Policy

UW-River Falls is committed to providing a safe environment in which to learn, teach, perform research, work, study, and visit. Because the Coronavirus (COVID-19) can spread quickly and cause widespread illness, the University will implement measures it deems necessary in order to protect faculty, staff, students, contractors, volunteers, and visitors from potential exposure to this disease.

Growing scientific evidence demonstrates that wearing a face covering is one of the most effective strategies in limiting the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local health departments recommend wearing cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and to help prevent people who may unknowingly have the virus from transmitting it to others. Furthermore, the Board of Regents of the University Wisconsin System has directed all UW campuses to adopt policies or protocols to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus (See Resolution 11, adopted July 9, 2020).

Accordingly, effective the date of this policy and continuing until otherwise announced by the University, the following requirements are in place for all university students, employees and visitors to campus:

1. Face coverings are required in all indoor public spaces, including classrooms.
   a. This does not apply in a non-shared office space.
   b. Face coverings are not required when eating or drinking, but individuals are expected to utilize good judgment and take additional safeguards, such as not eating in classes, promptly replacing face coverings when finished, and using physical distancing.
   c. Exceptions to this requirement may be in place for certain areas of campus, such as the C.H.I.L.D. Center, University Preschool, Fitness Center, or farms, where face covering use is not feasible or safe. In such cases, other safeguards such as barriers or physical distancing will be utilized if possible. Use of those spaces is conditioned on compliance with those other safeguards. 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.
   d. All students, faculty and staff will be provided with a washable face covering, at the start of the Fall 2020 semester. Individuals may also purchase or supply their own face coverings.
   e. Face coverings are acceptable if they consist of fabric or disposable surgical-style masks that cover the wearer’s nose and mouth. Please note, to be more likely to be effective, cloth face coverings should follow CDC guidelines and:
      1. Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
      2. Allow for breathing without restriction
      3. Be able to be laundered and machine-dried without damage or change to shape
      4. Not have an exhalation valve
   f. For more information on face coverings, see https://www.uwrf.edu/COVID-19/ReturnToCampus.cfm.
2. Face coverings are strongly encouraged outside when physical distancing is not possible.

3. Physical distancing of at least six feet will be maintained when feasible in all classrooms, and where possible in labs, specialized learning environments, public spaces and in workspaces.

4. Utilize 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.

5. Engage in daily self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19, and if symptoms exist, follow the direction provided by university or public health officials.

6. Cooperate and comply with university and public health officials regarding contact tracing, quarantine, and isolation processes or directives. Please be aware that the university will use seating chart and attendance tracking in face-to-face courses, as well as any other data available including meal plan, door access, event registration, visitor logs, and WiFi analytics to aid in the tracing efforts.

7. 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. (For more information, see campus website https://www.uwrf.edu/COVID-19/ReturnToCampusEmployees.cfm).

In accordance with its mission and values, as well as Board of Regents guidance, UW-River Falls will prioritize the health and safety of students, faculty, staff and surrounding communities when making decisions regarding the return to campus in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Safety measures taken by the University, including those noted above, are intended to help reduce the spread of this illness. Despite these efforts, however, the University cannot guarantee that individuals will not be exposed to or develop this illness. Therefore, individuals should rely on their own judgment (as well as the advice of their health care provider) to determine whether it safe for them to return to campus.

**Reasonable Accommodation**

Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals unable to wear a face covering. Requests for reasonable accommodations are considered on a case-by-case basis. It is the responsibility of the individual requesting the accommodation to contact the appropriate office below to obtain an approved reasonable accommodation.

- Employees requesting a reasonable accommodation, should contact Human Resources and complete the Reasonable Accommodation request form located [here](https://www.uwrf.edu/COVID-19/ReturnToCampusEmployees.cfm).
- Students requesting a reasonable accommodation due to disability, should contact Ability Services and may find more information [here](https://www.uwrf.edu/COVID-19/ReturnToCampusEmployees.cfm).
- Students requesting a reasonable accommodation for a reason other than a disability, should contact the [Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Excellence & Student Success](https://www.uwrf.edu/COVID-19/ReturnToCampusEmployees.cfm).

Students with an approved reasonable accommodation will receive an approved accommodation form from the Ability Services Office and must present that upon request to a university official or instructor.
A student or employee who has been granted a reasonable accommodation by the university is not required to explain to others the underlying basis for the accommodation.

**Compliance**
The health of our community is everyone’s responsibility. Wearing a mask is one of the most important ways to keep our campus community safe and healthy.

UW-River Falls expects all members of the university community to behave responsibly with respect for the health and safety of others. There may be times where following these expectations, such as wearing a face covering, is uncomfortable or inconvenient. Nonetheless, compliance with this policy is critical for the safe return to campus, residence halls, and in-class instruction. Additionally, the safety of the university community is dependent on the cooperation with quarantine and isolation directives. As a result, the university expects all students and employees to cooperate and comply with university and public health officials regarding contact tracing, quarantine, and isolation processes or directives.

Individuals who do not adhere to this policy directive may be asked or directed to leave campus. Students and employees who choose not to comply with this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

*Reporting a concern*

Reports about concerns may be made electronically via the UW-River Falls “Report It” website, using the reporting form for general student concerns or employee concerns.

- Employees are expected to inform university officials about a specific concern about noncompliance by completing and submitting a report. Additionally, an employee with a concern about noncompliance or general questions about this policy may contact their immediate supervisor, department chair/dean, division head, or human resources.
- A student with a concern about noncompliance or general questions about this policy may complete and submit a report via the Report It website or may directly contact Residence Life (for matters related to the Residence Halls), the Dean of applicable college (for concerns in classrooms), or the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Excellence & Student Success.

For more information regarding this policy, please see below “Related Documents.”

**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 COVID-related policies. Any reported incidents will be addressed in accordance with university policy.

**Authority**
The UW-River Falls Chancellor approves this policy in accordance with the Administrative Policy process. The Assistant 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.
Sanctions and Appeals Process
Failure to adhere to the provisions of this policy may result in appropriate disciplinary action as provided under existing procedures applicable to students, faculty, and staff, and/or civil or criminal prosecution.

University Responsibilities
Human Resources owns and manages policies that fall under its area of responsibility. Human Resources oversees the development and review of the policy.

Related Documents
- Board of Regents Resolution 11, approved July 9, 2020
- UW-River Falls Website, Falcons Forward, https://www.uwrf.edu/Falcons-Forward/Index.cfm

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