

## COVID-19: Guidance on Lunchroom and Breakroom Practices

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*We all have a part to play in keeping our workplace and University of Guelph community safe and healthy. Lunchrooms and breakrooms are places where there is a potential for increased risk of COVID-19 transmission as the employees are likely to:*

- Have interactions with others
- Not wear masks or other face covering during eating and drinking
- Conduct activities that release respiratory particles (e.g., speaking loudly and laughing)
- Touch shared surfaces (e.g., sink taps, counter tops, water dispensers, paper towel dispensers, fridge handles and microwave buttons)

Occupancy limits and physical distancing requirements have been lifted in all U of G spaces. However, in employee lunch/break rooms and kitchenettes, 2 metres of physical distance must be maintained if employees are removing their mask to eat or drink.

### Self Screening

- If you feel sick, DO NOT come to work and notify your Supervisor.
- If you become sick while at work, STOP working, isolate yourself from others, notify your Supervisor and go home as soon as possible.
- If you are ill/have symptoms or may have been exposed to COVID-19, do not come to campus/work. Ensure that you complete the [Ontario COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#) [1] and follow the directions given. Also complete and submit the [University Employee Self-Declaration Form](#) [2].
- If you have tested positive for COVID-19 or have COVID-19 related inquiries, call [U of G COVID-19 Call Centre](#) [3] at 519-824-4120, extension 53906. The call centre will guide you through the reporting process and will connect you with supports from Student Health Services or Occupational Health and Wellness as necessary. Refer to U of G webpage [“What to do when you’re sick or have been exposed”](#) [4] for more information.

### Create Safer Spaces

*The following measures can be incorporated into lunchrooms and breakrooms organizations and practices to prevent potential transmission of COVID-19 in shared spaces for eating and taking breaks:*

- Restrict eating to dedicated eating areas. These areas should have access to handwashing/sanitizing stations, cleaning and disinfectant materials, and adequate space to maintain at least 2 metres of distance from each other when eating or drinking.
- Position dining tables, chairs and other furniture in lunchrooms and breakrooms to help employees keep at least 2 metres of distance from each other when eating or drinking.
- Where possible, prepare/organize an outdoor space/furniture (e.g., bench) for employees to use. However, 2 metre distance should still be maintained when eating or drinking outdoors.
- Keep windows open as much as possible.

### Develop and Communicate Plans

*Develop and communicate plans for using lunchrooms and breakrooms including:*

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- Post information and reminders that “everyone is required to maintain a 2-metre distance from each other during eating or drinking”, “wash or disinfect hands before and after eating”, and “take masks off only when eating and drinking”. In accordance with the information on “[Cleaning Measures](#) [5]”, routine custodial services will be provided for most common spaces including cleaning/disinfection of kitchenettes (tables, counters, sinks if clear of items) but Departmental & Personal Use items, such as small kitchen appliances in lunchrooms and breakrooms, can be cleaned and disinfected as needed by the users.
- Consider assigning employees to specific lunchrooms and breakrooms if there are multiple spaces available.
- Allow masks to be removed indoors for eating and drinking only but not during other activities (e.g., waiting for the microwave).

## Additional Resources for Lunchroom and Break Rooms Practices During COVID-19

[Infrastructure Health and Safety Association \(IHSA\) Guidance on Lunchroom Practices during COVID-19](#) [6]

[Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development \(MOL\), Meal and Break Periods at Work during COVID-19](#) [7]

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### Source

URL: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/environmental-health-safety-ehs/ehs-programs-policies-guidelines-and-forms/ehs-23>

### Links

[1] <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/> [2] [https://uoguelph.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_8evYmTaJXnDkphP](https://uoguelph.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8evYmTaJXnDkphP) [3] <https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/covid-19-call-centre/> [4] <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campus/i-have-tested-positive-for-covid-19-what-should-i-do/> [5] <https://www.pr.uoguelph.ca/cleaning-measures> [6] <https://www.ihsa.ca/pdfs/alerts/COVID19/guidance-on-lunchroom-practices-during-covid-19.pdf> [7] <https://www.ontario.ca/page/meal-and-break-periods-work-during-covid-19>