

COVID-19

Spring Semester Safe Operating Protocols



Updated January 4, 2021

Table of Contents

Health & Safety	3
Campus Preparation	4
Before Coming to Campus	4
COVID-19 Reporting	6
WNCC Face Covering Protocol	7
Campus Physical Distancing and Hygiene Practices	7
Cleaning / Infection Control Protocols	8
Teaching and Learning Environment	8
Employee / Business Travel	9
Student Transport	9
Travel Requiring Charter Bus / Shuttle	10
Residence Life	10
Health and Safety Responsibilities	10
Quarantining/Isolation/Separation	10
Distancing and De-Densifying Efforts	11
Consolidation	11
Dining	11
Cleaning	11
Visitation	11
Athletics	11
Resources and Services	12
COVID-19 Concerns or Questions?	12

COVID-19 Spring Semester Safe Operating Protocols

This plan outlines the approved protocols for Western Nebraska Community College for the Spring 2021 semester. The protocols outlined in this plan apply to credit and non-credit classes, and will take effect January 4, 2021 for all locations. The plan is designed to ensure academic and service excellence and safety for students, faculty, staff, and community members as we continue to minimize the risk of exposure to the coronavirus. Items outlined in this plan are subject to change based on updated recommendations or guidelines from the following:

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

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

Panhandle Public Health District (PPHD)

<http://www.pphd.org/>

University of Nebraska Medical Center

https://www.unmc.edu/healthsecurity/_documents/Higher-Education-Pandemic-Recovery-Guide-Step-I-III-5-12-2020-v1.35.pdf

Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services

<http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

Tuscany Strategy Consulting, Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, Council for Higher Education Accreditation

<https://www.opensmartedu.org/>

Disaster Resilient Universities (DRU) Network

<https://safety.uoregon.edu/disaster-resilient-universities-network>

Health & Safety

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. It is the virus responsible for the current global pandemic and is a highly contagious and potentially lethal virus. Its spread continues in many areas of the world and the United States, including Nebraska.

WNCC is closely monitoring the ongoing developments regarding COVID-19 and is engaged in numerous efforts to prevent, mitigate, and respond to the COVID-19 situation facing our campuses. Efforts include the implementation of mask-wearing protocols, social distancing measures, increased cleaning, and other recommended mitigation strategies. Despite the College's best efforts, it is impossible to eliminate the risk of positive cases or an outbreak on our campuses. We cannot guarantee that people present at college locations will not be exposed to and become infected with COVID-19. The risk of exposure and possible infection is real and present in any community environment where large numbers of people are regularly interacting, particularly when they do not adhere to the established protocol that includes wearing masks when in public and frequent hand washing.

Recent information from the CDC indicates that COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. The College continues to follow the guidance of the CDC, PPHD, County Health Departments and medical experts. While the College will strive to reduce the risk and mitigate the effects of this virus, we need for every member of our community to cooperate with these ongoing efforts.

WNCC employees and students should understand that this pandemic is a fluid situation with circumstances ever-changing, and the protocols within this document are subject to change at any time. WNCC's COVID-19 Response Team will continue to assess the contents of this plan throughout the spring semester.

WNCC has identified multiple modes of communicating updates to plans, so please pay attention to the following sources for information:

- WNCC email
- [WNCC.edu COVID-19 information page](#)
- WNCC social media
- Local media sources

Campus Preparation

- WNCC continues working to prepare our facilities for a return to campus with decisions based on reliable guidance for institutions of higher education. The following preparations will be in place for the spring semester: Physical barriers (plexiglass, or “sneeze guards”) have been placed between individuals on service lines such as front-line walk-up counters in all WNCC locations that will see high levels of traffic and contact.
- WNCC has ensured that all protocols and settings in the workplace meet the current criteria of the State of Nebraska’s Directed Health Measures.
- Appropriate social distances will be marked on floors in high traffic areas.
- WNCC mask covering guidelines and COVID-19 safety informational posters have been placed on all entrances to WNCC facilities as well as throughout the buildings.
- Occupancy limits will be posted at all open or shared spaces (meeting rooms, classrooms, commons spaces, etc.) at all WNCC locations.
- Classrooms and open or shared spaces have been setup to meet social distancing guidelines. Furniture in these spaces may have been removed, marked as unusable, or placed in a manner to meet these guidelines.
- WNCC has secured appropriate and necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), hand hygiene products, and cleaning materials to support the college population for this semester.
- Upon return to campus, staff departments should have assessed their operations and developed processes to limit person to person contact and utilization of highly touched surfaces to further mitigate transmission of the COVID-19 virus. Please familiarize yourself with these changes and respectfully follow them throughout the Spring 2021 semester.

