



Phased Plan to Return to On-Campus Work

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¹ ROAR Drop-In opening moved to Phase II. Box Office designated official campus center drop-off/pick-up point. (Page 7)

² Hours added for RAWC and Box Office

Guiding Principles for Returning to Work on Campus³

The University of Arkansas Fort Smith will prioritize the health and safety of employees, students, parents, alumni, and visitors as the guiding principle to reopening the university.

The primary goal for this document is to lay out a plan that will allow individuals to return to work on campus in Summer 2020 while remaining vigilant in reducing risks associated with the novel Coronavirus. Plans for face-to-face instruction and activity on campus in fall 2020 will be created and disseminated throughout the summer.

This plan will align with the directives and guidance received from the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas, leaders within the University of Arkansas System, public health notices issued by the Arkansas Department of Health, and the guidance received from the Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization. Guidance received from professional associations and organizations also may be used for decision-making. Still, it will not supersede the advice and guidance received from the above named federal and state government or medical agencies.

The University of Arkansas-Fort Smith remains wholly committed to individuals who have reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act. We will follow guidance received to provide the safest and best environment for individuals with legal protection and accommodations. Guidance from the EEOC and ADA have been used in the creation of this plan.⁴

Our knowledge of the novel Coronavirus continues to evolve each day. Equally dynamic, our campus leaders will be required to continuously monitor and analyze the guidance we receive and modify our plans accordingly.

³ Modeled on a similar plan created by Duke University.

⁴ <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/pandemic-preparedness-workplace-and-americans-disabilities-act>

Defining Employees Who Will Return to Work on Campus and When

This document specifically addresses the rights and responsibilities of 12-month employees who are staff members and administrators who will work on campus beginning June 1, 2020. Faculty members employed in any summer session will continue to teach remotely and should not return to campus, except those granted access by their academic deans to gather personal or work-related materials that may be required for teaching or preparing to teach online.

Employees with certain conditions may be at higher risk for contracting COVID-19 or may have a higher risk for severe illness.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s latest guidance⁵ suggests that people in the highest risk categories include individuals who:

- Are over the age of 65,
- Suffer from chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma,
- Suffer from serious heart conditions,
- Severely obese (Body Mass Index of 40 or higher),
- Have diabetes,
- Suffer from chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis, or
- Suffer from liver disease

Employees with these or other high-risk conditions who have concerns about returning to work on campus should contact their direct supervisors (i.e., department head, director, academic dean, etc.) to discuss their needs.

Employers have been empowered to work to provide support for individuals who may not be able to return to campus immediately due to these and other risks.

Workplace Expectations and Communication

All faculty and staff members are required to comply with the policies, protocols, and guidelines in this document, as well as any published amendments to this document.

Amendments will be noted with the date and time of the modification and sent to employees through university assigned email addresses.

This document and any amendments will also be available on the University's COVID-19 website: <https://campuslife.uafs.edu/services/health-center/covid19>

⁵ (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>)

Symptom Monitoring Expectations

Employees instructed to return to the workplace must conduct symptom monitoring each day before reporting to work. Employees must be free of ANY symptoms potentially related to COVID-19 to be eligible to report to work.

At this time, these symptoms include one or more of the following:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Unexpected runny nose or sinus congestion (not previously diagnosed seasonal allergies)
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- New GI symptoms
- New loss of taste or smell
- A rash similar in nature to frostbite
- Other skin rashes/discoloration

Employees exhibiting any of these symptoms will be expected to call the Arkansas 211 hotline or their physician for assessment of symptoms and COVID-19 testing and should wear a facemask to avoid exposing others to the virus. Individuals who experience these symptoms should not come to work until they are certain that they do not have COVID-19. If the symptoms begin while at work, the employee should notify the direct supervisor and immediately leave to self-isolate until having an assessment with a medical professional.

Positive COVID-19 Reporting Expectations

Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 should contact the Office of Human Resources at 479-788-7086 and should not report to work until their attending or primary care physician has sent a letter of clearance to return to work.

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 are expected to follow their physician's directives for home quarantine or hospitalized care and may not return to work until the letter of clearance has been received. The office of Human Resources will confirm receipt of the clearance to return to work and will retain this letter in the employee's personnel file.

Employees living with or caring for an individual who tests positive for COVID-19 are expected to self-quarantine and not to return to work until 14 days after the individual's positive COVID-19 diagnosis.

For additional information, please review the most current [guidance from the Arkansas Department of Health](#).

