

PIU

# RETURN TO WORK GUIDE





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It will be updated as needed.

<b>Guiding Principles .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Return to the Workplace .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Workplace Expectations and Guidelines .....	2
Symptom-monitoring Requirement .....	2
Phased Staffing .....	3
Staffing Options .....	4
<b>Health and Safety Guidelines .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Face Masks/ Cloth Face Coverings .....	5
Physical Distancing .....	6
Handwashing .....	6
Gloves .....	6
Goggles/Face Shields .....	7
Personal Disinfection .....	7
Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene .....	7
<b>Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Public Transportation .....	8
On-campus Transportation .....	8
Working at PLU .....	8
Using Restrooms .....	8
Using Elevators .....	8
Meetings and Breaks .....	8
Meals .....	8
Travel .....	9
<b>Mental and Emotional Well-being .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Employee Assistance Program .....	9
<b>Enter/Exit Control .....</b>	<b>10</b>





Pacific Lutheran University's policies and protocols for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic are rooted in our care for the safety and well-being of our students and faculty, of our staff, and of the public with whom we interact. These policies and protocols are designed with our vulnerable community members foremost in mind, understanding that our care for them is core to our care for the community.

The primary goals for PLU's response to the COVID-19 pandemic are to protect public health and continue the institution's mission to educate students for lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership, and care— for other people, for their communities, and for the Earth.

PLU's plans will also be aligned and consistent with the local orders and ordinances of Pierce County, as well as with the State of Washington's Phased Reopening Model, "[Safe Start Washington](#)." PLU's plans will also follow recommendations from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, federal government (Opening Guidelines), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the PLU Emergency Coordination Team.

Our knowledge and understanding of the COVID-19 virus continues to evolve, and our policies and plans will be updated as more information becomes available. Refer to the latest updates to the [PLU Community](#) section of the [PLU Coronavirus web page](#) to stay up to date on announcements and find answers to frequently asked questions.





## Workplace Expectations and Guidelines

All faculty and staff are expected to be respectful and fully comply with the policies, protocols and guidelines outlined in this document as part of PLU's Workplace Expectations and Guidelines. Faculty and staff are all responsible for ensuring a safe and healthy environment on campus. Failure to do so may result in corrective action.

Teri Phillips, Chief Operating Officer, has been designated as the COVID-19 Site Supervisor for PLU. This role works in close coordination with the university's Recovery Planning Team and the Director of the Health Center to monitor the health of employees and students and enforce compliance with COVID-19 safety recommendations. All concerns and complaints regarding COVID-19 safety and public health related issues should be directed to the COVID-19 Site Supervisor.

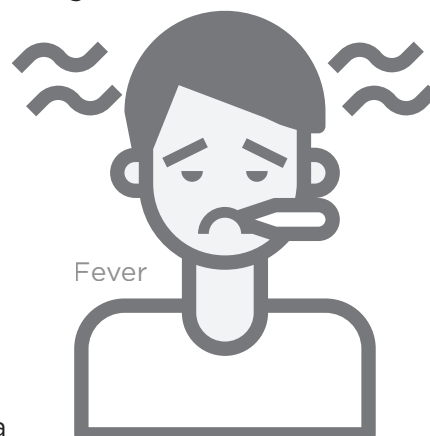
A report form will be created to give the PLU community a central location to direct public health-related concerns.

## Symptom-monitoring Requirement

Faculty and staff who have been instructed to return to the workplace will be required to complete a daily health attestation before reporting to work. Further guidance about the use of this attestation will be forthcoming. Direct your questions and public-health concerns to the Ask a Question form on the PLU Coronavirus Update web site. You must be free of ANY symptoms potentially related to COVID-19, or have had evaluation and clearance by a qualified healthcare provider stating that you are eligible to report to return to work on-campus..

At this time, relevant symptoms include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- And at least two of these symptoms:
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Runny nose or new sinus congestion
  - Muscle pain or aches
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Fatigue
  - New GI symptoms, e.g., loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea
  - New loss of taste or smell
- Known close contact with a person who has exhibited any of the symptoms listed above



If you have any symptoms, which can be related to COVID-19, and cannot attribute them to another condition, allergies, or a new physical activity, you must notify your supervisor, and call your healthcare provider for assessment of symptoms and possible COVID-19 testing.

