

## INTRODUCTION

UVic is committed to providing safe and healthy environments for all members of the university community. In alignment with the [BC Restart plan](#) and the updated post-secondary [Return-to-Campus \(RTC\) Public Health Guidance](#), and following [WorkSafeBC](#) requirements, this communicable disease (CD) plan outlines the ongoing prevention measures that everyone needs to follow, as well as enhanced safety measures to ensure a safe transition to a full return to on-campus activities in the fall. The CD plan has been updated from the previous version to include the enhanced safety measures recently implemented by the university and other post-secondary institutions in collaboration with public health.

## SCOPE

This CD plan applies to all units, staff, faculty and students engaged in any university activity including in-person instruction and related academic activities, research, and administrative, operational and ancillary services.

This CD plan replaces all previous COVID-19 safe work plans (SWPs). Units are also no longer required to create or customize their own safety plans, as the CD plan and the prevention measures apply campus-wide.

In addition to this CD plan, some units may still be required to follow applicable sector-specific safety guidelines or ongoing PHO requirements (e.g. gatherings and events). Similarly, those engaged in travel for research or study (e.g. field research, community research, field schools and field trips) will still need to follow local, provincial or federal travel restrictions, local community entry requirements, as well as university requirements for international student travel or field safety plans. Please contact [OHSE](#) if you have questions about any specialized safety requirements, and visit the [OHSE Return to Campus](#) website for more information and to ensure appropriate safety measures are in place.

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION

Communicable disease prevention focuses on basic risk reduction principles to reduce the risk of workplace transmission of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. The fundamental components of communicable disease prevention includes both ongoing measures to maintain at all times and additional measures to be implemented as advised by public health during periods of elevated risk.

For the fall 2021 return to campus transition, enhanced safety measures will also be in place in accordance with the PHO and updated post-secondary RTC public health guidance. OHSE will regularly monitor and review communicable disease information from public health, and update the campus community of any changes affecting university activities, including updating the CD plan as required.

## **(New)** ENHANCED SAFETY MEASURES

### BC Vaccine Cards and Campus Declarations

- The new [BC Vaccine Card program](#) comes into effect Sept. 13 (Sept. 7 for student housing). This program will require proof of vaccination to access a variety of on-campus discretionary services or activities as a patron or user.
- UVic will also be implementing a self-declaration system for students, staff and faculty to confidentially and securely declare their status as being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, or participate in periodic [rapid testing](#) until able to be fully vaccinated.



- **NEW** Review our [COVID-19 vaccination status declaration and rapid testing procedure](#).
- Please check our [vaccination webpage](#) for more details on these programs as it becomes available.
- The university will also be hosting [vaccine clinics](#) on-campus in partnership with Island Health to further promote and facilitate vaccinations for our students, staff and faculty.

### Mask Use

- In accordance with the new [PHO Face-Covering \(COVID-19\) Order](#), and the updated [Return to Campus Public Health Guidance](#), masks must be worn in indoor public and post-secondary spaces on campus by anyone aged 12 and older, including students, faculty, staff and visitors.
- **NEW** Review our [COVID-19 mask protocol acknowledgement and exemption procedure](#).
- Please check our [mask](#) webpage for more details about masking requirements in public spaces, classrooms and workplace areas, as well as a full list of exemptions.
- UVic Ambassadors will be present in buildings to promote, educate and assist the campus community on our return to campus safety measures. UVic Ambassadors will also have a supply of disposable masks available, if required, to support mask wearing in public spaces and classrooms.

### Enhanced Cleaning

- In addition to routine cleaning practices, the university will provide enhanced daily cleaning and disinfecting in higher occupancy areas throughout the fall term, including building indoor common areas and classrooms.

### Enhanced Ventilation

The university has introduced the following additional measures for building HVAC systems in accordance with WorkSafeBC and ASHRAE recommendations:

- HVAC filter upgrades to MERV-13 in the majority of buildings
- increased frequency of air filter replacement throughout the fall and winter semesters
- increased supply of fresh air into occupied spaces
- increased rate of air exchange where possible (i.e. total airflow in occupied spaces)
- daily pre-occupancy air change (flush) for building HVAC systems

For naturally ventilated classrooms that are not serviced by a building HVAC system, the following measures have been implemented to ensure appropriate air quality:

- Installation of HEPA air-purifying unit (wall-mounted)
- Room capacity limits
- Instructions to open windows and doors, as much as possible
- Instructions to ensure any vents (if present) are open and unblocked

In combination, all the above measures will ensure safe and effective ventilation and air quality for students, faculty and staff in our buildings and learning environments. Please visit the [building ventilation](#) webpage for more information and updates on our ventilation plans for the fall.

