SFU Internal COVID 19 Guidance on Safe Work on Campus (SFU Safety Plan)

Simon Fraser University is committed to the responsible resumption of on-campus work activities based on the direction of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), WorkSafeBC and the University’s ability to provide adequate supports, services and supplies in the current environment. This document outlines the principles and directions to be followed to ensure a safe and orderly return to on-campus activities.

Preamble
As of June 1st, 2020, the majority of SFU employees remain working remotely, with the exception of those who have already been working on campus to support essential services and priority on-campus research.

Before resuming activities that require additional faculty, staff or students to return to campus, a university-approved, unit-specific safety plan is required for that area. Additional details about the unit specific safety plans are provided below.

A provincial committee is currently developing a BC Post-Secondary Sector Safety Plan that will be submitted to WorkSafeBC for approval. Once the Sector Safety Plan is finalized, this guidance document will be updated as necessary and shared broadly. This document will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis, including Appendix A, as circumstances and direction from Health Authorities evolve.

Guiding Principles for Safe Work Activities

- The University will protect the health and wellbeing of students, faculty and staff.
- Work, including research, that can be carried out remotely should continue to be done remotely.
- Gatherings of more than 50 people are prohibited on campus at any time.
- Permissions for resumption of on-campus work, including research activities, are contingent on the availability of cleaning/disinfecting supplies, hand hygiene products and personal protective equipment (PPE), and the individual completion of related training.
- Supervisors, including faculty Deans, will consider issues of accessibility and equity when determining what individuals are needed to do work in-person. Additional health and safety protocols and accommodations will be put in place in each work space.
- The University will provide broad guidelines for the resumption of work consistent with the SFU COVID-19 Impact Scale.
Recovery Phases
SFU COVID-19 Impact Scale identifies four distinct recovery phases, extreme, high, moderate and low, that will aid in the recovery planning and implementation as the university responds to the external decisions and indicators to either loosen or tighten the operations in an orderly and coordinated way. SFU COVID-19 Impact Scale table included in Appendix A outlines at a high level which university activities are allowed to gradually return as SFU moves to loosen the operations.

The SFU decision to move from extreme phase to high over the coming months has been made based on information from a variety of sources including but not be limited to: Provincial Health Officer, BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training (AEST), Research Universities’ Council of British Columbia (RUCBC), WorkSafeBC and legal counsel.

Limited Resumption of Campus Activities
At this time, the focus is on permitting the resumption of some on-campus research, noting that there is an expectation that most research will continue to be performed remotely. Researchers who require on-campus resources in order to perform their research, and staff required to support those researchers on-campus, will be allowed access to facilities upon completion of a safety plan, and with the approval of their Dean. All teaching continues to occur remotely and in extremely rare instances will instruction be in-person in the fall.

As the risk level drops, additional activities may be permitted on campus. This will be broadly communicated at the time to ensure a similar degree of resumption of activity across academic and non-academic units.

Requirement for Safety Plans
Faculty/Department Areas
Before resuming activities that require additional students, faculty or staff to return to campus, a university approved, unit specific, safety plan must be in place for the area, ensuring compliance with WorkSafeBC requirements.

Departments and supervisors are responsible for developing their safety plans in consultation with their employees and local joint health & safety committee.

SFU recommends the use of the COVID-19 Safety Plan developed by WorkSafeBC that clearly outlines the measures required to safely resume operations, including physical distancing, limiting the number of people in work areas, and regular cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces. Departments can choose to follow the WorkSafeBC COVID-19 Safety Plan template and checklists, or use their own customized plan on the proviso that it is consistent with the WorkSafeBC document.
It is the responsibility of the Chair, Dean or Senior Manager to review, approve and sign each safety plan.

SFU specific guidance on Physical Distancing, Cleaning and Disinfection, and Personal Protective Equipment are provided in Appendices B, C and D.

Common Areas
Common (indoor) areas on campus are defined as hallways, stairwells, elevators, washrooms, lounges, study areas, and any other areas that are generally accessible by anyone on campus (not behind a lockable door). A single unified safety plan is developed for these common areas by Safety and Risk Services, and implemented by Facilities Services (e.g. signs, floor markings, taped off areas, furniture spacing etc.).

