

Information for Successfully Continuing to Work Onsite

The University is committed to provide and maintain healthy and safe working and learning environments for all workers, students, volunteers and visitors. This is achieved by observing best practices which meet or exceed the standards to comply with legislative requirements.

Our workers commitment to the University community is integral to the success of the institution. The University appreciates and values workers required to physically remain on campus because their important work supports the core activities of the University.

While supervisors are asked to ensure that any employees who can work from home are able to do so, there are certain roles that are essential or required for the continuation of the university's core business and that cannot be performed at home. Employees who perform these roles will be supported in engaging in other methods of social distancing in support of their own health and safety and to contribute to the overall effort to reduce the curve of infections of COVID-19.

As the current COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, McMaster is taking every reasonable precaution to ensure the health and safety of the campus community. Several proactive measures have been implemented which are aimed at preventing the spread of the virus. More specific information is available on the [University COVID-19 website](#).

The following general guidelines are intended to aid supervisors when addressing occupational health and safety concerns in the workplace related to COVID-19.

Occupational Health and Safety Requirements

In accordance with Ontario's Occupational Health & Safety Act (OHSA), the University has the responsibility to keep a safe and well-maintained workplace and to take all reasonable precautions to protect workers from illness and/or injury by ensuring a work environment free from hazards. For that reason, it is necessary for workers to take precaution to prevent exposure to COVID-19.

Means to prevent exposure while working on campus:

- Wash hands regularly with soap and water – hand sanitizer is secondary to proper hand washing
- Practice social distancing – avoid large gatherings and maintain a minimum distance of two metres from others
- Disinfect work and personal items that are handled regularly such as cell phones and work tools/equipment
- Discourage workers from using other workers phones, desks, offices and tools/equipment
- Avoid touching face, eyes and mouth
- If sick, stay home and contact [Tele Health Ontario](#) or [Public Health Ontario](#) for next steps
- Focus on your [personal well-being](#) to address stress and anxiety and access [Mental Health supports](#) as needed.

Reporting Workplace Hazards

As with all other hazards, workers with concerns regarding COVID-19 must report immediately to their supervisor. Supervisors are accountable for the safety of workers within their area and will take reasonable steps to address safety concerns brought to their attention which may require consultation with other campus partners.

At this time, supervisors are required to maintain regular contact with workers in order to discuss matters related to work, including safety. Supervisor check-ins (phone, email, etc.) should continue to be completed daily. Supervisors must also have safety procedures in place to ensure the well-being of workers who work alone or in isolation on campus. For additional information refer to [RMM: 304 Working Alone Program](#).

Workers in Ontario have the right to refuse work if they believe there is a dangerous condition in the workplace, or their duties present a danger to their health and safety. Immediately report all cases of work refusals to Environmental and Occupational Health Support Services or the FHS Safety Office. For additional information refer to [RMM: 114 Work Refusal Program](#).

Stay Connected with your Team

- **Plan Ahead** - Ensure team and department contact information is up to date and circulated with all team members.
- **Know your backups** - refer and read through your department's business continuity plan and if you or a family member are sick or unavailable, know to whom you can hand off essential work.
- **Coordinate Team Coverage** – work with your team and supervisor to develop a plan to ensure coverage for core services. There are many options for doing this. For instance, assign team members to one or more groups which will only come into the office for critical face to face meetings. As a further example, project managers assigned to group A are asked to only arrange for their office interactions on Mondays and Wednesdays, individuals assigned to group B are asked to only arrange for their office interactions on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
- **Prioritize Work** - talk with your supervisor and colleagues to determine what is the most important work to complete during this time.
- **Update Your Meetings** - Look through your calendar and add call-in or video options. Practice using video calling and screen sharing to maintain team dynamics and continue to collaborate. Review the IT tools and services that allow you to work from home by visiting: <https://cto.mcmaster.ca/it-updates/it-continuity-tools-services/>

Helpful Links to University Services

- [Human Resources](#)
- [Faculty of Health Sciences Human Resources](#)
- [University Technology Services \(UTS\)](#)
- Facilities - Customer Service: (905) 525-9140 ext. 24740
- [Hospitality](#)
- [Library](#)
- [Security](#)
- [Parking](#)

Service updates may also be posted to [Daily News](#).