

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Message from the President	2
A Message from OHRIDE	3
Returning to the Workplace	4
Workplace Expectations & Guidelines	4
Phased-In Staffing	4
Returning to the Workplace...WSU Phases I-III	4
Impacted Employees	4
Hybrid Positions	5
Personnel Expectations	5
When Employees Call in Sick	6
What to do if you're experiencing COVID-19 Symptoms	6
When an employee in the workplace presents with COVID-19 Symptoms	7
Symptom Monitoring	7
Inquiring about Travel	7
Mental & Emotional Wellbeing	7
The Albert and Amelia Interfaith Center	8
AllOne Health	8
Mass4You	8
Training for COVID-19 Protocol	8
Health and Safety Guidance	8
Continued Personal Safety Practices	8
Handwashing	9
Face Masks	9
Additional Operational Practices	9
Cleaning/Disinfection	9
COVID-19 Operational-Related Purchases/Expenditures	9
Guidance for Specific Workplace Consideration	10
Public Transportation	10
Meals	10
Resources and References	10

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Campus Community,

As the world moves forward in its ongoing fight against the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Westfield State University intends to begin implementation on of a phased return-to-work plan to welcome more of its faculty and staff back to campus in preparation for a new normal model for the Fall 2021 semester.

Following the guidelines, safety standards, and required protocols from the CDC, OSHA, ACHA, federal, state, and local entities, Westfield State's workforce plan is developed with the health and safety of the full campus community at its core.

I continue to be encouraged by the growing numbers of individuals vaccinated against COVID-19 and the decreasing numbers of those severely infected by it. Our plan will enable Westfield State to gradually bring its workforce back to campus to maintain our high quality of in-person service to our students in Fall 2021.

I thank all faculty, staff, and students for their enduring patience, flexibility, and cooperative spirit as we work together to meet unprecedented challenges to advance our commitment to student engagement and success.

Sincerely,

Roy

Roy H. Saigo, Ph.D.
Interim President
Westfield State University

A MESSAGE FROM OHRIDE

Dear Campus Community,

I am pleased to share with you Westfield State University's Return to Work Guide ("New Normal 2021"). The goals of this guide are to protect the health of employees, ensure the well-being of the campus community, and carefully and deliberately prepare for the return of on-ground working and learning environments. As we continue our gradual, phased return to work, we proceed with an abundance of caution. It is important to note that the success of our efforts to safely return to on-campus work depends on the commitment of each employee to exercise good judgment and comply with the guidance and directives contained in this document.

The Office of Human Resources, Inclusion, Diversity, & Equity (OHRIDE) based this plan on current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker, and best practices to support our safe and healthy return to campus.

As knowledge and understanding of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the variants and the FDA approved vaccine distribution continue to evolve, institutional plans and guidance will be updated. Please take the time to carefully review the guide. If you have any questions, your supervisor, area vice president, or the Office of Human Resources, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity will be happy to help you. We appreciate your flexibility and cooperation as we move through our phased return-to-work this spring/summer.

Note: due to the fluid nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the related federal and state guidelines, this guide may need to be regularly revised.

Sincerely,

Evelyn A. Soucie

Director, Human Resources
Office of Human Resources, Inclusion, Diversity, & Equity
Westfield State University

RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE

Workplace Expectations & Guidelines

Our goal is to facilitate a smooth, phased-in approach for the return of staff to campus between the months of June to August 2021, in consideration of the provisions set forth by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This approach is to support the intention of the University to resume all campus activities for the fall 2021 semester, with a full complement of faculty and staff teaching and working on campus. The return to campus will be implemented with the utmost consideration given to protecting the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff.

This return-to-the-workplace document provides information, expectations, and guidelines that all Westfield State employees are expected to follow. The safe and gradual return of the workforce is a responsibility that we all share, and complying with these protocols and guidelines will help make the return as safe as possible for all Westfield State constituents.

[Phased-in Staffing Revised to mirror the new Commonwealth of Massachusetts May 29, 2021 COVID-19 provisions](#)

The following Phases provide deadlines for return of employees to campus; however, all employees are encouraged to return to the campus workplace earlier, if possible, to ensure that there is sufficient on-campus staffing to meet operational needs for fall semester.

