

BATES INFECTIOUS DISEASE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PLAN^{1 2}

Bates is committed to maintaining a workplace that promotes the health and safety of all employees. The World Health Organization has declared a pandemic in connection with the respiratory disease, COVID-19, which is caused by the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). The virus that causes COVID-19 has been found to be easily transmitted from person to person and, therefore, creates a risk of exposure and transmission in the workplace. To address this potential workplace hazard, Bates has developed a set of policies, procedures, and actions designed to mitigate the risk of exposure to COVID-19. This plan will be updated and extended as appropriate. **All employees are required to review and comply with the following policies.**

In developing this document, our guiding principles are as follows:

- We will observe all public health guidance from local, state, and federal officials;
- We will take action to prepare campus spaces and develop clear plans to mitigate the risks of exposure and disease outbreak;
- We will work to maintain core college functions with the aim of providing a residential experience on campus for our students;
- We will communicate and educate faculty and staff with respect to important health advice and preventive information; and
- We will set clear community expectations for individual behavior designed to prevent disease transmission.

The plan below follows public health [guidance](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) and safe work guidance from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (“OSHA”) to minimize risk of exposure to and transmission of COVID-19 on campus. OSHA specifically categorizes roles and activities into a [risk pyramid](#) moving from Low Exposure Risk, to Medium, to High, to Very High Exposure Risk Activity. While most activity at the college falls into “medium” or “low” exposure risk, certain activities may carry additional risk. In these circumstances, managers will work carefully with their teams and will require heightened controls, work methods, and personal protective equipment.

The focus of this plan, through controls, good hygiene, and college policies, is to mitigate these opportunities for transmission. We remind everyone that Bates is a community where all members are responsible for creating an environment that is inclusive, supportive, respectful, and demonstrates mutual concern. Our actions must support our ability to work, study, live, and learn together productively and safely. As we act individually and collectively, please be mindful that personal circumstances may put certain individuals at higher risk for COVID-19 or may limit their ability to comply fully with this Plan. Please assume that everyone is committed to the health and safety of their colleagues and, as such, are doing everything they can do and need to do.

¹ OSHA Publication 3990-03

² Bates Plan first issued June 8, 2020; revised August 26, 2020, January 12, 2021, June 1, 2021, June 30, 2021, and August 16, 2021

VACCINE POLICY

All Bates employees are required to provide their vaccination status to Human Resources. To verify your vaccinated status with Human Resources, you may:

- Upload an image of your vaccination card to garnet gateway
- Present your vaccination card in person to Human Resources

All Bates employees are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated.

FACE COVERING POLICY

Bates requires face coverings on campus for unvaccinated employees. To increase the safety on campus, and reduce the risk of COVID-19 on campus, Bates is requiring that employees wear a face covering when inside campus buildings. Exceptions to the policy are:

- Eating in designated indoor spaces, when appropriate distance is maintained
- Working in private offices and when working alone in closed (or contained) spaces on campus
- Those who are fully vaccinated with an FDA-approved vaccine (Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson)

When public health conditions warrant, Bates may provide temporary policies, updated on the college website, that may increase the requirement for face coverings on campus.

This includes any type of [mask or cloth face covering](#) as described by the CDC. Employees are expected to understand the current face covering requirements in the state of Maine, which have been communicated by [executive orders of the governor](#) and are broadly reported and distributed. Maine has had public requirements consistent with the U.S. CDC's strong encouragement of the use of face coverings in public to minimize the transmission of the virus via respirable droplets that are exhaled/inhaled when we breathe.

Please refer to [CDC guidance](#) for use and handling of face coverings. Wash your hands before putting your face covering on. Ensure it fits snugly against the sides of your face. If you have specific fit, training, or other questions on face masks, please speak with your manager or contact Bates Environmental Health and Safety ("EHS"). Several face covering styles are available to ensure proper fit.

Bates will provide access to face coverings for all employees, as needed, and they may be issued as part of one's uniform in certain departments. If you would like to make your own, the CDC has provided [instructions](#) on how to do so. Face coverings are readily available for purchase, as well. If you need a face covering, contact your supervisor/manager or EHS. The college expects that you will clean and maintain your face covering properly, in accordance with CDC Recommendations and bring it to campus for daily use. Cleaning your face covering in a washing machine is appropriate.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND PRESUMPTION OF GOOD FAITH

When possible, accommodations will be made for those within our community who may not be able to wear a face covering due to trauma or underlying medical conditions. Employees requesting an accommodation for face coverings must contact Human Resources. Managers should not ask an individual to explain a request for an accommodation or the reason(s) for which one has been given.

GENERAL INFECTION PREVENTION MEASURES APPLICABLE TO ALL POSITIONS AND LOCATIONS

As CDC guidelines change (both [general](#) and specific [to Institutes for Higher Education](#)), our recommendations will adapt to reflect the latest ideas for reducing the risk of transmission on campus.

DISTANCING

As described repeatedly throughout this Plan and in public health announcements, physical distancing is the most effective preventative measure for COVID-19. Avoid close contact with others, and maintain 6' distance between yourself and others, including between workstations, when possible. The college has implemented the following measures and policies, among others:

- Employees are asked to limit occupancy in shared spaces whenever possible
- Maintain distancing where and when possible in hallways, stairwells, and on campus pathways
- Schedule appointments to reduce lines and congested waiting areas
- Limit employees to 2 people per utility cart or regular-size college vehicle, with face covering required

HANDWASHING

Bates College promotes frequent and thorough hand washing by providing a place for employees to wash their hands and/or use alcohol-based sanitizing products with at least 60% alcohol, located in numerous prominent locations throughout campus. Employees are encouraged to wash hands frequently, and particularly before/after eating, before using a shared coffee machine, after handling materials provided by vendors, and after using the restroom. Hand sanitizing stations are distributed throughout campus, and bathrooms are stocked with appropriate soap and signage for good hygiene.

