

# COVID-19 PROTOCOLS FOR FACULTY

**ANCHOR  
DOWN**  
STEP  
**UP**

*Together we can slow  
the spread of COVID-19*

**[vu.edu/fall2020](https://vu.edu/fall2020)**

# VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

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### KEY RESOURCES

- **Main Website**  
<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/>
- **COVID-19 Positive Dashboard**  
<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/covid19dashboard/>
- **FAQs**  
<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/faq/>
- **Community Messages and Updates**  
<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/category/community-messages/>
- **Return to Campus Videos**  
<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/videos/>
- **Testing and Contact Tracing Flowcharts**  
<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/faqs/steps-to-take-if-symptomatic-have-a-positive-test-or-are-designated-a-close-contact/>
- **VU Public Health AmbassaDore Hotline** – 615-343-1352
- **VU Public Health Central Command Center**  
<https://vu.edu/vucommandcenter>
- **VandySafe Symptom Monitoring**  
<https://police.vanderbilt.edu/services/vandysafe.php>

# RETURN TO CAMPUS: ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

## Required Return to Campus Acknowledgment

Before returning to campus or participating in any on-campus activities including in-person classes, work, or research, all faculty, staff, postdoctoral fellows and students must complete online or physically sign the COVID-19 Return to Campus Acknowledgment.

The Acknowledgment explains the university's guiding principles and related plans associated with the return to campus, describes certain guidelines and protocols that campus community members will be required to follow, and requests each person to confirm that they will cooperate to protect the health and safety of our campus community.

At the conclusion of the online module/Acknowledgment document, the individual will be asked to acknowledge that they have been informed of the risks and responsibilities associated with the return to campus and agree to follow all Vanderbilt University guidelines related to slowing the spread of COVID-19 infection.

## Addressing Noncompliance

Vanderbilt's Return to Campus Plan follows a phased and data-driven approach and considers the city of Nashville's phases, adapting them to be applicable to a college campus.

Compliance serves as an important aspect of the Return to Campus Plan, reminding campus community members of their responsibilities in helping to slow the spread of COVID-19. With the understanding that campus life will look very different with compliance in place, guidelines have been developed to promote the health and safety of the campus community as much as possible.

Students, faculty, staff and postdocs will be expected to comply with all university policies and protocols designed to slow the spread of COVID-19 infection and promote the health and safety of the Vanderbilt and Nashville communities.

Intentional or reckless disregard for these policies and protocols by students will be addressed through the Office of Student Accountability, Community Standards, and Academic Integrity, using the existing sanctioning considerations found in the *Student Handbook*, including by reviewing the potential impact on the community in the evaluation of the nature and severity of the incident, which may support an enhanced sanction.

The Vanderbilt *Faculty Manual* provides that faculty may be disciplined for violations of the university's standards of conduct. The process for reaching a decision to discipline a faculty member is overseen by the dean in consultation with the provost.

The university's progressive discipline policy states that a staff member can be disciplined for violations of protocols and procedures governing safety. The policy outlines a process for correcting single and repeat episodes of employee failure to comply with rules. Safety violations will be handled under this process.

## RETURN TO CAMPUS: **CAMPUS VISITORS**

Vanderbilt University deeply values its neighbors, community partners and visitors that make our community so vibrant. However, as part of our comprehensive efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19 at Vanderbilt, throughout the city of Nashville and beyond as much as possible, we have made the difficult decision to limit the presence of visitors on campus for the fall 2020 semester, and to impose certain heightened expectations for those visitors who are permitted.

In an effort to de-densify our public spaces, individuals including prospective students, faculty, staff and postdoctoral fellows, non-Vanderbilt interns and observers, recruiters and family members of students, faculty and staff—among others—will regrettably not be permitted in campus buildings until further notice, unless specific permission has been granted in advance by the appropriate university office, dean or vice chancellor.

In certain cases, exceptions may be made for approved users of VU Core Facilities, research participants, visiting researchers, suppliers, contractors, vendors, safety inspectors and others based on individual circumstances. Comprehensive details regarding limitations and possible exceptions can be found in our Visitor Policy Fall 2020.

Before coming to campus, visitors must review the **Campus Visitors Return to Campus Acknowledgment**.

