home when ill
- Practicing physical distancing whenever possible at work
- Practicing proper hand hygiene
- Avoiding touching the eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces throughout the workday
- Undergoing temperature checks prior to shift

All customers/diners are required to wear face masks or coverings while in the facility. Since an individual cannot eat and drink while in a mask, masks should be worn during movement in the facility and can be removed when sitting and dining. This further emphasizes the need for physical distancing of patrons, which will be accomplished via reconfiguration of dining spaces and increased availability of takeout options.

The number of individuals dining in a single facility at one time will be limited. The number will be chosen with the goal to achieve appropriate physical distancing of diners. Approaches include:

- Access control (i.e., once the target number is reached, patrons are only allowed to enter when another patron leaves)
- Physically spaced (6-foot) floor markers for waiting lines outside and inside the facility
- Appropriately spaced and limited numbers of tables and chairs per table
- Eliminating buffet-style self-serve food or beverage stations and replacing with staff-served meal stations
- Providing a bagged take-out meal option at every meal
- Arranging food delivery to students in isolation or quarantine

2. Counseling Center

We recognize that this academic year has been different than expected and that students may continue to have concerns adjusting to the new environment on campus. Now more than ever, we want to remind our students that the Counseling Center is here to help navigate these stressful times. We offer programs, resources, and services that support the overall mental health and well-being of our students. Our staff are providing distance counseling (teletherapy) via telephone or face-to-face video conferencing to currently enrolled students. Students must meet the eligibility criteria for teletherapy. Please note that while the eligibility criteria states that students must be physically located in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania while receiving these services (due to licensing restrictions), many states are allowing teletherapy sessions across state borders during the pandemic. This means that students located outside of PA may still be eligible to receive teletherapy services from our counselors. Students should inform the Counseling Center staff of their location so it can be determined whether their state has this type of arrangement in place. Students can visit [RMU Counseling](#) for more information on the process to begin teletherapy.

The Counseling Center will remain open and staff will be available for in-person crisis appointments. During regular business hours Monday - Friday, the Counseling Center can be reached at 412-397-5900 to schedule an appointment or to consult with a counselor regarding an urgent need for services. After

hours and on weekends, RMU Police can contact the appropriate resources for assistance with urgent needs for support.

3. Barnes & Noble Bookstore

The Barnes & Noble Bookstore is open to the public and abiding by all CDC, Pennsylvania Department of Health, and Allegheny County Health Department guidelines on traffic flow, personal protective equipment, cleaning, physical distancing, and signage. The store will continue to offer both in-store and online sales along with in-person store pick-up and direct shipments. Any inquiries, questions and concerns can be directed to businessoperations@rmu.edu.

4. Guidelines for Campus and Student-Centered Programming

a) Campus Recreation

Our facilities and programming are operating in alignment with the guidance from NIRSA: Leaders in Campus Recreation, the National Recreation and Park Association, the International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association, our healthcare partner UPMC, and other industry experts, as well as governing organizations for club sports teams, local and state authorities, and public health guidelines for operating recreation facilities.

Capacities for each space in our indoor facilities will continue to be determined based on governmental and/or public health requirements or guidance. Professional staff work closely with the Facilities team to complete cleaning protocols, ensure that our mechanical and safety systems are working efficiently, and regularly inspect all spaces and equipment for potential repairs to ensure that established procedures are being followed.

Measures are being taken in all facilities to improve our control over entry points, including a touchless entry card system with the use of plexiglass shields as appropriate. Student Recreation and Fitness Center floor plans maintain appropriate physical distancing for patrons. Signage and floor markings will control traffic and inform patrons. All patrons are required to wear face masks when in the building.

Separate [Campus Recreation documents](#) outline COVID-19 operations for the department as well as provide guidance for club sports and activities such as intramural/recreational programming.

b) Campus Events

All university departments are required to adhere to current guidelines for in-person events. The number of guests/attendees at an event must comply with current applicable guidance, as well as the modified capacity of the reserved space. Departments will consider alternative ways to offer programs and events. The use of available technology to host remote and/or virtual events is supported and encouraged.

