

SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOL OF MINES  
COVID-19 RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE GUIDELINES

May 20, 2020



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# Returning to the Workplace Guidelines

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## Workplace Expectations and Guidance

South Dakota School of Mines' policies and protocols for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic are rooted in the safety and well-being of the employees, guests and public we interact with. Employees are expected to comply with policies, protocols, and guidelines outlined in this document. Failure to do so may result in corrective action.

## Phased Staffing

As of June 1, 2020, SD Mines will phase-in a return of staff over time in a coordinated process to ensure appropriate social distancing measures. Supervisors will communicate expectations with staff regarding their scheduled return to the office and eventual return to normal operations. Effective June 1, 2020, administrative leave will not be available to employees who are not able to complete their full duties remotely. If changes to operations have caused a decreased workload for employees, supervisors will work with their VP/Executive Council Member or Human Resources.

As staffing on campus increases and operations expand, officials will closely monitor and assess the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus, in Pennington County. If localized outbreaks occur, tighter restrictions and reduced staffing may need to be implemented again in accordance with guidance from the SD Department of Health.

## High Risk Categories

The CDC has identified that individuals with certain conditions may have a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 infection. Currently, those at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- People 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised
  - Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medication. Please consult with your physician if you have concerns about being immunocompromised.
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

Employees who are in a high-risk category or have family members who reside in their home that are in a high risk category, and are concerned about returning to work should contact their supervisor to discuss options for an accommodation. Accommodations could include remote work, implementing social distancing measures, development of an alternative work schedule, use of leave, or any other arrangement deemed appropriate.

## Symptom Monitoring

SD Mines will implement required screening protocols for employees who return to the worksite. Until that time, employees should self-monitor symptoms using a symptom checker. Apple, Inc. and the CDC partnered to develop this online [symptom checker](#) to assist with evaluating your symptoms. The SD Department of Health also provides this [helpful tool](#) to assist in assessing your symptoms. The University recommends that each employee go through the symptom checker checklist daily to ensure symptoms are not overlooked or ignored.

Employees must contact their supervisor prior to coming to campus if any of the following symptoms occur:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Runny nose or new sinus congestion
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- New GI symptoms
- New loss of taste or smell

If you are experiencing these symptoms, or are overall just not feeling well, DO NOT come to work and contact your healthcare provider. Notify your supervisor and develop a plan with them on utilizing sick leave or working remotely if applicable to your situation.

### Telehealth Services

To help slow the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the South Dakota State Employee Health Plan will cover 100% of the cost for Telehealth services for the period of March 16 through June 30. Telehealth services are a convenient and affordable video alternative that can help minimize exposure for others during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you experience symptoms, a video visit can be an excellent way to contact a health care provider conveniently from your own home.

You should contact your health care provider if you have reason to believe you have been exposed to the virus, even if you are not showing any symptoms. Notify your supervisor so that they can assist you in properly assessing the situation.

## Close Contact with Person with COVID-19

If you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who is being tested for COVID-19, you should follow the instructions found in the attached *“COVID-19 What Should I Do Infographic.”* Close contact is defined as spending prolonged periods of time in the same room (more than 5 minutes), direct personal contact (e.g., hugging), contact with respiratory secretions (e.g. cough, sneeze on you), and shared eating/drinking utensils.

### COVID-19 Positive Employee in the Workplace

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19 and has been at the workplace, Human Resources will work with the South Dakota Department of Health on individual employee or agency issues. Human Resources will give additional direction on those specific issues as they arise.

Supervisors can require that employees to go home if they are suspected to be sick. The employee would then be allowed to utilize sick leave if they have available accrual.

## Available Leave for COVID-19 Infection, Quarantine, or Loss of Childcare

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (“Act”), enacted on March 18, 2020, provides employees with access to emergency paid sick leave (“EPSL”) for certain leave requests related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, there are provisions to provide partially-paid FMLA leave for those who do not have childcare due to COVID-19.

### Details are outlined here:

- [Department of Labor FFCRA Information](#)
- [SD Mines Employee FFCRA FAQ](#)

If you have questions related to the use of these leaves, please contact your supervisor or human resources office.

## Personal Safety Practices

### Face Coverings

Employees will be supplied one cloth mask by SD Mines, but everyone should have multiple face coverings. All students, faculty, and staff are expected to wear face coverings when other people will be encountered especially in common spaces (e.g., hallways, classrooms, recreational facilities, work areas, elevators, restrooms, retail spaces) or any other areas where it may be difficult to maintain a minimum 6 feet distance from other persons.

Face coverings worn for extended periods should be laundered or hand washed at least daily using regular laundry detergent. Face coverings issued by the university become the property of the user, and are the responsibility of that individual to ensure proper laundering. See CDC Guidelines for use of cloth masks.

### Social Distancing

Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus and slowing its spread. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms. Social distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk of getting very sick. To promote the concept of social distancing, in offices, labs, and study spaces, please ensure there is a minimum of 6 feet between desks, workstations, computer terminals, and individual study areas.

### Handwashing & Office Hygiene

Hand sanitizer dispensers will be available throughout campus. Faculty and Staff will receive a bottle hand sanitizer for their desk that can be refilled. Cleaning supplies will also be provided, please assist in cleaning and disinfecting surfaces that are frequently touched, including cell phones, desk phones, keyboards, remote controls, refrigerators, countertops, and door handles. Cleaning individual workspaces are the responsibility of the employee.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching your face. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and wash your hands after touching your face.

Cover your mouth with tissues when you sneeze and immediately discard them in the trash.

### Meetings

Meetings should continue virtually whenever possible to prevent contact and free up meeting spaces for possible use as offices for employees who are displaced from shared offices, or for use as classrooms. In-person meetings must be kept to adjusted capacity of the room, whichever is larger, while still maintaining a minimum of 6 feet of separation for social distancing.

## Up-To-Date Information

The following websites will provide you with up-to-date information on COVID-19.

- [Covid.sd.gov](https://www.southdakota.gov/covid-19) - Department of Health website with up-to-date information on COVID-19 in South Dakota.
- [CDC Coronavirus Page](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) - The official CDC page for COVID-19.