

WIDENER UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN

Introduction

On June 3, 2020, Governor Wolf published “[Preliminary Guidance for Resuming In-Person Instruction at Postsecondary Education Institutions and Adult Education Programs](#).” This guidance requires Pennsylvania postsecondary education institutions to publish a “Health and Safety Plan” that must be shared with students, faculty, and staff. The following elements are required in the plan:

- A strategy on how the institution will coordinate with local public health officials, or the equivalent of;
- A strategy to safely resume in-person instruction;
- A strategy to monitor health conditions on its campus community;
- A strategy to mitigate and contain the spread of the virus on campus, and to inform the DOH in the event that transmission occurs at the institution; and
- A strategy to communicate accurate and timely information to students, faculty, staff, and the communities it serves.

In addition to this document, you are encouraged to read more about Widener University’s response to COVID-19 at <https://www.widener.edu/coronavirus>. This website is updated regularly.

Coordinating with Local Public Health Officials

Widener University will coordinate and communicate appropriate information with the Chester County Health Department (CCHD) in regards to COVID-19 cases within the university community. The CCHD will follow up with all positive patients to conduct a disease investigation and conduct contact tracing.

Additional information and resources are available on the following websites:

Chester County Health Department - www.chesco.org/coronavirus

The Centers for Disease Control - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/index.html>

Restore Chester County - <https://restorechestercounty.org/Business-Schools.cfm>

Safely Resuming In-Person Instruction and the Return to Campus

Our dedicated faculty will offer a high-quality and flexible blend of in-person, hybrid, and online classes that best meet our students' needs and emphasize the powerful mentoring and personalized instruction that distinguishes a Widener education. Students may choose to participate virtually in a class that is offered in person. We are planning for a phased return to campus that prioritizes our community's well-being, as well as our students' learning and

academic success. Our flexible approach will also allow every student to continue the semester uninterrupted, even if there is a pandemic resurgence.

The university's Crisis Management Team and multiple task forces have worked diligently to develop plans for a safe return, guided by public health data, recommendations from local, state, and federal agencies, and a dedication to providing all graduate and undergraduate students the best possible learning experiences. With the additional expert guidance of an industrial hygienist, we are reconfiguring spaces and how we will maneuver them as part of a safe return to campus.

For all students, faculty, and staff, our return to campus in August will include:

- Masks covering the nose and mouth will be required (ADA exceptions will be reviewed as needed).
- Education about how to protect one's own and others' health on campus, reinforced by campus signage and clear community expectations.
- Enhanced disinfecting of classrooms and buildings that exceeds CDC requirements for living, learning, and working.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in academic and administrative buildings, as well as hand sanitizer refill stations in key locations to refill personal sanitizer bottles.
- Social distancing will be required in all campus spaces (exceptions must be approved for select lab, clinical or similar experiences).
- Occupancy limits in classrooms and other spaces.
- Everyone living on or coming to campus will participate in daily health self-assessments using a screening tool provided by the university, and will be required to report any COVID-19 symptoms.
- Contact tracing will be conducted with the assistance of public health officials.
- Anyone experiencing symptoms, anyone testing positive for COVID-19, or anyone who has been in close contact (within 6 feet for more than for 10 minutes) with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 will follow mandated quarantine requirements.
- All in-person instruction will conclude on Friday, November 20, 2020 and classes will shift entirely online in order to minimize exposure to the virus at a time when health experts expect a surge. All classes and exams will conclude online.

Monitoring Health Conditions in our Campus Community

- Everyone coming to campus will participate in daily health self-assessments using a screening tool provided by the university, and will be required to report any COVID-19 symptoms.
- Contact tracing will be conducted with the assistance of public health officials.
- Anyone experiencing symptoms, anyone testing positive for COVID-19, or anyone who has been in close contact (within 6 feet for more than for 10 minutes) with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 will follow mandated quarantine requirements.

- Testing will be provided for anyone who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or has been in close contact with a person who has tested positive. Anyone who is not symptomatic but wants to be tested will be directed to available services.
- Dedicated residence hall space will be reserved for student quarantine, as needed.

Mitigating and Containing the Spread of COVID-19 on Campus

- Should there be a case of COVID-19 in our campus community, the Director of Student Health Services will notify the Chester County Health Department, which is also serving as the Health Department for Delaware County (the county in which the university is located).
- At a minimum, the university will take the following actions:
 - Installation of additional hand sanitizing stations.
 - Sanitizing wipes or cleaner available in all buildings and classrooms.
 - Adjust classrooms as necessary to promote social distancing.
 - Reducing touchpoints (for example, propping interior doors so that they do not need to be touched as frequently)
 - Replacing hand air dryers with paper towel dispensers
 - Investing in Oasis Quasar technology to automatically disinfect water dispensers on bottle filling stations
 - Installing plexiglass shields in classrooms where feasible and appropriate
 - Upgrade our eligible HVAC systems to MERV 13 filters to capture airborne virus particles.
 - Cleaning all mechanical systems including filters and coils.
 - Increasing air exchanges to increase fresh air in buildings.
 - Installation of air purifiers in spaces that require them.
 - Disinfection of classrooms with a viricide at least daily.
 - Reducing housing occupancy levels

Communicating Accurate and Timely Information

Widener University will continue to communicate accurate and timely information regarding our plans for in-person instruction, operations, services, and activities to our students, faculty, staff, and the communities we serve. This information will be shared through the following channels:

- The university's Coronavirus web page at <https://www.widener.edu/coronavirus>, which includes Widener's latest responses to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Widener University's social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, including appropriate responses to comments and direct messages from all audiences;
- Virtual town hall meetings for Widener faculty and staff;

- And email communications in the form of messages and e-newsletters from administration to internal and external audiences.

Conclusion

At all times, Widener University will follow the directives of the CDC and the Pennsylvania Governor and Pennsylvania Department of Health.

We remind you that good hand hygiene, sanitation, and face coverings are essential to helping to stop the spread of the virus.

Additional resources related to COVID-19 and Higher Education include:

- [CDC Guidance for Colleges, Universities, and Higher Learning](#)
- [CDC Guidance on How to Protect Yourself and Others](#)
- [Pennsylvania Department of Health Website on COVID-19](#)

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