Spaces that normally welcome community visitors, including the Jean & Alexander Heard Libraries, the Fine Arts Gallery, the Wond'ry at the Innovation Pavilion and other spaces, as well as other campus buildings, will not be open to the general public. Exterior doors for administrative and lab buildings will be locked, and access to classroom buildings will be limited to those with a Vanderbilt card/badge.

In-person campus tours remain suspended for the time being. We encourage prospective students to explore the online resources available through Vanderbilt Undergraduate Admissions and through individual graduate and professional programs. These resources include virtual visit options, webinars, information panels with current students and other opportunities to connect.

**It is important to note that anyone who is on the Vanderbilt University campus for any reason must wear a face mask/covering at all times.** These requirements are consistent with our existing requirements for students, faculty, staff and postdocs who have returned to campus in recent months.

Until we are able to safely welcome the public again in person, we hope all community members will utilize our many virtual resources, which include information about groundbreaking research and innovation in the fight against COVID-19 and enhanced online library services.

Suppliers must submit the **Supplier Return to Campus Acknowledgment** prior to being granted permission to be on campus.

Review the full visitor policy at <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/faqs/campus-visitors/>.

# RETURN TO CAMPUS: TESTING AND RECOVERY

Faculty, staff and postdocs who have symptoms related to COVID-19, have received a positive COVID-19 test result outside the VUMC system, or have been officially notified that they are a close contact to a COVID-19-positive person must call the Occupational Health Center (OHC) at 615-936-0955 to receive guidance for their symptoms, possible testing, isolation/quarantine period, and return to campus criteria. If after-hours, OHC should call back within 30 minutes once a message is left. If OHC is not open and the symptoms are severe enough, the individual should go to the VUMC emergency department.

An individual awaiting test results must remain at home off campus in quarantine and keep their department chair/supervisor/mentor/lead researcher informed of their return-to-campus status.

If an individual believes they have contracted COVID-19 after exposure to a known COVID-19-positive person on campus and/or while performing job duties, OHC may direct the individual to complete a First Report of Work Injury or Illness.

Those enrolled in VU's health insurance plan may be aware that our insurance provider, Aetna, is taking significant steps in response to COVID-19. Aetna will waive co-pays and member cost share for COVID-19 testing. This will cover the test kit for patients who meet CDC guidelines for testing, which can be performed in any approved laboratory location.

## Asymptomatic Close Contact (ACC) Testing

The university also has updated its approach to testing of asymptomatic close contacts based on newly released guidance from the CDC. The CDC defines a close contact as any individual who was within 6 feet of a person who has tested positive for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic people who have tested positive, 2 days prior to positive test collection) until the time the person who tested positive is isolated. **Asymptomatic close contacts will be tested on day 8 of the required quarantine period. This applies specifically to all faculty, staff, postdocs and students who are authorized to be on campus and are participating in on-campus activities.**

How test kits for asymptomatic close contacts are delivered will vary slightly based on the individual's quarantine location. If an individual identified as a close contact is in on-campus quarantine housing, a prepaid test kit will be delivered to the person's quarantine location to be completed on Day 8 of their quarantine period. If an individual identified as a close contact lives off campus, a weblink will be emailed on Day 5 of their quarantine period to order a prepaid test kit to be delivered to their off-campus location by Day 8.

## Resource:

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/faqs/steps-to-take-if-symptomatic-have-a-positive-test-or-are-designated-a-close-contact/>

Check this webpage frequently for updated information throughout the fall semester.

# COVID-19 SCENARIOS for FACULTY



\*A “close contact” is defined as a person who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes, 2 days before the infected person’s symptoms developed, or 2 days before their positive test collection. This determination is made by the contact tracers in consultation with the person whose case is being evaluated.  
\*\*Contact the Occupational Health Clinic (OHC) at 615-936-0955 for assessment and testing.  
Close contacts must be quarantined for 14 days from date of last exposure.  
Contact with a close contact does not require quarantine per CDC guidelines.

# RETURN TO CAMPUS: POSITIVE CASE PROTOCOL

**All positive cases and close contacts are tracked by the Vanderbilt Public Health Command Center.** The Command Center is responsible for the following:

- Contact tracing
- Determining additional cleanings and protocols to implement
- Identifying trends and hot spots

Faculty with symptoms should stay home and immediately contact the Occupational Health Center (OHC) or their health care provider.

