

[Edit Policy](#)

SEC-045: COVID-19 Health & Safety Requirement I Prevalence Testing, Face Masks, Physical Distancing, Events and Gatherings, and Visitors

(See temporary policy modification in red text within policy statement)

Applies To: Academic Division and University-Associated Organizations.

Reason for Policy:

The University is committed to providing a safe environment in which to teach, perform research, work, learn and study. Because the Coronavirus (COVID-19) can spread quickly and cause widespread illness and death, the University has established requirements for prevalence testing, face coverings, physical distancing, events and gatherings, and visitors to the University in order to protect faculty, staff, students, and contractors (vendors who have a contractual relationship with the University) from potential exposure to this disease.

Definition of Terms in Statement:

- **Event or Gathering:**
In-person, on- or off-Grounds assembly, meeting, or convening that brings together multiple people from separate households in a single space, indoors or outdoors, at the same time for a common purpose to conduct University business or student activity. Events and gatherings may include meetings, social events, or other extracurricular activities that bring together people for in-person interaction. Events and gatherings do not include University-scheduled classes or labs. Events and gatherings do not include settings in which people are in the same general space at the same time but doing separate activities, like dorms, offices, stores, and restaurants where people may be working, shopping, or eating in the same general area but not gathering together in an organized fashion.
- **Expressive Activity:**
A non-commercial activity in which a person intends to convey a lawful message through speech or conduct that is likely to be perceived as such by an observer of the speech or conduct, and includes any lawful public gathering, demonstration, procession, or parade in which the primary purpose is to exercise the rights of free speech or peaceable assembly.
- **Face Covering (Face Mask):**
Face coverings/masks are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health primarily to slow the spread of COVID-19 by reducing spread of the virus from the wearer to others. They are not intended to provide protection from inhalation of small particles or virus aerosols. According to CDC guidance, an effective cloth face covering will:

- Cover both the mouth and the nose;
 - Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face;
 - Include multiple layers of fabric;
 - Allow for breathing without restriction; and
 - Be able to be laundered and machine-dried without damage or change to shape.
- **Physical Distancing:**
A public health practice designed to limit the spread of infection by requiring sufficient physical space of at least six feet between individuals.
- **Prevalence Testing:**
Testing to understand the number of COVID-19 cases in a population at one point in time.
- **University Facility:**
Any defined space of the University, including a room, lab, series of labs, building, or controlled outdoor area.

Policy Statement:

Temporary policy modification (gathering size last modified March 11):

Face Coverings: All students, faculty, staff, and contractors must wear masks at all times -- inside **and outside**, except when they are alone and in their own private space (e.g., in an individual office or in a private bedroom or bathroom) or a private space shared with a roommate (e.g., a double bedroom room in a residence hall). Masks should be worn in shared common spaces indoors. When they are outside, they must wear a mask **even when they can maintain** a physical distance of at least six feet. Everyone should sanitize hands before removing their mask or returning it to their face.

Events and Gatherings: To reduce the risk of the potential spread of COVID-19, gatherings and events should be conducted virtually whenever possible.

Limit total attendance of in-person **indoor** gatherings or events held in University facilities or on University property to **6 people maximum**. Limit total attendance of in-person **outdoor** gatherings or events held in University facilities or on University property to **10 people maximum**. Indoor dining (including in dining halls) should be limited to groups of 4. All attendees are expected to follow all public health protocols.

Limit total attendance of in-person **indoor** gatherings or events held in non-University facilities or property to a **maximum of 6 people** and otherwise follow local and state regulations. Limit total attendance of in-person **outdoor** gatherings or events held in non-University facilities or property to a **maximum of 10 people** and otherwise follow local and state regulations. Indoor dining should be limited to groups of 4. All attendees are expected to follow all public health protocols.

We strongly encourage all community members, especially students, to avoid intermingling groups.

(Exceptions to face coverings and events and gatherings remain in effect as outlined in the original policy statement below.)

All students, faculty, staff, and contractors must adhere to the following requirements:

A.