Returning to the Workplace: WSU Phases I through III

Massachusetts is currently in the final stages of the state's reopening plan. The University is currently operating at approximately 25% of department/building capacity, which will increase monthly from June through August 2021 for University staff who are currently working remotely as indicated in the following phases:

WSU Phase I: Staff should start transitioning back to working on campus approximately 50% of their work schedule throughout the month of June 2021, resulting in a 2 to 3 day schedule of on-campus work per week by June 30, 2021.

WSU Phase II: Staff should be prepared to be working on campus four days per week starting July 5, 2021 and remaining with this 4 day on campus work schedule throughout the month of July 2021. This change from the previous Guide increases employee on-campus presence by one day for the month of July.

WSU Phase III: Staff should be prepared to be working on-campus 100% of their schedule starting August 9, 2021. This change from the previous Guide increases on-campus employee presence by one day for the month of August.

Impacted Employees:

- Employees currently performing remote work will start to transition to on-campus work beginning June 1, 2021.
- Employees in positions determined to be critical for the purpose of COVID-19 will remain under the direction and supervision of their vice president.

Positions that are necessary for campus safety, facilities operations, dining operations, Residential Life, some classroom learning and/or designated on-ground activities, as well as jobs that cannot be effectively performed from home and are critical to ongoing operations, will continue to be prioritized in the University's phased return-to-work approach.

The university will lift the restricted building access effective June 15, 2021. Public access to campus buildings will be 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

OHRIDE understands that each employee may experience different challenges throughout the summer as we transition back to a fully open campus for fall. We suggest that each employee work with their department head/supervisor in meeting challenges while working towards mirroring the phases above. OHRIDE will be providing the necessary training and outreach in the upcoming weeks to supervisors, to include guidance to work through employee challenges and circumstances regarding work schedules while also meeting operational staffing needs.

The University will no longer require submission of on-ground work schedules after June 15, 2021. During this phased-in approach, employees will continue to visibly wear their employee ID while on campus.

Hybrid Positions:

Employees' remote schedules will lessen while their on-campus schedule increases as the University implements the above phased-in approach to repopulating the campus. During the spring/summer phased-in return to campus, OHRIDE will develop a process to assist supervisors/department heads in assessing positions in their area to determine whether certain positions would be appropriate to be considered for a pilot hybrid work schedule to continue beyond summer 2021. The hybrid model will depend on the operational needs of the University/department as well as the roles and responsibilities of each individual employee. OHRIDE will work with each vice president/department head to identify such positions. Employees whose positions are identified as an appropriate hybrid position will be contacted by their immediate supervisor. Supervisors should complete the [Supervisor Questionnaire](#) for each employee who requests a hybrid work schedule and employees should complete the [Request Form](#).

Personnel Expectations:

Safeguarding the health and safety of the campus community is paramount. Therefore, employees are expected to notify OHRIDE, by calling 413-572-5636, or emailing gpschenichnaya@westfield.ma.edu or hr@westfield.ma.edu, if they have been in contact with or exposed to COVID-19.

Vaccinated or unvaccinated employees asked to report to the workplace are expected to inform OHRIDE if they:

1. Have come in contact with or have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Based on the CDC's current knowledge, a close contact is someone who was within 6

feet of an infected person for a total of 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before infected person's illness onset until the time the patient is isolated;

2. Are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19; or
3. They have tested positive for COVID-19.

When employees call in sick:

Consistent with existing University policy, employees are responsible for contacting their supervisor if they are unable to report to work for any reason.

When an employee calls in sick, the employee should provide and/or may be asked if they are exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19. CDC provides that symptoms include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and/or diarrhea. For the current list of symptoms, please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

The University regards any responses from employees as confidential medical information and asks that employees contact OHRIDE if they are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, as identified above and as provided by the CDC. If a supervisor, manager, or department chair receives a call from an employee who discloses information about symptoms, the supervisor/manager/department chair must immediately notify OHRIDE in a confidential manner by contacting 413-572-8730 or hr@westfield.ma.edu. Supervisors, managers, and department chairs are expected to direct employees to contact OHRIDE directly rather than discuss confidential medical information with an employee. OHRIDE strongly encourages employees to contact its office at 413-572-8730 or hr@westfield.ma.edu.