Faculty testing positive or notified of their close contact status outside of the OHC, VUMC system should stay home and immediately notify the Command Center via webform\* ([vu.edu/coronavirus](http://vu.edu/coronavirus) or [vu.edu/vucommandcenter](http://vu.edu/vucommandcenter)).

- Note: OHC positives are routed automatically.
- If they have not already, they will be instructed to contact OHC for instructions about isolation (if positive) or quarantine (if close contact), and for other guidance.
- The Command Center then launches all subsequent notifications and actions.

## **What if someone reports to a faculty or staff member that they are COVID-19-positive, or a close contact?**

- The faculty or staff member should:
  - tell them to stay home, and
  - ask if they are working with Student Health (if a student) or Occupational Health (if a faculty or staff member), and
  - if not, tell them to immediately log their positive result or close contact status with the Command Center.
- The Command Center will launch all next steps (e.g., contact tracing, quarantine, symptom monitoring, testing).
- The person notified may email [CommandCenter@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:CommandCenter@vanderbilt.edu) to verify if needed.
- The faculty or staff member should not send notifications to other faculty members, staff or students.

## POSITIVE CASE NOTIFICATIONS

### Cases in the Classroom

- Instructors are notified if a student in their “in-person” class tests positive.
- The student will not be identified to the instructor but might reach out to the instructor since they will not be permitted to attend in-person classes.
- Instructors do not need to take any further action unless directed to do so by the Command Center.
- Only those in the class deemed close contacts through contact tracing will be notified.

### Non-Student Cases and Cases Outside the Classroom

- **All COVID-19-Positive Cases** should be reported to the Command Center via webform ([vu.edu/coronavirus](https://vu.edu/coronavirus) or [vu.edu/vucommandcenter](https://vu.edu/vucommandcenter)).
- **Lab/Research** protocols remain in place with the addition of reporting COVID-19 positive cases and close contacts from outside the VUMC system to the Command Center.
- **Supervisors** will be notified of those that test positive or who are deemed close contacts and will support the contact tracing process as needed.
- Blanket notifications beyond the supervisor will not take place.
- **Faculty and Instructors of Record** should work directly with their departments if there is an impact to their teaching (for example, needing to switch to online teaching or needing coverage for illness).

### Resources:

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/faqs/steps-to-take-if-symptomatic-have-a-positive-test-or-are-designated-a-close-contact/>

Check this webpage frequently for updated information throughout the fall semester.

# RETURN TO CAMPUS: CONTACT TRACING

To mitigate the risk to others of potential exposure and to protect all on campus as much as possible, a **Vanderbilt Public Health Central Command Center** has been established to manage contact tracing and notifications across VU communities. This Vanderbilt Command Center is a collaboration between the Nurse Faculty Practice Division in the School of Nursing, the Vanderbilt Student Health Center (SHC) and the Vanderbilt Occupational Health Center (OHC), and it will conduct contact tracing with individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19. By launching this robust in-house contact tracing capability, developed in collaboration with experts at VUMC, VUSN and Metro Public Health, Vanderbilt ensures coordinated contact tracing between campus and the Nashville community that is as timely as possible.

Faculty, staff, postdocs and students who live off campus and test positive for COVID-19 must isolate at their home/current residence and follow current CDC guidance as directed until they have recovered. Residential students who test positive for COVID-19 must isolate as directed by the Dean of Students office until they have recovered.

Please note that during this process the name of the index case will be disclosed to possible contacts, but protected health information will not be disclosed.

Per both VU Return to Campus protocol and CDC guidance, a close contact is defined as any individual who was within **6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes** starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive test collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

## Things to Remember:

- Incidental exposure such as walking by someone in the hallway, using the same equipment or the same area/room is not close contact.
- Surface contamination is not a primary pathway of concern per the CDC. Public areas will be frequently disinfected by Facilities/Plant Operations.

## Resources:

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/faqs/command-center/>

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/faqs/steps-to-take-if-symptomatic-have-a-positive-test-or-are-designated-a-close-contact/>

Check these webpages frequently for updated information throughout the fall semester.

## RETURN TO CAMPUS: GATHERINGS

The health and safety of the university community are foundational to our efforts in responding to COVID-19. VU's protocols with respect to "gatherings" prioritize core mission activities central to the university's mission. "Gatherings" must be conducted in accordance with VU-established guidelines, and some "gatherings" must be approved.

These requirements for in-person "gatherings" are subject to change based on public health guidance and Vanderbilt protocols.

