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OU and NWC COVID-19 Guidelines as of 07/29/2022

The National Weather Center (NWC) functions as a critical national resource and will have additional policies during the COVID-19 pandemic that augment those on the OU Norman campus. Please familiarize yourself with the NWC-specific policies below as well as with the guidance provided by the University of Oklahoma (OU) on the [OU Together](#) website. All OU Employees should and are encouraged to use the [Heathly Together App](#). At the end of this document, you will also find links to additional resources including the [Norman Campus Spring 2022 COVID-19 Protocols](#) the [OU Masking Protocols](#) and [Norman Campus Vaccination Information](#). As the nature of COVID-19 remains dynamic, this Plan will remain dynamic. This Plan applies to all Norman faculty, staff, student employees, students, contractors, vendors, and visitors who will be on campus or in the NWC.

Q1: Are vendors and visitors to the OU campus required to complete the COVID-19 screening process?

A. **No**, however, visitors and vendors on campus and in the NWC are required to accept and adhere to university masking policies and any requirements for entry and continued attendance at specific university events and facilities. It is the responsibility of each department to ensure that its scheduled visitors and vendors are aware of and abide by university policies and procedures while on campus. Departments will advise their visitors or vendors to leave campus if they begin to experience symptoms of COVID-19 during their visit and notify the individual who invited them to campus.

VENDORS in the NWC: OU and NOAA federal partner administrators are requested to notify Kyle Sandidge, Assistant Director NWC Operations, when vendors have been scheduled to provide services at the NWC. All vendors must have a designated Point of Contact (POC).

VISITORS in the NWC: (including Research Campus and OU Main Campus employees): Visitor access is restricted to the first floor and requires approved and displayed credentials. Visitors without approved and displayed credentials are required to register with Security upon entry. **Faculty, staff, and NOAA tenants are discouraged from inviting guests to the NWC into areas above the first floor unless visits are deemed mission critical.**

The designated Point of Contact (POC) for each visitor/vendor to the NWC must know the specific locations visited and people with whom close interactions were made by the visitor/vendor while at the NWC. This information is to be provided upon request to NWC Management should it become necessary to initiate contact tracing and deep cleaning of NWC areas that were visited.

Q2: Are NOAA employees required to complete the COVID-19 screening process?

A. NOAA employees must adhere to the [US Department of Commerce COVID-19 Information](#) for Commerce Employees. Once inside your respective suite or leased premise, each company must follow its own COVID-19 protection and prevention protocols.

Q3: What are the NWC entry guidelines pertaining to OU faculty/staff and NOAA/CIWRO employees?

A: Entry to the NWC **to areas above the first floor** is allowed only by individuals **intended** to be in the building and cleared to be on campus who display and present to NWC Security approved credentials (OU/NOAA/Research Campus IDs **and** NWC approved lanyards). **Intended** individuals are those faculty/staff/NOAA/CIWRO employees working, taking classes, or conducting business in the NWC. **Entry to NOAA spaces will remain restricted.**

Entry guidelines for scheduled **vendors and/or visitors** are found in Q1 above. **Faculty, staff, and NOAA tenants are discouraged from inviting guests to the NWC into areas above the first floor unless visits are deemed mission critical.**

Q4: What are the NWC entry guidelines pertaining to OU students?

The NWC has eliminated some previous restrictions for student entry to the NWC but it is still strongly recommended that students social distance, get vaccinated, mask up (especially in high-density settings such as classrooms and at special events when not eating or drinking), and continue to practice healthy behaviors like frequent hand washing and staying home when feeling sick.

[The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) has recommendations for the public about COVID-19 including how to prevent getting sick, what to do if you should become ill, vaccines, masks, and more.

Q5: How is entry to the NWC controlled?

A: Exterior doors are locked at all hours and locations with the following exception: 1) The first-floor north entrance will be unlocked Monday through Friday 7am-7pm and entry anytime outside these days/hours will require card swipe access.

Signage at the NWC first and second floor doors directs that people entering/exiting should stay to their right (the center and west doors are ENTRY ONLY and the east doors are EXIT ONLY).

