



COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan

Last Updated: 4/15/21

Introduction

In order to prioritize the health and safety of students, visitors, faculty, and staff, and being committed to transitioning back to in-person instruction, Pennsylvania Highlands Community College has established a health and safety task force which developed this Health and Safety Plan. This plan provides a path forward including considerations to support healthy, safe, and inclusive learning environments when resuming in-person instruction, operations, services, and activities.

This plan is based on what is currently known about COVID-19 and incorporates existing federal and state public health and safety recommendations directed at postsecondary institutions. It should also be noted that this plan may change as new information becomes available.

Contact Information

Please contact the following individuals if you have any questions or concerns.

- Employees should contact the Assistant VP of Human Resources: 262-3833
- Students and visitors should contact the Director of Safety and Security: 262-3837
- Anyone with questions about facilities and cleaning protocols should contact the Director of Facilities: 262-3842
- Anyone with general questions should contact the Vice President of Finance and Administration: 262-3822
- Students with accommodation requests (e.g., face masks) should contact the ADA Specialist: 262-6468

Additional Resource Information

- Pennsylvania Department of Health at www.health.pa.gov
- Center for Disease Control (CDC) at www.cdc.com

COVID-19 Pandemic Phases of College Operation (as Determined by PA Agencies)

Pennsylvania authorities have indicated that the College will follow the mandates imposed during green, yellow, and red phases. The Governor of Pennsylvania may move individual counties into different phases or revise the mandates within each phase without notice.

Red Phase

The red phase of the PA plan represents the most restrictive and aggressive mitigation efforts of the state and has the sole purpose of minimizing the spread of COVID-19 through social distancing, closure of non-life sustaining businesses, and aggressive building safety protocols.

- Telework required for all non-essential staff.
- Virtual-only instruction is mandated. However, clinical training and in-person instruction is permitted for selected programs preparing individuals for licensure as long as social distancing guidelines are enforced.
- Large gatherings are prohibited.

- CDC, DOH, and PDE guidance continues to be adhered to.
- Monitor public health indicators and adjust plans as necessary.

In the yellow phase, limited in-person instruction may resume at the College. Additionally, clinical training and field experience for all individuals preparing for licensure and certification are also permitted. However, before resuming in-person instruction, operations, services, and activities, institutions must plan and implement strategies to support healthy, safe, and inclusive learning environments informed by guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Yellow Phase

Work in the yellow phase is less restrictive than the red phase.

- Telework should continue for faculty and staff where feasible, especially for populations at higher risk for COVID-19.
- In-person instruction is allowed as long as social distancing guidelines are enforced.
- Large gatherings are prohibited.
- CDC, DOH, and PDE guidance continues to be adhered to.
- Monitor public health indicators and adjust plans as necessary.

Green Phase

Work in the green phase is much less restrictive than either the yellow or red phases, but the College will continue to adhere to many restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- The College may more fully resume in-person instruction and other routine operations though telework will be considered for some employees.
- Indoor gatherings of more than 25 are prohibited.
- Outdoor gatherings of more than 250 people are prohibited.
- Penn Highland's Cafe will remain open for indoor dining, with social distancing requirements in place.
- CDC, DOH, and PDE guidance continues to be adhered to.
- Monitor public health indicators and adjust plans as necessary.

Personal Responsibility

While the College can carefully plan for many scenarios, it is important that students, visitors, and employees abide by relevant College health and safety rules and assume personal responsibility to protect the health of everyone who works and learns on our campus. The College expects everyone to:

- Assume personal responsibility to protect themselves and others.
- Implement personal health safety practices on campus such as wearing a face covering and adhering to social distancing guidelines.
- Purchase their own face coverings.
- Wash hands frequently and use hand sanitizer as necessary.

Campus Health and Safety Practices

- College personnel will ensure that ventilation and exhaust systems are properly operating and will increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible.
- All rooms within the College will be subject to increased cleaning and disinfection based on a cleaning protocol consistent with CDC guidance. The facilities team at Penn Highlands will routinely perform enhanced cleaning. However, everyone at Penn Highlands will also be expected to do their part and wipe down personal work surfaces and frequently touched areas to stop the spread of illness. Disinfectant wipes will be provided in high traffic areas.
- Social distancing will be practiced by all employees, visitors, and students. Everyone should maintain a safe social distance of at least 6 feet apart when feasible. This includes offices, classrooms, laboratories, hallways, restrooms, common areas, and outdoor spaces.
- The College has installed plastic partitions or barriers in places where extended face-to-face services occur. Face coverings are still required in locations where physical barriers are installed. In-person appointments with employees will be limited when possible. Instead, employees will encourage students and visitors to use alternative methods of contact such as email, chat, and telephone calls instead of in-person visits.
- All employees, visitors, and students will be required to wear a face covering (see below).