What to do if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms:

- If an employee is experiencing new symptoms, listed above, the employee should remain out of the workplace and use their leave accruals to cover their sick leave absence from the workplace unless another process has been enacted for your union. Employees are encouraged to get tested for COVID-19, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated.
- If an employee has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and has worked on campus within the last 10 days of experiencing symptoms and/or diagnosis, the employee should contact OHRIDE and remain out of the workplace for a minimum of 10 days. Providing this information to OHRIDE will help the University with the notifications for contract tracing. During this time, the employee may be eligible for COVID-19 Temporary Emergency Paid Sick Leave Program, should [complete the request form](#) and submit it to Logan Taylor at 413-572-8476 ltaylor@westfield.ma.edu. For FAQs about this temporary program please click here.. . Employees diagnosed with COVID-19 will not be able to return to the workplace before receiving approval from OHRIDE. The University reserves the right to require medical documentation before an employee is permitted to return to work.
- If employees have exhausted all accrued leave, eligible APA and MSCA employees shall be allowed to use the sick leave bank without being required to go off the payroll for five (5) days before access. AFSCME employees who have exhausted their accrued leave may apply for an extension of sick leave, provided that such employee has been employed for a minimum of twelve (12) consecutive months prior to the commencement of such extension of sick leave.

If an employee calls to report they have been exposed to COVID-19 but is not displaying symptoms:

Before reporting to work, all employees are expected to contact OHRIDE if they have been exposed to COVID-19 but are not displaying symptoms. OHRIDE will discuss with the employee the cautionary measures being taken by the University, including the need to remain out of the workplace, and whether alternative work options are available.

When an employee in the workplace presents with COVID-19 symptoms:

When an employee in the workplace presents with symptoms, the employee will be asked by OHRIDE to leave the workplace and use sick leave or other available accrued leave, should the employee not have available sick leave to cover their absence. OHRIDE will discuss with the employee available leave options or possible alternative work arrangements. Additionally, OHRIDE will ask the employee to inform OHRIDE if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or if they have been exposed to COVID-19. Employees must contact their supervisor if they are unable to report to work.

- If the employee was diagnosed with COVID-19 or was exposed to COVID-19, the University will follow the guidance above (see section: “When Employees Call in Sick”). In the event the employee indicates they were not diagnosed or were not exposed to COVID-19, and their symptoms no longer persist, the employee will be permitted to return to the workplace. Employees should continue to self-monitor to ensure their health as well as the health and safety of others.

Symptom Monitoring

Before coming to work, employees who have been instructed to return to the workplace must be free of any symptoms potentially related to COVID-19. Employees are encouraged to take their temperature every day before reporting to work.

For a list of symptom updates, employees should go directly to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Inquiring about travel

In our efforts to lessen the risk and protect the well-being of our campus community while following state guidance, OHRIDE requests that you continue to follow the [Massachusetts travel advisory](#).

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

In a time of crisis, such as COVID-19, it’s not unusual or outside the norm to experience many emotional and psychological disturbances. You might find that you feel more anxious, depressed, angry, as well as have times when you have difficulty sleeping, eating, or enjoying life. These may be reactions to the stress the virus brings to your life. At times like these, it may be helpful to see someone for help in managing the feelings you’re having. You wouldn’t be alone in the need for extra help; many people are turning to mental health providers to assist in taking care of their mental health.

Community resources include:

- [Behavioral Health Network: The Carson Center \(413-568-1421\) in Westfield;](#)

- [National Suicide Prevention Hotline](#): 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for English, 1-888-628-9454 for Spanish or Lifeline Crisis Chat;
- [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#): 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522; and
- [The Eldercare Locator](#): 1-800-677-1116 – TTY Instructions.
- Child care option input here For information about emergency childcare options please visit https://eeclead.force.com/apex/EEC_ChildCareEmergencyProcedure

The following resources have been made available through OHRIDE:

The Albert and Amelia Interfaith Center

Fr. Warren J. Savage, Campus Clergy and Spiritual Advisors

Director and Catholic Chaplain (413) 572-5567 wsavage@westfield.ma.edu

AllOne Health, Westfield State’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP), offers services and support to employees and their family members in need of guidance. Free confidential telephone or video counseling is available, as well as online courses and a broad a range of self-assessment tools to guide you to healthy learning-and-decision making. If you need to speak with a counselor, or have questions about the program, call the EAP at 800-451-1834, or visit its website at allonehealth.com.

Mass4You, the State Employee Assistance Program provided by the Group Insurance Commission (GIC), is a friendly, confidential service that provides a range of resources for any life situation. Need a rental car? Meals delivered to your home? Mass4You will search and verify services to help you and your family, and will provide support when times are tough. For information and assistance, call 1-844-263-1982, or visit liveandworkwell.com and use the access code [mass4you](#).

