



Return to Campus Frequently Asked Questions

Graduate School of Education
Rutgers University | New Brunswick
Version 1.8; September 30, 2022

GSE Return to Campus FAQ

Version 1.8, September 30, 2022

IMPORTANT CHANGE TO UNIVERSITY POLICY:

Effective October 1, 2022:

- Face coverings will no longer be required in indoor teaching spaces and libraries. Where masks are optional, individuals who prefer to wear them will be encouraged to do so. Face coverings will continue to be required in all clinical settings. The university is prepared to revisit this change in protocol should future public health conditions warrant.
- All students and employees are required to be fully vaccinated, obtain a booster when eligible, and upload records to the university vaccine portal. There is no change in this requirement.
- Covered Individuals with medical or religious waivers must continue to test; however, once-weekly testing with self-administered rapid (antigen) tests is now required instead of twice-weekly PCR testing.
- Students and employees with medical or religious waivers who are not Covered Individuals must continue to test once per week, but now through self-administered rapid (antigen) tests instead of PCR testing.
- Rutgers will transition to self-administered rapid (antigen) tests, which will be available through the established test kit vending machines. Individuals with waivers must upload test results by way of an attestation. All students, irrespective of waiver status, may avail themselves of up to two tests per week and upload their results.
- Events, both indoor and outdoor, will no longer require attendees to show proof of full vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test.
- Vaccine requirements for contractors, volunteers, and others: Existing protocols remain in place. Please review the current university policy that addresses vaccination requirements for volunteers, contractors, guest lecturers, camp participants, and others. The FAQs about the policy are also helpful.
- Existing vaccine protocols for contractors, volunteers, and others remain in place.
- Although the vaccination requirements remain in place, the university will no longer offer COVID-19 vaccinations or boosters on campus, as these are readily available at pharmacies, clinics, and physician offices. Rutgers' COVID-19 vaccination locations will be closed by September 30.

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.

On September 1, 2022, the university implemented the "FlexWork@RU Pilot Program. As part of the implementation, all prior telecommuting and/or flex work arrangements were end-dated. 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 at least 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 September 30, 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.

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.

A special thank you to David Amiel for assisting with the document format and design.

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Scheduling

On September 1, 2022, the university implemented the “FlexWork@RU Pilot Program. As part of the implementation, all prior telecommuting and/or flex work arrangements were end-dated. 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 or at their respective work-site at least 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. Supervisors will 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.

If your child’s school is closed on a day you are scheduled to work and you are unable to make arrangements, you are required to use non-sick day paid time off. This applies to scheduled remote work and at worksite.

Rutgers is pleased to launch a Caregiver Support Pilot Program through Care.com from September 1, 2022, through August 31, 2023. All eligible employees may have a Care.com membership. Care.com offers employees access to the world’s largest network of caregivers to meet all of your unexpected care needs, connecting you with caregivers for children and adults, and giving you the option of using your own personal caregiver if no network caregiver is available. Backup Care is also available when school is closed, your babysitter or adult caregiver is sick, you need to work late, or any other time your regular care isn’t available. To learn more about the services provided, the specifics about this program (including eligibility) and to view the FAQs, visit the [University Human Resources Benefits website](#), where there also will be a link to sign up for a Care.com membership.

Health & Wellness

The safety and well-being of our GSE employees is paramount and we have developed our plans accordingly. Rutgers continues to require all employees, both faculty and staff, to provide proof of vaccination and booster as soon as eligible. The use of face coverings is now optional in all GSE spaces. Faculty and staff have been provided with both cloth and KN95 face coverings and your choice to use them will be fully supported. Sanitizer dispensers remain in place at the ends of all hallways and outside classroom spaces.

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. Paid time off is to be charged if the employee is unable to work or if the department schedule cannot be modified to satisfy the 3-day minimum on-site requirement. 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?

You should contact [OneSource](#) and forward appropriate medical documentation confirming the diagnosis within five (5) business days of your initial absence. You should also let your supervisor know that you will be absent due to illness, but you are not required to disclose your medical diagnosis to your supervisor.

Diagnosed employees are advised to stay home and follow medical direction regarding treatment. Follow the recommendations of the [CDC's Quarantine and Isolation Calculator](#) for COVID infection and exposure.

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 and are physically on campus or in Rutgers facilities should contact Occupational Health directly at 848-932-8254 to report the case and seek guidance.

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.

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

Diagnosed employees should contact Occupational Health to report their case. 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.

Health and Wellness Continued

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

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?

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?

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?

Effective October 1, 2022, the testing strategy at Rutgers is changing:

Covered Individuals with medical or religious waivers must continue to test; however, once-weekly testing with self-administered rapid (antigen) tests is now required instead of twice-weekly PCR testing.

Students and employees with medical or religious waivers who are not Covered Individuals must continue to test once per week, but now through self-administered rapid (antigen) tests instead of PCR testing.

Rutgers will transition to self-administered rapid (antigen) tests, which will be available through the established test kit vending machines. Individuals with waivers must upload test results by way of an attestation. All students, irrespective of waiver status, may avail themselves of up to two tests per week and upload their results.

Although the vaccination requirements remain in place, the university will no longer offer COVID-19 vaccinations or boosters on campus, as these are readily available at pharmacies, clinics, and physician offices. Rutgers' COVID-19 vaccination locations will be closed by September 30.

Student Instruction

The safety and well-being of our students and GSE employees is paramount to us. We will follow the revised guidance put forth by the University on September 26, 2022.

<https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu/important-updates-and-changes-to-rutgers-covid-19-protocols>

- Effective October 1, 2022 face coverings are optional in all indoor teaching spaces and libraries. Individuals who prefer to wear them are encouraged to do so and will be supported.
- 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. 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?

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. 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

How frequently are the GSE buildings cleaned?

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?

We will work with the Administrative Services Center and department chairs on requests for office space for students, with final decisions made by the Dean's Office. The building is open. Our students are welcome to use typical spaces such as the student lounge.

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?

Meetings are being scheduled in GSE spaces with prior approval. Please engage the Administrative Services Center with requests.

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

Casual visitors and guests are not required to provide vaccination documentation or proof of negative test results.

Suggested courtesies to minimize potential exposure:

- 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 September 30, 2022

EVP/COO Calcado: [Important Updates and Changes to Rutgers' COVID-19 Protocols](#)

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](#)