Q6: What measures are suggested to be taken to track the locations visited by faculty/staff/students entering the NWC?

A: Everyone entering the NWC is strongly encouraged to document specific locations they visit and people with whom they have close contact during each visit. Faculty, staff, and students are responsible for documenting their own movement and contacts. Such documentation may be used to direct deep cleaning in potentially infected areas. Supervisors are responsible for strongly encouraging this contact tracing protocol with people and in locations they oversee.

Q7: What mitigation measures should be considered to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in areas that don't allow a physical distance of at least 6 feet between individuals (e.g., at reception desks, in graduate student offices, and/or in other shared office space)?

A: When physical distancing of at least 6 feet is not possible in a public setting, common area, or shared space, additional mitigation options must be implemented where possible. **It is the responsibility of each unit to determine best options for this implementation. Suggestions include:**

- a. staggered breaks or shifts
- b. reconfigured physical space
- c. reconfigured seating designations
- d. revised workflow processes
- e. flexible meeting formats, such as video or telephone conferencing.

Occupants of the NWC are not to move fixed furniture (e.g., smart desk furniture, file cabinets, furniture not on wheels or easily moved). A request for assistance should be made via the NWC Trouble Report (<https://intranet.nwc.ou.edu/>).

Q8: How are seating areas in common spaces being managed – e.g., reception areas, NWC atrium and south patio? Is furniture in the NWC Atrium available for use?

A: The NWC has eliminated some previous restrictions in common spaces in the NWC including in the atrium and on the south patio allowing both these areas to be used. However, it is strongly recommended that social distancing be practiced, individuals be vaccinated, masks worn (especially in group settings and at special events when not eating or drinking), and everyone continue to practice healthy behaviors like frequent hand washing and staying home when feeling sick.

Q9: How are the NWC Library, the NWC Observation Deck and the NWC Outreach Room being managed?

A: The NWC library is not open for self-checkout of materials or as a study space until further notice. However, library personnel are in the NWC Library on specific days/hours to assist patrons and manually checkout textbooks and other materials. Additional information about the NWC Library is found at <https://www.ou.edu/nwc/library>.

The NWC Observation Deck and the NWC Outreach Room is “off limits” until further notice. NWC Security continually monitors these areas and will direct unauthorized persons to vacate the areas.

Q10: Are gatherings or events allowed on the OU campus and/or in the NWC?

A: Events, including those hosted by third parties, may be held in **university** facilities following pre-COVID protocols. In accordance with CDC guidance, the university recommends COVID-19 vaccination for anyone participating in events on OU property. OU expects individuals to wear a mask indoors, especially in high-density settings, such as classrooms and at special events when not eating or drinking.

Third-party events in the NWC Building unaffiliated with the university or NOAA entities are prohibited through April 2022 for all but special cases approved by the NWC Director. Questions regarding events in the NWC may be addressed to the NWC Event Manager, events@nwc.ou.edu.

Q11: What is the University/NWC responsibility for sanitizing facilities and equipment?

A: OU is continuing to follow guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control. [New guidance from the CDC on June 15, 2021](#), highlighted that “in most situations, the risk of infection from touching a surface is low. The most reliable way to prevent infection from

surfaces is to regularly wash hands or use hand sanitizer.”

The university has resumed pre-pandemic cleaning protocols, taking into consideration applicable government and industry cleaning and safety standards, as well as the understanding that COVID-19 is primarily spread by inhaling respiratory droplets or aerosols.

In 2020, the university upgraded many facilities to support the healthiest possible environment, including converting air filters to hospital-grade standards; increasing outside air where possible; installing touchless, motion-sensor fixtures in public restrooms; and adding more hand sanitizer stations across campus.

