

Health and Safety Guidance for Grad Students

Guidance created by Kevin Fleming, Office of the Dean of the Graduate School, in collaboration with Health Promotion and Prevention Services and Environmental Health & Safety.

Princeton University is committed to helping protect the health and safety of all students, faculty, and staff who are newly arriving or returning to campus, as we gradually resume operations that support the University's teaching and research mission and related activities.

This document provides instructions, guidelines, and procedures for safely living and working on campus. For the purpose of this document, *campus* means any Princeton University property, including residential areas and academic buildings.

It is important to remember that this pandemic is evolving and guidance will continue to change in response. University expectations in response to the pandemic may exceed guidelines set forth by the State. Please continue to pay attention to campus wide communication and regular updates to our guidance and policies. You can **stay informed** by visiting [Spring Term 2021 \(princeton.edu\)](https://springterm2021.princeton.edu) or covid.princeton.edu for the latest COVID-19-related guidance and information.

Preventing Transmission of COVID-19 on Campus:

Follow Quarantine and Isolation Protocols Strictly

- **The best way to reduce community transmission of COVID-19 is for each individual to follow instructions for quarantine or isolation very strictly.**
- If you are asked to be in quarantine or isolation, it is because there is the potential that you have been exposed to COVID-19 (quarantine) or have received a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 (isolation). Do not break either quarantine or isolation to access additional testing, as this may put others around you at risk, and is a violation of local and state public health ordinances.
- If at any point during quarantine you start to experience symptoms associated with COVID-19, call University Health Services at (609) 258-3141 for guidance.
- For more information about quarantine and isolation expectations, check out the UHS Fact Sheets here: <https://uhs.princeton.edu/health-resources/coronavirus-covid-19#factsheets>

Avoid close contact with others.

- Limiting close physical contact with others is one of the best things we can do to reduce the chance of spreading COVID-19 to one another. **Stay at least 6 feet/2 meters (approximately 2 arm lengths) away from others.** Physical distancing reduces the chance of exposure to the potentially virus-containing droplets and particles that leave our nose and mouth when we talk, sneeze or cough. Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick. Staying committed to maintaining physical distancing is critical to protect the health of your fellow grad students, faculty and staff. For more information, visit: [Princeton COVID Resources](https://princeton.edu/covid19). For students that are approved for in-person academic work on campus: all work that can be done remotely should still continue to take place remotely.

Answer Questions from Contact Tracers Honestly

- **If you receive a call or email from a contact tracer, please be as honest as possible about who you have had close contact with.**
- Contact tracers are UHS staff and are bound by confidentiality. No information shared during the contact tracing process will be used for disciplinary purposes, either on or off campus.

- Sharing [who you have had close contact with](#) is essential for maintaining public health, even if that contact happened in a setting that was not permitted. Sharing your contacts honestly allows those who may have been exposed to be advised to quarantine and limit further potential viral spread.

Cover your mouth and nose with a face covering when around others.

- Face coverings must be worn inside campus buildings at all times unless you are alone in a room or in your personal living space. You do not need to wear a face covering outdoors if you are able to keep at least 6 feet or 2 meters away from others. **The use of face coverings or masks is not a substitute for physical distancing**; however, it is another tool that may reduce the chance of spreading COVID-19. Face coverings help trap large droplets from speaking, coughing, or sneezing from spreading outside of the face covering. They provide the wearer little protection from inhaling droplets released from other people. **Please ensure you continue to practice physical distancing even while wearing a face covering. For more information, please visit: <https://ehs.princeton.edu/FaceCoveringsPolicy.html>.**

Maintain your face covering.

- Always clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol prior to putting on, touching or removing your face covering. Do not touch the front or inside of the covering and store the covering in a paper or plastic bag. Avoid touching the mask while it's on. Keep your face covering clean and wash it frequently. Cloth face coverings can be laundered with your regular clothing.

Maintain Proper Personal and Communal Hygiene to Limit Exposure.

- **Wash your hands with soap and water frequently.** If you do not have immediate access to soap and water, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth or any part of your face.
- Practice good cough and sneeze etiquette. Cover your cough/sneeze with a tissue or sneeze/cough into your elbow.
- Routinely disinfect all shared items, appliances, facilities and personal electronics in shared spaces at home or in academic buildings, using a disinfecting solution or wipe.
- Be conscious of what you touch, and wash your hands after touching shared surfaces. Elevator buttons, handrails, door handles and other frequently touched surfaces can be vectors for disease spread.

Follow the Asymptomatic Testing Protocol.