ENHANCED CLEANING PRACTICES

[OSHA](#) has indicated that “It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has SARS-CoV-2 on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the primary way the virus spreads.” To reduce the likelihood of exposure and transmission, Bates is enhancing custodial practices, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and equipment, with more frequency in shared work areas.

STAYING HOME WHEN SICK

The college requires employees to stay home if they are [sick](#). Additional details on what to do if sick are provided in “Self-Monitoring, what to do if you have symptoms, and returning to work”.

RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

As indicated by [CDC signage](#) in multiple locations on campus, the community is asked to practice respiratory etiquette (i.e., covering coughs and sneezes).

SELF-MONITORING, WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19, AND RETURNING TO WORK

SELF-MONITORING

Bates requires all employees to [self-monitor](#) for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (relying on CDC list of symptoms as well as advice from state public health officials). As stated in college communications throughout this pandemic, the college requires employees to stay home if they are sick. Employees who experience the onset of symptoms (fever included) are required to notify their manager and Human Resources, and leave the workplace.

POSITIVE COVID-19 TESTS

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 are required to report the diagnosis to Human Resources (HRCovid@bates.edu or 207-795-5100) and department head within 24 hours. Similarly, employees are required to report to Human Resources if they receive an order from a state or local public health agency directing them to self-quarantine. All records regarding the diagnosis and report to Human Resources will be maintained as a confidential medical record.

INFECTED EMPLOYEE QUARANTINE AND TIMELINE ASSISTANCE

Bates will work with the CDC to determine the timeline of when infected individuals have been in the workplace, determine close contacts of infected individuals when in the workplace, and if feasible, ask close contacts to self-quarantine as appropriate per current [CDC recommendations](#). We expect these situations to be limited, as vaccinated individuals are not directed to quarantine when identified as close contacts; rather, vaccinated close contacts are directed to self-monitor for symptoms. Employees are expected to cooperate with the college in determining the timeline of presence in the office and assessing close contacts.

PANDEMIC SICK BANK

A Pandemic Paid Sick Leave [Policy](#) was implemented effective July 1, 2020 to ensure that all staff employees eligible for leave have paid time off specifically for COVID-19 absences. The details of this policy are available on the HR website and should be reviewed by all employees.

RETURNING TO WORK AFTER A POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST

Employees are required to follow [CDC guidance](#) regarding discontinuing home isolation. Employees are also required to contact Human Resources to certify compliance with this requirement before returning to work. Please reach out to Human Resources if you have questions.

TRAVEL

The college's travel policies will be updated and communicated regarding business travel. Starting June 1, the college will resume support for domestic travel for business purposes. All state-required mandates and policies must be followed, which may make travel to certain locations impractical. International travel is not yet permitted on college funding unless by exception. Faculty may request exceptions to Malcolm Hill and staff seeking an exception may request exceptions to their respective member of senior staff.

VISITORS IN THE WORKPLACE

During the COVID-19 Pandemic the college discourages non-essential visitors, while recognizing that certain vendors and contractors need access to the campus to maintain the operations of the college.

Visitors will be permitted in college buildings for college hosted business at the specific invitation of faculty or staff (e.g. meetings) if conditions permit. When public health conditions warrant, the college may temporarily place a moratorium on campus visitors. When visitors are permitted, unvaccinated visitors are subject to the same face covering requirements as unvaccinated employees (see Face Covering Policy above). Hosts are required to escort their guests into and out of college buildings. All buildings will continue on keycard access, and unticketed events open to the general public will not be held on campus until further notice.

Bates asks employees to minimize purchases and deliveries on campus. For those that must occur, coordinate with the delivery vendor to determine a time, location, and method to minimize exposure and transmission on the Bates Campus. Facility Services works closely with contractors to be in areas that minimize concentrations of Bates Employees, and to follow appropriate policies to minimize exposure and transmission in their work. All vendors and contractors must follow Bates policies, principally the practice of wearing a face covering on campus. Specific policies for contractors and vendors are available on the [Facilities Services](#) website; the [vendor policy](#) is also available on the [Human Resources website](#).

From time to time, Bates may provide temporary policies, updated on the college website, that may temporarily change the restrictions for vendors on campus.

REPORTING

If you have questions or concerns about the Plan, please contact HRCovid@bates.edu or 207-795-5100. If you have been targeted or been negatively impacted on campus, please contact Gwen Lexow, Bates' Title IX Officer, at 207-786-6445 or glexow@bates.edu.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Bates is committed to reducing exposure to the coronavirus in the workplace. The Infectious Disease Preparedness and Response Plan is designed to reduce exposure for all employees and, therefore, all employees are required to comply with the Plan at all times. Failure to do so will lead to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination of employment.

List of supplemental material provided as links embedded in this document

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3993.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/official_documents

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-face-covering.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/considerations.html>

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

<https://www.bates.edu/hr/covid-19-resources/pandemic-sick-leave-policy/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/isolation.html>

<https://www.bates.edu/facility/covid-19-response/>

<https://www.bates.edu/hr/files/2020/08/hr-covid-vendor-plan.pdf>

<https://www.bates.edu/hr/covid-19-resources/>