COVID-19: How to Work Safely in Student Residences or Family Housing Units

This guideline was developed by Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) for all employees who are required to work in occupied student residences or family housing units. To prevent the transmission of COVID-19, appropriate precautionary measures and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements must be followed. The measures and PPE listed in this document have been developed in consultation with Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. The University of Guelph will take measures to minimize its employees’ potential exposure to COVID-19. Working in any occupied residence room or occupied family housing unit will only be considered for urgent or emergency work. In the case of urgent or emergency work, consult with your manager or supervisor for guidance on appropriate COVID-19 health and safety protocols. An emergency is defined as a situation that poses an immediate risk to life safety, sanitization system operation, or significant damage or destruction to University property.

Before you Come to Campus

- If you feel sick, stay home, DO NOT come to campus/work and inform your supervisor.
- If you are coming to campus, or another University site for work, you must complete the University of Guelph COVID-19 Daily Screening Form [1] BEFORE you arrive.
- If you become sick while at work, STOP what you are doing, isolate yourself from others. Put on a face covering and wash your hands. Go home as soon as possible. Avoid public transit and take measures to protect others around you. Inform your Supervisor.
- If you are ill/have symptoms, do not come to campus/work. Ensure that you complete the Ontario COVID-19 Self-Assessment [2] and follow the direction given. Also, complete and submit the University Employee Self Declaration Form. [3]

For a complete list of COVID-19 related symptoms, refer to the Ministry of Health’s COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms [4].

What to bring

- In addition to the tools, parts and/or equipment required for the job, take the following with you:
  - Supplied cleaners / disinfectants
  - Disposable gloves for use in cleaning / disinfection
  - Medical masks and eye protection (face-shield, safety goggles or glasses)
  - Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (optional)
- If you will be working in any washroom or in an occupied residence room or occupied family housing unit, the following supplies and Droplet and Contact PPE will be required:
  - Droplet and Contact PPE which includes:
    - Surgical/procedure mask (medical mask)
    - Isolation gown
    - Eye protection (goggles or face shield)
    - Disposable gloves
  - Supplied cleaners / disinfectants
  - Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol

Droplet and Contact PPE
Employees who may enter residence washrooms or any occupied residence room or occupied family housing unit must wear the following PPE as a minimum:

1. Surgical/procedure mask (medical mask)
2. Isolation gown
3. Disposable gloves
4. Eye protection (face shield or goggles)

Prior to entry, all employees must be trained by Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) on how to put on and take off the PPE properly.

PPE should be changed as soon as possible if it becomes damp, soiled or damaged.

Disposable PPE such as surgical/procedure masks, disposable face shields, isolation gowns and gloves must be removed and disposed of immediately after use. The used PPE should be put in a garbage bag, which should be tied up with an “overhand knot” before it is placed in a lined garbage bin.

Overhand Knot: 1) Gather and twist tightly the unused top portion of the bag, 2) Make loop with the twisted end, 3) Loop the end through to create a knot.

If the job task requires CSA-approved safety glasses, a face shield that is not CSA-approved must not be used as a substitute.

If the job task requires CSA-approved goggles, a face shield should not be used as a substitute even if CSA-approved.

A surgical/procedure mask is meant to help prevent large-particle droplets and splashes from passing through the mask material.

Droplet and Contact PPE is required for cleaning or doing repair work in all residence washrooms.

Please refer to How to Put On and Take off Droplet and Contact PPE [5].
Hand hygiene
• If possible, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds immediately before you enter the unit, immediately after you leave the unit, and during donning and doffing of PPE as instructed.
• Dry your hands with a paper towel or with cloth towel that no one else will share.
• Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

If the residence is occupied, maintain physical distancing at all times

• Immediately after knocking on the front door or ringing the doorbell, take a few steps back to stay at least 2 metres away from the occupant who opens the door.
• Instruct the occupant (and the other occupants) in the unit to maintain at least 2-metre distance from you for entire duration of the work.
• If the work needs to be conducted in a room, you and the occupant should not be present in the same room as it is difficult to maintain a safe distance from each other. Kindly ask the occupant to leave the room until the work is finished.
Clean/disinfect the work surfaces before and after the work

- Immediately before the work begins, use cleaners / disinfectants to clean/disinfect the work surfaces that you are going to touch, using supplied cleaners / disinfectants, including the tools, tables, doorknobs, light switches, faucet handles, cabinet handles, etc.
- Immediately after the work is finished, clean or disinfect the work surfaces that you have touched.
- Follow the manufacturer’s guidelines on the use of the cleaning/ disinfection products and wear disposable gloves if needed (e.g., to avoid irritation on your skin). Follow appropriate steps to take off gloves in order to avoid skin contact with the outside of the gloves.
- Always wash your hands immediately after removing the gloves or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

Wear a medical mask and eye protection

- A medical mask and eye protection (face shield, safety goggles or glasses) is required for routine work in occupied student residences and occupied family housing units.
- Follow the EHS COVID-19: Guidance for Using Medical Masks.
- When worn properly, a medical mask protect you and others from COVID-19.
- Review and follow Public Health’s infographic on how to make your mask fit properly.
- Follow the Public Health guideline on COVID-19 mask use and the precautions below:
- Follow the cleaning and disinfection instruction for eye protection in the Protective Eyewear Guidance if using a reusable face shield, safety glasses or goggles.
- Consistently and strictly adhere to hand hygiene, physical distancing, and respiratory etiquette as described above as the mask alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Wash hands immediately before putting it on and immediately after taking it off (in addition to practicing good hand hygiene while wearing it).
- Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose and mouth when removing their mask.
- When removing the mask, grasp the ties or ear loops carefully without touching the front of the mask.
- Do not share the mask with others.
- Avoid touching the mask while using it.
- Disposable masks must be replaced if they become damp, soiled, or crumpled and discarded after use. Dispose of the mask properly in a lined garbage bin.
Respiratory etiquette when coughing or sneezing

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand.
- Dispose of any tissues used as soon as possible in a waste bin and wash your hands afterwards

Appendix A – Guiding Principles for Custodial Staff and Trades and Maintenance Staff

Personal Living Spaces and Washrooms (Example: Family Housing Units, Residence Bedrooms):

- PPE = Droplet and Contact PPE
- Staff may only enter personal living spaces to perform urgent and emergency work.

All Other Spaces (Example: Lounges, Corridors):

- PPE = Medical Mask and Eye Protection (Face Shield)