## ONGOING PREVENTION MEASURES

### Supporting employees and students to stay at home when sick

- All employees and students must continue to do a [daily health self-assessment](#).
- If you are ill or have symptoms of a communicable disease (e.g. fever and/or chills, recent onset of coughing, diarrhea):
  - please stay home
  - notify your supervisor or instructor of your absence
  - consult the [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) to see if you should get tested, and contact 811 if you require medical advice
- Unit leaders should follow the sick leave provisions in the appropriate collective agreement to support employees, and contact their Human Resources Consultant if advice is required.
- Instructors should follow established protocols to support student absence due to illness, and contact the leader of their academic unit (Chair/Director/Dean) if advice is required.
- Please review the updated [COVID-19 Self-Assessment and Sick Leave protocol](#) for more information.
- For those employees who are able to work at home while they are recovering from their illness/symptoms, please refer to the [HR remote working](#) website which includes guidance on setting up your home workstation, ergonomic tips, FAQs and other resources.

### Promoting hand-washing and hygiene practices

- Washing your hands regularly, or using hand sanitizers if a washroom or sink is not readily available, is one of the most simple and effective ways to minimize the spread of communicable diseases.
- In addition, covering your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough will also help to reduce the spread of germs.
- For the fall term, all washroom facilities on campus will be re-opened and available for employees, students and the public to facilitate regular handwashing. The university will also continue to supply hand sanitizer stations at all main entrances to buildings, and additional locations in buildings with higher occupancy levels, to promote hand hygiene.
- Units who provide services in busy client-facing settings such as retail checkouts, kiosks, food service counters and other similar areas, are encouraged to keep a supply of portable hand sanitizer available for their customer and client use.
- For outdoor or off-campus university activities, individuals should ensure that hand sanitizer is supplied if washing facilities are not available (e.g. outdoor events, vehicles, field locations, etc.).
- The university will be developing and posting signage throughout campus to remind everyone of these important practices.

### Routine cleaning

- The university is committed to maintaining a clean environment through routine cleaning practices, and implementing enhanced cleaning practices if directed by public health during any periods of elevated risk.

- For the fall term, general campus cleaning by Facilities Management and cleaning in student housing by Residence Services, will be continuing above pre-COVID levels as described in the section, Enhanced Cleaning.
- Areas or units which may have specialized cleaning practices and schedules due to their activities or regulatory requirements (e.g. laboratories, health clinics, isolation rooms, food service areas, event planners, etc.) should continue to follow those protocols, in addition to any other requirements that may still be in place from the PHO.
- Individual units or office areas are not required to disinfect surfaces or shared equipment (e.g. photocopiers, keyboards, desks, appliances, etc.) as part of their usual housekeeping practices.

### **Building Ventilation (HVAC Systems)**

- Following the direction of WorkSafeBC and the PHO, institutions must ensure that building heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are operating and maintained in accordance with WorkSafeBC requirements and relevant ASHRAE Standards.
- Ahead of the fall term, Facilities Management has assessed building HVAC systems to ensure those systems continue to meet WorkSafeBC requirements.
- The university is also taking extra steps to further improve indoor air quality as described in the section, Enhanced Ventilation.

### **Supporting Vaccination**

- Getting vaccinated is the most important tool supporting the BC Restart Plan.
- The university encourages everyone who is eligible and able, to consider vaccination to protect yourself and others.
- UVic employees are [entitled to up to three hours of paid leave](#) to be vaccinated against COVID-19, if required.
- [Learn more about the benefits and safety of the vaccine](#), and [register](#) to receive an invite to book a vaccine appointment.

### **RESPONDING TO ELEVATED RISK**

- The level of risk of certain communicable diseases, including COVID-19, may elevate from time to time or on a seasonal basis. This may occur at a local or regional level or within a workplace.
- OHSE will monitor public health information and be responsive to any further directives from the local medical health officer or provincial health officer.
- Any changes to prevention measures during periods of elevated risk will be communicated to those affected in our campus community.

### **COMMUNICATION AND MONITORING**

- This CD plan will be available on university websites and shared widely with our campus community.
- Leaders should ensure that everyone on their teams have reviewed the CD Plan and understand and follow the measures in place.
- The prevention measures will be reinforced through campus signage, social media and other communication tools on a regular basis.
- The ongoing review and evaluation of the CD plan will involve the joint University Safety Committee, as part of its annual consultation process on health and safety programs.

- Monitoring of the prevention and safety measures is a shared responsibility of leaders for those areas and individuals they supervise, joint local safety committees as part of regular building inspections as appropriate, and OHSE.
- Individuals should report any health and safety concerns to their supervisor, who is responsible to follow-up and address any concerns.
- Individuals may also contact their union representative, joint local safety committee, or OHSE for assistance with a safety concern or question.