



**Northern
COLLEGE**

COVID-19 PANDEMIC OPERATIONAL PLAN

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY
COVID-19 PANDEMIC OPERATIONAL
PLAN**

SUBJECT	COVID-19 PANDEMIC OPERATIONAL PLAN
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1.0 Overview

As Northern College moves into various phases of Recovery for COVID-19, it is critical that public health measures and workplace guidelines established by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development are followed to reduce the risk of further waves of COVID-19. The College is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and learning environment for its students, staff, faculty, contractors and visitors, at all College facilities. Northern also recognize that mental health awareness is a key component of an ever-growing commitment to a safe work environment.

A gradual lifting of restrictions while watching closely for any resurgence is the best way to protect community health. Flexibility and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances will therefore guide our actions until the end of the 2019-2020 Academic Year, and throughout the 2020-2021 Academic Year.

In order to achieve this and move from recovery to a phased in opening, a Pandemic Recovery Committee has been established to guide us. This Committee will work to format an overarching plan/guideline to ensure that our campuses have the necessary tools to adjust to a phased in approach of the re-opening of our facilities. The Committee is comprised of College staff from various departments and disciplines, including Senior Management, supervisors, and Mental Health and Safety representatives. Joint Occupational Health and Safety committees will then be provided the opportunity to comment on the plan.

Smaller and more customized plans for each department, program, area, service and site that demonstrate how to conduct business going forward in a careful and methodical way to protect everyone to the greatest extent possible while still delivering education to our students, will be developed.

The intention of the plans will be to ensure that the gradual re-opening of our Campuses is a thoughtful, measured approach as we protect the safety and mental health of our employees, as well as those we serve, educate, and interact with in our communities.

2.0 Operational Plan

2.1 COVID – 19 Awareness

Signage must be posted on proper hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, self-assessment, contact tracing and physical distancing throughout the facility in accordance with the local Health Units. Signage will be placed at any common entrance and where people tend to congregate. Signage will be checked weekly by the H&S Coordinator or the respective Campus Manager and upgraded if required as per provincial and local Health Unit Guidelines

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The College will clarify expectations of staff, students, visitors and external service providers/contractors before their return to campus using various communication channels such as emails, social media and College portals. The message will be clear that those expectations are to promote the physical distancing requirements at all times between themselves and the people they study/work with. The College will encourage students, faculty and staff to use non-contact greetings with each other that are positive and reminds others to keep a safe distance. College community members who are either symptomatic and/or have been advised by Public Health to self-isolate have to remain home and are not to enter the premises under any circumstances.

The College will develop an online orientation to prepare students, faculty and staff for the return to campus. This presentation will consist of instructional content on PPE wearing, disinfecting and cleaning, social distancing as per local health units guideline and outline the College health and safety protocols. The orientation is to be made mandatory with an acknowledgment and receipt before persons can enter the College once they sign in (certificate they receive from completing the orientation).

2.2 Communication

Communication is key to the success of our business as we adapt quickly to new working situations. Updates such as physical distancing measures, school closures and self-isolation rules have led to various new working scenarios, including remote work, rotating shifts and retrofitted work environments. It is vital to stay in touch with workers, students, partners and others in the community, to maintain a sense of belonging and keep good ideas and actionable items flowing. Strong, consistent and relevant employee communications are fundamental to the adaptation of our business during this disruption, and the development, resourcing, and implementation of a solid plan for frequent, on-target and timely communications will help us rebound more quickly as we move forward. Uncertain times can cause stress and anxiety. Keeping in touch on a regular basis when required as the pandemic evolves- can mitigate and help manage much of this. Employees will also be looking for reassurance and guidance along with the clarification of goals. Regular feedback, encouragement, and support can help individuals and teams stay on track and keep well. This is true for both remote and on-site employees. Our staff and students need to know that their wellness and mental health are important at every stage of recovery.

2.3 Joint Health and Safety

The College will work with their respective Joint Health and Safety Committees or Pandemic Committee (ensuring that the pandemic committee includes representation from the JHSC) to consult on the College reopening plan outlining how they will manage the safe opening and operation of their campuses. The JHSC is to consider direction provided by the local public health authority as well as guidelines from provincial and federal governments. The 'Pandemic Recovery: Return to Business Checklist' that Workplace Safety and Prevention Services has developed covers a number of key questions to be addressed.