- **VU community members only:** Attendance must be limited to VU community members (defined as persons with VU identification cards) only.
- **On-campus gatherings only (unless approved):** Generally, off-campus gatherings are not permitted if students are in attendance and/or if VU funds will be used. Exceptions to this rule require approval by the provost or her designee.
- **Maximum "gathering" attendance limit:** The number of total/unique attendees may not exceed the maximum number under the university's phased Return to Campus Plan (i.e., Phase 2 and 2+ max. = 10; Phase 3 and Phase 4 to be defined), or the VU COVID-modified maximum capacity for the space, whichever is more restrictive. Organizers count as attendees for purposes of the maximum attendance limit.
- **Capacity controls/attendance tracking:** Sign-ups and ticket distribution should be managed to maintain a strict maximum number of total/unique attendees. If interest exceeds capacity, develop a clear methodology for determining who will be chosen to attend, and consider using a waitlist or setting up separate pools/pods of attendees that do not overlap. Attendance should be closely tracked to assist in contact tracing, if necessary.
- **Physical distancing:** Physical distancing is required. The "gathering" may be held only if attendees can maintain appropriate physical distance given the nature of the activities contemplated. Consideration should also be given as to whether attendees will be stationary or moving around during the event.
- **Face masks/coverings:** By default, all participants must wear a face mask/covering. There may be exceptional circumstances when a face mask/covering can't be worn (e.g., woodwind performer or singer during a performance); in those cases, approval should be granted only if additional physical distance and/or physical barriers can be used.
- **Food and drinks:** Food and drinks may be served in a space where classes are held only on days when no classes are held in the space, and the space must be cleaned before the next class is held. Food and drink (provided in single-serve or grab-and-go type packaging) must be consumed only while maintaining physical distancing. Attendees may remove their face masks/coverings only temporarily to eat and drink as needed.

- **Student events:**

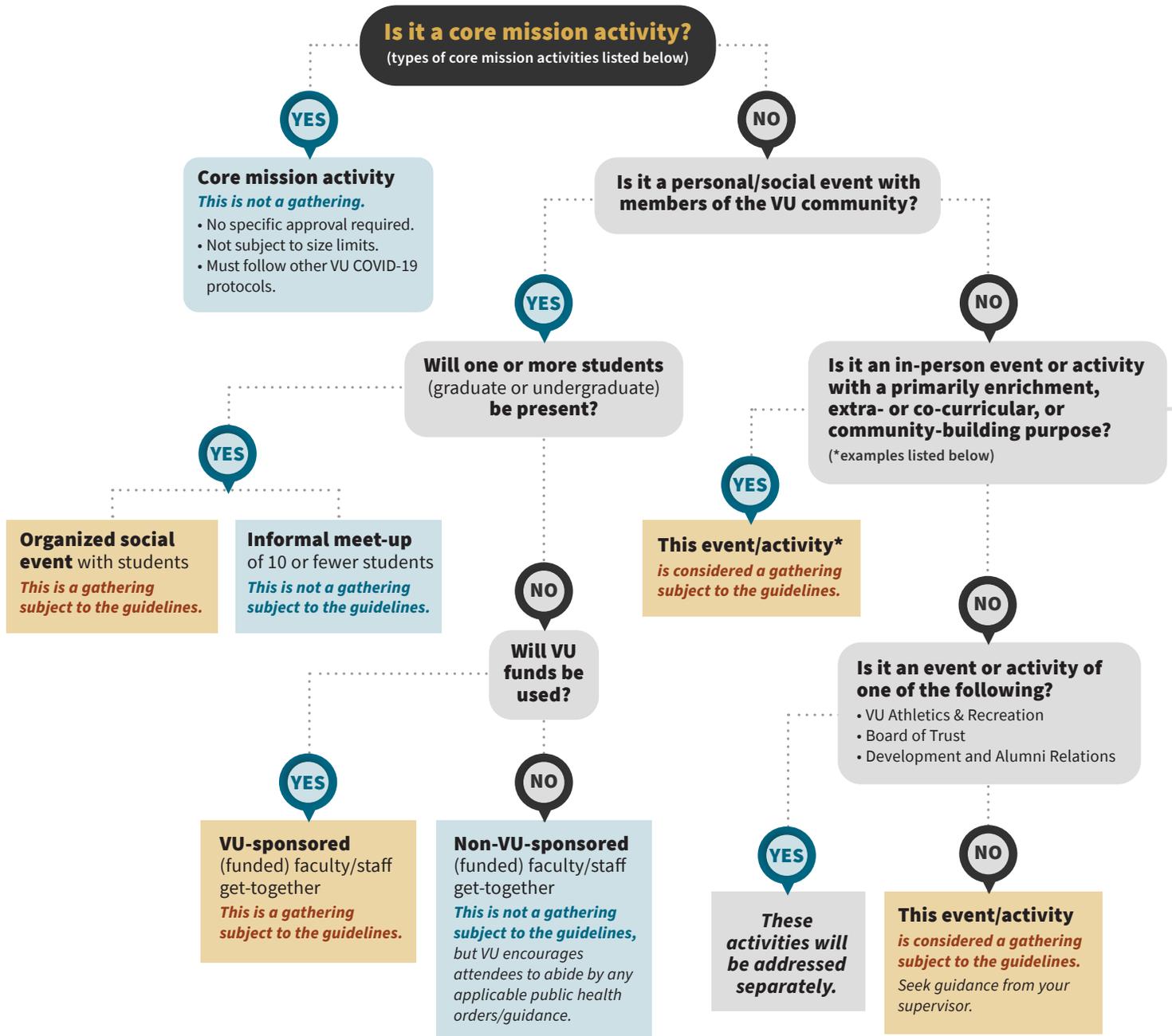
- **Recognized student organization (RSO) events:** Events of RSOs must be approved.
- **Social events with alcohol:** Student social events with alcohol, whether on- or off-campus, are not permitted.
- **No off-campus events for registered student organizations will be approved prior to Sept. 30, after which this guideline will be reviewed.**