Prevalence Testing and Other Risk Mitigation Measures: All students, faculty, and staff are required to follow COVID-19 risk mitigation measures, including testing, as directed by the University.

Regular prevalence testing is critical for keeping the University and the local community safe. It is **mandatory** for students to test once each week or as otherwise directed by the University. Students who miss their weekly testing requirement will face a series of escalating consequences. Students may also face additional sanctions including referral to the Judiciary Committee, termination of housing contract, and dismissal from the University.

B.

Face Coverings: All students, faculty, staff, and contractors must wear masks at all times when they are inside, except when they are alone (or with their roommates) and in their private spaces (e.g., dorm rooms, apartments, or individual offices). When they are outside, they must wear a mask when they cannot maintain a physical distance of at least six feet. Everyone should sanitize hands before removing their mask or returning it to their face.

Exceptions: There are four exceptions to the requirements above:

- **EATING, DRINKING, PERSONAL HYGIENE:** People may remove masks, of course, when eating, drinking, showering, brushing teeth, etc.
- **EXERCISING:** Certain exceptions to masking requirements apply to those who are exercising indoors – e.g., for those who are swimming or on exercise equipment. Details on these exceptions will be posted at IM-Rec and athletic facilities. To be on the safe side, always bring your mask with you.
- **TEACHING:** Instructors may remove masks when teaching behind plexiglass barriers as long as they can maintain physical distance of at least six feet from students.
- **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) ACCOMMODATIONS:** Some members of the University community may have pre-existing conditions that preclude them from wearing a mask; the relevant UVA office will evaluate requests for accommodation to determine whether there is a qualifying disability-related condition under ADA and a reasonable accommodation. **Students** with qualifying disability-related conditions can contact the [Student Disability Access Center \(SDAC\)](#) to seek accommodations related to masking requirements. **Employees** with qualifying disability-related conditions can seek accommodations related to masking requirements by following the [Procedures for Employees with Disabilities to Request Workplace Accommodations](#).

C.

Physical Distancing: All students, faculty, staff, and contractors should maintain six feet or more from others whenever possible.

D.

Events and Gatherings: To reduce the risk of the potential spread of COVID-19, gatherings and events should be conducted virtually whenever possible.

Limit total attendance of in-person indoor or outdoor gatherings or events held in University facilities or on University property to 15 people maximum. Large outdoor areas (e.g., the Lawn and Mad Bowl) can accommodate more than one event or gathering provided the groups are appropriately spaced from one another. All attendees are expected to follow all public health protocols.

Limit total attendance of in-person gatherings or events held in non-University facilities or property to a maximum of 15 people and otherwise follow local and state regulations. All attendees are expected to follow all public health protocols.

The University may expand the permissible event size as public health circumstances allow.

When planning in-person events, please seriously consider whether:

- There is a compelling need for the event to occur in the fall instead of at some later time.
- The event holds immediate importance to either the University's core mission of teaching, research, and patient care, or to student self-governance.
- There are potential long-term consequences of not hosting the event.
- There are specific reasons the event cannot be held virtually.

Guidance on allowable in-person events and gatherings that require additional precautions (beyond six-foot physical distancing and masking):

- Vocal music and theater rehearsals and performances may only take place outside with ten-foot physical distancing and masking. Theater productions should be small and have very limited movement.
- Dance rehearsals and performances may take place inside or outside with ten-foot physical distancing and masking.
- Brass and Woodwind ensembles should not practice or perform until further notice.
- Note: All rehearsals and performances are subject to attendance restrictions noted in the attendance section of this policy.
- All additional IM-Rec requirements are posted in IM-Rec facilities and are outlined in [IM-Rec's approved Fall 2020 plan](#). Additional Athletics requirements are posted in Athletics facilities.

Exceptions: The requirements listed above do not apply to the following gatherings and events; instead the maximum size for gatherings established in the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle ordinances to prevent the spread of COVID-19 applies; if not addressed by the aforementioned ordinances, the Governor's Executive Order 67 (or as it may be further amended or superseded), any Order of Public Health Emergency, or any other State or federal laws related to the COVID-19 pandemic regarding the maximum size for gatherings, applies. The University's masking and physical distancing guidelines outlined in this policy continue to apply to all events operating under an exception.