2.4 Screening

Prior to entering campus, all persons will be asked to self-assess through questions identified on signage at designated entrances. If individuals have answered "yes" to any of the questions they will not be allowed on the premises and will be directed to contact the local health unit. The College will be prepared to work with local public

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health authorities to implement appropriate screening measures on campus throughout the staged re-opening of the Colleges.

2.5 Campus Community Tracking

If an employee or student tests positive for COVID-19, the local public health unit may ask the College to provide information on where they worked/studied as well as the contact information of any other member of the campus community who may have been exposed. The College will comply with this request as per Government and health unit regulations. The College will maintain restricted access points and remind employees to remain in their office during work hours and have all personnel entering the College sign in and out in order to help facilitate the tracking protocol throughout our Recovery Plan.

2.6 Cleaning Protocols

Increased cleaning and disinfection protocols will be implemented and communicated across all campuses, as per direction provided by local public health authorities (please see appendix for information on cleaning public places). Existing guidelines from provincial and federal governments are to be adhered to and additional measures could be considered. During each stage of re-opening cleaning protocols will be reviewed in accordance with provincial and local public health guidelines.

2.7 Mental Health

It is important to recognize that students, faculty, staff and visitors may need extraordinary support because of the anxiety and uncertainty created by COVID-19.

This can be a very stressful and potentially disorienting time for many students and employees. Meeting their needs will require additional measures such as providing training for student peers, offering enhanced EAP services, deploying wellness ambassadors and extending additional support for staff. The College may also need to be able to respond to the additional health and wellness challenges created for our communities by this pandemic. There are several resources that can help address mental health in the learning environment, including those developed by the Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health.

2.8 Physical Distancing – for as long as required by public health

Further details can be viewed in each departmental reopening plan as appropriate. In order to accommodate physical distancing requirements, individuals must not be permitted to congregate in groups. To the greatest extent possible, on-campus activities are to allow for a minimum distance of two meters or six feet between individuals at all times. For the most part, our campus hallways are wide enough to allow for ease of flow in both directions. In areas where this cannot be accomplished directional arrows will be visible. In all campuses where physical distancing cannot be attained, masks will be mandatory. These physical distancing requirements will continue to be updated based on direction from government and health officials. Please refer to the specific departmental operational plans for more detail.

In elevators, the maximum number of riders will be two in accordance with physical distancing requirements and signage will indicate this. Assess washrooms and entrances to determine if physical distancing is possible – limit

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numbers or close as appropriate and use signage to outline expectations for distancing. Assess areas such as hallways, bus stops, common areas, cue lines and other areas where congestion occurs to ensure physical distancing practices are promoted and enforced.

In instances where physical distancing is not feasible such as labs and shops, the College will work with local public health authorities to develop alternative forms of protection. The College will promote adherence to physical distancing requirements through signage and classroom instruction on College COVID protocols and consider internal disciplinary policies to enforce the requirements in accordance with the College Code of Conduct.

In order to reduce the pressures related to physical distancing in the early stages of the re-opening, the College will continue to minimize the number of students on campus by offering the majority of its courses in an online format. With respect to classroom activity, teaching ratios and classroom layouts may need to be amended to accommodate safe physical distances as on-campus activity resumes in accordance with provincial and health unit guidelines. As required the College will; identify and use alternate locations (gyms, conference rooms, larger classrooms, lecture halls, etc.) to put more distance between students and their instructors. The College will also:

- Add floor markings and barriers to manage traffic flow and physical distancing. Install barriers where needed; this can include plexi-glass or markings on the floor to ensure at least 2 meters of separation.
- Where there are two doorways to a classroom, designate an 'entry' and an 'exit' door. Stagger start times, breaks and lunch times may be incorporated in Stage 3 as per our Reopening Plan.
- Increase the amount of time between classes.
- Restrict the number of people on-site and where they are assigned to work as per each departmental plan
- Restrict movement from provided office space to other areas of the College in accordance with the College's On Site Protocol (see appendix)
- Control site movement by limiting the potential for people to gather.
- Limit the number of people working in one space at the same time.
- Minimize the number of people using each piece of equipment or technology in instances where sharing cannot be avoided. This can be accomplished by alternate schedules or rotation.
- Provide proper cleaning/safety disinfecting materials (wipes, spray etc.) if equipment needs to be shared. To avoid the potential for contamination.
- Hold meetings virtually or in a large space if the meeting cannot be accommodated virtually. Adhere to limitations on the number of people allowed to gather.
- Limit unnecessary on-site interaction between employees.
- All those who are able to work or study remotely will be encouraged to do so until further notice is given with regard to physical distancing requirements.