COVID-19 Prevention Measures
All members of the university community must follow the guidance provided by the PHO to reduce their risk of infection of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds using soap and water.
- If a sink is not available, 60-90% alcohol-based hand rubs (hand sanitizer) can be used to clean hands if they are not visibly soiled. If they are visibly soiled, you can use an alcohol-based disposable hand wipe to remove the dirt and then use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with unwashed hands.
- When you sneeze or cough, cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow, and then wash your hands.
- Stay home when you are ill, or have had close contact with somebody who has tested positive for COVID-19 or displaying symptoms.
- Practice physical distancing.
- Do not visit campus if you have returned from travel outside of Canada within the last 14 days or live in the same household as a confirmed or clinical COVID-19 case who is self-isolating.

Daily Screening
The BC Restart Plan mandates daily screening of faculty, staff and students at post secondary institutions. The current guidance is that this may take the form of faculty and staff self-identifying that it is safe for them to return if they do not have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Chills
- New or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath
- New muscle aches or headaches
- Sore throat
And if they have not travelled outside of Canada within the past fourteen days, and are not a close contact of a person who tested positive for COVID-19.

In support of this self-selection, this information is posted at all building entrances and is contained within the mandatory online *COVID-19 Awareness and Safe Return to Work* training module on canvas.

**Mandatory Training**

Prior to returning to work on campus, all employees must complete the online *COVID-19 Awareness and Safe Return to Work* training module on canvas.

Supervisors must confirm completion of the training prior to allowing their employees to return to campus.

**Reporting**

Employees should report safety concerns and hazards to their supervisors. If not addressed, concerns can be escalated to the local safety committees and/or Environmental Health and Safety (EHS). All health & safety incidents, including accidents and near-misses, must be reported to EHS through the online web form.

Employees and students can also raise COVID-19 specific safety concerns by emailing covid19_safety@sfu.ca. This email account is monitored by Safety & Risk Services.

**Compliance Monitoring**

**Faculty/Department Areas**

Faculties/departments are responsible for creating COVID-19 safety teams to provide oversight for safe conduct and compliance around access to campus and approved COVID-19 site safety plans within the areas under their authority.

Regular inspections within areas will be conducted and documented by the safety teams. Inspection teams may be organized at either the department or faculty level. Please refer to the Guidance to COVID-19 Safety Plan Inspections document.

**Common Areas**

In addition to the faculty/department COVID-19 safety teams, a safety ambassadors team will provide education and friendly reminders to members and visitors of the SFU community about established COVID-19 safety measures in place in all common areas including hallways, elevators, study areas and lounges.