**Resource:**

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/coronavirus/faqs/meetings-and-gatherings/>

Check this webpage frequently for updates throughout the fall semester.

# How to determine if your event/activity is a “gathering” subject to COVID-19 guidelines



## TYPES OF CORE MISSION ACTIVITIES

**Campus Public Health Events:** On-campus public health/infection prevention and response events (COVID-19 testing center, Flulapalooza)

**Academic Courses or Co-curricular Events:** Academic courses and co-curricular events when offered in connection with a VU course

**Mission-Related Meetings Led by Chancellor, VC, Dean, VP, or Dept. Chair:** Meetings of VU personnel convened to meet regarding VU’s academic-, research-, and service-related activities (e.g., meeting convened by chancellor, vice chancellor, dean, vice provost, or department chair)

**Faculty- or Staff-Led Events in Direct Support of Learning/Discovery:** University instructional and research support meetings that directly support learning/discovery and are directed by faculty/staff (e.g., lab meetings, journal clubs, poster sessions, programs of an academic/substantive nature hosted on The Ingram Commons or in a residential college and organized by a faculty head, programs of an academic/substantive nature sponsored by an identity-based center, recitals overseen by faculty/staff)

**Research Lab Activities:** University research lab activities, subject to the VU research ramp-up plan phases

**Use of Libraries:** Use of university libraries as an individual patron

**Dining in Designated Dining Spaces:** Dining in designated on-campus dining spaces (including outdoor spaces/tents)

## \*EXAMPLES of IN-PERSON EVENTS or activities with a primarily enrichment, extra- or co-curricular, or community-building purpose

- Meetings or events convened by Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) (including fraternity and sorority chapter events)
- Lectures or panels not part of a VU course (Chancellor’s Lecture Series, Crawford Lecture, deans’ lectures, RSO-organized lectures, etc.)
- Art, dance, music and theater performances (organized by RSOs and VU offices)
- Ceremonies and receptions

# RETURN TO CAMPUS: EMPLOYEE COVID-19 EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND

The Vanderbilt University Employee COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund has been established to support faculty, staff and postdocs who are experiencing significant, temporary financial challenges as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund is in place to help those in need with costs that are occurring because of the COVID-19 crisis.

The fund has been created under an Internal Revenue Code (section 139) and is limited to the federally declared COVID-19 disaster and to employees only. Eligible expenses include medical expenses, temporary housing needs attributable to COVID-19, and increased dependent care expenses arising from the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on usual dependent care arrangements.

This fund does not replace the Faculty and Staff Hardship Fund which is also available to support faculty, staff and postdocs. The employee-funded staff hardship fund is administered by the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to provide counseling and resources including financial support.