Before Coming to Campus

As recommended by PPHD, employees and students should continue to monitor themselves for symptoms related to COVID-19 throughout the spring semester, and should NOT come to campus if sick or have had exposure to an individual testing positive for COVID-19 that has self-quarantined for less than 14 days.

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- *Fever or chills*
- *Cough*
- *Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing*
- *Fatigue*
- *Muscle or body aches*
- *Headache*
- *New loss of taste or smell*
- *Sore throat*
- *Congestion or runny nose*
- *Nausea or vomiting*
- *Diarrhea*

Public Health Recommendations for the Screening, Exclusion, and Re-Admittance of Ill Students and Staff for COVID-19 in Schools

The following symptom screening criteria for ill students and staff is based on the most current research. Because people with COVID-19 have reported a wide range of symptoms – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness – the following criteria has been developed to assist schools in identifying possible COVID-19 cases.

Students with two of the following: fever (measured or subjective), chills, cold/shivering, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
OR:
At least one of the following: new cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, loss of taste and smell
OR:
Has at least one symptom and answers yes to: Is there someone in your household who is currently in quarantine or currently positive for COVID-19?

Students and staff who meet criteria should immediately isolate in the designated area and be sent home as soon as possible. Require the symptomatic person to wear a surgical or procedure mask while waiting, if tolerable.

Re-Admittance to School

Symptomatic staff /student who tests positive:

Exclude for:

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared
- AND:**
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever reducing medication
- AND:**
- Symptoms have improved

Symptomatic staff /student not tested:

Exclude for:

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared
- AND:**
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication
- AND:**
- Symptoms have improved
- OR**
- May return to school if an alternative diagnosis is established with a health care provider's note.

Symptomatic staff /student who tests negative:

Exclude until fever free for 24 hours (or meets the schools' requirements for readmission) **AND** improved respiratory symptoms

There is no reason for a student or staff member to get a “negative test” to be cleared for the return to school. A COVID-19 positive individual does not need a repeat COVID- 19 test or a health care provider's note in order to return. Recovery will be determined and communicated to the school by public health.

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, please call the 24/7 help line at 308-262-5764.

Rave Guardian App

To assist employees and students in pre-screening themselves for symptoms of COVID-19 before reporting to campus, download the mobile app **RAVE Guardian**, designed by RAVE, WNCC's emergency notification service provider. The app can be found in the Google Play and Apple stores. Once downloaded, **daily wellness checks** will be sent to help screen for COVID-19 related symptoms.

Employees and students should also reference the attachment on page 5 "Public Health Recommendations for the Screening, Exclusion, and Re-Admittance of Ill Students and Staff for COVID-19 in Schools" when pre-screening themselves before determining if it is safe to report to campus for the day.

COVID-19 Reporting

Employees that are sick or exhibiting symptoms should report this to their supervisor immediately from home, and in conjunction with their supervisor, implement contingency plans for the department and position.

Students that are sick or exhibiting symptoms should report this to their instructors immediately from home, in conjunction with their instructor(s), implement plans to complete coursework.

COVID-19 Self-Reporting Form

<https://www.wncc.edu/about-wncc/campus-safety/covid-19-self-reporting-form>.

WNCC has updated its protocols on how employees and students should report COVID-19-related information to WNCC. In addition to reporting to your supervisor or your instructor(s) as mentioned in the previous paragraph, WNCC has implemented a self-reporting form. Employees and students who have met the following conditions are asked to report this information to WNCC by completing the online form.

- You have been excluded from campus because of symptoms
- You have tested positive for COVID-19
- You have been ordered to quarantine by a public health authority
- You have had close contact with another person who tested positive for COVID-19
- You have recovered from COVID-19

The form should be filled out in its entirety, and should be filled out each time your case progresses. For example, from a quarantine, to testing positive, to recovering from COVID-19. In this example, the report would be filled out three (3) times.

Documentation of quarantines, isolations, positive test results, and recoveries (if available), should be emailed to **covid19reporting@wncc.edu**.

Employees and students are required to fill out the recovery form before returning to campus, no exceptions.

Questions or concerns about reporting any of this information should be emailed to **covid19reporting@wncc.edu** and WNCC will respond as soon as possible.

WNCC continues to rely on local public health entities to work with employees and students to conduct contact tracing for all positive cases. Cooperation by employees and students is highly encouraged for the safety of all at WNCC.