According to the CDC, individuals with certain conditions may have a higher risk for COVID-19 infection. Relevant conditions may include:

- Age (65 years and older)
- HIV
- Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
- Chronic lung disease
- Diabetes
- Serious heart conditions
- Chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis
- Severe obesity
- Being immunocompromised

Faculty and staff members who have been instructed to return to work on-site and have concerns about doing so due to a medical condition that places them in a higher-risk group, as well as those who are pregnant and those who wish to seek Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Reasonable Accommodations related to Returning to the Workplace, should contact their supervisor and/or Human Resources to arrange appropriate actions based on their individual situation. In accordance with ADA protections, employees are not required to disclose if they are in a high-risk category based upon a pre-existing medical disability.

## Phased Staffing

PLU will phase in a return of faculty and staff over time in a coordinated process to ensure appropriate physical distancing, the continued availability of PPE (personal protective equipment) and disinfection supplies, and proper testing capabilities for COVID-19.

PLU will assess expanded staffing based on mission-critical operations, the ability to control and manage specific work environments, and the need to access on-site resources. These decisions, once approved, will be communicated through your respective immediate supervisor, department head/chair, and/or vice president or provost.

The need to reduce the number people population (density) on-campus to meet physical-distancing requirements will continue for some time in accordance with the State of Washington's phased approach to reopening. Support units that can effectively continue to work remotely will likely continue to do so until restrictions are eased for larger gatherings.

Expanded staffing will be tightly controlled and coordinated to mitigate potential risks and ensure the safety of faculty and staff, as well as of the communities we serve. No team or department should increase staffing levels beyond current needs to support critical on-site operations without approval from your respective immediate supervisor, department head/chair, and/or vice president or provost. Once decisions to expand on-site staffing in certain areas have been made, staff should follow the policies and protocols detailed in this guide for returning to work on-campus.



As staffing on-site increases and operations expand, officials will closely monitor and assess the potential spread of the virus, as well as existing policies and procedures to mitigate it. Testing will be a critical part of assessing the impact of increased staffing. If localized outbreaks emerge, tighter restrictions and reduced staffing may need to be re-implemented.

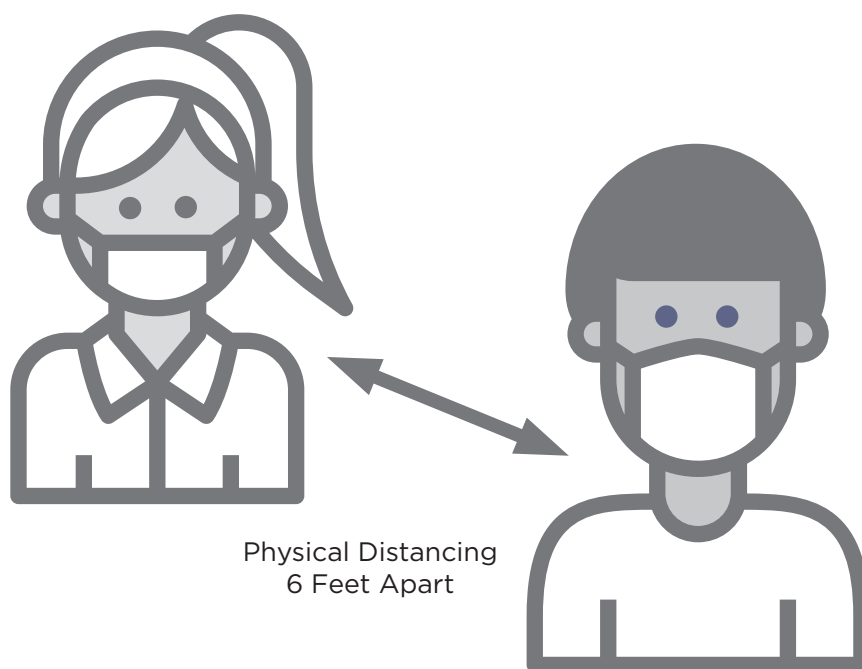
## Staffing Options

Once faculty and staff members have been instructed to return to work on-site, there are several options that departments should consider to maintain required physical-distancing measures and reduce population density within buildings and work spaces.