**Resources**

- [SFU COVID-19 FAQs](#)
- [BC Restart Plan](#)
- [WorkSafeBC COVID-19 and returning to safe operation - Phase 2](#)
Appendix A
SFU COVID-19 Impact Scale
### SFU COVID-19 Impact Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Teaching¹</th>
<th>Research²</th>
<th>General On-Campus</th>
<th>In-Person human participants research</th>
<th>Fieldwork/Off-Campus Sites</th>
<th>Faculty/ Staff</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
<th>Campus Amenities and Services</th>
<th>Meetings/Events/Programs</th>
<th>International Travel³</th>
<th>Building Access/Common areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extreme (E)</td>
<td>No in-person teaching</td>
<td>No on-campus research (excluding exemptions)</td>
<td>No in-person human participants research (HPR) on or off campus (excluding exemptions)</td>
<td>No research fieldwork or research in third-party sites (excluding exemptions)</td>
<td>Only employees providing in-person essential services on campus</td>
<td>No visitors permitted on campus.</td>
<td>Only essential on-campus services (e.g., Residence Dining Hall, Health and Counselling)</td>
<td>No in-person meetings, events or programs</td>
<td>No university-sanctioned international travel and activities</td>
<td>Restricted building access, common areas and lunchrooms closed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (H1)</td>
<td>Only approved essential in-person teaching⁴</td>
<td>On-campus research (safety and risk mitigation plan must be approved)</td>
<td>Minimal intervention HPR (safety and risk mitigation plan and updated protocols must be approved)</td>
<td>Low risk activity may be approved with safety plan (e.g., local, distancing possible)</td>
<td>Only employees providing essential services on campus (staggered shifts in place)</td>
<td>Only visitors approving or assisting with a core service, and only on invitation approved by a manager.</td>
<td>Only essential on-campus services (e.g., Residence Dining Hall, Health and Counselling)</td>
<td>No in-person meetings, events or programs, except some essential academic meetings with approval</td>
<td>No university-sanctioned international travel and activities</td>
<td>Restricted building access, common areas and lunchrooms closed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (H2)</td>
<td>Only approved essential in-person teaching⁴</td>
<td>On-campus research (safety and risk mitigation plan must be approved)</td>
<td>Minimal intervention HPR (safety and risk mitigation plan and updated protocols must be approved)</td>
<td>Low risk activity may be approved with safety plan (e.g., shared vehicle, distancing difficult)</td>
<td>Limited numbers of employees providing essential and some limited services on campus (staggered shifts in place)</td>
<td>Only visitors approving or assisting with a core service, and only on invitation approved by a manager.</td>
<td>Very limited on-campus services with restrictions (e.g., Dining, Health and Counselling, Library, etc.)</td>
<td>Essential internal on-person meetings, events, ceremonies or programs may be approved. Must have a safety plan and limited numbers of participants</td>
<td>Only essential university-sanctioned international travel and activities in accordance with approved guidance for exceptions (safety and risk mitigation plan required)</td>
<td>Restricted building access, common areas and lunchrooms closed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate (M1)</td>
<td>In-person teaching may occur if approved, with restrictions on class sizes and types of classes</td>
<td>On-campus research (safety and risk mitigation plan must be approved)</td>
<td>Medium intervention HPR (safety and risk mitigation plan and updated protocols must be approved)</td>
<td>Medium risk activity may be approved with safety plan (e.g., shared vehicle or equipment, distancing difficult)</td>
<td>Employees providing services commensurate with on campus community member levels (staggered shifts in place)</td>
<td>Only visitors approving or assisting with a core service, and only on invitation approved by a manager.</td>
<td>Limited on-campus services with restrictions (e.g., Dining, Health and Counselling, Library, Recreation Facilities, etc.)</td>
<td>Limited approval of in-person meetings, events, ceremonies or programs with restrictions on participant numbers</td>
<td>Only limited university-sanctioned international travel and activities in accordance with approved guidance for exceptions (safety and risk mitigation plan required)</td>
<td>Restricted building access, common areas and lunchrooms available with restrictions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate (M2)</td>
<td>In-person teaching may occur if approved, with restrictions on class sizes and types of classes</td>
<td>On-campus research (safety and risk mitigation plan must be approved)</td>
<td>High intervention HPR (safety and risk mitigation plan and updated protocols must be approved)</td>
<td>High risk activity may be approved with safety plan (e.g., commercial flights, shared accommodation)</td>
<td>Significant number of employees on campus (staggered shifts in place)</td>
<td>Visitors with a legitimate reason in support of the University core mission (teaching, research, learning) may be approved</td>
<td>On-campus services open with restrictions (e.g., Cafeterias, some students services)</td>
<td>Limited approval of in-person meetings, events, ceremonies or programs with restrictions on participant number</td>
<td>Limited university-sanctioned international travel may be approved</td>
<td>Unrestricted building access, common areas and lunchrooms available with restrictions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (L)</td>
<td>In-person teaching without restrictions to class sizes</td>
<td>On-campus research without restrictions</td>
<td>No restrictions</td>
<td>No restrictions</td>
<td>All employees on campus with exceptions</td>
<td>Visitors welcome</td>
<td>On-campus services open without restrictions</td>
<td>In-person meetings, events, ceremonies or programs without restrictions</td>
<td>University-sanctioned international travel</td>
<td>Unrestricted building access</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Decisions on teaching will usually apply to an entire academic term and may be made months in advance. A reduction in impact scale during an academic term may therefore not lead to any changes in teaching activities on campus.
2. Please refer to guidance documents on Fieldwork/Third-Party Sites and HPR.
3. All international travel and activities at all levels will need to follow Government of Canada travel advice and advisories and BC Provincial Health guidelines including isolation requirements.

