



# Return to Campus Frequently Asked Questions

Graduate School of Education  
Rutgers University | New Brunswick  
Version 1.7; March 24, 2022



## **GSE Return to Campus FAQ**

Version 1.7, March 24, 2022

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### **IMPORTANT CHANGE TO UNIVERSITY POLICY:**

#### **Effective immediately:**

- Non-Healthcare Contractors, Event Attendees, Camp Attendees, Guest Lecturers, Program Organizers, Program Participants, and Volunteers are required to have completed a primary series of an FDA-authorized or FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccine as recommended by the CDC or provide proof of a negative COVID-19 PCR or antigen laboratory-processed test within 72 hours of the Event start. Failure to provide the required documentation precludes the individual from participation and they must leave campus.
- Casual Visitors and Guests (individuals attending a business meeting, social interaction, medical appointment, or other short-term and transient visit) are not required to show proof of vaccination.

#### **Effective Monday, April 4:**

- The use of face coverings **in offices, conference rooms, research labs, housing, and public spaces (including the GSE Student Lounge) in buildings will be optional.**
- The use of appropriate face coverings will still be required in all teaching spaces (classrooms, lecture halls, seminar rooms, etc.), teaching labs, computer labs, buses, libraries, and clinical facilities. Additionally, face coverings will continue to be required in student-staff and student-faculty meeting spaces.
- The decision to use face coverings in spaces where they are not mandated is entirely a matter of individual choice. All members of the community should have masks in their possession at all times on campus.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

Consistent with the guidelines established by the University's, "[Guide to Returning to Rutgers](#)" the Graduate School of Education (GSE) has organized a working group comprised of faculty and staff members to create an FAQ Document.

As part of our continued efforts to support the health and safety of our university community, and as an important tool in fully repopulating our campuses in the coming months, the [telecommuting policy](#) relaxation has been extended through June 30, 2022. This extension will allow for a Return to Rutgers planning process that provides unit heads sufficient flexibility to meet the business needs of their departments while supporting the safety of our campus community.

Accordingly, the GSE is committed to having all GSE offices open five days a week and to having our employees work with their supervisors to continue to work in their respective buildings 2-3 days per week.

In order to comply with federal Executive Order 14042, Rutgers requires all employees, both faculty and staff, to provide proof of vaccination and booster (if eligible). The federal executive order allows for medical and religious exemptions. Employees must upload proof of vaccination and booster as soon as eligible to the faculty/staff COVID-19 vaccination portal. A NetID and password are required. New employees must provide proof of vaccination and booster (if eligible) prior to their start date.

The GSE Return to Campus FAQ is a "living" document which was last updated on March 24, 2022. The document is intended to be a supplement to [the guiding document](#). We have identified frequently asked questions for our GSE community and provided specific answers where appropriate. This document will continue to be updated and shared as needed.

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### *Working Group Committee Members*

**Co-Chairs:** Robert Allison and Tiffany Mayers

**Members:** Vivian Allen, Wanda J. Blanchett, Louise Hornecker, Carrie Lobman, Jeanette McCreary, Beth Rubin, Nicole Symonds, Melissa Thomas, and Matthew Winkler.

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## Scheduling

In response to President Holloway's January 2021 directive that we begin repopulating the campuses, the GSE instituted a plan requiring staff to return to campus 2-3 days per week beginning in July 2021. This has been achieved with the aid of the [University's telecommuting policy](#), which is currently scheduled to expire on June 30, 2022. Supervisors are asked weekly to confirm and report their staff schedules so that we can monitor capacity in our buildings and ensure equitable compliance. We have also given supervisors significant latitude in creating their schedules to accommodate staff and unit needs.

Accordingly, we are committed to having all GSE offices open five days a week and to having our employees work with their supervisors to continue to work in their respective buildings 2-3 days per week.

### *How can I change my scheduled days in the office?*

You have full flexibility to change your days in the office with approval from your supervisor. Please notify Bob Allison and Melissa Thomas via email when the change is approved.