## Eligibility:

- Full-time benefits-eligible VU-employed faculty (including Full Status, Partial Load faculty), full-time VU-employed staff who have completed six months of service, and VU-employed postdoctoral fellows are eligible to receive funds if their annual base salary is below \$125,000.
- Students (graduate, professional and undergraduate) are not eligible under this employee relief fund plan but are eligible under the Student Hardship Fund.

## Maximum Award:

- Total assistance is limited to \$500 per eligible employee during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic (federally declared disaster).
- Eligible employees may submit more than one request for reimbursement. But, the total reimbursement across applications cannot exceed \$500.

## Application Process:

1. **Complete the online COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund application. The form may also be printed and completed manually.** Once completed, scan the form and send by email to askHR@vanderbilt.edu or mail the completed form to Emergency Relief Fund; C/O HR; PMB 407704; 2301 Vanderbilt Place; Nashville, TN; 37240-7704.
  - **If needed, eligible individuals may phone** 615-343-HRVU (3478) to request a copy of the form be mailed to them for completion.
2. Human Resources will evaluate and process applications on a rolling basis and communicate a decision usually within two weeks of submission of the application.

3. If approved, you will receive payment in your paycheck. The payment will be made no later than the next pay period following the communication of a decision. If that pay period is less than one week after the decision, the payment will be made by the following pay period.

\*Emergency funding is not guaranteed to all who apply. Funding is awarded on a case-by-case basis and is contingent upon availability of funds in the COVID-19 Employee Emergency Relief Fund account. Requests may be fully funded up to a \$500 limit, partially funded, or not funded at all. The information provided will be treated as confidential and shared only with individuals directly involved in administration, processing and reporting.

### **Appeals:**

1. An employee has the right to appeal a denial to the Benefits Standing Committee if they believe that their claim was wrongly denied. (Committee membership is posted at <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/provost/committees/standing/benefits/>)
2. Appeals must be made within three days (72 hours) of receiving a denial.
3. Appeals must be made by sending an email to [askHR@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:askHR@vanderbilt.edu). The email must detail the basis for the appeal. The appeal cannot be based on new or different expenses.
4. Appeals will be decided within two weeks of the submission of a complete appeal request.

### **Resource:**

The form can be found at [https://hr.vanderbilt.edu/COVID19\\_Relief\\_Fund.php](https://hr.vanderbilt.edu/COVID19_Relief_Fund.php).

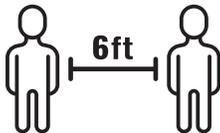
Check this webpage frequently for updates throughout the fall semester.

# PERSONAL SAFETY PRACTICES



## **MASK UP.**

Wear a face mask/covering over your nose and mouth in public settings, indoors and outdoors.



## **BACK UP.**

Maintain 6 feet of physical distance from others, even when outdoors, and avoid gathering in groups.



## **WASH UP.**

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer, especially before and after eating or spending time in a public setting.



## **CHECK UP.**

Monitor yourself daily for COVID-19 symptoms using the VandySafe app.

These protocols are required **at all times while on campus** and are also **critically important to follow while off campus** to enhance the safety of the VU community, as well as the surrounding Nashville community. For more details about the Return to Campus Plan, visit [vu.edu/fall2020](https://vu.edu/fall2020). **Call the Public Health Hotline at 615-343-1352 to report any COVID-19 concerns.**

# SYMPTOM MONITORING AND TESTING

Individuals who have been **authorized** to return to campus must also conduct symptom monitoring every day before coming to campus. All individuals must be **free of ANY symptoms related to COVID-19** to be on campus.

**These symptoms or combinations of symptoms include:**

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

While not mandatory for employees to use this specific tool, a symptom-assessment tool has been created within the existing VandySafe app for daily self-monitoring.



Once logged in, simply click on “**COVID-19**” and then “**Symptom Monitoring**” to answer a few short questions. (Those working remotely do **NOT** need to enter symptoms in the symptom-assessment tool.)



If you develop any symptoms, call the Vanderbilt Occupational Health Clinic at 615-936-0955 and notify your supervisor.

**Anyone with symptoms must quarantine off campus until testing results are back.**

If you received a positive test result from **anywhere other than OHC**, please visit [vu.edu/vucommandcenter](https://vu.edu/vucommandcenter) to fill out a contact tracing form.