



COVID-19 CAMPUS RESPONSE PLAN

2020-2021



ABSTRACT

In planning and preparation for controlled operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, NSCAD's approach to our campus response is informed by the principles outlined in this document.

NSCAD University

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Response Principles

In planning and preparation for controlled operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, NSCAD's approach will be informed by the following principles:

1. NSCAD's highest priority is to protect the health and safety of its community members on our three campus sites (Fountain, Academy and Port). This plan has been built around the University's commitment to the health and safety of our community members, including students, faculty, staff, volunteers, alumni, and contractors, and in pursuit of the highest academic quality in our teaching, research, and service.
2. NSCAD's COVID-19 Campus Response Plan conforms to the Provincial Sector Framework that sets out eight (8) controls which must be maintained and recommends that, at this time, university-related activities should occur remotely whenever possible, and that where possible, working and learning from home should be the default, not the exception.
3. All decision-making will be informed by public health directives and best evidence. The university will continue to work closely with the crisis management COVID-19 committee and sub-committees.
4. The University's approach to returning to campus will be both coordinated and incremental, as it continues to depend on public health directives. Each stage of the plan is designed to allow the University to move the plan forward, backwards, or put on hold, as circumstances change and depending on current provincial directives.
5. On-campus activities (which may include, but is not be limited to learning, teaching, research and business functions) may be authorized through the [campus access activity form](#) so long as control measures, including physical distance rules, can be maintained. All campus activities must abide explicitly to the safety plan and must be approved through the campus access activity form. If the safety plan is silent on a proposed activity, explicit permission must be sought before a campus activity form is submitted.

6. The university will provide as much certainty as possible to students, staff and faculty by making and communicating decisions as early as possible.

Key Guidance:

- NSCAD will minimize the hazard presented by COVID-19 by requiring, whenever possible, that members of the NSCAD community continue working and learning remotely.
- NSCAD will continue to consider additional technology or supports which may facilitate more effective remote learning and work.
- NSCAD will identify employees required on-site for campuses to function efficiently.
- NSCAD will provide opportunities for students to be on-site at times to complete or maximize their learning experience as long as all health and safety conditions can be maintained.

NSCAD recognizes that each and every one of our community members has responsibility for workplace health and safety. We encourage and communicate the shared internal responsibility system for effective risk mitigation to our community, and refer back to our [Code of Conduct addendum](#). We encourage members of the University community to not only adhere guidelines but be positive promoters of them as well.

All individuals on campus are expected to adhere to all health and safety directives put in place by the university as described in this guideline (e.g., abide by directional signage, don't enter spaces that are marked closed, etc.), as well as all health and safety directives recommended by local and provincial public health and the provincial and federal government including:

- Practicing regular hand hygiene by frequently washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer of 60% alcohol or higher.
- Practicing physical distancing by staying 2 metres (6 feet) away from others, whenever possible.
- Wearing non-medical masks or face coverings that cover the nose and mouth, when on campus.
- Discouraging the touching of your mouth, eyes, and nose with your hands.
- Using proper coughing and sneezing etiquette.
- Disinfecting high-touch surfaces frequently.
- Self-isolating as per public health guidelines

1. Determining Who Will Return to Campus

NSCAD's COVID-19 Campus Response Plan conforms to the Provincial Sector Framework that sets out that, at this time, where possible, working from home should be the default, not the exception.

NSCAD will consider modifications to work and learning schedules when a phased in return to campus begins.

- When the time comes to return to campus, NSCAD will consider factors impacting one's ability to return physically to campus such as:
 - Pre-existing medical conditions
 - Mental health considerations
 - Method, and availability, of travel to the workplace
 - Childcare, eldercare, or other caregiver concerns
 - Ill family members
 - Quarantines / isolations within the household
 - Other household members' occupational situations (military deployment, health care, etc.)

Additional resources for staff and students can be found on our [Mental Health and Wellbeing: Our Response](#). We encourage all employees and students to utilize this as needed.