Definitions:

- **Close contact** – a person that is less than six feet for 15 minutes or more with a person that is positive for COVID-19. People considered as a close contact during contact tracing will be ordered by public health officials to self-quarantine for 14 days and to get tested for COVID-19 if they begin experiencing symptoms.
- **Contact of a contact** – a person that is a contact of a close contact (outlined above). People considered a contact of a contact are not required to self-quarantine but should continue all the important precautions of staying six feet away from others, wearing a mask, monitoring for symptoms, and frequent handwashing or sanitizing.
- **Quarantine** – confirmed as a close contact and must stay home and monitor for symptoms for 14 days since the last exposure to prevent the spread of the virus. If symptoms appear, get tested.
- **Isolate** – confirmed with COVID-19 and must stay home and away from others for at least 10 days from when symptoms first appeared, at least three full days with no fever, and all other symptoms have improved.

Not abiding by self-quarantine or self-isolation requirements by health officials is enforceable as a misdemeanor offense per the Governor's Directed Health Measure.

- The WNCC Human Resources department will be as flexible as possible while maintaining a consistent leave administration process for employees.
- The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) has been extended through **March 31, 2021**. Employees should continue to use the EMER code when unable to work due to COVID-19. Beginning April 1, 2021, WNCC will no longer use the EMER leave code, and employees should utilize normal absence codes (sick, personal, vacation).
- If an employee will be absent for three (or more) days, please contact Jenny Keener in Human Resources for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) paperwork.

WNCC Face Covering Protocol

Continuing January 4, 2021, all WNCC employees and students will be required to wear face coverings at all times unless they are alone behind closed doors. Students when in their respective residence hall rooms will not be required to wear face coverings. This protocol applies to all WNCC locations.

Please make sure to arrive to campus each day with a face covering on before you enter any WNCC facility.

Acceptable Types and Use of Face Coverings

- WNCC defines acceptable face coverings as: Acceptable face coverings are a reusable cloth mask or disposable mask or face shield. Face shields should only be used in conjunction with an acceptable face covering. Regardless of type used, the mask should not be designed with an exhalation valve. All face coverings must extend from the bridge of the nose to below the chin, at minimum.
- Face coverings should be worn appropriately at all times when required.

Requests for Accommodations

- Employees should continue to work directly with Human Resources to request reasonable accommodations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Employees can begin the accommodation process by first completing a Employee Request for Accommodation form found on the WNCC Human Resource portal page.
- Students should continue to work with the Executive Dean of Students and Disability Services Officer to request reasonable accommodations during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Should there be concerns regarding not having a personal supply of masks, employees should contact Human Resources, and students should contact the Executive Dean of Students.

Campus Physical Distancing and Hygiene Practices

It is highly important that employees and students maintain awareness of their physical distancing from others while on campus. PPHD defines close contact as **“being within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more within a 24-hour period”** and maintaining this distance whenever possible significantly decreases the chance of transmission of the virus between persons.

Please follow these other practices for the safety of all while at WNCC

- Refrain from physical contact with others when possible (greeting, shaking hands, etc.)
- Respect occupancy limits of all spaces on campus.
- Follow all floor physical distancing stickers while waiting in line (where applicable).
- Refrain from moving furniture in all open public spaces, as these have been setup for appropriate physical distancing from others.
- Utilize hand hygiene after entering the building by either: washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or utilizing a hand sanitizing product with at least 60% alcohol.

- Sanitize items between use that are shared between persons.
- Use sneeze/cough etiquette even when wearing a face covering.
- Utilize hand hygiene after coughing, sneezing, blowing your nose, etc.
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose, and mouth without properly sanitized hands.
- Reusable cloth face coverings should be laundered after each day.

Meetings & Gatherings

- Employees are encouraged to conduct meetings and gatherings virtually via Zoom or through other traditional means (i.e. phone, email).
- All meetings and gatherings should be in compliance with Spring 2021 protocols and the current Nebraska Directed Health Measures.

Cleaning / Infection Control Protocols

Routine Cleaning

FBG Services will continue to clean routinely on a daily/nightly bases throughout all WNCC locations utilizing products and practices that are consistent with CDC and PPHD guidelines.

- Routine cleaning concerns and requests can continue to be made via the WNCC Requests system via the WNCC Portal by selecting “FBG Custodial Services.”

There are times where it is more practical for staff to clean and disinfect spaces between uses such as: between meeting space use, when sharing items such as computers between use, and occasionally in the classroom.