COVID-19 Related Leave

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to use accumulated sick leave to account for their absence. If the employee does not have sufficient accumulated sick leave, they may use vacation leave and unpaid leave to cover the time of treatment or required self-quarantine.

Employees who must self-quarantine due to the positive COVID-19 test results of a person with whom they reside may request to work remotely for the period of self-quarantine or may use accumulated sick leave, vacation leave, and leave is available through the Families First Coronavirus Act through 12/31/20. The most comprehensive collection of information regarding FFCRA is available on Human Resources' my.UAFS site.

Required Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Each employee who reports to campus will be required to wear a facemask or face covering while in public spaces, common areas, and shared workspaces, and when in the presence of others. Facemasks and face coverings will not be required in individual offices.

UAFS officials are committed to acquiring sufficient quantities of facemasks to provide two disposable facemasks each day to every employee working on campus. Employees may choose to wear a cloth face covering of their own, which will assist the university in budgetary spend on disposable PPE. Those who choose to wear cloth facemasks will be required to wash the covering each day and must have a replacement on hand in the event the cloth mask becomes wet or soiled.

The World Health Organization has created this graphic⁶ to show how to properly put on, wear, and dispose of a disposable facemask:



Other Personal Care Information

Employees should practice the following hygiene habits to minimize potential community spread of COVID-19:

- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water
- Wash hands frequently and after each time you have been in a public place,
- Avoid touching your face (eyes, nose, mouth) and wash your hands immediately if you cannot avoid doing so,
- Cough into your elbow, not your hand,
- Create a physical distance of at least 6 feet between you and others,
- Do not gather in groups of 10 or more,
- Avoid crowds and mass gatherings,
- Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content
(For a list of locations of the dispensers in each building on campus, please refer to the [Phased Return to Work website](#) and its [Hand Sanitizer locator page](#))

⁶ <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>

Campus Security

The safety and security of campus facilities is paramount in a time when UAFS is gradually reopening its campus. All exterior doors for campus facilities will remain locked during Phases I and II of the university's return to work (see below). All employees must use their keys or ID Cards to enter facilities or make arrangements for their supervisor to provide access.

All employees will be required to have their UAFS employee ID Cards with them at all times in the event evidence of employment is required by University Police or other campus officials.

Campus Cleaning

Rest assured, the employees of SSC have been disinfecting and cleaning surfaces constantly in preparation for the arrival of our employees in June. They will continue to disinfect surfaces such as tabletops, counters, doorknobs/handles, elevator buttons, handrails in the stairwells, and restroom fixtures continuously throughout the day. High traffic areas will be wiped down frequently with disinfectant.

Employees are encouraged to wipe down or disinfect areas, surfaces, and equipment that they touch or use before and after each use. The employees are also encouraged to sanitize shared workspaces and items such as printers and copiers, mailboxes, etc. UAFS will do our best to procure disinfecting wipes and supplies, which will be available in all buildings.

Meals

Meal services (retail and dining hall) will not be available until students return on campus in August. We encourage employees who want to bring their lunches and eat on campus to do so under the following conditions:

- Wear a mask to and from the dining location,
- Sanitize the space (table, chair, microwave, refrigerator handle, etc.) before and after use,
- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds before and after the meal,
- Keep a reasonable social distance between yourself and other diners (6+ feet),
- Try not to sit immediately facing another diner to avoid the spread of the virus, which is transmitted through airborne droplets.

Phased Staffing

The University of Arkansas-Fort Smith has identified a four-phase approach to returning employees to work on campus. The phased approach is necessary to decrease population density and provides time for us gradually to prepare facilities, policies, and procedures to support a full return to campus. The phased return plan is as follows:

PHASE I

Beginning June 1, vice chancellors and senior leaders will identify individuals whose job responsibilities require them to support critical on-site work in preparation for face-to-face instruction this fall. This group includes individuals who will be required to support the physical and technical modifications necessary to reduce risk.

During Phase I, limited services will be open on campus.

As the number of individuals living on campus is limited to only those with 12-month contracts in Sebastian Commons apartments, food service will not be available.

The Recreation and Wellness Center will be open for limited hours of operation each week. The June 1-21 (Phase I) schedule is 6-9 a.m., and 4-7 p.m. Monday – Thursday.

There will be many limitations to the activities that will be allowed. Staff will post temporary rules at the location, on the website, and through email with the weekly hours of operation announcements.

The Boreham Library will not be open to the public, but some employees will return to prepare for a limited opening in July (see Phase III).