2. Physical distancing

Aside from eliminating the risk, physical distancing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and others. NSCAD has created and posted **space-specific protocols** and plans for each campus to mitigate risks associated with COVID-19. These have been created by adhering to Nova Scotia Public Health (NSPH) guidelines and the unique needs of each space.

Plan details:

NSCAD will adhere to the following:

- Individuals permitted access to campus are required to keep a minimum of 2 m (6 ft.) away from others.
- Limit occupancy in spaces such as break rooms, common spaces, and lounges, to the assessed total or provincial guidelines, whichever is the most restrictive, and provide signage for capacity limits in these spaces.
- NSCAD will add additional swipe card readers to maximize campus access controls at entrances and exits.

- Whenever possible, members of the NSCAD community will avoid in-person group meetings, with preference for virtual meetings.
- Enforce NSCAD space-specific protocols to address the unique needs and circumstances of each workspace or learning space.
- Facilities Management and Health and Safety have evaluated areas with constricted access (doorways, hallways, elevators, stairwells, washrooms, etc.) and:
 - applied directional arrows for one-way flow patterns to control traffic in entrances and exits.
 - added hazard specific signage.
 - developed a protocol and signage for elevators that restricts usage to one person at any given time.
 - developed a protocol and signage for washrooms that restrict usage to ensure physical distancing guidelines can be met, this often means making washrooms single use.
 - assessed learning spaces/classrooms for maximum capacity and adjusted for current COVID-19 physical distancing guidelines from NSPH.
 - restricted use of rooms and spaces that cannot be modified to meet COVID-19 guidelines without impeding emergency exits
 - assessed worksite layouts to determine whether restructuring or barriers are required to increase spacing between workstations or learning spaces, such as studios, classrooms or common areas.

3. Physical Barriers

Physical barriers at NSCAD have been created for situations when physical distancing cannot be maintained. These have been created to keep our NSCAD community and visitors safe while working or learning. These partitions will be cleaned frequently, will be of sturdy construction, adhere to the fire code and will not obstruct one-way flows or impede duties of the NSCAD community.

Plan details:

- Partitions are being created to provide barriers between students in studio spaces.
- Partitions have been added to areas where high foot traffic and where face-to-face dialogue is necessary.
- Whenever possible, desk-mounted barriers for employees who have frequent interaction with the public will be made of transparent materials to allow ease of viewing.
- Facilities Management has developed a plan to ensure that erected physical barriers are cleaned frequently by custodial services.
- No one should take it upon themselves to create a partition or physical barrier. Requests for a partition or barrier should be made to Facilities Management.

Traffic Flow Control Measures:

- Designated entrances and exits will be posted in each building.
- Many spaces within the NSCAD community do not allow for two-way traffic with physical distancing. In areas where appropriate physical distancing is not possible (such as stairwells, narrow corridors and entryways) traffic flow and directional signage/arrows indicating which direction to travel in and are to be followed.
- Additional floor decals and signage can be made available on request from Facilities Management.
- Elevator use is restricted to one person at a time, unless the person in the elevator requires a support person. Face coverings are to be worn in the elevator at all times.

4. Additional Administrative and Engineering Controls

Plan details:

Administrative:

- NSCAD has created [an addendum to the Code of Conduct](#) to address expectations for safe NSCAD Community behaviours that apply to COVID-19.
- NSCAD will reinforce hand hygiene, including before entering and exiting the University with an alcohol-based hand rub of 60% or more (if hands are not visibly dirty) or with soap and water (if hands are dirty). This will be practiced through the duration of campus visit. The necessary supplies will be provided and personal hygiene measures will be reinforced to protect and reduce exposure.
- NSCAD has created safe work practice for handwashing and use of face masks.
- NSCAD is creating materials (e.g., posters, social media blasts, webpage banners and content) that will be branded for consistency to ensure that all community members are able to identify authentic communications.
- The University is required to maintain contact details of all persons on campus.
- The University is required by NSPA to maintain a list of contact details of individuals who are required to self-isolate (see section 7 of this document).