Conference and Facilities staff provide oversight for the process of reserving and utilizing space in campus facilities. This scheduling and approval process will ensure compliance with capacity

requirements and university guidelines. Priority for available space will be given to first meet the academic needs of the university. Hosts will be required to use all campus spaces as they are configured so as to promote physical distancing. Reservations will be staggered for events so as to allow for time between events. Campus buildings, when not used for academic classes or approved events, will be secured to prevent unauthorized use of space.

c) Student Club and Organization Activities

The Office of Student Involvement or appropriate Academic School will provide approval for all student club and organization sponsored events. Staff members will continue to provide tools and training to assist student organization leaders and their advisors with event planning this semester. Groups are encouraged, and, in some instances, required to host meetings and events remotely. Reservations for events will be staggered in meeting spaces so as to allow for time between uses. Student groups are encouraged to hold outdoor events where possible. All student organization events will be required to have a designated contact person responsible for ensuring compliance with required guidelines. Until further notice, in-person student organization events are open only to currently enrolled RMU students, as well as faculty and staff, and in-person events open to the general public or external audiences are not permitted. The Office of Student Involvement can provide specific guidelines and protocols for events where food and/or beverages are desired.

d) Intercollegiate Athletics

Guidelines applicable to RMU's Division I athletic teams are described in detail in the "RMU Athletics Return to Campus Policy and Procedures Manual," which complies with current guidance from the NCAA, the Horizon League, and other conferences. The manual will be reviewed with all student-athletes, coaches, and athletic administrators prior to their return to campus.

III. MONITORING HEALTH CONDITIONS IN OUR CAMPUS COMMUNITY

A process for identifying and separating individuals who have COVID-19 symptoms (see subsection B, below) and/or require testing, who test positive for COVID-19, or who have had direct contact with another individual who tests positive) has been documented in the COVID-19 Response Protocol. (See "Communicating with Students, Faculty, Staff and Other Stakeholders" in Section V(C).) This is a critical and effective strategy of mitigating further spread of the virus. All individuals who feel sick or appear to have symptoms are advised to stay at home. A plan for those students who cannot or should not go home has been established.

A. Monitoring and Surveillance - General

Strategies for monitoring and surveillance provide a flexible blueprint for reimagining a new normal for RMU. We expect the plan to evolve as the data, and the facts, change. Undergirding this effort is our eagerness to return to some semblance of "normal." But to do so, we must meet an unprecedented challenge: figuring out how to move forward safely while we wait for supplies of the vaccine for COVID-

19. This comprehensive blueprint shows how to effectively respond to the crisis by aligning logistics, educational strategies, and public health approaches into one coherent response.

B. Guidelines for Students, Faculty, and Staff to Self-Monitor

All individuals in the RMU community are requested to “self-check” for COVID-19 symptoms every morning (and more frequently as necessary) before going to class or coming to work. All members of the RMU community are strongly encouraged to use the Campus Clear App, which can be downloaded onto any smartphone. Campus Clear will send a reminder each morning with a quick symptom assessment, and will indicate whether the individual is cleared to come to work and/or class. If you have any questions about Campus Clear, please contact Human Resources at humanresources@rmu.edu or the IT Help Desk at help@rmu.edu.

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. According to the CDC, individuals with one or more of these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

For more information or potential updates concerning COVID-19 symptoms, please refer to the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov). Individuals may also utilize the CDC’s “[Self-Checker](#)” to assist in making decisions regarding seeking medical attention. Additional information regarding symptoms of COVID-19 can be found on the Pennsylvania Department of Health’s [website](#).

Individuals exhibiting any of the above COVID-19 symptoms must adhere to the following:

- Must not report to work, class, or clinical assignments.
- All faculty and staff members should contact their medical provider for screening, consultation and appropriate treatment.
- If faculty and staff members do not have a personal medical provider, they may contact the MyHealth@School Center for phone screening during business hours at 412-397-6220.
- All students must contact MyHealth@School Center for phone screening/triage during business hours. If the Center is closed, students are advised to contact their own medical provider or the UPMC Anywhere Care App - Virtual Urgent Care (please note: fees apply) and call the MyHealth@School Center on the next business day.
- Must not participate in any university-sponsored events or activities.

- If required by your medical provider or the university, self-quarantine at home or in appropriate campus housing.
- Must follow the appropriate protocols provided for students and employees to return to the campus.