The Campus Center will have one location at the UAFS Box Office open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday – Thursday for students or visitors to get directions or drop off materials. Employees will conduct all other business online and by appointment.

Physical Plant employees will report to work and will be responsible for making modifications to physical spaces (see Physical Modifications to Campus, page 10.)

Academic facilities will be closed except to staff who have key or ID Card access to enter and leave the buildings. Faculty should not access the academic facilities without prior approval of their academic dean.

Meetings will continue to be conducted by phone or through Microsoft Teams, Blackboard Collaborate, or other video or teleconferencing software. No face-to-face meetings will be scheduled.

PHASE II

Beginning June 22, the next phase of employees will return to work with staggered and flexible schedules as identified by division vice chancellors. Some employees will continue to work remotely part of the day or for full days to reduce the population density and limit the number of people entering and exiting facilities simultaneously. No food service will be available on campus during this time.

The RAWC will open for additional hours, but not full operation. New rules and hours will be communicated weekly via email.

The Campus Center will open limited hours to admit and register students. Business that can be conducted online will continue online by appointment.

The ROAR First Year Advising Center will have minimal staff and may see only students who "drop-in." Advising appointments and new student orientation will continue to be held online.

Academic facilities will be closed except to staff who have key or ID Card access to enter and leave the buildings. Faculty should not access the academic facilities without prior approval of their academic dean.

Meetings that are regularly scheduled and have fewer than 10 participants may be conducted in person as long as individuals maintain proper social distancing of at least 6 feet. Meeting hosts should be prepared to include employees who are continuing to work remotely and wear masks as needed.

PHASE III

Beginning July 13, all staff will return to work on campus, except those who receive supervisor permission to work remotely due to high-risk factors, job requirements, or other needs. No food service will be available on campus during this time.

All areas of campus administrative operation (i.e., major service units such as financial aid, admissions, registrar, advisors, housing, cashier, HR, procurement, event planning, career services, athletics, ASC, etc.) will be open. Still, most will have limited staff who stagger their arrival and departure times and rotate the days on which they work remotely versus on campus.

Academic Facilities--Faculty members may have access to offices and laboratories as approved by their academic dean. They will be expected to follow all requirements outlined in this document.

The Boreham Library will open to employees and registered students only for limited hours that will be established and communicated weekly. Study rooms will remain closed, and signs in the Library will instruct patrons to use sanitizer and sanitizing wipes to clean common areas before and after use.

Campus tours may be scheduled, but hours of available tours will be limited, and the group size, including tour guide, cannot exceed 10 people. Individuals will be required to wear masks and use hand sanitizer throughout the event. The tour guide will be expected to wear gloves and open and close doors for the group members.

PHASE IV

Beginning August 6, the campus will be open for regular operating hours from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Limited food service will be available in the Campus Center using touchless payment and pick up methods. Food service will be available in the Lion's Den after students return to campus.

Meetings may continue face-to-face with the previously noted restrictions of physical distancing and groups no larger than 10.

As on-campus work ramps up through the four phases identified, UAFS leaders and members of the Emergency Management Team will continue to monitor and assess the spread of COVID-19 closely.

If any increase in community spread or severity of the virus is noted on campus, in the region, or the State of Arkansas, campus officials may be required to modify this plan in order to mitigate risks, which may mean tighter restrictions on hours of operation, physical distancing, or a partial or complete return to remote work.

Physical Modifications to Campus

UAFS leaders are aware of many physical and operational changes that will help us to reduce the risk of community spread of COVID-19. We are committed to the safety of employees, students, and guests; thus, we have identified many modifications that must take place to physical spaces and our business practices.

Modification of physical spaces—UAFS leaders have researched and identified several limitations of the current campus layout, and need to make changes to ensure risk reduction. Until all work is accomplished, we believe that staggering employee time on campus and continuing some remote work will be necessary. Examples of physical space modification include but are not limited to the following:

- Addition of plexiglass affixed to counters in high traffic areas to provide barriers between employees and those who need face-to-face services,
- Floors in high traffic areas will be marked with six-foot separation marks to identify the amount of space expected between those waiting,
- Potential changes to office/work assignments where one or more people share space (i.e., shared cubicles, offices, service counters/desks, etc.),
- Signs will remind employees that restroom use should be limited based on size to ensure at least 6 feet of distance between individuals. Employees will be required to wash their hands thoroughly after using the restroom to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.
- Drinking fountains that have bottle refill stations may be used to refill bottles, but all other water fountains will have signs that indicate the water fountain is not to be used.

