This work guidance document outlines methods to be used by essential staff performing fieldwork around others during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

**APPLICABILITY**

This document can be used by UT Austin staff when performing fieldwork on campus during the COVID-19 pandemic and/or for any period of time determined by university and unit leadership. This document does not apply to health care providers or custodial personnel working in healthcare facilities.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Department Supervisors**

- Implement the work practices outlined in this document within departmental/institutional operations.
- Ensure employees are fit tested for respirators and trained prior to requiring employees to wear respirators.
- Ensure employees follow the campus Health and Wellness Plan.
- Communicate to all employees methods for limiting transmission (found in the “Prevention” section of the UHS website).
- Allow employees to exceed minimum guidance for exposure controls found in this document.

**Employees**

- Implement and follow minimum work practices found in this document.
- Immediately report when sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 to supervisor, Environmental Health & Safety, and Occupational Health Program.
- Follow the campus Health and Wellness Plan.

**Environmental Health & Safety (EHS)**

- Provide information and technical assistance regarding safe work practices during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Occupational Health Program**

- Provide monitoring of employees who have tested positive or presumed positive for COVID-19 and perform daily check-ins with those employees impacted.
WORK PRACTICES

Below are the work practices that must be followed at all times to comply with social distancing practices. These are to be used in addition to requirements of the task you are performing.

• Utilize the following guidance for riding together to and/or from work locations.
  » Pickups, SUVs, small vans, carts – No passengers are allowed unless approved by the supervisor on a case-by-case basis and both driver and passenger approve of riding together. If driving alone, driver does not need to wear a recommended protective face mask. If supervisor approves one passenger, recommended protective face masks must be worn by both passenger and driver at all times, and windows must be rolled down for air circulation. More than one passenger must be approved by the associate director.
  » 12-Passenger Vans – Only the driver and one passenger are allowed in the 12-passenger vans. The passenger must sit on the rearmost bench seat for physical distancing from the driver. Recommended protective face masks must be worn at all times in the van, and windows must be down for air circulation.

• Do not use other workers’ phones, desks, computers, or offices. If not possible, follow cleaning instructions provided separately for Shared Work Spaces.

• Work outside. If not possible:
  » Install plastic sheeting barriers where feasible.
  » Increase ventilation rates in the work environment when feasible (adjust AHUs, introduce fans, etc.).
  » Implement the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when required by pre-task planning.

• Follow the campus Health and Wellness Plan by incorporating these individual behaviors:

  If you are sick, stay home.
  Wash your hands well and often.
  Carry your own hand sanitizer and surface wipes.
  Wear a cloth mask indoors.
  Keep 6 feet of distance between yourself and others whenever possible.
  Avoid touching your face and cloth mask.
  Keep your hands clean. Sneeze and cough into your elbow, and open doors without your hands if possible.
  When possible, meet online or outdoors and in larger common areas, not private offices.

• Clean and disinfect shared tools and equipment before and after each use.

Disinfect with a diluted bleach solution, alcohol solution with at least 70% alcohol, or EPA-registered household disinfectant.

• Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer’s instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
  » Five tablespoons (1/3 cup) household bleach per gallon of water, or
  » Four teaspoons household bleach per quart of water.
When employees must work within six feet of each other, pre-task planning is required. If a task requires employees to work closely for a prolonged period of time and activity is strenuous, it will likely produce more than typical respiratory droplets. Then consideration by the supervisor for additional PPE is warranted. (See PPE section below.)

- Situations may arise where a brief and momentary encounter occurs between employees conducting work (e.g., handing a required tool to an employee on a ladder). Pre-task planning must include methods for maintaining social distancing when unplanned situations occur that challenge social distancing requirements. This must include a stop-work process for employees.

- Employees must be instructed that an appropriate transfer of materials between employees is for one employee to place an item down at a distance of greater than six feet for the other employee to retrieve, all while maintaining six-foot social distancing between each.

- When all potential solutions for maintaining social distancing are exhausted, employees are limited to these conditions:
  - Must be reported to supervisor.
  - Must keep a log of all persons involved in work activity.
  - Must be done by using the maximum distance to achieve the reason for encroaching on social distancing requirements (e.g., longest stretched arm to another person).
  - Must install physical barriers such as poly sheeting between employees, if feasible.
  - Must avoid face-to-face contact where breathing zones become common.
  - Time frame must be limited to seconds, not minutes.

- Report any contact to foreign bodily fluids or PPE failures to supervisor immediately.

**PPE** (to be determined by supervisor based on work activity and location)

Recommended protective face masks are required while inside UT Austin buildings and are recommended while working outside. Face masks shall include the following design elements:

- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
- Be secured with ties or ear loops.
- Include multiple layers of fabric.
- Allow for breathing without restriction.
- Have the ability to be laundered.

If social distancing is maintained, then additional PPE is not required. Each department is responsible for designating appropriate supervisor(s) to make PPE determinations. Below details potential PPE to be used when pre-task planning shows social distancing is unable to be maintained.
Employees utilizing a respirator listed in this section must follow the Respiratory Protection Program, which includes:

» Medical evaluation.
» Fit testing for the respirator used.
» Required training.

OTHER REQUIRED SUPPLIES

• Log for people working together and body temperatures of workers.
• Bleach/alcohol wipes or cleaner.
• Hand washing area and hand sanitizer.