### *I am using Paid Time Off (PTO) on my scheduled day to be in the office.*

### *Do I need to come into the office on another day during that week?*

No.

### *My child's school is closed. What do I do?*

The Expansion of Permissible Use of Accrued Paid Sick Time, which allowed employees to use their accrued paid sick time when unable to work for reasons related to COVID-19 (self-quarantine, school closure, place of child-care closure, or lack of availability of child-care), expired on February 28, 2022.

Given that the telecommuting policy accommodation remains in effect until June 30, 2022, UHR has encouraged department heads to remain flexible with regard to telecommuting and other flexible work arrangements where feasible. Any potential arrangements should be discussed in advance with GSE Human Resources.

## Health & Wellness

The safety and well-being of our GSE employees is paramount and we have developed our plans accordingly. Rutgers is requiring all employees, both faculty and staff, to provide proof of vaccination and booster as soon as eligible. GSE spaces have been assessed as part of the University's FAST program and recommendations have been implemented. All individuals entering GSE facilities are required to wear face coverings in common areas, which is defined as any non-workstation area of our buildings. Faculty and staff have been provided with cloth face masks and KN95 masks will be made available to all full-and part-time faculty, staff, and instructors as soon as available. We have placed sanitizer dispensers at the ends of all hallways. Faculty and staff have been provided with cloth face masks. Additionally, disposable masks are in classrooms and student lounge.

### *What do I do if I am not feeling well on a day that I am coming to the Campus?*

Staying home while sick, whether from COVID19 or any other illness, is required. The self-screening [My Campus Pass](#) tool is no longer required; it remains available for your use."

### *I tested positive for COVID-19. What should I do next?*

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 should contact Occupational Health at 848-932-8254 directly to report the case and seek guidance.

Employees who test positive for COVID-19, regardless of whether they have symptoms, must not come to campus until cleared by their personal medical provider. Employees who can work remotely, and feel well enough to do so, may, with supervisor approval, work from home while in isolation. Employees who are unable to work remotely must charge sick time or paid time off.

Please note, you are not required to disclose your medical diagnosis to your supervisor.

### *My child's school is closed. What do I do?*

The Expansion of Permissible Use of Accrued Paid Sick Time expired on February 28, 2022. Given that the telecommuting policy accommodation remains in effect until June 30, 2022, UHR has encouraged department heads to remain flexible with regard to telecommuting and other flexible work arrangements where feasible. Please discuss specific arrangements with GSE Human Resources.

### *I was exposed to COVID-19, outside of work. What do I do?*

Fully vaccinated (including booster) individuals who are exposed to a positive case of COVID-19 but remain asymptomatic are not required to quarantine and may continue their regular duties. Unvaccinated individuals who are exposed to a positive case of COVID-19 must quarantine, even if asymptomatic. Note that CDC defines exposure as a minimum of 15 minutes within 6 feet of a person who has COVID-19, without appropriate protection. Please ensure to contact your medical provider for further guidance.

Given that the telecommuting policy accommodation remains in effect until June 30, 2022, UHR has encouraged department heads to remain flexible with regard to telecommuting and other flexible work arrangements where feasible. Any potential arrangements should be discussed in advance with GSE Human Resources.

## Health and Wellness Continued

*I think my colleague at work has COVID-19. How will I be informed if I have been exposed?*

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Diagnosed employees should contact Occupational Health to report their case. The Occupational Health office will then evaluate these individuals and the risk of exposure to others in accordance with the [New Jersey Department of Health \(NJDOH\)](#) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) risk assessment guidelines. As appropriate, Occupational Health will speak to those who are deemed to be close contacts of the individual and potentially at risk. Those who are not contacted will have been deemed not to be at-risk.

*Can an employee be sent home from work if they are showing COVID-19 like symptoms?*

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If an employee is showing flu-like symptoms (e.g., fever above 100.4°F, cough and/or sore throat, body aches, headache, chills) or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath) their supervisor should direct them to leave work.