- Please visit [Testing | Princeton COVID Resources](#) for more information. Please reach out to covidtests@princeton.edu with questions or concerns.

University Health Services (UHS) Guidance:

- **If you begin to feel ill in any way or are concerned about your health at any time, please go immediately to your nearby place of residence, avoid contact with others and call University Health Services (UHS) at 609-258-3141.** UHS staff will provide guidance and support to you as needed.
- Please visit [COVID Testing and Public Health Guidance | University Health Services \(princeton.edu\)](#) for directions on what to do if you, or others you've been in contact with, have tested positive for COVID-19.
- If you have taken a test for COVID-19 off campus, please email communityhealth@princeton.edu as soon as possible, regardless of the results. UHS will assist you with what to do next.

- If you need to travel overnight and/or outside of New Jersey (or the state in which you are residing while studying on campus, if not New Jersey), please register your personal travel: [Personal Travel Information Enrollment \(google.com\)](#)
- **If you have traveled outside of the state of New Jersey, including any international travel, you must complete the COVID Risk Assessment within 7 days prior to your return to campus:** [COVID-19 Risk Assessment for Princeton Community Member - Veoci \(Public Form\)](#). After you complete the risk assessment form, a staff member from UHS will reach out to you. If you have any health-related questions or concerns about the COVID-19 risk assessment, please email communityhealth@princeton.edu.
- **If you are concerned about work, research and classes while sick:** We recognize staying home goes against many norms to persist with work and research while feeling ill, but **it is of utmost importance that each of us pays attention to our health as our actions can impact the health and safety of fellow graduate students, faculty and staff.** If you are concerned about how to continue progress on your work and research while you are ill, please reach out to the Graduate School for assistance. Graduate students in the humanities and social sciences can email Geoffrey Hill, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs at gbhill@princeton.edu. Graduate students in the natural sciences and engineering can email Christine Murphy, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs at cm15@princeton.edu.
- **If you are mandated to quarantine or isolate by UHS, you must comply.** Aggregate data about who is isolating or quarantining on our campus is regularly reported to the State of New Jersey. Breaking the guidance of either isolation or quarantine is a major public health concern, and if it occurs, University disciplinary measures may be imposed.

Guest Policy:

- **Lawrence and Lakeside Apartments:** Graduate students living in studio or one-bedroom apartments are permitted to have a maximum of two on or off campus guests at a time. In multi-occupancy units, students may have one on or off campus guest per contracted student at a time and are also responsible to obtain consent from each of their roommates indicating that they approve of guests being invited into their unit. All residents must agree or guests will not be permitted.
- **Graduate College and Annexes:** Students may have a maximum of two student guests at a time. The student guest(s) must currently be living on campus also. Students seeking to have a guest(s) are responsible to obtain consent from each of their roommates indicating that they approve of guests being invited into their room/annex. All residents must agree or guests will not be permitted.

Gatherings Policy:

- Graduate students and graduate student organizations may now submit requests for in-person gatherings through the EMS web app <https://scheduling.princeton.edu>. This change is on a trial basis and may be amended as needed.
- The University Gatherings Team will review and approve, if appropriate public health measures are in place, requests for gatherings of greater than 5 people indoors and greater than 20 people outdoors that support a student's progress towards a degree or a student's health and well-being, or are deemed critical to the mission of the University.
- The Graduate School will review and approve, if appropriate public health measures are in place, requests for gatherings of less than 5 people indoors and less than 20 people outdoors that

support a student's progress towards a degree or a student's health and well-being, or are deemed critical to the mission of the University.

Taking Care of Your Mental Health During the Pandemic

Common Reactions:

Please recognize that there can be a wide range of reactions to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is helpful to make space for these emotions with roommates, friends and colleagues:

- Anxiety, worry, or panic
- Difficulty concentrating/sleeping
- Feeling helpless/confused
- Anger
- Exhaustion, feeling "burned out"
- Social withdrawal
- Hyper-vigilance to your health
- Feelings of loss/grief

If you're feeling stressed and would like to talk about it:

- Please reach out to Counselling and Psychological Services (CPS) to set up a virtual appointment with a counselor: [Counseling and Psychological Services | University Health Services \(princeton.edu\)](#)
- **If you need to speak with someone immediately, call CPS at any time: 609-258-3141**
- **If you are experiencing an emergency, please call 911 immediately.**

Virtual Community Engagement:

CPS, the Graduate School and a variety of other campus offices and departments are regularly hosting virtual community engagement events. Please visit Princeton University's Wintersession website at [Virtual Activities Calendar — Princeton University Wintersession](#) to see daily events and programs happening on campus and follow the Graduate School on social media to see more events and programs hosted across our departments. We also encourage you to stay connected with the Graduate Student Government (GSG) at: <https://gsg.princeton.edu/>.