In addition, individuals should look for emergency warning signs associated with COVID-19. If they show any of the symptoms noted below, they should seek emergency medical care immediately. In the event of an emergency on campus, call Campus Police at (412) 397-2424. Otherwise, call 911.

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

C. Reporting

All individuals are expected to stay home if they exhibit symptoms of COVID-19. All students, faculty and staff members will need to obtain clearance to return to campus following an absence related to COVID-19. In addition, individuals need to report any of the following conditions and provide other notification to the university as appropriate.

1. If You Have Been Exposed or Have Tested Positive

Any RMU student, faculty member, or staff member is required to contact the MyHealth@School Center at (412) 397-6220 during business hours for phone screening/triage after learning that they have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or they themselves have tested positive for COVID-19. If the Center is closed, individuals are advised to: 1) contact their own medical provider or utilize the UPMC AnywhereCare App - Virtual Urgent Care (available to students and faculty and staff carrying UPMC health insurance, fees may apply); and 2) call the MyHealth@School Center on the next business day.

2. If You Need to Stay Home

Students should call the MyHealth@School Center at 412-397-6220. Do not visit the clinic. Your medical provider or MyHealth@School Center, as applicable, will advise you on next steps after screening is completed. The MyHealth@School Center staff is available by phone Monday - Friday from 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. If the Center is closed, students are advised to contact their own medical provider during non-business hours and call the MyHealth@School Center on the next business day.

After contacting a medical provider or the MyHealth@School Center, students, faculty, and staff, as applicable should contact the university as follows:

- Students must contact the Dean of Students Office to inform the university of any absences related to COVID-19 in order to be excused from class attendance. This office will be responsible

to make formal notification to the student's instructors using the normal student hospitalization notification procedures.

- Faculty members should inform their department head via phone or email, whichever is convenient in order to arrange for class coverage or remote instruction, and send an email to humanresources@rmu.edu.
- Staff members should inform their immediate supervisor via phone or email, whichever is convenient, and should also send an email to humanresources@rmu.edu.

Faculty and staff should follow the Policies for Faculty/Staff Sick Leave as outlined in this document. Students must contact the MyHealth@School Center by phone to receive clearance to return to campus.

The university adheres to the illness, quarantine, and isolation guidance provided by the CDC, the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and the Allegheny County Health Department which includes a requirement for individuals exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms to isolate for a period of ten (10) days and that they are clear of fever for at least 24 hours without medication and their symptoms have improved. For individuals with a known or suspected exposure to someone with COVID-19, generally an individual may return to work or school when one of the following conditions have been met:

1. Two weeks have passed since the exposure and the individual has not developed any COVID-like symptoms;
2. Ten (10) days have passed since the exposure, the individual has not developed any COVID-like symptoms, and the individual has tested negative using a PCR test for COVID-19 based on a specimen taken no more than 48 hours prior to the tenth day of quarantine; or
3. The individual to whom they were exposed tests negative for COVID-19.

RMU may require students and employees to present appropriate medical documentation in connection with a return to school or work.

3. Reporting Non-Compliance

Students, faculty, and staff may report non-compliance with this Plan and/or other COVID-19 related safety measures to the Provost's Office, Dean of Students Office, RMU Police Department, or immediate supervisor, as appropriate. The university also utilizes a web-based tool for anonymously reporting non-compliance. This resource should be used as a last resort when an individual is uncomfortable reporting non-compliance through other university channels. Using this [reporting page](#), you will see "COVID-related" as an option under "Nature of the report."

Individuals are requested to report any instances of non-compliance with this Plan without fear of repercussions. "If you see something, say something."

D. Testing, Symptom Checking & Contact Tracing

1. COVID-19 Testing

RMU, in partnership with the Allegheny County Health Department and Curative, Inc., will provide mandatory reentry testing for all students who are taking one or more on-ground courses in the Spring 2021 semester. This includes undergraduate and graduate students, and residential and commuter students. Students will be required to quarantine in their residences while they await their test results. Testing will also be available on a voluntary basis for faculty and staff members.

RMU's ongoing strategy includes regular surveillance testing of enrolled students. RMU also administers diagnostic testing for three groups within the campus population including: (1) those who are symptomatic for COVID-19; (2) when directed by a medical provider, those asymptomatic with recent known or suspected exposure to COVID-19; and (3) individuals who have traveled to an area with a high rate of infection. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should consult their medical provider regarding isolation.

