

Hygiene/Safety Regulations for University Operations

(- Last updated: June 28, 2022 -)

A sense of relaxation in dealing with COVID-19 has become palpable. Nevertheless, the pandemic is not over. At present, unfortunately, there is again an increase in the number of infections. Special hygiene and distance regulations continue to apply for your workstations at the university, your workplace, and working hours.

The following regulations apply to all areas and departments of the university and to all persons who are at the university, e.g. also to guests who visit the library. For further up-to-date information on specific issues, please refer to the university's website: <https://www.uni-potsdam.de/de/presse/aktuelles/coronavirus>.

The [Recommendations of the BMAS on occupational infection control after the expiry of the SARS-CoV-2 occupational health and safety regulation](#) must also be observed.

1) Hygiene Regulations

Please wear a surgical mask, FFP2 mask or equivalent in the corridors, hallways, elevators and stairwells of the University of Potsdam until further notice. This also applies when entering or leaving lecture halls and seminar rooms. Elevators may only be used alone and while wearing a mask.

In general, a minimum distance of at least 1.5 meters must still be maintained for all activities without additional protective measures. If fixed seats are offered, the minimum distance can be reduced to 1 meter (exceptions for teaching contexts, see below). When compliance is not possible in public spaces, at least medical-grade masks are to be worn.

Wearing a mask helps to create so-called intrinsic safety, that is, a safety that comes from within. Necessary surgical/FFP2 masks are available to employees at the Occupational Safety Unit of the University of Potsdam.

Furthermore, frequent airing of the rooms is still required.

The use of disinfectant by our employees is considered of a lesser priority than the protective measures mentioned above. Disinfectant will only be issued in consultation with the Occupational Safety Unit. The general hygiene rules and recommendations of the Robert Koch Institute and the Federal Center for Health Education on the prevention of infections are to be observed.

2) Teaching Activities

On-site, face-to-face **courses** are possible with a maximum number of attendees determined in accordance with the room capacity. There is a mask mandate in place for everyone; at least a medical mask, but we recommend an FFP2 mask.

Special regulations (such as in the laboratory or if the nature of the educational, training or further training measure does not permit the wearing of a mask) are possible after a risk assessment has been carried out and must be checked by the Occupational Safety Unit.

In preparative chemistry laboratories, the mask mandate can be waived if wearing a medical mask would cause additional laboratory-related dangers. This may be the case if personal protective equipment is negatively affected by the respirator.

Laboratories generally have an air exchange rate of eight times per hour and are therefore considered to be very well ventilated in terms of infection control. A fume hood is operated with a laminar air flow that retains vapors and aerosols or transports them away with the exhaust air. Air around the fume hood that might be contaminated with the virus will be sucked out thanks to a continued air flow. It is possible to dispense with the wearing of a respirator if minimum distances are observed in front of a fume hood. Persons in charge of supervision must wear an FFP2 mask (or equivalent) in order to be able to intervene quickly (averting danger).

Practical sports courses in higher education may take place in compliance with the respective regulations of the sports facility.

Rooms must be entered and vacated in an orderly fashion and in compliance with the distance regulations. The teaching staff members / persons in charge of the course are to give instructions to that end.

For rooms in which windows can be opened, users are required to ensure that the room will be aired thoroughly for short periods at frequent intervals by opening the windows as wide as possible. Rooms should be aired out in this manner for 5 to 15 minutes as frequently as possible. Suggestions on ventilation times can be found in the [statement of the Commission for Indoor Air Hygiene at the German Environment Agency](#).

If outside temperatures permit, courses should be held (in whole or in part) with open windows. At the very least before and after a course, the room must be aired out for at least 10 minutes with both windows and doors wide open.

Rooms in which windows cannot be opened must have a ventilation system installed as a prerequisite for use. HGP-UP is responsible for ensuring that the necessary air change rates are met. The share of recirculated air is to be set to zero.

