Carleton College is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for student researchers, faculty, and staff. To that end, the college has developed the following Best Practices Guide for in-person student researchers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a parallel [Best Practices document for employees that applies to faculty and staff](https://d31kydh6n6r5j5.cloudfront.net/uploads/sites/321/2020/05/COVID_19_Best_Practices_Guide.pdf). Only students who are approved to live on campus may do in-person work on campus. This guide is meant to help students transition to in-person work on campus, while being mindful of health and safety. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 on campus, and that requires full cooperation among our community. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of our community. Even if you are not concerned about your own health, you must follow these expectations to protect the health and safety of other students, faculty, and staff on campus.

This best practice guide follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines and federal OSHA standards related to COVID-19 and addresses:

* [Screening Student Researchers Exhibiting Signs & Symptoms of COVID-19](#_bookmark0)
* [Facilities](#_bookmark1) Access, Use, and Cleaning
* [Student Responsibilities for Handwashing and Disinfecting](#_bookmark2)
* [Respiratory Etiquette: Cover Your Cough or Sneeze](#_bookmark3)
* [Social (Physical) Distancing](#_bookmark4)
* [Communications and Training](#_bookmark5)

# SCREENING STUDENT RESEARCHERS FOR SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

Student researchers should [self-monitor](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Student researchers must stay in their rooms and report their absence by contacting their supervisor if they do not feel healthy. Any student researcher experiencing symptoms, or who falls in any of the following categories, must either submit a [Community Concern Form](https://carleton-advocate.symplicity.com/public_report/index.php/pid697558) or call security at 507-222-4444. After reporting their absence as described above, students will be contacted by professional staff for next steps.

* Student has been or is scheduled to be tested for COVID-19
* Student was notified by local or state department of health of a known or potential exposure to COVID-19
* Student or someone in their close contacts had direct contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19

Accommodations for students with underlying medical conditions are available. To request an accommodation, students should contact Disability Services.

# FACILITIES ACCESS, USE, AND CLEANING

Only students who are authorized to do research on campus, under the supervision of a faculty member, are allowed access to research spaces and buildings that otherwise remain locked to most students living on campus. **All in-person research activities should take place between 8 AM and 6 PM on weekdays**. Any work intended to take place outside of those hours must be approved in advance by Gretchen Hofmeister, Director of Undergraduate Research. Student researchers are not permitted to provide building, room, or lab access to other students who are not doing research in that space. Areas that are designated off-limits (with signage, caution tape, or other means) during the summer should not be accessed or used. Furniture will be arranged to support social distancing and should not be rearranged by students or other workers. If students are found in violation of this policy, they will be told to comply and given a warning. An additional violation will result in denial of access to work spaces and public spaces on campus.

Priority spaces and objects have been identified by custodial staff to be cleaned and disinfected more frequently due to their location in high-traffic areas. Custodial staff will provide daily cleaning and disinfecting services to high-touch objects such as door handles, elevator panels, and railings; and common areas in the work environment including restrooms, break rooms, lounges, kitchens, utility rooms, laundry rooms, learning spaces, and meeting rooms. Enhanced disinfection procedures will be followed, should a college employee, student, or visitor be diagnosed with COVID-19.

# STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HANDWASHING & DISINFECTING

All students are responsible for taking the necessary steps to ensure the safety of themselves and others to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. They are instructed, via [posters](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/handhygiene/wash/dontforget.pdf) hung in the restrooms throughout campus, to frequently wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Students are also reminded, via the College’s COVID-19 website, of [the importance of handwashing](https://youtu.be/FAnsnvpszYw), especially at the beginning and end of their work periods, prior to any mealtimes, after using the toilet, and before/after removing gloves. The College maintains restrooms in all campus facilities, making it convenient for individuals to wash their hands. When available, dispensers containing hand sanitizer with greater than 60% alcohol are provided throughout campus to be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, as long as hands are not visibly soiled. Students are encouraged to avoid unnecessary touching of objects such as door handles, counter tops, vending machine buttons, etc., and to avoid touching their mouth, nose, and eyes with their hands.

Students should clean/disinfect their personal spaces and work areas including phones, keyboards, touch screens, controls, copy machines, equipment, tools, vehicles and machinery, classroom supplies, etc. regularly. For each building, Custodial Services has set up supply stations which contain “cleaning kits” (with appropriate instructions and PPE) for use by employees. Questions regarding COVID-19 PPE should be directed to your supervisor or Environmental Health and Safety (EHS).

# RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE: COVER YOUR COUGH OR SNEEZE

Students are instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and should dispose of tissues in the trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. The MDH [“Cover Your Cough” posters](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/cyc/cycphceng.pdf) are displayed prominently across campus to remind everyone of the importance of this behavior.

# SOCIAL (PHYSICAL) DISTANCING

Physical distancing (minimum of six feet) must be maintained whenever possible in the workplace through engineering and administrative controls. The following controls will be reassessed, modified, and expanded as needed.

# Physical Methods:

* Masks will be required in any space in which more than one person is working. All summer research student, faculty, and staff personnel will be issued two cloth masks that will be provided by the Undergraduate Research Office. Follow these [tips on wearing and cleaning masks](https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/tips-on-how-to-wear-and-care-for-your-cloth-mask/) from the Mayo Clinic. Beyond these masks, each department will be responsible for the purchase of all other PPE as usual.
* Some positions or activities may require the use of additional PPE, including safety glasses or goggles, face shields, lab coats, and/or gloves.
* Place marks on the floor, spaced six feet apart, to indicate proper distance for individuals who may need to wait in a line.
* Limit identification card building access to 8 AM – 6 PM on weekdays.
* If allowed by fire code and security, prop doors open to decrease the touching of door handles.

# Behavioral Methods:

* Maintain six feet of distance between students:
	+ Do not gather in groups.
	+ Do not share elevator rides and avoid sharing other small or poorly ventilated spaces.
	+ Increase distances between desks and workstations if necessary.
	+ Reduce the number of students in an office or lab if proper spacing is not feasible.
	+ If a task requires two or more people working in close proximity with each other, then your supervisor will provide additional guidance in the form of a task-specific SOP, which may include additional physical barriers or PPE.
* Avoid face-to-face meetings. If a face-to-face meeting is unavoidable:
	+ Hold the meeting in a large space or meeting room to ensure that participants remain at least six feet from each other.
	+ Limit the number of attendees to 6 or fewer individuals.
	+ Conclude the meeting in the shortest amount of time possible.
* Restrict movement between departments and/or functions.
* Do not gather during breaks or lunch.
	+ Eat outside, at your desk, or away from others.
	+ Strive to bring meals that do not require the use of shared microwaves or refrigerators.
	+ A maximum of two persons may be in a break room at one time while being mindful of social distancing.
	+ Disinfect shared surfaces and wash hands after eating.
* College vehicle use:
	+ Only one occupant is allowed at a time (exception: Security Services transports).
	+ The user of a shared-use vehicle must disinfect the vehicle when finished using the vehicle.

# COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAINING

This COVID-19 Best Practices Guide for On-Campus Research is available on the Undergraduate Research website and will be communicated via email to students as they begin work on campus. Additional training materials, including project-specific COVID-related SOPs, should be provided by your supervisor and completed on the first day back to working on campus, is. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring the training completion for their student researchers.