In addition, student-athletes will be subject to testing protocols as outlined in the "RMU Athletics Return to Campus Policy and Procedures Manual."

Consistent CDC and Allegheny County Health Department recommendations, if there is an increased campus or community spread of the virus, expanded testing of the student and/or employee population may be performed.

2. Roaming Random Compliance Enforcers

RMU may utilize Roaming Random Compliance Enforcers who will stop individuals on campus, check their temperature, ask them to comply with masking requirements if necessary, and ask them if they are making use of the Campus Clear App.

3. COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is conducted by health departments to prevent the spread of infectious disease. Robert Morris University also conducts contract tracing to identify any close contacts within the university community. Contact tracing involves identifying people who have an infectious disease (cases) and their contacts (people who may have been exposed) and working with them to interrupt disease transmission. As of December 9, 2020, the CDC defines a "**close contact**" as someone who was within six feet of an infected person for a **cumulative** total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (e.g., three 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes) starting from two days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, two days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated, with or without masks.

MyHealth@School Center staff and the Allegheny County Health Department will communicate regarding any positive test results so that the Allegheny County Health Department and RMU can

perform contact tracing. As this is a required function of the Health Department, they will take the lead in this effort. Any student, faculty, or staff diagnosed with COVID-19 who has been on campus within fourteen days of their diagnosis will be required to cooperate/provide information about their contacts on campus via our internal contact tracing efforts and/or the Health Department.

IV. MITIGATION AND CONTAINMENT STRATEGY

A. Isolation and Quarantine

The university has developed isolation and quarantine protocols for students, faculty, or staff who have COVID-19 symptoms and/or require testing, who test positive for COVID-19, or who have had direct contact with another individual who tests positive. RMU's COVID-19 Response Protocol outlines the circumstances under which students and employees will be asked to quarantine or isolate. The protocol is described under "Communicating with Students, Faculty, Staff, and Other Stakeholders" in Section V(C).

B. Policies for Visitors to Campus

Guidelines for Campus visitors include:

- The wearing of masks and physical distancing are required at all times on campus. Guests (including vendors) will be provided masks if they do not have their own.
- Vendors and guests will be required to sign in at the locations where they are conducting business or visiting.
- Resident students will not be permitted to have off-campus guests or commuter students in the residence halls. Additionally, resident students are asked to refrain from visiting any campus residence hall other than the one to which they are assigned.

C. Travel

The university expects all students, faculty and staff to adhere to travel guidance and orders issues by the Commonwealth, Allegheny County, and RMU as applicable. Additional guidance from the County may be found [here](#).

1. Faculty, Staff Non-Essential Travel

All non-essential university-related travel for faculty and staff, including domestic and international destinations, will continue to be suspended until further notice. .

International travel is suspended as various countries are still battling to control the spread of COVID-19. Many countries have restricted the entry of U.S. nationals and others have imposed 14 days of quarantine on international travelers.

2. International Exchange Students

For the Spring 2021 semester, RMU has not accepted any international exchange students from partner universities. For Fall 2021, RMU is accepting applications with the understanding that the programs will be cancelled if not feasible due to COVID-19.

3. Student Trips Abroad

For the Spring 2021 semester, all semester abroad programs have been cancelled. For Fall 2021, recruitment has started with the understanding that the programs will be cancelled if not feasible due to COVID-19.

For Spring 2021 all Faculty Led Education Abroad Programs (FLEAPs) have been cancelled. For Spring 2022, the process of recruiting faculty for FLEAPS will commence in Summer 2021.

For both categories of travel the following factors will be taken into consideration for the program to occur: U.S. Department of State travel advisories, CDC advisories on foreign travel, host country COVID-19 situation, host country CDC equivalent advisories (where applicable), and the host university's preparedness for the safety of our students. Program decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis when non-refundable expenses have to be paid.

4. Student Non-Essential Travel

All non-essential university-related travel by students for RMU affiliated student organizations, programs, and groups is suspended until further notice. Travel guidelines for student athletic competitions will be pursuant to guidance outlined by the RMU Athletic Department for our NCAA Division I athletic teams and the Department of Campus Recreation for our club sports program.