[Training for COVID-19 Protocol](#)

Westfield State will continue to offer training to its faculty and staff about hygiene protocols. The training for faculty and staff will continue to be administered through OHRIDE, and the Division of Student Affairs will continue to administer the appropriate training for students. Supervisors are expected to continually remind employees of safety precautions, hygiene protocols, and other measures aimed at reducing virus transmission.

Campus training will include:

- Return to work training;
- Supervisory responsibility around COVID-19 policy and procedures;
- Self-screening at home, including temperature-and-symptom checks;
- Importance of not coming to work if experiencing Covid-19 symptoms
- When to seek medical attention if symptoms become severe; and
- Which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting and suffering from a severe case of the virus.

Supervisors who conduct training should know that the training does not need to include in-person training. Training can be done through virtual means, or providing this document for discussion with teams. Departments may request a representative from OHRIDE to join their department meeting to discuss/clarify specific health and safety or workplace/personnel matters.

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE

Continued Personal Safety Practices

Handwashing: Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching your face. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and wash your hands after touching your face.

Facemasks: As of May 29, 2021, Governor Baker has rescinded the April 30, 2021 facemask order and has replaced it with the following; with the exception of remaining face covering requirements for public and private transportation systems and facilities housing vulnerable populations, all industry restrictions in the Commonwealth of MA, requiring face coverings, have been lifted. **Non-vaccinated individuals are advised to continue wearing face masks and to continue distancing in most settings.** The advisory also includes that fully vaccinated individuals no longer need to wear a face covering or social distance indoors or outdoors.

The university is adapting to the changes in the Governor's orders. This will allow for fully vaccinated employees, as of May 29, 2021, to no longer be required to wear face coverings indoors or outdoors while on campus grounds and while in campus buildings. Employees who remain unvaccinated will still be required to wear face coverings while on campus grounds and in campus buildings.

Non-vaccinated individuals (due to documented medical or religious exemptions) will be required to wear masks indoors and when they cannot socially distance; participate in weekly asymptomatic COVID-19 testing; and to isolate or quarantine if they test positive for COVID-19 or are identified as a close contact of a positive individual.

Unvaccinated employees are expected to supply their own face coverings, unless the department supplies the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), based on the nature of their work. Cloth face coverings must be worn for only one day at a time, and they must be properly laundered before use again.

Additional Operational Practices at Westfield State

- Dining Services has reopened at limited capacity and will continue to follow all applicable guidelines from federal, state, and local agencies.
 - a. As of June 15, 2021, managers/supervisors/department heads will no longer be required to limit visitors or keep logs of all visitors.
- Managers/supervisors/department heads will no longer be required to limit movement throughout the facility and limit contact between workers, and may resume in-person meetings.
- **Possession of WSU Employee Identification:** All WSU employees are still required to possess their WSU employee ID on-person while on campus.

COVID-19 Operational-Related Purchases/Expenditures

Governor Baker has announced that June 15, 2021 will end the Commonwealth of Massachusetts state of emergency. As of same, WSU will no longer be accepting requests for purchases related to COVID-19. (i.e., cleaning disinfectants, plexiglass partitions). If your department chooses to purchase similar items, these purchases will need to be approved by the department's vice president and funded by the department's operational line items. If partitions are desired, please contact facilities at 413-572-5278 as there may be partitions available that are no longer in use by intended recipients.

Guidance for Specific Workplace Consideration

Public Transportation: Wear a mask before entering any shared transportation vehicle (bus, ride-sharing service, carpool, etc.) and avoid touching surfaces with your hands. Upon disembarking, wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater-than 60% alcohol as soon as possible and before removing your mask.

Meals: Before and after eating, thoroughly wash your hands to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

Resources and References

Employees may visit the CDC, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and/or Westfield State University's websites for more information and updates regarding COVID-19.

The following resources are available to employees to check symptoms:

Buoy Health – Symptom Checker

https://www.buoyhealth.com/symptom-checker/?configuration=ma_%20covid&concern=coronavirus

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

Tips for at Home Quarantine or Self-Monitoring

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/10-tips-for-at-home-quarantine-or-self-monitoring/download>

This document was prepared using resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts state government executive orders, and guidance and memorandums from the Office of the Governor.