If an employee refuses to go home, the supervisor may call [Occupational Health \(OH\)](#) and transfer the call to the employee for discussion with a physician or nurse. After a discussion with the employee, OH will advise both employee and the supervisor whether the employee will go home and the expected duration of absence. OH will also provide direction to the employee about when to return to work.

*One of my direct reports has informed me that they were diagnosed with COVID-19. Should I inform my department?*

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No.

If the supervisor needs guidance, they should contact [Rutgers Occupational Health Office](#) and they will provide guidance on the matter.

*Will the work areas of those who were diagnosed be cleaned?*

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If there are locations and areas that require additional cleaning following a report of a positive COVID-19 test, those areas will be addressed by the University's Institutional Planning and Operations and Environmental Health and Safety staff.

*Is COVID-19 testing available on campus?*

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On-campus testing is limited to Rutgers employees who are granted a medical or religious exemption from vaccination and those working in areas of the health system. View up-to-date testing requirements and guidance by visiting the [Rutgers testing strategy](#) webpage.

## Student Instruction

The safety and well-being of our students and GSE employees is paramount to us. As we prepare for a more robust in-person instructional experience in Spring 2022, we will be following the guidance put forth by the University in August 2021, “Navigating Our Classrooms and Student Spaces”.

<https://ipo.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/Navigating-Our-Classrooms-and-Student-Spaces.pdf>

- The Rutgers student vaccination mandate, combined with the use of face coverings indoors and as permitted by NJ Executive Order 242, **allows full occupancy of classrooms**, residence halls, and other areas across campus. Common sense and courtesy should be used when gathering with others, **but social distancing is not required**.
- Face masks are required in all classroom settings. Faculty are expected to communicate applicable safety protocols to students in their courses, including the required use of face coverings. Faculty will remind students to wear face coverings, should such a reminder be needed. If a student declines to wear a face covering after a reminder, the faculty member should ask the student to leave class and then report the event through the Rutgers New Brunswick [Incident Reporting Form](#). Additional information about reporting student concerns can be found [here](#).
- Groupwork is permitted in class without social distancing.
- Students communicating to an instructor they have contracted the virus should be sent home and instructed to contact the Student Health Center immediately:  
<http://health.rutgers.edu/about-us/hours-locations/>
- If you are teaching and have tested positive for COVID-19 you should contact Occupational Health directly to report the case and seek guidance. Their phone number for all campuses is 848-932-8254. You should also notify your department chairperson of the situation.
- We are not required to provide online access to classes for students who are not permitted to attend.
- **Food is not permitted in classrooms.** Subject to rules that may be posted at individual classrooms, beverages may be consumed if face coverings are promptly replaced after taking a drink. There are no stated restrictions on beverages in GSE classrooms.
- There is no requirement for supplemental ventilation systems in classrooms beyond the building infrastructure currently in place.



## HVAC System

### *Is our HVAC system compliant with guidelines?*

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The HVAC systems in the GSE buildings are compliant with all guidelines.

The University's HVAC maintenance professionals and engineers manage and monitor all of our infrastructure and continue to manage, monitor, and adjust our equipment as necessary to ensure proper and healthy operation. All University HVAC systems and buildings have undergone:

- Maintenance to ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and provide appropriate indoor air quality for the occupancy level in each space
- Assessment and, where required, replacement of filters to ensure they are functioning appropriately
- Inspection of filter housings and racks to assure appropriate filter fit and to minimize any air flows around, instead of through, each filter
- Extended operation of systems to enhance air exchanges throughout our buildings
- Maintenance to ensure that restroom and other local exhaust ventilation fans are fully functional and operating at maximum capacity
- Disabling of demand-controlled ventilation (DCV)

Institutional Planning & Operations (IP&O) recently made their maintenance database available to all University community members. To request access, send an email, including your name and NetID, to [servicedesk@ipo.rutgers.edu](mailto:servicedesk@ipo.rutgers.edu). Facilities is also in the process of preparing a brief explanation of how the GSE system functions, what causes malfunctions, and how we can better manage prevention of problems as opposed to responding to them. This will be shared with the community upon receipt.

