**UW-River Falls Administrative Policy**

**Title:** Interim COVID-19 Related Health & Safety Rules

**Policy ID:** AP-01-128

**Effective:** 9/25/2020

**Revision:**
- 2/5/2021
- 5/20/2021
- 8/19/2021 – updated to address Fall 2021 planning and mitigation practices
- 8/30/2021 – updates to Authority and Duration sections and date of review
- 9/23/2021 – updates to required testing frequency
- 11/19/2021 – policy extension
- 1/21/2022 – updates to face coverings, testing and recommended practices
- 2/17/2022 – policy extension
- 3/11/2022 – policy extension

**Review:** As needed

**Next Review Date:** TBD

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**Policy:**

UW-River Falls is committed to providing a safe environment in which to learn, teach, perform research, work, study and visit. The novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19 can spread quickly and can result in severe illness and death, particularly for vulnerable individuals such as those with underlying health conditions. UW-River Falls is committed to mitigating, to the extent possible, the risks associated with the novel coronavirus and will act to implement measures and adopt practices that it deems necessary to protect students, employees, contractors, volunteers, visitors and the greater community from potential exposure by reducing the likelihood of spread of COVID-19 on campus property or at any UWR sponsored activity. These measures will be determined following recommendations and guidance on disease mitigation published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) and our local public health agencies. That guidance and this policy will be subject to change based on disease transmission levels.

Wisconsin State Statutes including, but not limited to, Wis. Stat. ch. 36, and Wis. Admin. Code secs. UWS 17-18 provide authority to the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents and its Chancellors to protect the health and safety of those on University of Wisconsin System campuses. See Authority section below for more information.

**Duration:**

This policy is in place for all university students, employees and visitors to campus until March 11, 2022, unless extended, terminated, or otherwise modified based on changing conditions related the COVID-19 Delta (or other) variants, including but not limited to changes in CDC guidance, state and local public health conditions, and campus safety.

**Definitions**

**Face covering:** a piece of cloth or other material that is worn to cover the nose and mouth completely, also referred to as a “face mask.” A “face covering” or “face mask” includes but is not limited to a cloth face mask, a disposable or paper mask, a neck gaiter, or a religious face mask. A “face covering” or “face mask” does not include face shields, mesh masks, masks with holes or openings, or masks with vents.

**Physical distancing:** maintaining at least six (6) feet of distance from other individuals who are not members of your household or living unit.
**Fully vaccinated:** it has been ≥ two weeks after a person has received the second dose in a two-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or ≥ two weeks after a person has received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson [J&J]/Janssen); there is currently no post-vaccination time limit on fully vaccinated status; guidance may change to address any need for third doses or boosters.

**Campus Property:** any property (land or buildings) subject to UWRF’s control.

1. **Access to Campus Property and Activities**
   a. No employee, student or visitor may enter or remain in any UWRF building or other facility, or attend any UWRF sponsored-activity on campus, if the individual has been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider, is currently subject to isolation guidance following a positive COVID-19 test or quarantine from a close contact.
   b. Individuals who develop a fever (temperature of 100.4° or higher) or have had other symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should be tested or otherwise evaluated by a healthcare professional before coming to campus. Information about COVID-19 symptoms can be found on the [CDC’s website](https://www.cdc.gov).
   c. Residence hall students who have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been determined to be a close contact will be expected to follow local public health guidance regarding isolation and quarantine. Residence hall students who test positive and are required to self-isolate will be expected to do so outside the residence halls, at home or another off-campus location.

2. **Face coverings**
   Due to higher transmissibility of both the Delta and Omicron variants of the COVID-19 virus that are currently circulating in the United States, in line with the CDC guidance for institutes of higher education where not everyone is fully vaccinated, and in line with the December 2021 Wisconsin DHS health advisory, stating that everyone should wear a well-fitting mask in all public indoor settings, UW-River Falls will require masking in all indoor public spaces on campus property for all persons regardless of vaccination status, and regardless of the ability to physically distance.

   Experts have also recommended upgrading to higher quality surgical or N95, KN95 or KF94 masks for optimal protection. Disposable surgical masks will be available in most department offices or at the University Center Info Desk, as supplies allow. Students and employees interested in using N95, KN95 or KF94 will need to procure these on their own and may request a free N95 mask at a federally approved pharmacy or health center.

