



Pandemic Policy

- A. PURPOSE.** This policy documents the authority of the College to act in order to maintain safe university operations during the declaration of a public health emergency, pandemic, or other serious public health threat and outlines the principles under which related directives and mandates will be enacted, communicated and implemented.
- B. APPLICABILITY.** All faculty, staff, administration, students, and other individuals accessing either the West Windsor campus, James Kerney campuses, and any other instructional sites.
- C. POLICY.** The Mercer County Community College Board of Trustees has the authority to direct the College Administration to take all actions necessary and expedient for the ongoing operations of the College and to create and/or revise bylaws, rules and regulations required. During times of public health emergency (as declared by federal, state or local authorities), the Board of Trustees, the President and College Administration will ensure that the College's operations are maintained in compliance with any applicable emergency order.

In addition to complying with College rules and regulations that may be adopted by the Board of Trustees from time to time, all faculty, staff, students and visitors must adhere to the provisions of this policy and any standard, operating procedure or campus rule promulgated under this policy.

In the event of a public health emergency due to a communicable disease emergency or pandemic, policies, standards and operating procedures (whether system-wide, campus-specific or unit-level) developed under this policy will be enacted, communicated and implemented in accordance with the following principles. All such mandates will:

1. Conform to applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and orders (executive and public health).
 2. Conform to any specific directives and procedures issued by the College and, if requested by the Board of Trustees, be timely presented to the Board for review and ratification.
 3. Reflect feedback from stakeholder engagement to the extent practicable given the circumstances of the public health emergency.
 4. Be communicated to all relevant College stakeholders through official channels of campus communications, including email, campus websites and local media.
 5. Faculty, staff, students and contractors are expected to monitor the stated communication so they remain informed. Faculty, staff and students who do not adhere to mandates promulgated under this policy, whether provisional or interim in nature, may be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination or expulsion.
- D. PUBLIC HEALTH SAFETY PRACTICES:** Measures prescribed by public health officials as a way to prevent or curb the transmission of a communicable disease. The term includes a wide range of practices that vary depending on the nature of the disease, including but not

limited to the following:

1. Hand washing
2. Wearing face covering or other protective gear
3. Social distancing/physical distancing
4. Utilizing protective equipment, such as plastic/glass barriers or plastic covers that can be changed between use
5. Cleaning/sanitizing shared workstations, desks, equipment, and the like
6. Disease testing
7. Vaccination
8. Quarantine

E. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. The Office of Human Resources (OHR) is responsible for putting together detailed guidance for supervisors on public health emergency precautions, the applicability of Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), use of sick time, prohibiting employees from coming to work, and sending people home. Generally, supervisors should encourage employees to stay home when sick, discourage public conversations about the health status of any employee, and continue to follow all applicable laws and policies. The College stresses the following guidance:

1. **Supervisors and Faculty should NOT:**
 - a. Ask employees or student to disclose their personal health status or medical conditions.
 - b. Discuss, question or list concerns regarding an employee's or student's symptoms or perceived medical condition publicly or in open spaces.
 - c. Threaten the status of an employee's employment or a student's enrollment based upon recent travel or based upon their exposure to somebody who has travelled.
 - d. Assume an employee or student has traveled to an area or country that has been identified under the public health emergency that they should call the OHR for guidance and resources prior to returning to the Campus.
2. **Supervisors and Faculty SHOULD:**
 - a. Discourage interoffice conversations that include negative comments about colleagues that blame them for the spreading of contagion, assume someone has any medical condition, mock those who have any medical condition and/or disclose the personal health status and medical conditions of others.
 - b. Send an employee home if they are exhibiting observable symptoms and/or behaviors in alignment with a severe cold, flu or current illness as defined under the public health emergency or are otherwise "under the weather" in a manner that impacts their ability to successfully perform their duties. The College will follow [CDC guidance](#) regarding quarantine and/or isolation.
 - c. Explain to employees that the guidelines to request to utilize sick leave and/or file a claim or report off under FMLA still apply. If an employee is unwell and/or required to practice social distancing and unable to work they should notify their direct supervisor and the OHR.

- d. Require employees that are returning from FMLA approved leave to provide OHR with a Medical Release to Full Duty.
- e. Maintain any information in connection with an employee request for leave based upon a medical condition confidential in compliance with HIPAA requirements, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- f. Refer students to a licensed medical person or the college counselor with an LPC based upon HIPAA or ADA for when there is a medical condition confidential in compliance with HIPAA requirements, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- g. Encourage an educational and healthy workplace by promoting and requesting that employees and students adopt infection control practices in the workplace.
- h. Refer to the College's website for more information.
- i. Refer to the College's Procedure Website for specific procedures regarding pandemic, and standards and operating procedures (whether College-wide, or division-level)

F. USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE). Based on the nature of the public health emergency, all measures will be taken in accordance with NJ State requirements. All students, faculty and staff are required to follow those measures.

The College will inform the Campus Community when these measures are active and when they are suspended through the Office of Public Relations and Communications, on the website and the Blackboard Learning Management System.

G. ENFORCEMENT: Compliance this policy is mandatory.

1. Employees: Any employee found to have violated, intentionally or unintentionally, this policy may be subject to performance feedback and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
2. Students: Failure to comply with campus signage or a verbal directive from campus personnel not limited to social distance, wearing of a protective face mask, personal protective equipment required by the course syllabus, congregating in common areas and parking lots, a 14 day quarantine period due to exposure and/or at stay home order following a positive test, is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.
 - a. First Violation = Student receives a written warning notice, suspending campus access (14days), restricted to remote access only. Student may be reinstated, after the 14th day with letter of petition to have campus access;
 - b. Second Violation = Student campus access is suspended for the balance of the semester, restricted to remote access only, up to/and including suspension from all classes.
 - c. Third Violation = Student jeopardizes enrollment, up to/and including suspension from classes and campus for the balance of the academic year and/or Expulsion from the college.
3. No refunds of tuition will be granted to students serving a Suspension. Students on federal and state aid will need to be mindful of a loss of aid, and fund balances which must be paid to the college prior to reinstatement.
4. Additional related student code of conduct violations may apply.