D. COVID-19 Related Leaves

Staff needing to stay home due to COVID-19 related symptoms should inform their supervisor via email or telephone, and should also send an email to humanresources@rmu.edu. Faculty who need to stay home for COVID-19 related symptoms should contact their department head via email or telephone and should also send an email to humanresources@rmu.edu. This will allow the university to watch for trends and assist with any necessary contact tracing.

In addition to their PTO entitlement, full-time staff members and library faculty have been granted an additional 10 days of COVID-19 emergency leave to be used between June 1, 2020 and May 31, 2021. This leave may be utilized for COVID-19-related reasons that preclude them from coming to campus and/or working remotely, such as potential exposure to COVID-19, caring for a sick family member, required self-quarantine after travel, etc. Absent the sudden onset of symptoms, this leave should be requested as far in advance as is practicable. Staff members exhibiting COVID-like symptoms will be granted available leave from the time of symptom onset to a minimum of 24 hours after symptom resolution.

Any employee seeking a COVID-related medical leave or a COVID-related accommodation pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended) is required to contact UPMC WorkPartners at (833) 851-5184. Employees may contact Human Resources for assistance in initiating this process or for more information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended), the Family and Medical Leave Act, and Short-Term Disability.

E. On-Campus Health Center Services

At RMU, UPMC WorkPartners provides clinical health services. They have provided guidance for the operation of the MyHealth@School Center at RMU and have established protocols for in-person visits. Enrolled students and benefit-eligible employees can be seen by appointment after the completion of pre-screening/triage completed by telephone. Modifications to the Center's physical space and adjustments to the workflow in the center will strive to comply with best practices for physical distancing, use of PPE, and touchless transactions. Positive phone screenings will be directed to utilize telemedicine via the UPMC AnywhereCare App or other appropriate care consistent with the individual's insurance coverage.

F. Individuals at Risk for Increased Illness

The CDC has provided guidance (found [here](#)) about individuals who are more likely to become severely ill if they contract COVID-19, including older adults and people with underlying medical conditions. All RMU students and employees are encouraged to review the CDC guidance and discuss any concerns with their medical providers. Inclusion in a group that may be at higher risk of developing severe COVID-19 related symptoms is not necessarily, by itself, a basis for reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Requests for accommodations will be considered on an individual basis. Students who wish to request accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office at SSD@rmu.edu. Employees who wish to request accommodations should contact UPMC WorkPartners at (833) 851-5184.

G. Personal Hygiene, Personal Protective Equipment, and Face Masks

1. Handwashing

To mitigate exposure following contact with potentially contaminated surfaces, all individuals are encouraged to wash their hands often with soap and water. You should lather with soap and water for at least 20 seconds each time you wash your hands. This is particularly important after spending time in a common area or public space, before and after preparing or eating food, and after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching your face.

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands with the sanitizer and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after touching your face.

For a more in-depth guide to handwashing, please follow the CDC [guidelines](#).

2. Coughing/Sneezing Etiquette

Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when you cough or sneeze – even if you are in a private setting and are not wearing your face mask. Throw the used tissue in the trash. Wash your hands afterwards for at least 20 seconds as described above. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.

3. Face Masks

Wearing a face mask is mandatory in all University locations, both inside and outside. A face mask or face covering (collectively referred to throughout this Plan as a “face mask”) means a covering that completely covers the nose and mouth, is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face, secures under the chin, fits snugly against the sides of the face without gaps, and should have two or more layers of breathable fabric. **A mask is NOT a substitute for social distancing. Masks should still be worn in addition to staying at least 6 feet apart.**

RMU will make a cloth mask available to employees and students who need one. Students, faculty, staff and visitors are free to wear their own masks, so long as the mask covers the nose and mouth and complies with the specifications set forth in the above paragraph. Masks with graphics or images must also conform to our community decency standards. Commercially manufactured disposable masks may be used (and will be made available by the university upon request), but must be discarded into the trash after being worn for one day. Cloth face masks or face coverings may also be used for a day at a time, but must be properly laundered prior to being used again. Having a week’s supply of cloth face masks coverings helps to reduce the need for daily laundering.