Effective August 28, 2020
Physical Distancing Guidelines

This document outlines the principles and instructions to be followed regarding physical distancing at SFU to ensure an orderly and safe return to on-campus activities. The information below is based on current guidance at May 19, 2020. Any new guidance made available by health or WorkSafeBC will be reflected in updates to this document.

General

- All individuals are required to keep 2 metres (or 6 feet) apart from one another in each campus space wherever possible.
- As duration spent in an enclosed space may also play a role with the transmission of the virus, it is suggested that individuals take occasional breaks from work or study environments to maximize exposure to fresh air, and attempt to keep interactions with others brief when feasible.
- Unused interior spaces should be kept locked to minimize the potential for contamination and the need for cleaning.

Communication

- Physical posters and digital messaging shall be used to remind individuals to maintain 2m distance from one another.
- Physical distancing graphics and signage (e.g. maximum occupancy, lunchroom guidelines, etc.), and floor decals, as identified within these guidelines will be made available for departments to download or order through Document Solutions.

Workspaces

- Work that can be conducted remotely should continue as such in accordance with direction from supervisors to minimize physical interactions on campus.
- When work cannot be performed remotely, supervisors need to consider creating staggered or alternating shifts to minimize the number of individuals in an area at any one time to reduce the risk of exposure. The use of cohorts of workers who work together and who do not interact with other cohorts can also be considered.
- Create work arrangements to position individuals at least 2m apart from one another and from communal pathways, where no physical barriers are in place. Avoid side-by-side seating at adjacent computers, at adjacent fume hoods or on the same bench; avoid activities that require multiple persons to operate or handle equipment at the same time.
- Minimize sharing workstations. If individuals must share work stations integrate these locations into cleaning and hygiene protocols, ensuring that frequently-touched surfaces are addressed such as the computer keyboard and mouse, desk surface, and telephone. [Please refer to the Cleaning & Disinfection guidelines for details].
• However, even with all the workplace rearrangements there may still be a few tasks where individuals may need to be in close proximity to another person. These encroachments on physical distancing should be kept as brief as possible, through planning the work task and providing instructions to individuals.

Meetings
• Most meetings should be able to occur using videoconferencing and other remote means. If individuals need to meet in person within their office or elsewhere, 2m space separation between each individual needs to be maintained. Avoid meetings or gatherings where physical distances cannot be maintained.
• Consider having all or some attendees attend virtually, using larger rooms, or moving meetings outside.
• Eliminate hand-to-hand contact between individuals (handshakes, fist bumps, high-fives, etc.).
• Individually-packaged catered meals and single-use drinks are acceptable however open food buffets are not permitted. Use of self-service amenities such as beverage (coffee/tea/water) dispensers could be used if properly cleaned after each use.

Common areas in shared buildings
• Facilities Services is responsible for safety (cleaning, signage) in common areas of shared buildings, including washrooms, elevators, hallways, study areas and lounges. Local Health & Safety Committees may be engaged to provide assistance and guidance.

Common areas (NOTE: campus common areas remain closed at extreme and high recovery phases)
• Seating within learning spaces, study spaces, dining areas and computer labs needs to be configured to maintain 2m separation between seated individuals. This may require that certain seats being taped off or removed. Accessible seats need to be provided.
• Place distance markers, floor decals or tape to mark off areas where individuals can and cannot walk. Consider installing distance markers outside of area to allow for queuing to provide physical distancing inside the space.
• Manage the flow of people in busy common areas such as hallways, stairwells, washrooms, in lab bays, etc. by using one-way directional signage and/or stanchions, where appropriate to maximize physical distancing.
• Where multiple entrance-exits exist in a space, consider restricting passage using one-way directional signage (other than for emergency exiting situations).
Lunchrooms (NOTE: lunchrooms remain closed at extreme and high recovery phases)