Other Operational Changes Under Consideration

University officials are considering the following operational enhancements to reduce risks further or enhance work and teaching online:

- Conducting all one-on-one meetings with students by appointment only and holding one-on-one meetings online unless there is a necessary exception,
- Adopting an electronic ticketing system versus providing and handling paper tickets,
- Prohibiting university-sponsored travel until December 31, 2020, unless approved by the chancellor,
- Adopting public health guidelines for any proposed large gatherings,
- Requiring temperature screenings for any proposed large gatherings,
- Consider testing each employee and student for COVID-19 when symptoms may be present, and at regular intervals, if required or advised and if supplies are available,
- Procuring and implementing a document storage and retrieval system which is programmed to allow access to and routing of documents electronically and remotely and allowing e-signature,
- We will mail parking permits and allowing students to apply the permit charges to their student accounts,
- Requiring students and employees to make credit card payments for tuition, fees, and other expenses online, not through the cashier's office,
- Use of online appointment scheduling and text messaging to alert a student that he or she can come to the facility for a face-to-face transaction (similar to the systems used at restaurants that allow patrons not to gather in the lobby),
- Requiring events held on campus or in spaces owned/leased managed by UAFS to include a variety of risk reduction and physical distancing strategies,
- No use of lapel microphones that are shared,
- Disinfecting lab and other shared equipment between each use,
- Removing/Rearranging equipment (i.e., computers, lab equipment, exercise equipment) to provide physical distance between users,
- Encouraging on-site employees to use digital communication tools to communicate with colleagues and supervisors.
- Encouraging phone calls, email, Microsoft Teams, etc. to avoid meetings where physical distance cannot be maintained.
- Encouraging employees to sanitize all public surfaces they touch during dining, including tables, chairs, microwaves, refrigerators, vending machines, etc., and to wash their hands before and after meals.

Frequently Asked Questions

I plan to travel out of state this summer on personal time. Can I come right back to work?

Employees should be knowledgeable about the State of Arkansas guidance or requirements about out-of-state travel, and they should be prepared to take action accordingly. For example, if the State of Arkansas requires a 14-day self-isolation before returning to work, our employees should plan to include that time as part of the vacation. If the state recommends but does not mandate a self-isolation, employees should consider the risks which are inherent from the travel and discuss self-isolation with a supervisor.

My student organization was planning to travel this summer. Are we allowed to do that?

University-sponsored or related travel will be prohibited this summer except as approved by the chancellor. The president and professional advisor may submit a request for consideration to Dr. Lee Krehbiel, who will discuss the trip and ways you plan to reduce risks with the chancellor for consideration.

What happens this fall with classes, housing, activities, etc.?

The university's senior leadership team, academic deans, Faculty Senate, Staff Council, Student Government Association, and other campus experts will be meeting throughout the summer to make important decisions about reducing risk and returning to face-to-face classes this fall. Campus officials will disseminate plans for fall as soon as they are available.

I did not see gloves listed as required PPE. Is UAFS providing gloves for employees?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention do not recommend wearing gloves in the workplace; however, we will have gloves available for those individuals whose jobs require frequent disinfecting (i.e., Boreham Library, RAWC, etc.)

During a typical workday, I take a break and go for a 10-15 minute walk around campus. Do I need to wear a mask?

Employees should wear masks as they enter and leave workspaces and buildings, but they are not required to wear masks while walking or interacting outdoors. Employees are encouraged to keep at least a 6-foot physical distance between themselves and other walkers.

When can we host large events again?

Following guidance from the Arkansas Department of Health, we are allowed to host large indoor or outdoor events as long as no more than 50 people attend, all attendees must wear masks, and all adhere to the physical distance requirements of 6+ feet between participants. Individuals who have COVID-19 symptoms or believe they are at higher risk will be advised not to attend.

What if I see someone who is not meeting these guidelines?

Of course, we expect all employees to adhere to this reopening plan. This is new for all of us, and it will be easy for people to forget and revert to old practices. If you observe someone who does not adhere to the guidelines, please remind the individual gently and compassionately to follow this plan. If the individual does not comply or if you are uncomfortable confronting the situation, share what you observed with your direct supervisor, who will either communicate with the individual or identify ways to prevent the behavior in the future.

Where can I learn more about best practices for returning to work?

The World Health Organization has created a document that has been used to guide some of the content of this plan. It can be found at: <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/advice-for-workplace-clean-19-03-2020.pdf>