Mobile air cleaners can only be purchased in individual cases after a risk assessment based on the specific circumstances and are the exception. Further information can be found on an [information page on mobile air cleaners \(MLR\)](#) on the intranet.

3) Using Offices and Work Spaces

Safety distances of at least 1.5 m must still be maintained in the office and work spaces to prevent infection. The minimum sizes for workstations in accordance with Occupational Safety Rule 1.2 must be applied. It is of particular importance to air rooms at frequent intervals. Furthermore, where this is required due to the nature of the premises or work organization, technical and/or organizational measures are to be implemented to protect against infection, for example, physical barriers (sneeze guards).

The heads of the faculties, divisions, and institutions shall define appropriate guidelines for their area of responsibility.

Based on the university's authority, wearing a mask is still mandatory if distances cannot be maintained. This means:

- no mask requirement if it is ensured that minimum distances of 1.5 m are maintained
- in meeting rooms, a distance of 1 m is sufficient after the seats have been taken and if they are carried out with a maximum number of people present according to the room capacity of the meeting room.

The nature of the respirator must be such as to reduce the spread of transmissible droplet particles during coughing, sneezing, speaking or breathing. For optimal effectiveness, it is important that the face covering fits correctly. It must fit snugly over the mouth and nose and be changed when it becomes wet. You can find further information on this on the websites of the Occupational Safety Unit (Intranet).

- [What are FFP2 masks?](#)
- [Directive on FFP2 masks](#),
- [Information leaflet on time limits for wearing face coverings](#), and
- [Information leaflet on respiratory protection and prevention](#).

4) Public Access / Other Events

Public access is to be organized with infection protection in mind. One possible measure to be implemented is the definition of office hours or the use of fixed appointments. Advisory services can also be offered via telephone or e-mail or online. Appropriate physical barriers (acrylic glass screens) can be provided in the relevant areas to protect employees that are in frequent contact with the public.

There is no mask requirement for non-teaching events if they are held with a maximum number of attendees according to the room capacity and if it is ensured that the minimum distances are observed.

5) Illness/Suspected Illness

Symptoms of the common cold must be assessed by a physician **before** going to your workplace at the university/ attending a course. If the symptoms are unclear and no incapacity for work has been ascertained, employees must work from their home office for the time being after consulting their supervisor. Both employees and students with the above-mentioned symptoms must adhere to the orientation guide for citizens by the Robert Koch Institute (see appendix to this concept).

Further information is available on the websites of the [Federal Ministry of Health](#).

6) Returning to the University after Traveling (on Holiday)

For those returning from what are known as risk areas (students and employees), the valid version of the Ordinance on Coronavirus Entry Regulations (CoronaEinfreiseV) shall apply (see <https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/service/gesetze-und-verordnungen.html>).

Should university employees stay in a COVID-19 risk area, they must inform the head of their department of this fact before returning to their workplace. The heads of department and supervisors have the right to ask whether employees have been to a COVID-19 risk area.

In such cases, the current guidelines for dealing with returnees from COVID-19 risk areas as published on the UP website must also be observed.

7) Business Trips

In order to carry out and obtain approval for business trips, please observe the respective information or publications of the Division of Human Resources and Legal Affairs. Furthermore, the guidelines of the Robert Koch Institute with regard to the designation of risk areas published by the RKI shall apply. Business trips to areas of variants of concern as defined by the RKI will generally not be approved until further notice. Business trips to areas with travel warnings from the German Foreign Office are generally not eligible for approval.

8) Dining Halls/Cafeterias

The Studentenwerk Potsdam (Association for Student Affairs) provides information on access to dining halls and cafeterias and the regulations that apply there.

9) General Legal Provisions

The regulations of the Federal Government, the State of Brandenburg, and the City of Potsdam relating to the control and containment of the coronavirus shall apply in their respective versions. Student and employee representatives will be included within the framework of the applicable legal

provisions.

10) Closing Provisions

The defined measures will be adapted to the current situation on a short-term basis.

Potsdam, 28 June 2022

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