Department/Area Responsibility - OU department/area managers are responsible for obtaining cleaning supplies and providing for the cleaning of its shared office equipment, furniture, surfaces, and environment. **OUFM cleaning supplies, including EPA/CDC approved supplies, can be requested [here while they last](#).** NOAA department/area managers should work through the NOAA Designated Official to obtain supplies (NOAA DO will contact OU Real Estate Services).

a. COVID-19 Positive Individuals – NWC Department managers made aware of an individual who has tested positive and has been in the NWC within seven days of becoming ill, may contact Kyle Sandidge, Assistant Director NWC Operations, who will coordinate disinfecting arrangements.

Q12: How are beverage stations/drinking fountains/communal water coolers and coffee stations being managed? How are food/drink in academic spaces managed?

A: Use of drinking fountains that are not touch-free should be discouraged. Use of communal water coolers and coffee stations should be permitted only if appropriate procedures are established for disinfecting surfaces before and after each individual use (see [signage 2](#)).

Food and drink are not allowed in academic classrooms/spaces. Consuming food in learning spaces is a significant concern for transmission of illness and therefore is prohibited. Students that may need to eat for health reasons, such as blood sugar regulation, should step outside the classroom to a social distanced location.

Drinking in classes is generally discouraged. It is acceptable in longer course formats (e.g., exceeding an hour), for students to take a sip from a water bottle or cup with a lid by momentarily removing their mask and immediately replacing it after each sip. Instructors may also need to take sips of water while they are teaching. Discretion should be used while drinking in the classroom and temporary removal of a mask should always be momentary and replaced after the sip.

Q13: May individuals who reside in the NWC have food delivered to the building?

A: Yes, but individuals ordering food from third party food delivery services must arrange to meet the delivery person outside of the building. Third party food delivery services may not enter or be given access to enter OU campus buildings. Questions regarding food delivery for events may be addressed to the NWC Event Manager, events@nwc.ou.edu.

NWC Tours:**Q14: Are we conducting in-person tours of the National Weather Center in 2022?**

A: At this time, in-person tours of the National Weather Center are postponed for 2022. This is subject to change as we monitor the latest surges of COVID-19. We encourage you to watch and share our virtual tour here: <https://bit.ly/3nH84HD>. If you have any questions regarding this, please contact NWC/A&GS Outreach Coordinator, Kaitlin Frost (kaitlin.frost@ou.edu).

Q15: When will in-person tours begin again for the National Weather Center?

A: The National Weather Center building leadership is currently monitoring the COVID-19 situation and working with University of Oklahoma officials to keep our faculty, students, and staff safe. This situation remains ever-changing and dynamic, and we will continue working with OU and NOAA leadership to determine the best course of action regarding in-person tours. Tours of the building will remain postponed for 2022 until noted otherwise.

Filming Requests at the NWC:**Q16: I have a filming request for myself/organization/research group/etc. - Is this currently allowed inside the National Weather Center?**

A: Yes, we are allowing mission critical filming to take place inside the building. We review these requests on a case-by-case basis, while keeping COVID-19 data in mind, and these requests are subject to be postponed or declined. Please note all filming participants are required to be masked while inside the NWC.

Q17: How do I submit an NWC filming request?

A: First, please gather initial information such as who is requesting filming, how many people are requesting to enter for filming, day and time being requested, purpose of the filming, etc. and then email your request to NWC/A&GS Outreach Coordinator, Kaitlin Frost (kaitlin.frost@ou.edu). Kaitlin will contact you to help coordinate filming, gather more information if needed, alert security, and gain NWC building leadership approval for the filming project.

WEBSITE RESOURCES:

Center for Disease Control (CDC) - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>

NOAA Guidance/Policy folder (NOAA access only) - <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1x0mY0mSClrxSKHMDIUPKYybOO5fFpUi1?usp=sharing>

NOAA Self-Certification PDF (NOAA access only)- https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zWd9dl5lv_PCafko_BqHO5MaBhiuq-z_/view?usp=sharing

NWC Intranet (access only in NWC or via VPN) - <https://intranet.nwc.ou.edu/>

NWC Library - <https://www.ou.edu/nwc/library>

OU Adjusted Space Capacities and Venue Occupancy - <https://www.ou.edu/together/operations>

OU COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions - <https://www.ou.edu/coronavirus/coronavirus-faq>