   These rules will be in effect as long as Pierce County is experiencing a substantial or high rate of transmission. UWRF will remove this requirement when community transmission rates return to lower levels.
   a. Exceptions:
      i. Students in their assigned residence hall rooms or suites, in communal residence hall spaces where others are not present or where it is possible to physically distance by at least 6 feet.
ii. Employees when alone in a private, unshared office, lab or other approved workspace.

iii. Individuals participating in outdoor activities – although physical distancing is encouraged.

iv. Masks may be only briefly removed when actively eating or drinking or when performing a task that is not conducive to wearing a face covering (i.e., brushing teeth, showering, etc.).

v. Other exceptions to this guidance may be in place for certain areas of campus, such as the C.H.I.L.D. Center, University Preschool, Fitness Center, WIAC/Athletics, or farms, where face covering use is not feasible or safe. Approved exceptions to this policy will be posted in the designated areas. University offices in need of an exception to this policy should write to administrative-policy@uwrf.edu.

b. Reasonable accommodation:
Requests by those unable to wear a face covering are considered on a case-by-case basis. A student or employee who has been granted a reasonable accommodation is not required to explain to others the underlying basis for the accommodation. It is the responsibility of the individual requesting the accommodation to contact the appropriate office below to obtain an approved reasonable accommodation.

i. Employees requesting a reasonable accommodation, should contact Human Resources and complete the Reasonable Accommodation request form located here.

ii. Students requesting a reasonable accommodation due to disability, should contact Ability Services and may find more information here. Students with an approved reasonable accommodation will receive an approved accommodation form from Ability Services and must present that upon request to a university official or instructor.

iii. Students requesting a reasonable accommodation for a reason other than a disability, should contact the Director of Student Success.

3. COVID-19 testing
UWRF plans to offer free COVID-19 testing on campus through Friday, April 1. Individuals are also encouraged to seek COVID-19 testing at local clinics, pharmacies or through their healthcare provider.

COVID-19 test results are most accurate when you are tested by a health care provider or at a community testing site, but you may choose to use an at-home test when these other options are not available to you. The federal government has instructed insurers to cover the cost of at-home tests purchased at pharmacies and has also made it possible to order up to four free at-home tests online at https://www.covidtests.gov/. At-home tests cannot be used as proof of COVID-19 testing such as for plane boarding or access to event venues, and as such will not be allowed for meeting UWRF testing requirements. See here for more information on at-home COVID-19 tests: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p03090.pdf.

Based on current community COVID-19 prevalence, the increase in COVID-19 incidence due to the Omicron variant, the prevalence of indoor activity due to colder weather, and to ensure a safe
return to spring semester instruction and operations which are primarily in-person, the following
COVID-19 testing protocols are in place:

a. On-campus testing will be available in Hagestad Hall to students and employees Monday-
Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Community testing is also available at this location Monday-Friday, 8-
10 a.m. and 2-4 p.m.

b. Students and employees are expected to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and, if
experiencing symptoms, are expected to seek testing as soon as possible. This includes
those who are fully vaccinated, due to the higher transmissibility of the Delta and Omicron
variants.

c. If you have had a confirmed exposure to someone who tested positive for COVID-19, such as
a roommate, you are expected to test immediately regardless of symptoms or vaccination
status to help avoid a possible outbreak. UWRF may also require that asymptomatic
students and employees get tested, regardless of vaccination status, in the case of an
identified exposure or suspected outbreak in a specific setting such as classroom, student
org, residence hall, etc. Impacted individuals will be notified by email of any such testing
obligations.

d. All unvaccinated employees and students who work or learn on campus (i.e., not 100%
online or working off-site) will be required to test once the week of January 24-28,
regardless of symptoms.

e. The conditions in which you can be exempted from a testing requirement are listed below.
To be exempted, you must register one of the following in the COVID-19 Portal:
   i. You are 100% online.
   ii. You have received a negative test result off campus. At-home test results are not
considered valid for this purpose. The current guidance from public health is that self-
tests cannot be used as proof of COVID testing and should only be used as a screening
tool when other testing options are unavailable, for example, when symptomatic on a
weekend or before joining indoor gatherings with others from different households.
   iii. You have tested positive off campus for COVID-19 in the last 90 days. (If you tested
positive on campus, the exemption will be applied for you. Proof of test result may be
requested.)
   iv. Have an approved exemption. To receive an exemption, employees should email
hr@uwrf.edu and students should email ability.services@uwrf.edu (medical exemption)
or student.success@uwrf.edu (non-medical exemption).
   v. Those who are required to test but fail to do so will be held accountable. Affected
students and employees will receive a follow-up message with more details.