**Remote Work:** Those who can work remotely to fulfill some or all of their work responsibilities may continue to do so to reduce the number of individuals on-campus and combat the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus. These arrangements, which should be approved by the immediate supervisor, can be done on a full or partial day/week schedule, as appropriate.

**Alternating Days or Weeks:** In order to limit the number of individuals and interactions among those on-campus, departments may schedule partial staffing on alternating days or weeks. Such schedules will help enable physical distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces.

**Staggered Reporting/Departing:** The beginning and end of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting and departure times by at least 30 minutes will reduce traffic in common areas to help meet physical-distancing requirements. (See Enter/Exit Controls for further details.)









## Face Masks/Cloth Face Coverings

Beginning June 8, most employees will be required to wear a cloth face covering or face mask, except when working alone in an office, in a vehicle, or at a job site. (Exceptions include individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, or who communicate with someone who relies on language cues such as facial markers and expressions and mouth movements as part of communication.) Recent research has shown that the appropriate use of face coverings significantly minimizes the transmission of the virus to others near you. It's possible to spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick, so the mask or cloth face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing.

You may wear a disposable mask or cloth face covering. Disposable masks may only be worn for one day and then must be placed in the trash. Cloth face coverings must only be worn for one day at a time, and must be properly laundered before reuse. PLU will provide two cloth face masks per individual faculty and staff member. (You may also provide your own face coverings.) You are responsible for maintaining and laundering your face coverings and bringing them to work.. Having a week's supply of cloth face coverings can help reduce the need for daily laundering.

See further details regarding mask use and care below:

Type and Intended Use of Face Coverings/Masks				
Type	Cloth Face Covering	Disposable Mask	Medical-Grade Surgical Mask	N95 Respirator
				
Description	Home-made or commercially manufactured face coverings that are washable and help contain wearer's respiratory emissions	Commercially manufactured masks that help contain wearer's respiratory emissions	FDA-approved masks that protect the wearer from large droplets and splashes; helps contain wearer's respiratory emissions	Provides effective respiratory protection from airborne particles and aerosols; helps contain wearer's respiratory emissions
Intended use	Required for campus community use in non-healthcare settings (office spaces, general research/work settings, shops, community areas) where six-feet physical distancing cannot be consistently maintained. Must be replaced daily. (While likely necessary for ingress and egress, not required when working alone in an office.)		These masks are reserved for healthcare workers and other approved areas with task-specific hazards.	

## Use and Care of Face Coverings

Putting on and wearing the face covering/mask:

- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to handling the face covering/disposable mask.
- Ensure the face-covering/disposable mask fits over the nose and under the chin.
- Situate the face-covering/disposable mask properly, with nose wire snug against the nose (where applicable).
- Tie straps behind the head and neck or loop around the ears.
- Throughout the process, avoid touching the front of the face covering/mask.



## Taking Off the Face Covering/Mask:

- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth when removing the face covering/disposable mask.
- When taking off the face covering/disposable mask, loop your finger into the strap and pull the strap away from the ear, or untie the straps.
- If you plan to reuse the mask during your shift, place it in a bag without touching the front surface of the mask.
- Wash hands immediately after removing and prior to replacing a previously used mask.

## Care, Storage, and Laundering of Face Masks

- Keep face coverings/masks stored in a paper or plastic bag when not in use. Be sure to have a bag on hand if you expect to have to remove and replace your mask (for meals, for example).
- Cloth face coverings may not be used more than one day at a time, and must be washed after use. Cloth face coverings should be properly laundered with regular clothing detergent before first use, and after each shift. Cloth face coverings should be replaced immediately if soiled, damaged (e.g., ripped or punctured), or visibly contaminated.
- Disposable masks must not be used for more than one day, and should be placed in the trash after your shift or immediately if it is soiled, damaged (e.g., stretched ear loops, torn or punctured material), or visibly contaminated.
- Consider laundering cloth face masks by hand, with soap and water, and hang to dry. This will help to make a fresh mask available on a daily basis.

