

COVID-19

Fall 2021 Semester Safe Operating Protocols



August 2021

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COVID-19 Fall 2021 Semester Safe Operating Protocols

This plan outlines the approved protocols for Western Nebraska Community College for the Fall 2021 semester, and applies to credit and non-credit classes at all campus 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/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>

OpenSmartEDU.org

<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 continues to closely monitor COVID-19 and is engaged in numerous efforts to prevent, mitigate, and respond to the pandemic. 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.

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 fall semester.

Communication Methods

WNCC has identified multiple modes of communicating COVID-19 updates, so please pay attention to the following sources for information:

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

#HealthyAtWNCC

- WNCC continues to utilize physical barriers (plexiglass, or “sneeze guards”) with high levels of traffic and contact
- Appropriate social distances are marked on floors in high traffic areas.
- WNCC mask covering guidelines and COVID-19 safety informational posters have been placed throughout all buildings.
- WNCC still has access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), hand hygiene products, and cleaning materials to support the college population for this semester. WNCC employees should reach out to Administrative Services for those supplies.

Before Coming to Campus

As recommended by PPHD, employees and students should continue to monitor themselves for symptoms related to COVID-19 throughout the summer, 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*

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 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.



Public Health Recommendations for the Screening, Exclusion, and Re-Admittance of Ill People

The following symptom screening criteria for ill people 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 in identifying possible COVID-19 cases.

People with two of the following: a fever of 100.4 or above, chills, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea or fatigue

OR:

At least one of the following: sudden onset of cough, sudden onset of shortness of breath or sudden loss of taste or smell

OR:

Has at least one symptom and answers yes to: Have you been around anyone that has tested positive for COVID-19 or in isolation?

If at home:

- Self-Isolate until results are received
- Get Tested for COVID-19

If at school/work/childcare

- Go home
- Self-Isolate until results are received
- Get Tested for COVID-19

<http://www.pphd.org/COVID-19.html>

Re-Admittance to Work/School/Childcare

Symptomatic person 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 person 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 work/school/childcare if an alternative diagnosis is established with a health care provider's note.

Symptomatic person who tests negative:

Exclude until fever free for 24 hours (or meets the work/school/childcare requirements for readmission) **AND** improved respiratory symptoms

Asymptomatic person who tests positive:

Exclude for 10 days from date of test **AND** only allow to return if no symptoms develop. If symptoms develop, refer to symptomatic positive instructions.

There is no reason for a person to get a “negative test” to be cleared for the return to work/school/childcare. 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 communicated by public health.

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, and 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>.

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.

Contact Tracing 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.

For Employees

- The WNCC Human Resources department will be as flexible as possible while maintaining a consistent leave administration process for employees.
- 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.
- The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) has been extended through **September 30, 2021**. If you have questions regarding COVID-19-related sick leave, contact Human Resources for questions.

COVID-19 Testing Opportunities

CAPWN

Exclusively for WNCC, Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska (CAPWN) offers DRIVE-THRU tests on Mondays and Fridays from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. To schedule a test, call 308-672-9846. If the phone isn't answered, leave a message with your name, date of birth, and call-back number.

CAPWN offers testing for the general public that can also be utilized by WNCC employees and students. This DRIVE-THRU clinic is offered on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays from 7:00 – 8:00 a.m. Follow this link to schedule a COVID-19 test on these dates: <https://tinyurl.com/ydxdx5mc>.

Employees and students can also call his/her health care provider, hospital, or clinic for testing opportunities. For more information, visit http://www.pphd.org/COVID-19_testing.html.

WNCC Face Covering Protocol

All WNCC employees, students, and community members will be required to wear face coverings in the following areas on campus where multiple people will be gathered:

- Classrooms (all campuses)
- Conference/Meeting Rooms (all campuses)
- Cougar Palace (Scottsbluff Campus)
- Judy Chaloupka Theater (Scottsbluff Campus)
- Bishop Dining Hall (Scottsbluff Campus)
- Harms Center High and Low Bays (Scottsbluff Campus)

Facial coverings will not be required in commons spaces, work areas, hallways, restrooms, etc.

Individuals can continue to wear face coverings if they choose in non-required spaces, and we ask that everyone be respectful of each other's personal decisions.

Acceptable Types and Use of Face Coverings

WNCC defines acceptable face coverings as:

- A reusable cloth mask, 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.

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 Office of Student Life.

Campus Physical Distancing & Hygiene Practices

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

- Refrain from physical contact with others when possible (greeting, shaking hands, etc.)
- Follow all floor physical distancing stickers while waiting in line (where applicable).
- 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 can schedule meetings in person, or continue to conduct them virtually via Zoom or through other traditional means (i.e. phone, email) if he/she prefers.
- All meetings and gatherings should be in compliance with Fall 2021 protocols.

Cleaning / Infection Control Protocols

Routine Cleaning

FBG Services will continue to clean routinely on a daily/nightly basis 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 in the WNCC Portal by selecting "FBG Custodial Services."

There are times, however, where it is more practical for staff to clean and disinfect spaces between uses, and 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 Administrative Services. Be sure to check the label of the cleaning product for disinfection procedures to ensure proper disinfection occurs when cleaning.

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.
- 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 there are instances when appropriate physical distancing cannot be maintained, but an awareness of close contact should be maintained.
- 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.
- Students can participate in internships and clinicals during the Fall 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, located on the WNCC Portal, 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.
- All passengers in the vehicle are required to wear face coverings while traveling 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.
- 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 a process for transporting students to and from campus during this pandemic. See below.

- Employees who request a vehicle for student transport will be given a WNCC SUV for transport. All vehicles will be stocked with appropriate PPE for transport (masks, hand sanitizer, facial tissues, etc.)
- 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. 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 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.
- Bus/shuttle drivers should refrain from physical contact with travelers and their 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.
- 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 Fall 2021 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

- Face coverings are required in the following areas of the residence halls:
 - Community kitchens
 - laundry rooms
 - computer labs
 - study spaces
 - residence hall lobbies
 - Pioneer Activity Center
 - Toadstool Conference Room
- Face coverings are **not** required in secured residential areas, including residence hall rooms.
- Residential students are required to comply with health and safety laws, orders, ordinances, regulations and health and safety guidance adopted by WNCC or WNCC Residence Life as it relates to public health crises, including COVID-19.
- Residential students who are exhibiting symptoms or have tested positive for COVID-19 should follow COVID-19 protocols and remove themselves from classes and activities in order to minimize transmission.
- Adherence to health and safety requirements applies to all residents, staff, and visitors.

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 assigned 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, WNCC 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 Bishop Dining Hall unless seated and eating.
- Dining Services will provide meal deliveries to residents who are required to self-quarantine or self-isolate in Conestoga or Pioneer residence halls.

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.
- Sanitation stations will be provided in all residential environments, equipped with hand sanitizer and alcohol wipes.
- Face coverings and alcohol wipes will be given to every student when they check in.

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.

Resources

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 following procedures within the Fall 2021 SOP:

- 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.