- Individuals are to be encouraged to take breaks and lunch outdoors, in their office or personal workspace, or in other areas where proper physical distancing is feasible.
- Lunchroom seating should be configured to provide the 2m physical distancing requirement.
- Communal beverage (coffee, tea) equipment can be used if properly cleaned after each use.
- Handwashing soap, and cleaning and disinfectant supplies should be present.
- Refrain from providing and consuming communal foods.
- Individuals should bring their own dishes and utensils.
- Allow communal doors to remain open throughout the workday to reduce contact with door handles.
- Remove non-essential communal items, such as candy, magazines, and complimentary phone chargers.

Elevators

- Elevators are to be limited to 1 individual at a time. Able-bodied individuals are to be encouraged to use stairwells rather than elevators to free-up elevators for individuals with accessibility needs.
- Place distance markers, decals or tape on the ground to indicate where individuals should stand while lining up to enter the elevator. Ensure adequate space is provided for those exiting the elevator.

Washrooms

- Unless protected by a physical partition, 2m separation between individuals within washrooms facilities needs to respected where feasible. To maximize physical separation, a certain number of adjacent equipment such as sinks, may need to be taken out of service.

Use of SFU vehicles

- If individuals need to use University vehicles, they should travel alone in order to practice physical distancing.
- Place disinfecting wipes and alcohol-based hand sanitizers in vehicles. [please refer to Cleaning & Disinfection guidelines]

Deliveries

- Minimize interactions between personnel and outside visitors, contractors, delivery personnel or truck drivers.
- Adjust practices for proof of delivery so that in-person signatures are avoided and online confirmation of receipt of package can be used instead.
Maximum Occupancy

- No single gathering or event of more than 50 people is permitted in any space or area at any time. This prohibition on gatherings of greater than 50 people refers to “one-time or episodic events” (festivals, public gatherings, etc.) and is not intended to apply to buildings where the environment allows for distance between people such as in workplaces or libraries.

- Each common space or area is required to have a maximum occupancy limit established to provide for physical distancing, with signage posted on the entrance doors. Spaces include: classrooms, theatres, labs, meeting rooms, dining areas, study spaces, atriums, lunchrooms, locker rooms, washrooms, elevators and outdoor gathering areas.

- Each department is responsible to establish and post maximum occupancies for their respective spaces. Spaces, areas, or laboratories that are shared by multiple departments will need coordinated assessment to ensure that the maximum occupancy considers the entire space, not just the portion assigned to a particular department or individual. Facilities Services, working with MECS and Student Services, shall be responsible to calculate maximum occupancy and post signage for all common spaces including Registrar-controlled classrooms. Standard signage will be provided.

- For Research space, it is the responsibility of the facility/lab manager or, otherwise, the PI, to ensure that maximum occupancy is not exceeded.

- The determination of maximum occupancy shall be based upon*:
  
  a) the principle that each person requires approximately 5 square meters of unencumbered floor space to maintain physical distance.
  
  b) this unencumbered space would be floor space minus floor space used for equipment such as tables, benches, and fume hoods, etc.
  
  c) the workflow of activities to ensure interactions between persons are minimized
  
  d) any other considerations unique to the space, including a practical assessment of whether the maximum occupancy calculate can reasonably achieve the 2m separation of people throughout the operating hours of the space

*Take, for example, a space with 200 square metres of floor space with 70 square metres of equipment/displays. The space has 200 square metres minus 70 square metres = 130 square metres of unencumbered floor space for individuals. The maximum number of people allowed in the space to support physical distancing would be: (130 square metres) / (5 square metres/person) = 26 people.

Where Physical Distance cannot be maintained

- Where distance cannot be maintained, including at service or check-out counters, consider separating people with partitions or plexiglass barriers. Where physical installation of barriers is desirable, please submit a Facilities Request through

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Facilities Services. Where no installation is required, departments may procure barriers independently. Shortage of materials may delay the procurement process.