- Employees and Students should continue to utilize cleaning supplies given by WNCC to disinfect their work areas, classrooms, and personal spaces throughout the day.
- Employees can replenish cleaning supplies by contacting the Administrative Services department and requesting more products.
- Employees should check the label of their cleaning product for disinfection procedures to ensure proper disinfection occurs when cleaning.

Continuous Cleaning Process

- WNCC will continue a scheduled weekend deep cleaning (fogging) of all of our high traffic areas and classrooms at all locations.
- FBG will continue utilizing door markers to identify which spaces have been disinfected or need to be disinfected.
- Employees should continue to utilize the door markers by:
 - » Recognizing that when the door marker is **GREEN** upon entry, the space has been disinfected.
 - » Setting the markers to **RED** after utilizing a classroom or other space, or when leaving for the day.
 - » When entering a space with a **RED** marker, recognizing the space must be sanitized before use.
- Faculty will continue to assume the responsibility of sanitizing classroom spaces throughout each business day.

Teaching and Learning Environment

Lecture Courses

- In accordance with WNCC Face Covering protocols, faculty and students will both be required to wear face coverings for the entirety of the class.
- The maximum occupancy of a classroom should never be exceeded.
- Desks and furniture have been setup for appropriate physical distancing and faculty and students should refrain from moving furniture in the classroom.
- Hand hygiene and sanitation materials should be made available to the students before class.
- Faculty should be as flexible as possible while maintaining a consistent leave administration process for students in the classroom.

- Faculty will have the flexibility to conduct class times outdoors when feasible.
- Should a student begin to exhibit symptoms related to COVID-19 in the learning environment, faculty members should respectfully excuse the student from class.

Lab Courses

- WNCC understands that there are certain instances when appropriate physical distancing cannot be maintained such as (student and faculty one on one contact, lab times, etc.) but an awareness of close contact should be maintained to ensure we are not within 6 feet of another for more than 15 minutes if possible.
- During lab courses when students and faculty are working together in close proximity, faculty should cohort small groups of students together as much as possible for as long as possible to help further reduce the risk of virus transmission.
- Student internships and clinicals shall resume in the Spring 2021 semester.

Employee / Business Travel

All employees will continue to reserve vehicles ahead of time through Administrative Services on the Scottsbluff Campus, and with designated individuals on Alliance and Sidney campuses. Supervisor consideration and approval is required before any travel outside of the WNCC service area. The Travel Request Authorization form must also be completed and approved before the vehicle is authorized for use.

More than one employee will be allowed to use the same vehicle for travel as long as the following measures are utilized during travel:

- Use social distancing as much as possible. For example, when two persons are traveling the passenger should utilize the rear passenger seat while the driver maintains their seat.
- To avoid any potential exposure (being within 6 feet of each other for more than 15 minutes) to COVID-19 or any other illnesses, all passengers in the vehicle are required to wear masks for the duration of travel in the vehicle.
- Seatbelts must always be worn!
- The vehicle's ventilation system should not be set to recirculation mode, but to allow fresh air into the vehicle for the duration of travel. Fresh air can also be introduced into the vehicle by opening windows frequently, or for the duration of travel.
- If possible, employees should cohort themselves into vehicles by department, or by ensuring the same employees travel to and from the destination together.
- Employees who utilize WNCC vehicles for travel will be given supplies at checkout to sanitize the vehicle after use
- Employees are required to sanitize the vehicle before checking the vehicle back in.

Student Transport

WNCC has developed a process for transporting students to and from campus during this pandemic. The process is described below.

Employees who request a vehicle for student transport will be given one of WNCC's SUVs for transport. All WNCC SUVs will be stocked with appropriate PPE for transport (masks, hand sanitizer, facial tissues, etc.)

- Both the student and employee should wear face coverings before entering the vehicle and continue to wear them for the duration of travel.
- Both the employee and student should use proper hand hygiene before entering the vehicle.
- The vehicle's ventilation system should not be set to recirculation mode, but to allow fresh air into the vehicle for the duration of travel. Fresh air can also be introduced into the vehicle by opening windows frequently, or for the duration of travel.
- Employees should transport no more than two (2) students at one time in a WNCC transport vehicle. Students should be seated as follows to allow for social distancing as much as possible:
 - » One student in the second-row passenger side

- » One student in the third-row drivers side seat
- » The student's luggage and belongings should sit next to them in their seating row. Do not combine all luggage in the cargo space.
- All WNCC transport vehicles will be sanitized between use by FBG before it is authorized to be used again.
- If more than six students require transport at approximately the same time, arrangements should be made with Administrative Services department to schedule transport via bus/shuttle.