- Gatherings for religious exercise including, but not limited to, religious ceremonies.
- On-Grounds expressive activity, subject to PRM-017 and related policies governing expressive activity, and Off-Grounds expressive activity on a public street, public sidewalk, in a public park subject to park rules, and on other public property expressly designated for expressive activity by its governmental owner occupant.
- NCAA-sanctioned athletics events, including practices and competitions (should they occur).
- IM-Rec-sponsored events, conducted under [IM-Rec's approved Fall 2020 plan](#).
- Official Division of Student Affairs-sponsored events.
- Volunteer service with a community organization operating in the [Blue Ridge Health District](#) with a COVID-19 risk mitigation plan in place. The organization's plan does not need to be provided to the University in advance of the service activity; however, the University may restrict activity with a particular organization and require review of its risk mitigation plan if public health concerns are reported.
- On-Grounds tents designed for individual or a few students to gather at appropriate physical distance to eat, study, or attend an on-line class between in-person activities. These tents are labeled with the capacity of the tent and, at no time, should the capacity exceed the posted limit.
- Events and gatherings held at event facilities owned or managed by University-associated organizations (for example, Morven Farm, Alumni Hall, the Boar's Head Pavilion).
- In very rare instances, additional exceptions will be considered and must be approved by the appropriate school dean, the athletic director (for athletic facilities), or for University-wide or non-school-based events, the [Office of Major Events](#).

Space Reservation: For the foreseeable future, the University will not allow reservation of University facilities by unaffiliated persons (this includes weddings, camps, conferences, etc.)

except when the planned use is to engage in public speaking or distribution of literature on outdoor University property (as specified in Procedure 2.3 of [PRM-017: Use of University Facilities or Property and Limits on Direct Solicitation and Advertising](#)).

E.

Visitors to the University: To reduce the risk of bringing cases of COVID-19 to Grounds, we ask that Academic Division faculty, staff, and students limit any visitors until further notice with following exceptions:

- Visiting students enrolled in UVA courses, including Executive Education students.
- Visiting faculty or in-class presenters teaching UVA courses.
- Visiting scholars, researchers, or research subjects in human research projects.
- Patients or clients of clinics.
- Employees of University-associated organizations.
- Contractors or vendors delivering goods or services to Grounds, including personal care attendants.
- Patrons of the University Bookstore and guests of the Boarű Head Inn and its associated facilities.
- Members of the IM-Recreation facilities.
- Public safety first-responders and others on Grounds for emergency/health safety purposes.
- Visiting athletic teams and their official guests, referees, or ticketed fans attending NCAA-sanctioned athletics competitions (should they occur).
- Other exceptions, as approved by the relevant dean or vice president.

Residence Halls: Access to rooms and living spaces in on-Grounds residences will be limited to building residents and select staff only. Overnight guests are not permitted. During move-in, two visitors will be permitted to assist a student.

Job Interviews: For open positions, interviews should be conducted remotely. In exceptional cases, finalist interview for faculty and/or senior leadership positions may be held on Grounds and must be approved in writing by the relevant dean or vice president.

Public Visitor Areas: Many of the Universityű frequently visited spaces, including the Rotunda, McCormick Observatory, and the Libraries are closed to visitors until further notice. These facilities will remain open to faculty, staff, and students. Please check facility websites for modifications to hours of operation and services.

Deans or vice presidents may approve limited exceptions to allow other visitors who may need to come to Grounds for University-related business that cannot be conducted virtually.

All visitors are expected to adhere to the Universityű masking and physical distancing requirements as noted in this policy.

The University will review these limits after the fall semester if prevailing state rules or public health guidance changes.