OU Mask policy - <https://ou.edu/coronavirus/masking-policy>

OU Norman Campus COVID-19 Phase III Return Plan - <https://ou.edu/together/norman-phase-iii>

OU Screening and Reporting login - <https://covidreporting.ou.edu/accounts/login/?next=/>

OU Signage Order Form (after OU single sign on (sso) login) - <https://printingstorefront.ou.edu/ou/catalog.cgi>

OU Student Return Plan - <https://ou.edu/together/students>

OU Together - <https://ou.edu/together>

OU Vendor/Visitor Screening and Reporting form - <https://covidreporting.ou.edu/quest>

OUFM COVID-19 Resources (cleaning supplies) - <https://www.ou.edu/facilities>

US Department of Commerce COVID-19 Information - <https://www.commerce.gov/covid19employeeupdates>

QUICK REFERENCE:

NWC Facility Management Team

- **Cindy Magarian**, NWC Director Admin/Finance/Ops, cindy-weisberg@ou.edu, 325-3095/325-3037
- **Sterling Butler**, NOAA/NSSL, Security Facility Manager, Sterling.Butler@noaa.gov, 325-6686
- **Heather Bowers**, NWC Security Director, hbowers@ou.edu, 325-6137/618-3666
- **Kyle Sandidge**, Assistant Director NWC Operations, sandidge1@ou.edu, 209-3200/325-1850
- **Claire Chastain**, NWC Event Manger, events@nwc.ou.edu, 325-3095/325-1819/760-8085
- **Greg Leffler**, NWC Dock Manager, gleffler@ou.edu, 325-1850/397-9644

NWC Director and AGS Dean

- **Berrien Moore, III**, berrien@ou.edu, 325-3095

AGS Executive Associate Dean

- **Petra Klein**, pkklein@ou.edu, 325-3095

NOAA/NSSL Director

NOAA/NSSL Designated Official

- **Kurt Hondl**, kurt.hondl@noaa.gov, 325-6907

SIGNAGE:

1 – office space cleaning and hygiene

OFFICE SPACE CLEANING AND HYGIENE

Workspace

Individuals are encouraged to disinfect their individual workspaces (desk, phone, keyboard, etc.) daily. If your workspace is your work vehicle, the same guidelines apply.

Equipment from Home

Individuals bringing electronic equipment to university buildings from off-campus locations should thoroughly clean before placing in OU work environments.

Shared Items

Individuals must avoid using other's phones, desks, offices, computers, work tools, etc., when possible. Individuals using shared office items, such as copiers, must clean and disinfect the item before and after use.

Food Preparation

Individuals may prepare food in common areas only one person at a time and must clean the area after their use.

**Use of Communal Water Coolers
and Coffee Stations**

Should be permitted only if appropriate procedures are established for disinfecting surfaces before and after each individual use.

INDIVIDUALS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CLEANING
THEIR PERSONAL AND SHARED SPACES
AND OFFICE EQUIPMENT.

2 – department/area responsibility

DEPARTMENT/AREA RESPONSIBILITY

Office Electronics

Cleaning instructions for many types of common in-office computers and peripheral devices, including university-owned equipment for individual use as well as shared-use equipment, are available here:

www.ou.edu/ouit/workanywhere/get-started/equipment-sanitization

For equipment not listed on the webpage above, individuals should refer to the manufacturer's recommended instructions or contact their local IT support personnel.

COVID-19 Positive Individuals

Department managers must contact Facilities Management and the Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHSO) for disinfecting assistance when made aware of an individual who has tested positive and has been on campus within the last seven days.

NORMAN CAMPUS
Facilities Management: (405) 325-3060
EHSO: (405) 325-5147

Each department/area manager is responsible for obtaining cleaning supplies from Facilities Management that have been EPA-approved and providing for the cleaning of its shared office equipment, furniture, surfaces, and environment. These cleaning supplies can be requested here:

www.ou.edu/facilities

COVID Procedures: National Weather Center (NWC) Filming Requests
Applicable to the NWC/College of A&GS Offices