- Although the use of Personal Protective Equipment is not a substitute for physical distancing measures, non-medical masks should be worn in all indoor public spaces, including hallways, study lounges, and other common areas, and in other situations where physical distancing is not possible. [Please refer to the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidelines for details].
COVID-19 Cleaning & Disinfection Protocol

This document is intended to provide guidance on the cleaning and disinfection of common and non-common areas at SFU and is consistent with direction provided by the Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafeBC.

Increased cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched objects and surfaces can help prevent the spread of illness including COVID-19. Current evidence suggests that SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses.

All departments are required to develop a COVID-19 Safe Work Plan prior to the resumption of work and research activities on campus. Clear direction on the cleaning/disinfection of department spaces must be included in these plans. Facilities Services should be informed as spaces are re-occupied to ensure the resumption of cleaning/disinfection of common spaces in these areas.

**Cleaning/Disinfection in Common Areas**

SFU’s contracted janitorial service provider has implemented a high touch point cleaning/disinfection initiative which involves the cleaning/disinfection of high touch point surfaces in common areas, including elevator panels and buttons, washroom partitions, taps, flush handles, door handles and push bars, garbage lids, and blue phones. Department kitchens are cleaned/disinfected once per day.

When teaching activities resume, lecture theatres and classrooms will be cleaned on a daily basis. Exterior surfaces such as benches and seating areas are not included in the cleaning/disinfection protocol.

**Cleaning/Disinfection in Non-Common Areas**

Non-common areas, including counter services, waiting rooms, offices, research areas, and labs, and retail and dining areas, are not included in the high touch point initiative. It is the responsibility of department personnel to clean and disinfect high touch surfaces in their spaces and to maintain a supply of disinfecting products.

Consistent with guidance provided by the BC CDC, general cleaning and disinfection of common surfaces that people touch (e.g., countertops) should occur at least once a day. Highly touched surfaces (e.g., door handles) should be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day and when visibly dirty. Items that cannot be easily cleaned (e.g., magazines) should be removed whenever possible.

Specific protocols may be needed in situations where items are shared but cannot be
cleaned and must remain in circulation (e.g., library books). Consideration should be given to setting these items aside after each use for a designated period of time to allow sufficient time for the virus to degrade.

Cleaning and disinfecting is a simple, effective, two-step process that is described below.

- **Step 1: Clean**
  Clean the surfaces of any dirt, debris or visible soiling. Use water and soap or any household cleaning product.

- **Step 2: Disinfect**
  If available, use a store bought disinfectant. Disinfect the surfaces, following the instructions on the product label. If possible, wear gloves and open a window for fresh air.

**Shared Workstations and Equipment**

Sharing of workstations and equipment should be avoided whenever possible. If sharing cannot be avoided, frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected before and after use. For workstations this includes the computer keyboard and mouse, desk surface, and phone. For labs, this includes all shared lab equipment and devices. For vehicles, this includes the steering wheel, gear shift, climate control, and radio.

**Selection of Cleaning/Disinfecting Products**

It is important to use disinfecting agents that are known to be effective against coronaviruses. Premixed store-bought disinfectant cleaning solutions or wipes that contain bleach (5.25% sodium hypochlorite), hydrogen peroxide (0.5%) or quaternary ammonium compounds should be used. Examples include Lysol, Clorox, and Virox products. A solution of 70% ethanol or isopropanol in water is also an acceptable disinfecting solution.

A list of approved disinfectants is provided by Health Canada.

Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions, including the recommended PPE.

**Additional Cleaning/Disinfection if a Presumed/Confirmed Case is Identified**

Departments who are informed of a presumed or confirmed case of COVID-19 in their areas should close the impacted space and contact Facilities Services to request additional cleaning/disinfection of the area.

**Procurement of cleaning products**

Departments are responsible for purchasing cleaning and disinfectant supplies through the regular procurement channels (i.e., through Science Stores, Staples).
Central Stores will maintain a small inventory of cleaning and disinfectant products for purchase but this supply will be prioritized for essential service providers.