## **GSE Specific Information & Safety Precautions**

### *If I see someone not wearing a mask in a classroom or other mandated area, what do I do?*

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All members of the GSE community are empowered to ask anyone to wear a mask if they observe someone not in compliance. The expectation of masking is well socialized, and our experience demonstrates that most individuals simply forgot and are not looking to make a political statement when asked to put them on. If you are uncomfortable doing this, you should ask a colleague if they can make the request. An anonymous tip form has also been established and you can report your observations [here](#). Be advised that this form is not monitored in real-time. Also keep in mind that immediately addressing the situation will be more effective than a delayed response.

### *How frequently are the GSE buildings cleaned?*

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Office spaces at the GSE are being cleaned once per week, which includes vacuuming, dusting and trash removal. Open areas in the building, (restrooms, classrooms, elevator, etc.) are cleaned daily and disinfected twice per day. Cleaning supplies are available at copy machines, and we ask that you wipe down the equipment before and after use. Cleaning supplies to wipe down office areas are available upon request, as are individual hand sanitizer dispensers.

### *Can students request dedicated space within the GSE?*

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We cannot assign offices or other private spaces for student use. The building is open. Our students are welcome to use typical spaces such as the student lounge provided, they are compliant with masking requirements.

Additionally, there is a new [Study Space Finder](#) to assist students in finding suitable spaces to work outside of the classroom. This is particularly for those students who may be looking for places to attend their online courses, a quiet place to study, the nearest computer lab, or those who want to find a group study room to work on a team project.

### *Can meetings be scheduled at the GSE?*

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We are currently allowing meetings in GSE spaces provided prior approval has been granted by senior administration. Considerations for approval include the number of attendees, ability of the organizer to enforce requirements, and available space to safely accommodate the request. Requests should be sent to Bob Allison for consideration.

### *I want to bring a visitor to the GSE on official business. What do I need to do?*

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All visitors must be cleared through the University before coming to campus for official business. To do so, please complete the [online visitor log](#). You will be prompted to use log in with your Net ID and password.

### *Suggested courtesies to minimize potential exposure:*

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- Leave copy room doors open to circulate air.
- Wipe down touchpoints (doors, copiers, refrigerators, window locks, following meetings all tables and chairs) when you are done using. Cleaning supplies are available in these areas.
- Wash items in kitchen sink immediately.

## **Recent University Communications**

Updated March 24, 2022

EVP/COO Calcado: [Changes Related to COVID-19 Protocols](#)

President Holloway: [Our Return to Campus this Summer and Fall | Rutgers University](#)

NB Chancellor Molloy and Provost Conway: [Information Regarding Return to Campus for Rutgers–New Brunswick | Rutgers-New Brunswick](#)

EVP/COO Calcado: [Guide to Returning to Rutgers - Update 6/16/21 - University wide COVID-19 Information](#)

Update on Telecommuting Policy Relaxation - <https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu/update-on-telecommuting-policy-relaxation/>

[Return to Rutgers tech checklist](#)

[COVID Testing from State of NJ – December 17, 2021](#)

[Update on COVID-19 Protocols and Change in Operating Status - December 20, 2021](#)

[Significant Changes Related to COVID-19 - January 4, 2022](#)

[Update on Booster Vaccination for Faculty and Staff – January 7, 2022](#)

[Information on Student Required Booster Vaccination – January 10, 2022](#)

[Event Protocol Update - January 13, 2022](#)

[Navigating our Classrooms and Student Spaces – January 21, 2022](#)

[At-home COVID-19 Test Kit Coverage with OptumRx - January 26, 2022](#)

[Return to Campus Update – January 31, 2022](#)

[Expansion of Permissible Use of Accrued Paid Sick Time Extended Through February 28, 2022](#)

[Changes Related to COVID-19 Protocols March 10, 2022](#)