Compliance with Policy:

If a student violates the prevalence testing requirement:

- *First Missed Test:* Students who miss one week of testing will receive a warning. This warning is not cause for disciplinary action. Because these are just warnings, there is not a process to appeal the warning. Students should ensure that they test weekly so they will not be subject to further sanctions.
- *Second Missed Test:* If students miss a second week of testing, their school will be notified.
- *Third Missed Test:* Students who miss a third week of testing will have their NetBadge access (or local equivalent) disabled. This means that the studentű access to websites, services, and applications protected by NetBadge will be disabled (such as email, SIS, and Collab).

Furthermore, students who miss a third week of testing may not access University facilities or participate in University classes, programs, or activities in person until they test. Please note: If you are a graduate teaching assistant, research assistant, or student-worker, losing access to core systems may have an additional impact on your instruction or your ability to fulfill your work responsibilities.

If a student's NetBadge access has been disabled for failure to comply with the University's COVID-19 prevalence testing program, the student can restore NetBadge access by getting tested. Students can view the current testing sites and times at www.besafe.virginia.edu. NetBadge restoration will be processed automatically after testing.

If students are not physically in the Charlottesville/Albemarle area and are therefore unable to get tested to restore NetBadge access, please email prevalence-test@virginia.edu.

- **Fourth Missed Test:** Students who miss a fourth week of testing will be subject to Interim Suspension from the University, which could result in the forfeit of the entire semester and all associated tuition and fees.

If a **student** violates the rules and requirements around Face Masks, Physical Distancing, Events and Gatherings, and Visitors or other risk mitigation measures, it may result in the following consequences based on the severity of the violation:

- **Minor violations** will ideally be addressed in the moment by an active bystander (e.g., offering a forgetful student a mask) and/or through an educational discussion (e.g., student meeting with residence life or other staff). We will encourage peer engagement and bystander intervention by faculty, staff, and students in training programs and other communications, consistent with our broader social norming campaign.
- **Serious violations** will be routed to the University Judiciary Committee (UJC) and also evaluated for immediate interim disciplinary suspension by the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS); through this administrative process, ODOS can suspend a student from in-person learning/activities (i.e., allow them to continue with remote learning) or all enrollment (no remote learning). The interim suspension includes a no-trespass order from Grounds enforceable through the University Police Department. The definition of what is a serious violation will be fact-bound, though we expect it will include repeated violations by the same individual or organization, those that constitute a refusal to comply when warned or encouraged, and large events in plain, intentional disregard of size and distance limitations.
- **Widespread violations** will be a factor in determining whether and when to close the University to students and in-person classes and to request that students return home.

If an **employee** fails to comply with requirements of this policy, it may result in disciplinary action in accordance with relevant University policies.

Details on enforcement for faculty, staff, and contractors are being developed and will be added to this policy once ready.

Effective Term of the Policy: This policy will remain in effect indefinitely until federal, state, local, and/or University directives deem a face covering or physical distancing is no longer necessary or recommended to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Questions about this policy should be directed to [Emergency Management](#) or [Environmental Health and Safety](#) or the [Office of the Vice President and Chief Student Affairs Officer](#).

Effective Date: 06/01/2020 Last Revised Date: 03/11/2021 Policy Type: University
Contact Office: [Emergency Management \(UVA\), Environmental Health and Safety, Vice President and Chief Student Affairs Officer \(Office of the\)](#)
Oversight Executive: President of the University

Major Category: Safety, Security and Environmental Quality
Next Scheduled Review: 03/31/2021

Approved by, Date: President of the University, 06/01/2020

Revision History: Added Volunteer Service Exception and updated Temporary Modification/Gathering 3/11/21; added Prevalence Testing and Other Risk Mitigation Measures 3/09/21; updated Temporary Modification/Gatherings 2/26/21, 2/16/21; updated Temporary Modification/Gatherings 1/15/21, 10/13/20; updated Temporary Modification/Face Coverings 9/24/20; added Temporary Modification 9/22/20; added Events & Gatherings, Visitors 8/31/20; revised 8/18/20 (definition of Face Covering, Health/ADA Accommodations Exception); added Wise 7/8/20; edited Policy Statement 7/15/20, 6/25/20; revised Section 1 6/2/20.

Source URL: <https://uvapolicy.virginia.edu/policy/SEC-045>