Face Coverings

Everyone is required to wear facial coverings within any Pennsylvania Highlands Community College facility, as mandated by Pennsylvania State agencies.

- Commercially manufactured or homemade masks are acceptable and must cover the nose and mouth while fitting snugly against the face.
- Individuals who want to enter any building of Penn Highlands must bring their own personal face covering.
- Faculty and instructors may wear a face shield when teaching.
- Facial coverings must always be worn throughout any building operated by Penn Highlands except for when eating and while abiding by all other social distancing guidelines.
- The CDC and PDE allow for individuals eating to remove their masks. Masks can remain off while eating or drinking if the person remains seated and socially distanced from others.
- If a person cites a medical exemption for wearing a face mask, that person must present a printed, signed note by a practicing medical doctor to the College's ADA Specialist (located in the Student Success Center in the Richland campus) and request an accommodation and evaluate potential alternatives. Please contact the ADA specialist by phone (262-6468) if you have a question or need to schedule an appointment.
- Students who cannot wear a mask will be counseled to take remote classes as much as possible; however, if the student participates in in-person instruction then they will be required to wear a face shield (which meets PA Dept. Of Health guidelines) at their expense.

Monitoring Health Conditions of Campus Community

The College encourages self-reporting and self-quarantining. Self-reporting of symptoms by students and employees is imperative to contain a local outbreak of COVID-19. For students, the College will make every effort to mitigate any negative impact of quarantine on class grades or employment status.

- Penn Highlands does not have residential students and COVID-19 testing will not be provided. Penn Highlands recommends individuals seek appropriate medical care should a potential COVID-19 exposure occur or if they are experiencing symptoms.
- Individuals who develop symptoms prior to arriving at campus should notify their supervisor or instructor and stay home. Individuals who develop symptoms while on campus should separate from others and return home immediately.
- Penn Highlands employees may contact Human Resources if they have visited an area of high COVID-19 prevalence and are concerned about returning to on-site work.
- Students who know they have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 should report that information to the Office of Security and Safety at 262-6427 while employees should phone the Human Resources office. It is recommended that the person self-quarantine and have a COVID test conducted.

Quarantine Recommendations After SARS-CoV-2 Vaccination

People who are vaccinated against COVID-19 do **NOT** need to quarantine after an exposure to another person with COVID-19 if they meet **ALL** the following criteria:

- They are fully vaccinated (i.e., ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine);
- They are within 3 months following receipt of the last dose in the series; AND,
- They have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.

Regardless of vaccination status, persons who exhibit new or unexplained symptoms of COVID-19 still need to isolate and be evaluated for COVID-19 testing.

Close contacts who have not received vaccine or who do not meet all of the above criteria must follow existing quarantine guidance.

Protocol for a Confirmed COVID-19 Case on Campus

The College will take the following steps if a COVID-19 case has been confirmed on one of its campuses.

- May notify Pennsylvania Department of Health at 1-877-PA-HEALTH to report single/multiple positive test results or to seek guidance regarding planning/mitigation efforts.
- If warranted, the College will close potentially contaminated rooms or buildings to visitors, students, and non-essential employees for a minimum of 24 hours. All areas may be re-opened

after proper cleaning and disinfecting per CDC guidance. It may be possible to keep large portions of the campus safely open even if a case of COVID-19 has been identified.

- Communicate close contact exposure information with students, employees, and stakeholders.
- Ensure continuity of education for those impacted by any temporary suspension of in-person operations. Instruction will continue remotely during this interruption. Follow CDC guidance if individuals were in close contact with someone who became infected with the disease.
- Access additional CDC guidance on dealing with confirmed cases on campus.
- Students or employees who have been exposed should self-quarantine in accordance with CDC and state guidance. See information at the end of the document for guidance.
- The College may screen for symptoms of COVID-19 including body temperature checks, when warranted. Individuals exhibiting symptoms:
 - Will not be permitted to enter campus buildings.
 - Are strongly advised to self-quarantine at home.
 - May not participate in any institution-sponsored events or activities including those off campus.
 - Should consult with their medical provider about options for testing and necessary treatment.