f. Those who test positive for COVID-19 are expected to adhere to local public health guidance
regarding isolation and quarantine. https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-
19/diagnosed.htm

g. The above testing protocols will be in effect, unless otherwise shortened or extended by the
chancellor, through March 11. This protocol may be extended, terminated, or otherwise
modified based on changing conditions related to the COVID-19 variants, or in response to
changing CDC guidance, state and local public health conditions, and campus safety.
4. **Other recommended health and safety practices**
   
a. Get the COVID-19 vaccine if possible. UWRF is not mandating that any student or employee receive the vaccine; however, achieving a high campus vaccination rate appears to be the best possible hope of mitigating the risks associated with COVID-19, therefore vaccines are strongly encouraged. The Wisconsin DHS Health Advisory states “The authorized COVID-19 vaccines remain highly effective at preventing severe disease and death from Delta. Evidence also suggests that fully boosted people are protected against serious illness and hospitalization from Omicron.” The CDC also expects current vaccines to protect against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths due to infection with the Omicron variant. As with other variants, vaccines have remained effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. The recent emergence of Omicron further emphasizes the importance of vaccination and boosters.

   i. Vaccination status is confidential and should not be discussed or disclosed outside of a conversation with any employee or student who might self-disclose this information.

   ii. In an ongoing effort to understand how well our campus is protected from COVID-19, UWRF has enabled the ability for campus community members to upload their booster dose information in the COVID-19 portal. Information entered in the portal is confidential and only used in aggregate for data reporting without identifying information.

   iii. Regarding the federal Executive Order (EO) 14042 (federal contractor vaccine mandate), UWRF has determined it does not have any federal contracts at the present time, and therefore is not a “covered contractor” or a “covered contractor workplace” for purposes of the EO. Therefore, subject to further consultation with UW System, UW-River Falls employees are currently not subject to the terms of the EO.

b. Frequent handwashing with soap and water, or the use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol when soap and water are not readily available, is strongly encouraged.

c. While the university has adopted sanitation protocols to reduce the spread of the virus, individual units are expected to be responsible for their office spaces and to appropriately sanitize items and surfaces on a regular basis.

d. UWRF cannot guarantee that individuals will not be exposed to or develop COVID-19. All students and employees are encouraged to adopt a sense of personal responsibility and use their own best judgement and follow the advice of their healthcare provider regarding their risks.

e. We expect that all students, employees and visitors act in a manner that demonstrates respect and safety for all.
Compliance
Students and employees who choose not to comply with requirements stated in this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. Reports about concerns may be made electronically via the Report It website.

No Discrimination
Consistent with the university’s policies against discrimination, UW-River Falls does not tolerate discrimination, profiling, bias, or any form of harassment, based on race, disability, or other protected class, in conjunction with this policy or any other policies. Any incidents of discrimination should be reported on the Report It website.

Authority
In addition to the generalized authority cited above, this policy is being issued pursuant to authority in the laws of the State of Wisconsin and applicable University of Wisconsin System policies, including but not limited to: Wis. Stats. ss. 36.11(1)(a) and (c), 36.09(1)(a), (f) and (L), 36.35(2) and 101.11; Wis. Admin. Code ss. UWS 18.11(6)(a) and (7)(e), UWS 18.08(9)(b), UWS 18.13, UWS 17.09(1), (14) and (15); and Regent Policy 23-2.

The UW-River Falls chancellor approves this policy in accordance with the Administrative Policy process. The vice chancellor for business and finance is responsible for the substance of and compliance with all administrative policies. The Policy Owner (Responsible Office) is responsible for the administration and maintenance of this policy. Request an exception to this policy by writing to administrative-policy@uwrf.edu.

Related Documents
- Wisconsin State Statutes
  - https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/36/09/1
  - https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/36/11
- UW System Board of Regents Policy Document
- UW-River Falls Website, Falcons Forward, https://www.uwrf.edu/Falcons-Forward/Index.cfm
- CDC Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People
- Pierce County Public Health Coronavirus Response
  - https://covid-piercecounty-wi.hub.arcgis.com/
- Wisconsin DHS Health Advisory

Contact
Please direct questions about this policy to administrative-policy@uwrf.edu.