## Physical Distancing

Keeping space between yourself and others is one of the best tools we have to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus and to slow its spread. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick (or can spread it without ever feeling sick), it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you are experiencing no symptoms. Physical distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk of getting very sick. Staff at work on-site should follow these physical-distancing practices:

- Stay at least six feet (about two arm lengths) away from other people at all times.
- Do not gather in groups.
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.
- Follow physical-distancing directions provided by floor markers and directional and other signs in buildings and outdoor spaces.



## 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, removing a mask, or touching your face. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, over 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. Wearing a face mask can help remind you to avoid touching your face.



## Gloves

Healthcare workers, those providing first aid, dining workers, and others in higher-risk tasks should use gloves as part of their PPE (personal protective equipment). That said, according to the CDC, gloves are not necessary for general use and do not replace good hand hygiene. Washing your hands often is considered the best practice for sanitation during common everyday tasks.

## Goggles/Face Shields

Staff and faculty do not need to wear goggles or face shields as part of their general activity on-campus. Good hand hygiene and avoiding touching your face are generally sufficient practices for non-healthcare environments.

## Personal Disinfection

While custodial crews will continue to clean common spaces, offices, and other work areas based on CDC guidelines, additional care should be taken by individuals at their work sites to wipe down commonly used surfaces. Before starting work, and before you leave any room in which you have been working, you must disinfect all work areas with an EPA-registered disinfectant solution. These areas include any shared-space location or equipment (e.g., coffee makers, desks and tables, light switches, door knobs, etc.). Cleaning stations will be provided for classrooms, office suites, and some common areas.



## Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene

If you are in a private setting and do not have your cloth face covering on, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or use the inside of your elbow, when you cough or sneeze. Then throw used tissues in the trash, and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. If you cough or sneeze into your face mask, change into a fresh mask as soon as possible.

## Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios

### Public Transportation

If you take public transportation, maintain six feet of distance from others while waiting for your bus. Wear a mask before boarding the bus, and avoid touching surfaces with your hands. Upon disembarking, wash your hands or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol as soon as possible, and before removing your mask.

### On-campus Transportation

Limit occupants of carts, trucks, and other PLU vehicles to one person (the driver) per vehicle. To maintain physical-distancing efforts and preserve the ability to serve essential functions, Campus Safety courtesy shuttle service has been discontinued, with service expected to resume in Fall 2020. Walking escorts will continue to be available 24/7, while observing physical distancing for those with safety concerns. Mobility Escort requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis for those physically unable to navigate the campus.

### Working at PLU

If you work in an open environment, be sure to maintain at least six feet of distance from coworkers. If possible, have at least one workspace separating you from your next coworker. You must wear a face mask or face covering at all times while in a shared workspace/room.

Departments should assess open work environments and meeting rooms to institute measures to physically separate and increase distance between employees, coworkers, and customers, such as:

- Placing visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, or signs to indicate to customers where they should stand while waiting in line.
- Placing one-way directional signage for large, open workspaces with multiple through-ways, to increase distance between employees moving through the space
- Marketing and Communication is developing template signage and branded visual cues, more information to come.
- Considering designating specific stairways for up or down traffic, if building space allows.



Wear a Mask

No more than one person should be in the same area unless the required six feet of distancing can be consistently maintained. If more than one person is in a room, masks/face coverings should be worn at all times. Masks/face coverings must be worn by any staff in a reception/receiving area. Masks/face coverings must be used inside any PLU facility where others are present, including in narrow hallways where others travel, restrooms, break rooms, conference rooms, and other meeting locations.

### Using Restrooms

Use of restrooms should be limited based on restroom size whenever possible, to ensure at least six feet of distance between individuals. Because many PLU restrooms do not allow for sufficient personal distancing, best efforts should be made to avoid sharing sinks and waiting in line inside the restroom. If necessary, wait outside the restroom until appropriate distancing can be attained. Wash your hands thoroughly before leaving the restroom to reduce the potential for transmission of the virus.

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## Using Elevators

No more than one person may enter an elevator at a time, so please use the stairs whenever possible. If you are using the elevator, wear your mask or face covering and avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers, if possible (use your elbow, for example). Wash your hands or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol as soon as possible upon departing the elevator.