Additional Resources

- BC CDC Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings
- SFU Cleaning and Disinfecting Guide to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19
- WorkSafeBC Cleaning & Disinfection
Appendix D

Personal Protective Equipment Guidelines
COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment Guidance

This document is intended to provide guidance on SFU’s recommendations for the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and is consistent with direction provided by the Provincial Health Officer and WorkSafeBC.

PPE is equipment worn by workers to minimize exposure to specific hazards. Examples of PPE include respirators, gloves, and eye and face protection. PPE is generally considered the last line of defense against hazards in the workplace, as outlined in the hierarchy of controls below. PPE does not reduce the hazard itself nor does it guarantee permanent or total protection.

Other than the PPE normally worn by employees (e.g., gloves and safety glasses worn in labs), additional equipment is not recommended to protect against COVID-19 in most situations.

Hierarchy of controls

1. **Elimination or Substitution:** This involves removing the risk of exposure entirely from the workplace. This could involve postponing, re-organizing, or planning work in such a way that workers are not exposed to any risk. Having workers work remotely would be an example of eliminating the risk from the workplace.

2. **Engineering controls:** These are physical changes in the workplace, such as installing plexiglass barriers.

3. **Administrative controls:** This involves altering work practices to minimize exposure, such as minimizing the numbers of workers in a space, staggering work shifts, and holding meetings via video-conferencing.

4. **Personal protective equipment (PPE):** This last form of protection should only be considered after careful consideration of the previous control measures. Some workplaces have specific requirements for PPE, such as in health care settings and labs. Please refer to [SFU’s PPE in the Laboratory document](#) for guidance on required PPE.
Respirators and Masks

N95 respirators and medical masks are not recommended for SFU employees with the exception of first aid and health care providers who may be required to provide care to ill community members. These items are in short supply across the province and need to be prioritized for health care workers.

The use of non-medical or homemade masks can help in containing your own droplets and protecting others but are not a substitute for physical distancing. Non-medical masks should be worn in all indoor public spaces, including hallways, study lounges, and other common areas, and in other situations where physical distancing is not possible.

Employees are reminded that cloth masks must be washed before they are reused and should be replaced when wet, soiled or damaged. Additional information on home-made masks is provided by the BC CDC.

Gloves

Gloves are not recommended for most SFU employees to protect against COVID-19. Other measures, such as physical distancing and good hygiene practices, are more effective in preventing the risk of transmission. Gloves should continue to be worn by health care and first aid providers and by researchers handling hazardous materials in the lab. Gloves are also recommended when cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects or surfaces.
When required, gloves should be used in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions and good hygiene practices. This includes:

- Choosing the proper gloves for the chemicals or other materials you are handling.
- Proper donning and doffing gloves to minimize contamination. If you are wearing a mask, put your gloves on last, and take them off first when you are finished. Wash your hands before and after wearing gloves.
- Changing gloves after there is a tear, damage, or puncture.
- Not using hand sanitizer on gloves.
- Gloves should not be worn through the hallways in lab areas to prevent the risk of contaminating surfaces with hazardous materials.

**Eye and Face Protection**

Eye protection, through safety glasses or goggles, and face shields are only recommended for health care workers and first aid providers where there is the potential for any spraying or splattering of blood or other bodily fluids. Faculty, staff and students working in labs should continue to wear the necessary PPE to protect against the hazardous materials in use. Safety glasses and goggles should not be shared between people. If specialized PPE must be shared (e.g., face shields, acid aprons, etc.), it must be disinfected before and after use.

**Procurement of PPE**

Departments are responsible for purchasing PPE supplies through the regular procurement channels (i.e., through Science Stores). Central Stores will maintain a small inventory of PPE products for purchase but this supply will be prioritized for essential service providers.

**Additional Resources**

- [BC CDC Guidance on Masks](#)
- [Government of Canada Non Medical Masks and Face Coverings](#)
- [WorkSafeBC Returning to Safe Operation FAQs](#)