

FEINBERG RETURN TO CAMPUS GUIDANCE

Updated December 17, 2020

Changing guidance will be provided as circumstances dictate

Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine has returned faculty, staff, and student functions to campus in line with the University's [Return to Campus Policy](#) and in steps designed to support the reactivation of the research and educational enterprises while responsibly prioritizing the health of our community.

As of November 2020, Feinberg has completed steps one through six of the medical school's phased return to campus plan and is aligned with Northwestern University's COVID-19 protocol and densification requirements. Research and education ramp-ups are complete, and a high percentage of faculty and staff roles have been integrated back to on-campus and in person environments. We are aligned with local city and state densification capacity limits. All necessary precautions for on-campus safety remain in place, and restrictions on visitors, travel, and events remain. This phase continues until a vaccine is available; workplace flexibility and accommodations related to the pandemic are supported.

The University has moved to a [color-coded activity level system](#) and will communicate changes to protocol and densification as necessitated by internal and external factors.

Principles

- Ensure that medical school personnel return to campus in a way that is compliant and congruent with [city](#) and [state](#) stay at home policies, as well as University [policies for environmental health and safety](#) and [phased return to campus](#).
- Recognize we are in an uncertain new-normal; risk can be mitigated with appropriate caution, but not completely eliminated; the virus is going to be in the community causing new cases of disease for some time; will need to adapt to change.
- Self-agency characterized by common sense behaviors and consideration of others in the work environment is critical to an effective return to campus.
- The school's responsibility is to provide guidance and support for how to implement best practices for safely returning to work in an academic campus setting, as well as to ensure that return-to-work policies are equitable and flexible to the very wide span of employee roles and work settings on our campus. Entrusting departments, institutes, centers, and business units with the responsibility of implementing guidance and adhering to expectations in a manner appropriate to workplace configurations, operations, staff and team composition, and programmatic activities.
- All individuals returning to campus must complete a [University training module](#). Those involved with research must complete the "[Pandemic Essentials: Research on Campus](#)" training module assigned in myHR Learn. All PIs are required to develop and submit a laboratory activation plan with your group.

- Trust but verify: **A monitored hotline (312-503-3437)** is available to allow faculty, staff, and students to report concerns or issues that may need to be addressed by the school; it is hoped in the spirit of quality improvement that people using the hotline will leave contact information to provide confidential follow-up. In addition, buildings will be regularly monitored to ensure that programs and laboratories are meeting appropriate guidance.
- All faculty, staff, and students should follow [University procedures for reporting positive cases of COVID-19](#).
- Northwestern University supports flexible work arrangements, both occasional and formal, where work allows. See Northwestern's [COVID work arrangement web site](#) for the University's policy and other details.
- Common sense approaches for social distancing should be implemented within shared campus facilities.
- Be prepared for either tightening or loosening of occupancy and other guidance below, and the possibility of another shelter-in-place order, at any time.

Occupancy Considerations Across Steps

- Daily use of the official Northwestern University or Northwestern Medicine symptom tracker is required for entry to campus. Personnel with fever (>100.4), respiratory illness, cold, or other symptoms of illness are expected to stay home.
- Larger office suites should organize in shifts (morning/afternoon, alternate days, etc.) wherever possible, and continue to use collaborative tools and remote work options when functional necessity does not substantially require on-campus presence.
- In open floorplans, adjacent staff should coordinate to minimize the number of personnel onsite and in close proximity.
- Common sense measures such as avoiding breakroom gatherings and the crowding of elevators, stairwells, or entryways should be observed.
- Minimize eating and drinking in groups in the workplace and in communal spaces such as breakrooms and lounge areas. Eating at one's workspace while in compliance with social distancing and hygiene practices -- provided the workspace is not inside a laboratory -- is permissible.
- Elevator usage should be limited to 4 riders, one in each corner; use of stairs is strongly encouraged for one floor up and two floors down.
- Doors may be propped open when office spaces are occupied to minimize contact with handles unless doing so poses a security or safety risk.

Health Considerations

- Persons diagnosed with COVID-19 or presumed COVID-19, or who have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19, must comply with all [posted Northwestern University return-to-work policies for communicable disease reporting](#).
- Testing information for Feinberg faculty, students, and staff members can be found on the [Feinberg COVID Testing webpage](#).
- Cloth or procedure/surgical masks must be worn by all personnel on campus, including in laboratories, even when social distancing is being observed. Exceptions might include: when individuals are using potentially hazardous volatile or particulate materials, or when you are the only one in a microscopy room for several hours. Please consult Research Safety if you have questions about when it is unsafe to wear a mask in your research laboratory.
- The unit assigned the space is responsible for providing sanitizer in work areas. To order hand sanitizer and disinfectant, use Procurement & Payment Services' [online form](#).
- Lobby stands in some entryways dispense masks, hand sanitizer, and facial tissues. These resources are not intended to meet needs within work areas.
- Handwashing and sanitizers should be used several times during the workday.
- Spray sanitizer such as 70% ethanol should be located in all common areas.
- If common equipment is used, use a booking sheet, put an "in use" sign up, do not share usage time, and wear masks while using. Wipe down equipment after use with 70% ethanol.

Meetings and Visitors

- Meetings, lectures, seminars, and other activities should be held virtually, using Zoom or similar platforms. [The University has provided further guidance for student-focused on-campus gatherings](#).
- Maximum capacities of meeting, seminar, and classrooms should be significantly reduced in accordance with building requirements to ensure that occupants can maintain social distancing.
- Visitors to campus other than patients are limited to [those defined by the University](#). Units must pre-register visitors to Feinberg buildings using the EasyLobby system. To set up system access, email fsm-research@northwestern.edu.
- Volunteers are prohibited until further notice.

Transportation

- Always wear a mask when using public or shared transit (CTA/Metra/shuttles).
- Travel at non-rush hours when possible.
- Use apps such as Spot Hero to find discounted parking if garage parking is unavailable.

- Consider biking or walking to campus; additional bike racks have been installed under the canopy at 345 E. Superior.

Personal Travel

- Please refer to Northwestern University's [published COVID-19 travel policy](#), which includes guidance for international and domestic travel.

Resources

- Northwestern Medicine [video on properly using masks](#)
- Supervisors send questions to:
 - In research areas, contact Michael Blayney, Executive Director, Research Safety, at (847) 491-4387 or michael.blayney@northwestern.edu, or
 - In non-research areas, contact Gwen Butler, Director, Environmental Health and Safety, at (847) 491-4936 or gwen.butler@northwestern.edu.
 - For HR issues/questions, please contact your HR Business Partner.
- Aramark [cleaning protocol](#) for Feinberg
- Feinberg [COVID-19 site](#)
- Northwestern University Research [COVID-19 site](#)
- Northwestern Medicine [COVID-19 site](#)
- [Northwestern University COVID-19 and Campus Updates](#) site