Take advantage of the outdoors.

Getting outside is important both for your physical and mental health. Consider solitary activities like walking and running. Contact sports (e.g. basketball or soccer games) are not allowed and do not allow players to adhere to physical distancing.

Fostering a Strong and Supportive Community while Living on Campus

Living, studying and working on campus while practicing physical distancing with roommates and neighbors can be difficult, but maintaining a strong and supportive community can help us cope. This portion of the guide will help you with guidance on how to stay safe, manage relationships with others, and build a sense of community in residential areas during these difficult times.

Follow University and State guidance.

While we as individuals may not personally feel at high risk of severe COVID-19 infection, other members of the Princeton community may have underlying health conditions that can seriously affect their health if they contract COVID-19. Please remember that our University guidance is designed to keep our community safe and it is of critical importance that each individual holds themselves accountable.

Talk about it.

Talking about your reactions to the pandemic and what you and your roommates, friends or neighbors

emotionally need from each other can be helpful with coping and reducing conflicts. Discuss expectations on living and/or working together and have ongoing conversations about what each of you are doing to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Consider working with roommates to develop a process for people and items entering and exiting your residential spaces.

Clean frequently.

Encourage everyone to clean up after themselves in the common areas in your apartment at all times. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and items. Be sure to thoroughly wash all dishes and utensils you use. Use disinfecting wipes to wipe down counters, bathrooms, and kitchen supplies after using them. Along with respecting shared spaces indoors, please ensure you are cleaning up after yourself, your pets, or your children outdoors on campus and in town.

Get to know your neighbors.

While it is always polite to consider how our actions impact our neighbors, our behavior during the pandemic takes on increased importance as most graduate students must study, work and live at home in close proximity with others. Even though we are maintaining physical distance, we can still be cordial and safely get to know other members of the community. Safely introduce yourself and establish rapport with the neighbors that live around you so that you can understand their needs and so they can understand yours. If you're comfortable doing so, exchange contact information. You may want to discuss your academic schedules, noise levels and other things that can affect relationships between neighbors while living, studying and working from home.

Be proactive. Take the first step.

Taking initiative to openly and honestly discuss concerns in a respectful way with others can help facilitate solutions to problems and quickly resolve conflicts. Please consider whether your concern could be ameliorated through a direct conversation rather than the involvement of Public Safety or administration. While Public Safety is committed to supporting the Princeton community in safety and respect, please consider that the threat of calling authorities or law enforcement may be interpreted as an intimidation tactic particularly against Black and other communities of color across the United States. We all, as a community, should be conscious of not reproducing those dynamics on campus. If you need guidance on how to address a conflict with people you care about, check out the Calling In/Calling Out tips from UMMatter here: [Calling Out/In Disrespect | UMMatter \(princeton.edu\)](#)

Reporting Violations:

While we expect all students to openly and honestly discuss issues and concerns directly with members of your community first *before* getting others involved, please know you have the following options in reporting physical distancing violations or unauthorized gatherings in residential areas:

- **Public Safety:** If you are experiencing an emergency, dial 911 from any phone on campus to get in touch with Public Safety.
 - **For general questions or inquiries, or to report a violation of University-policy related to the COVID-19 pandemic, you can connect with Public Safety through their non-emergency number at 609-258-1000.** Public Safety's approach is to first educate and encourage the Princeton community to follow guidance, not to document or arrest anyone for violating policy.
- **EthicsPoint Hotline:** If you would prefer to be anonymous or wish to make a formal reports, use the EthicsPoint hotline by submitting an [online report](#) or calling toll-free 866-478-9804.

Additional Support and Important Resources

Stay informed. Visit [Spring Term 2021 \(princeton.edu\)](#) and [covid.princeton.edu](#) for the latest COVID-19-related guidance and information.

Housing: For Housing-related questions, please email askhousing@princeton.edu or call 609-258-3460.

The Graduate School: Please feel free to reach out to any staff member at the Graduate School if you have any general questions or concerns: <https://gradschool.princeton.edu/staff>
Please also visit [Resources and FAQs for All Graduate Students | Grad Events \(princeton.edu\)](#) for FAQs and other information.

Institutional Equity & Diversity: [Institutional Equity & Diversity | Provost \(princeton.edu\)](#)

Student Health Plan and your health benefits: [Student Health Plan | University Health Services \(princeton.edu\)](#)