## Meetings

Convening in groups increases the risk of viral transmission. Meetings should be held using the extensive range of available collaboration tools (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet, or telephone.). In-person meetings are limited by the restrictions of local, state, and federal orders. Additionally, once limited meetings are permitted, chairs and tables should be arranged and visual cue marks should be placed in meeting rooms to support physical-distancing practices between attendees. Masks must be worn during in-person meetings once they are allowed.

## Meals and Breaks

Wash your hands thoroughly before and after eating to reduce the potential for transmission of the virus. Supervisors should stagger meal and break times for their staff to discourage staff members from congregating in large groups.

If dining on-campus in a common area, you should wear your mask or face covering until you are ready to eat and then replace it after you are done. On-campus dining establishments must meet requirements to allow at least six feet of distance between customers, including in lines and seating arrangements. Individuals should not sit facing one another. Staff and faculty are encouraged to take food back to their office areas or eat outside, if possible. Due to potential limits on capacity, dine-in space in our campus restaurants might be limited and/or unavailable. For specific information about current options offered by Dining Services, please check their [COVID-19-specific web page](#).

If you are eating in your work environment (break room, shared office, etc.), maintain six feet of distance between yourself and others. Individuals should not sit facing one another. Only remove your mask or face covering in order to eat, then put it back on. Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in employee break rooms to support physical-distancing practices between employees. Wipe down surfaces, including tables, refrigerator handles, and coffee machines, etc. after use in common areas.

## Travel

Under Phase 2: Travel out-of-state for PLU business or sponsored activities is prohibited. This includes student travel, international travel, and travel via airlines. Personal travel or air travel is discouraged. Phase 2 public-health guidance requires that individuals who travel to and from any state that is not contiguous to Washington self-quarantine at their residence for 14 days to become eligible to physically return to campus. Refer to the [Essential Staff Guidelines](#) for information about self-quarantine.

## Mental and Emotional Well-being | Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

PLU offers mental and emotional support programs via the First Choice Health Employee Assistance Program. More information and access to this service can be found on the [PLU Human Resources main page](#).





Entry to buildings will be regulated and monitored. Your PLU ID card is required for entry to all buildings with swipe access. Do not hold or prop open exterior doors for any other person. Departments should identify usable building access points and coordinate staff arrival and departure times to reduce congestion during typical “rush hours” of the business day. Staff arrivals and departures should be scheduled in 30-minute increments to reduce personal interactions at building access points, hallways, stairs/elevators, etc. whenever possible.

Once you have been instructed to return to the workplace, you should report to work or depart work through the designated building access and at the designated time, to limit the number of people entering and exiting a building at any one time. You must follow all posted entry/exit and traffic-flow requirements specific to the building.

Visitors, trainees, guests, and pets are not allowed on worksites during this time. Authorized visitors should be limited, but include delivery personnel and service providers. They must abide by current state and local guidelines for physical distancing, face masks, etc. as well as PLU policies. In accordance with Governor Inslee’s “Safe Start” Plan, departments are responsible for maintaining a log of all visitors to their area. The log must include the name, phone number, and email address of each visitor and must be maintained on file for at least four weeks. Violation of these guidelines may result in the immediate revocation of building-access privileges, as well as corrective action.

## Stay safe, PLU!

Dear PLU Faculty and Staff,

I am so proud of PLU. In the spring, we faced a health threat unlike any other in our lifetime. We acted quickly, and together our community worked to slow the spread of the virus and look after each other.

As we return to campus, we will not be the same. And we will act with prudence to bring the lessons we learned from Spring 2020 forward to continue to protect our community in new seasons.

How? By maintaining effective containment strategies; by activating and enhancing our personal efforts to sanitize and keep our spaces clean; by wearing our masks and face coverings everyday; by readying our highly trafficked areas, and ensuring they have supplies and protocols in place; and by developing new strategies as we learn more over time.

All of us have a responsibility to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 by following medical advice and taking the simple, practical steps recommended by health authorities. This pandemic drives home the essential interconnectedness of our human family and our Lute community.

We will get through this, together.

Teri Phillips  
Chief Operating Officer  
COVID-19 Site Supervisor for PLU