All students, faculty, staff and visitors (including vendors/service providers) to the campus are required to wear a face mask when:

- Outdoors and unable to maintain sustained physical distance of at least six (6) feet from other individuals (who are not members of the same household).
- In any indoor location or enclosed space where another person or persons who are not members of the individual’s household are present in the same space, irrespective of physical distance.
- Waiting for, riding on, driving or operating public transportation or paratransit or while in a taxi, private care service or ride-sharing vehicle.
- Engaging in work, whether at the workplace or performing work off-site, when interacting in-person with any member of the public, working in any space visited by members of the public, working in any space where food is prepared or packaged for sale or distribution to others, working in or walking through common area, or in any room or enclosed area where people, except for members of the person’s own household or residence, are present when unable to physically distance.
- In the presence of others or in public settings where other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain. This includes common spaces/areas, conference rooms and classrooms.

- As appropriate, this requirement will be adjusted in accordance with evolving guidance from governing agencies. Further information regarding the Commonwealth's face mask order,, and FAQs can be found [here](#).

Remember, effective use of face masks is critical in minimizing risks to those around you. Please remember that COVID-19 can be spread even by individuals who do not have symptoms. Disposable masks will be made available to those visitors who do not bring their own.

4. Use and Care of Face Masks

Before handling your face mask, please wash your hands or use hand sanitizer. Ensure that your face mask fits over the nose and under the chin. Arrange the face mask properly with the nose wire snug against the nose (where applicable). Tie or fasten straps behind the head and neck, or loop around the ears. Avoid touching the front of the face mask throughout this process.

When removing the face disposable mask, avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Loop your finger into the strap and pull it away from your ear, or untie the straps. Wash your hands immediately after removing your face mask.

Cloth face masks should be washed after each use. They should also be laundered with regular clothing detergent before first use, and after each shift or day worked. Face masks should be replaced immediately if soiled, damaged (punctured, ripped, etc.), or visibly contaminated.

For details regarding cloth face masks, including how to create, wear, and care for home-made face masks, please visit the [CDC website](#).

5. Gloves

Facilities, Residence Life, RMU Police, Health Services and similar functions should wear disposable gloves while completing certain tasks, working in high touch areas, and when entering students' rooms/residence halls. Gloves will be provided by the university. According to the CDC, gloves are not necessary for general use and do not replace good hand hygiene (i.e. washing your hands often).

6. Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Additional PPE is required for employees interacting directly with an individual who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19. These employees must wear an N95 respirator, gloves, gown, and eye protection (goggles, safety glasses or face shield), which will be provided by the university. Specific training/education, medical evaluation and respirator fit-test have been provided to individuals who may be required to wear an N95 respirator.

H. Cleaning Guidelines

Environmental Services will clean and disinfect campus spaces in accordance with CDC guidelines for disinfection protocols. Campus constituents may call Colonial Central at 412-397-4343 to report any concerns.

1. Residence Halls

Environmental Services provides daily routine cleaning and disinfection using a CDC-approved product. Students maintain their own living space. Ready-to-use disinfectant will continue to be placed in communal bath and shower rooms for students to “self-serve”. It is recommended that the product stays in contact with surfaces for one minute before being wiped down. The product can also be misted and allowed to air dry. Hand soap will continue to be provided in each communal bathroom where there are private and semi-private rooms. Hand sanitizer will be available in public areas of the residence halls.

2. Classroom Buildings

Environmental Services utilizes enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols for classrooms using a CDC-approved product. All classrooms will continue to have a ready-to-use disinfectant and paper towel dispensers. The product can also be misted and allowed to air dry. It is recommended that the product stays in contact with surfaces for one minute before being wiped down. Hand sanitizer is available in corridors and near entrance/exits of classrooms and restrooms. Disinfectant wipes will be available in computer labs.

3. Office Spaces

Environmental Services provides twice weekly cleaning and disinfecting using a CDC-approved product. Ready-to-use disinfectant will be provided in office areas along with a microfiber towel. New towels will be supplied once per a week.. Employees are encouraged to disinfect and clean their designated spaces frequently, especially high touch areas.

4. High Traffic Areas

Buildings that have high traffic receive a porter service Monday-Friday. This service occurs two times per day. The public areas, bathrooms, and entrances including high touch areas will be disinfected. A designated group of cleaners will be responsible for performing this service. Hand sanitizer is available throughout all public spaces.