Travel Requiring Charter Bus / Shuttle

All travel arrangements that require the WNCC charter bus or shuttle will continue to be scheduled through the WNCC Information Coordinator.

Persons traveling via charter bus or shuttle are required to wear face coverings for the entirety of bus travel.

Arrangements will be made by the Information Coordinator and requester to allow for maximum physical distancing (i.e. multiple vehicles may be used to transport persons).

Bus/shuttle drivers should refrain from physical contact with travelers, and their personal belongings during the trip.

The event coordinator will be responsible for maintaining physical distancing during travel and for disinfection of the vehicles during and after use.

The event coordinator will be responsible for maintaining physical distancing during travel and for disinfection of the vehicles during and after use.

Should any person traveling become ill, or begin to exhibit symptoms of illness during travel, the event coordinator should be responsible for obtaining assistance from their department to activate the Spring semester student transport process. Persons who become ill during travel should not continue to travel with the rest of the group to further ensure transmission of the virus is limited or non-existent.

Residence Life

Health and Safety Responsibilities

- Facial coverings are required in all areas of college housing.
 - » Residents are not required to wear face coverings when in their own housing space.
- All residential students are prohibited from creating a health or safety hazard within College Housing.
- Residential students are required to comply with health and safety laws, orders, ordinances, regulations and health and safety guidance adopted by the College or Residence Life as it relates to public health crises, including COVID-19.
- Adherence to health and safety requirements applies to all residents, staff and visitors and extends to all aspects of residential life, including but not limited to, bedrooms, bathrooms, lounges, computer rooms, and all common spaces.

Quarantining/Isolation/Separation

- WNCC Residence Life has designated appropriate housing space for self-quarantine or self-isolation of students living on campus as not all residential rooms or halls are appropriate for self-quarantine or self-isolation.
- In those situations where a resident is required to self-quarantine or self-isolate, they may not be permitted to continue residing in their residential space for the quarantine or isolation period and may be provided alternative housing arrangements in the designated housing space as needed.
- At any time, the College may request or require a resident to leave college housing when that resident's continued presence in the housing community poses a health or safety risk for community members.

Distancing and De-Densifying Efforts

Residential students are required to comply with any de-densifying efforts needed on campus due to COVID-19 or other public health emergency.

Consolidation

Residential students are required to comply with any consolidation efforts needed on campus due to COVID-19 or other public health emergency, including, but not limited to, the relocation of all or some residential students to alternative housing in order to better use our staff/ building resources.

Dining

- Facial coverings are required in the dining hall unless seated and eating.
- Seating in the dining hall has been set up for appropriate physical distancing, and no more than three (3) persons are allowed at one table at a time.
- Self-serve buffets are not allowed.
- All meals will be served with disposable utensils and dishware.
- Dining Services will continue to provide meal deliveries to residents who are required to self-quarantine or self-isolate in Scottsbluff college housing.

Cleaning

- Residence Life will educate and inform residential students on appropriate cleaning protocols within their assigned spaces to reduce the spread of COVID-19 within residence halls.
- Residence Life will continue to implement and modify its cleaning protocols to address COVID-19 or other public health emergency in the interest of minimizing the spread of disease.

Visitation

- Off-campus visitors are not allowed in college housing until further notice.
- Residents visiting other students in college housing are required to follow all college housing check in and visitation procedures.

Athletics

The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) has ruled that all close-contact fall sports move to the Spring 2021 semester.

- WNCC Athletics has developed protocols for safe practices, workouts, team meetings, pre-screening for symptoms related to COVID-19, sanitation, and travel for the Spring 2021 semester.
- WNCC Athletics will allow spectators at all sporting events during the spring semester. All sporting events must follow the capacity and seating guidelines put forth by Directed Health Measures of the State of Nebraska at the time of the event, and the criteria for which was approved by Panhandle Public Health District for all events taking place in Cougar Palace.
- Face coverings are required for all spectators at WNCC Athletics events held in Cougar Palace.

Resources and Services

WNCC COVID-19 Web Page

Visit <https://www.wncc.edu/about-wncc/campus-safety/covid-19> to view all information regarding COVID-19 resources at WNCC.

Visitors

All community members, contractors, and vendors are subject to follow the procedures within the following sections of the following protocols:

- Before Coming to Campus
- WNCC Face Covering Protocol
- Campus Physical Distancing & Hygiene Practices
- Cleaning / Infection Control Practices
- Residence Life

COVID-19 Concerns or Questions?

Please report **COVID-19** concerns or protocol violations by emailing covid19@wncc.edu. WNCC will follow up on **ALL** concerns or violations reported.