Communication Plan

In order to communicate accurate and timely information to the College community, the College will utilize multiple communication modalities including posting information using email, internal posters, social media, the College website, intranet, text messaging (Signal Vine) and through press releases. Faculty will be asked to add a statement to their syllabus about health and safety precautions and will be provided a short presentation that can be presented to their students on the first day of class. Please contact the Office of Safety & Security with additional questions at 262-6427.

Room Capacities and Gatherings

In order to abide by social distancing guidelines and PA directives, any gatherings of employees or students will be reduced in size.

- Gathering limits in place:
 - Indoor events: 25% of maximum occupancy, regardless of venue size and only if attendees and workers are able to comply with the 6-foot physical distancing requirement.
 - Outdoor events: 50% of maximum occupancy, regardless of venue size and only if attendees and workers are able to comply with the 6-foot physical distancing requirement.
- Common seating areas on campus, in classroom buildings (including the library), and in dining facilities will be reduced to encourage social distancing.
- Student groups will be advised to host remote group events, gatherings, or meetings, to the extent possible.

- Classrooms have reduced occupancy to accommodate appropriate social distancing of 6 feet between individuals when feasible or to implement other social distancing strategies that reduce risk of transmission between students in the classroom.
- Chairs have either been removed or taped off in all classrooms to encourage social distancing.
- Dining facilities and operations have been reconfigured to ensure that diners are 6-feet apart or partitions have been put in place to provide added protection.
- All occupancy strategies do not prohibit access for students with disabilities, including physical locations/spaces, instruction, student services, and activities if they are limited and abide by all ADA regulations.

Employee Work Expectations

It remains critical to keep the College community safe and mitigate fears related to COVID-19. Where possible and feasible, personnel will be encouraged to telework or to combine telework with on-campus presence. The needs of vulnerable populations and the mental health of personnel have been considered when establishing return-to-work protocols. The College will protect vulnerable populations by:

- Providing accommodations for individuals at higher risk of COVID-19 and individuals with disabilities.
- Ensuring any accommodations for people with disabilities are consistent with ADA laws and regulations.
- Telework will continue whenever possible and with supervisor approval, even when in-person instruction, operations, services, and activities continue.
- Some employees may have rotating schedules of on-campus or telework to limit the number of personnel on campus at one time.
- Providing opportunities to telework for employees with underlying health conditions or for employees who are experiencing a mental health crisis as a result of COVID-19.
- Travel for College business will only occur if essential.
- Implementing telework options for employees who are ill, but able to work from home (dependent upon position and with supervisor approval).
- Implementing leave options under the Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) for employees who cannot work for reasons related to COVID-19.

Course Modifications and Adaptations

The College will provide courses using various modalities of teaching including socially distanced in-person teaching, synchronous remote learning (live classes broadcast via the Internet), hybrid courses (some in-person and some remote), and traditional online course work.

- Students will be counseled to take the proper modality that fits their learning style and their desire for an in-person learning experience.
- All classes are flexible enough to transition to a fully online environment if necessary.
- All on-campus students will be expected to follow all the rules in place in this document.

Terms and Definitions per CDC

Close Contact – Someone who has been within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to specimen collection) until the time the patient was isolated.

Exposure – Having come into contact with a cause of, or possessing a characteristic that is a determinant of, a particular health problem.

Isolation – Separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.

Quarantine – Separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.

ACTION PLAN IF STUDENT/EMPLOYEE HAD CONTACT WITH A CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE

No **Close** Contact and they are asymptomatic.

No further action is needed.

Self-Report Close Contact/Exposure

Not allowed on campus, if already on campus they will be sent home immediately.

Quarantine for 10 days, or a 7-day quarantine with a negative test on or after day 5 of quarantine.

If symptoms develop, they should seek medical attention and isolate for an additional 10 days.

- College:**
- Follow established communications plan to notify staff, students and families.
 - May notify Pennsylvania Health Department
 - Clean and disinfect the area(s) where the staff member was present.
 - Identify corrective actions, if any, that can be taken for the future.

- Person:**
- Stay home, self-isolate
 - Seek medical attention
 - Remain home until:
 - at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared,
 - AND remain symptom free for at least 3 days (72 hours) (defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications),
 - AND other symptoms have improved.

ACTION PLAN IF STUDENT/EMPLOYEE APPEARS SICK