I. Service for Areas with Suspected COVID-19

The Pennsylvania Department of Health has provided guidance for businesses/facilities impacted by COVID-19, including cleaning and disinfection. When necessary, RMU will rely on its third party professional service provider (G.S. Jones) to treat/disinfect areas impacted by COVID-19.

J. Operation of Mechanical Systems Providing Fresh Air

Where possible, HVAC systems that introduce fresh air into the buildings will have the percent of outdoor air settings adjusted to maximize the amount of fresh air movement through the building. A minimum percent of fresh air by code is typically 10% - 15% of the total output of the air handler. Under this procedure, the percent of fresh air will be adjusted to as high as 100% based on outdoor

temperatures, humidity, and the capacity of the unit to heat/cool the desired percent of fresh air. The settings of each unit will be adjusted based upon weather conditions.

K. Physical Distancing

Physical distancing is one of the simplest yet most effective ways of avoiding exposure to COVID-19 and slowing the spread of the virus. Since the virus can be spread by people who are not aware they are sick, it is important to keep your distance from others when possible, even if you do not feel ill. Physical distancing is important for everyone, but especially to help protect those at higher risk of becoming very ill if infected. Thus, employees are asked to **maintain a minimum distance of six feet** from other people at all times while respecting occupancy limits. This includes office space, common areas, and classrooms.

1. Classroom Capacity

Classroom capacity has been modified to address adequate physical distancing, as described in Section II(A), above.

2. Assessing Residential Capacity

The residential capacity in Spring 2021 will be held at approximately 1,700 students (88% capacity) to ensure adequate physical distancing. The plan reserves designated housing locations for quarantine and/or isolation. (See “Communicating with Students, Faculty, Staff and Other Stakeholders” in Section V(C).)

3. Residential Student Housing Shuttle

Our residential student housing shuttle will comply with physical distancing and enhanced cleaning requirements. Depending on the housing layout and student population, shuttle routes and capacities will be adjusted as needed to support physical distancing. Riders and drivers will be required to wear face masks while on the shuttles.

4. Mail and Print Center/Student Mailroom

The mail/print/copy Center (300 Grant) and Student Mailroom (Nicholson) will comply with physical distancing using floor signage for queueing and plexiglass shields for the counter and door window, respectively. Specific window hours have been established to minimize queue lines and will be communicated to students, faculty, and staff.

5. Continued Utilization of Web and Telephonic Platforms for In-Person Interactions

When possible, meetings should be held using the extensive range of remote collaboration tools (i.e. Google Meet, conference call, etc.), even when all parties are on campus. Convening in groups increases the risk of viral transmission and should be avoided unless necessary.

In-person meetings are limited to the restrictions of local, state, and federal orders and should not exceed any current mandate, assuming those in the room can safely maintain six feet of physical distance from one another. Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in meeting spaces to facilitate physical distancing among attendees. All attendees must wear a face mask while sharing space in a common room.

Handshakes, fist bumps, and high fives are to be avoided. Any meetings which must occur in person should be held in an appropriately large space, where sufficient physical distancing can be maintained. Meetings involving food and beverage services are prohibited until further notice, unless express permission is provided by departmental management, such as a department head or equivalent, in which case food and beverages will be limited to single serving beverages and packaged food items in lieu of communal/shared platters and utensils.

6. Remote Work / Staggered Shifts

The need to decrease the number of people on campus to meet physical distancing requirements will continue and may vary based on the most up-to-date guidance received from the government and public health agencies. Areas that can continue to effectively work remotely will likely continue to do so until restrictions are eased for larger gatherings.

Once staff members who have been instructed to do so return to work on-site, consideration for the below options should be taken by departmental leaders to maintain physical distancing best practices:

- Remote Work: Those who can work remotely to fulfill some or all of their work responsibilities should continue to do so to reduce the number of individuals on campus and the potential spread of COVID-19. (To this end, a formal staff remote work policy will be forthcoming.)
- Alternating Days: In order to limit the number of individuals and interactions among those on campus, departments should consider scheduling partial staffing on alternating days to eliminate having too many staff members in shared office space at once.
- Staggered Reporting/Departing: When possible, adjusting reporting and departure times by at least 30 minutes is suggested, as it will assist with reducing foot traffic and having too many people in common areas at once.