2.9 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The College will ensure it has all the necessary PPE supplies as required by their operational plan, which could include non-medical masks, disposable gloves, face shields, hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes, plexiglass. The requirements for PPE may vary based on advice from local public health authorities. Students in the healthcare

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sector may have a higher potential risk of coming into contact with infected persons. Healthcare students who interact with patients, are to wear PPE as required by the employer and/or instructor based on the industry standard and public health guideline.







It is recognized that many colleges donated PPE to community partners in response to the shortage of supplies. The College will ensure it has sufficient PPE inventory prior to reopening. Recognizing that the PPE shortage may persist, the College will work collaboratively on a procurement initiative and/or advocate for government assistance.

Wear a face covering when physical distancing is a challenge.

Do:

-  Wear a non-medical face covering like a cloth mask.
-  Wash your hands before putting it on and immediately after taking it off.
-  Make sure it fits well and covers your nose and mouth.
-  Change your face covering when it gets slightly wet or dirty.
-  Wash your face covering in hot water with detergent after each use.
-  Dispose of single-use face coverings into a lined garbage bin and wash your hands.


Do not:

-  Do not wear a medical-grade mask as these should be reserved for our health care workers.
-  Do not share face coverings with others.
-  Do not touch or move your face covering when wearing it.
-  Do not place on children under the age of two years or on anyone who can't take it off on their own.
-  Do not use plastic or other materials that you can't breathe through as a face covering.
-  Do not re-use face coverings that cannot be cleaned.

It is recommended you wear a face covering when physical distancing is a challenge. Stop the spread of COVID-19.
The best way to protect yourself is to continue to stay home as much as possible, wash your hands thoroughly and often, and stay 2 metres apart from others.

Visit ontario.ca/coronavirus

Ontario



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3.0 Additional Considerations

The specific measures outlined in this plan are all considered to be additional health and safety measures designed to supplement existing public health and industry guidelines. For each specific program or on-campus activity, additional considerations will need be reviewed and outlined in each campus re-opening plan.

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4.0 Resources:

Centre for Innovation in Mental Health

<https://campusmentalhealth.ca/>

Self-Monitoring Fact Sheet-Public Health Ontario

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-self-monitor.pdf?la=en>

Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Settings-Public Health Ontario

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf?la=en>

Mask Use for Non-Healthcare Workers

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/2020/05/factsheet-covid-19-masks-not-healthcare.pdf?la=en>

5.0 Appendix:

Workplace Safety & Prevention Services-Return to Business Checklist

<https://www.wsps.ca/WSPS/media/Site/Resources/Downloads/Pandemic-Recovery-Return-to-Business-Checklist.pdf>

Northern College On Site Education

On Site Protocol-see next page

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COVID-19 ON SITE 
EDUCATION

PLEASE SIGN IN AND OUT

PLEASE MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING (2M) AS
MUCH AS POSSIBLE

PLEASE WEAR A MASK IF SOCIAL DISTANCING (2M)
CANNOT BE MAINTAINED (MASKS PROVIDED INITIALLY)

PLEASE FOLLOW THE ARROWS AND STAY IN YOUR
DESIGNATED AREA

IF YOU FEEL UNWELL PLEASE DO NOT ENTER AND
CONTACT YOUR LOCAL HEALTH UNIT

IF YOU FEEL UNWELL ON SITE REPORT TO SECURITY OR
CONTACT PERSON

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN WITH SOAP AND WATER
FOR 20 SECONDS. IF SOAP AND WATER ARE NOT AVAILABLE
USE A HAND SANITIZER

AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE AND MOUTH WITH
UNWASHED HANDS

PLEASE COUGH INTO YOUR ELBOW IF NEEDED

CLEAN AND DISINFECT FREQUENTLY TOUCHED OBJECTS
AND SURFACES

PLEASE ONLY USE DESIGNATED WASHROOMS OR
COMMON AREA

**THANK YOU FOR DOING YOUR PART IN COVID-19
PREVENTION**

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