Implementation of the above staffing models will be made at the departmental level, and the adoption of any of these models must be approved by departmental leadership.

L. Responding to a Resurgence of COVID-19 Activity

The university must be mindful and include in its planning the flexibility and procedures necessary to reverse course in the event of an increase of COVID-19 activity. This may be a result of cases within the campus community, local/regional outbreaks, or similar health-based data/indicators. In any case, the university will continue to work in cooperation with and take direction from federal, state, and local government and public health agencies. In the event of an outbreak or resurgence of the virus, the university will assess and adjust operations in a manner that is consistent with the current or evolving situation.

V. COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

A. Student Obligations

Before coming to campus, all enrolled students will be expected to review university documents published prior to the start of the Fall 2020 semester including the Acknowledgement of Risk and Responsibility, and the RMU Code During COVID-19, which is a supplement to the RMU Student Code of Conduct. The Code outlines additional behavioral norms and expectations for students designed to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the RMU community. Compliance with the Code is essential to the health and safety of all members of the campus community. Residential students were also required to sign a Housing Contract Addendum that explains their obligation to abide by health and behavior guidelines while living on campus and should review this document prior to their return. These documents are included in the COVID-19 section of the RMU website at rmu.edu/coronavirus. New students must review and agree to the terms of these documents prior to beginning the Spring semester. Students must also comply with any additional requirements communicated by our academic schools or departments.

B. Student and Employee Training

Prior to the beginning of the Fall 2020 semester, all students and employees participated in a video training prepared by one of RMU's resident experts (epidemiologist or biologist) on best practices for staying healthy and avoiding viral spread. The video trained students and employees on measures to protect health and prevent the spread of COVID-19. This training helped the RMU community prepare for and mitigate the impact of the virus. Participants discovered how to prepare for a pandemic, what to be aware of, how to prevent contracting and spreading viruses, and how to assist the RMU community during the pandemic. Additional education and training will be provided throughout the Spring semester to reinforce best practices and/or to provide updates on new guidance and protocols.

Additionally, students and employees will be encouraged to adopt the proposed strategies as their daily routine. Students and employees will also be encouraged to use their calendar feature on cell phones to track daily activities, locations, and encounters with others – whether it be a formal meeting with a professor, or an informal coffee break with friends – as additional sources for contact tracing.

C. COVID-19 Response Protocol

The Emergency Management Subcommittee of RMU's Safety Committee developed the COVID-19 Response Protocol as a supplement to the university's existing Infectious Disease / Pandemic Plan. The protocol is activated in the event of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 infection of any student, employee, or other individual who has had contact with our campus community.

A core team of responsible individuals assesses each case and, subsequently, implements established response protocols. These protocols include but are not limited to:

- Initial investigation and coordination with university health services, medical provider(s), and the Allegheny County Health Department
- Quarantine / isolation, as appropriate
- Testing
- Cleaning of affected area(s)
- Contact tracing
- Communication with affected students, faculty, and/or staff

In accordance with the COVID-19 Response Protocols, RMU communicates appropriate information about suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infection in the campus community with stakeholders. Specific communication strategies are developed on a case-by-case basis -- guided by the COVID-19 protocols -- in an effort to (1) protect the privacy of an affected individual as much as possible while (2) ensuring that contacts of affected individuals have the information they need to protect their own health and safety, and (3) complying with the university's obligations under the Clery Act. Depending upon the nature and urgency of these communications, they may be made via phone call(s), email, and/or RMU Alert. The university also publishes information related to COVID-19 on the university's web site at rmu.edu/coronavirus. All students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to ensure that they are registered for RMU Alert communications. Please contact the Help Desk for assistance.

VI. COORDINATING WITH LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS

RMU will continue to monitor the evolving guidance of public health agencies and will update this Plan and related protocols accordingly. Because COVID-19 is a reportable disease, the MyHealth@School Center staff will report positive COVID-19 cases to the Allegheny County Health Department. The Health Department will in turn communicate to RMU any confirmed cases in instances where they are able to determine the individual is a member of our campus community. The Health Department will monitor and analyze reported data to determine any trends and offer guidance about next steps.