Engineering:

Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) measures will help to reduce the risk of airborne transmissions of COVID-19. It is not possible to speak to ventilation at NSCAD under one umbrella. Each of the University's three buildings has varying capabilities to enhance ventilation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Where possible, NSCAD will increase the amount of fresh air being brought into buildings through air handlers. This is achievable at the Academy building and has been enhanced to function at 100% at the Port campus.
- Where increasing fresh air intake is not possible, NSCAD will reduce the amount of air being recirculated through building at the Fountain campus and restrict access when ventilation improvements cannot be achieved.
- Where possible, replacement of air filters in HVAC systems will be undertaken to upgrade filters to increase air quality.
- NSCAD will promote the use of operable windows during favourable weather conditions.
- A hand washing station or washroom will be readily available or a hand sanitizing station with a minimum 60% alcohol based will be made available.

5. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

To align with the NSPA's announcement regarding non-medical mask usage, as of July 31st, 2020 NSCAD is requiring the use of non-medical masks or face coverings in most indoor common spaces on our campuses as a public health measure to keep our community safe and help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Non-medical masks should be worn by all community members who are on campus for any purpose and in any indoor common areas. For non-reusable non-medical facemasks will have a specific disposal bin around NSCAD campuses. A communication poster will be posted near and around our campuses to education our members how to properly dispose a non-medical mask. This is an effort to help protect their safety as well as our cleaning staff's health and safety.

NSCAD will encourage and expect the use of a non-medical mask in these areas and acknowledges exemptions for children under two, as well as children ages 2-4 when their caregiver cannot get them to wear a mask, and individuals with a valid medical reason. You can find more information on mask requirements [here](#). Common areas include:

- Entrance ways.
- stairwells
- elevators where there is another person present
- hallways
- common study areas
- library
- studio spaces
- classrooms
- washrooms where another person is present
- NSCAD members who are eating or drinking in a space where two metres physical distancing can be achieved may take their masks off.

- NSCAD members are free to remove non-medical masks in personal, private workspaces where a distance of two metres can be achieved.
- A safe work practice has been created on how to properly use your non-medical mask and you can find that [here](#).

Once all other control strategies are deemed impractical, personal protective equipment face masks, gloves, and glasses can be effective protection from COVID-19. We encourage all of our community members to wear non-medical masks and will be reminded when needed, these reminders may be from email, communication from managers, supervisors, Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator, Senior Leadership Team, etc., health and safety boards, and NSCAD navigator.

Non-medical masks or face coverings are required on campus.

NSCAD is adopting the following standards for personal protective equipment use while on campus when deemed necessary. NSCAD will continue to provide PPE to personnel whose tasks require protection.

N-95 Filtering Facepiece Respirators

N-95 masks are currently only recommended for use by medical professionals during the pandemic, unless they are required for other non-COVID-19 hazards. The use of these respirators requires a medical evaluation and respiratory fit test prior to their use.

Surgical style facemasks

These masks provide additional protection when an appropriate minimum distance of 2 m (6 ft) cannot be observed. Personnel using these masks as PPE should ensure the mask's quality is sufficient to provide adequate protection.

Non-medical masks

Non-medical (e.g. cloth) facial coverings may provide limited protection to those wearing them and can help to protect others by containing respiratory droplets while coughing and sneezing. Frequent laundering is required to prevent cross contamination and microbial build up on reusable non-medical facial coverings.

Disposable gloves

Disposable (e.g. nitrile) gloves are recommended when workers may be in direct contact with an ill person, or a contaminated object or environment. Gloves must be used and removed properly to prevent cross-contamination. Frequent and thorough hand hygiene, as well as not touching one's face, are still required while using gloves.

Face/eye protection

Face and/or eye protection may provide additional protection when workers may be in direct contact with an ill person.

6. General Cleaning and Disinfection

NSCAD has a fully staffed cleaning team that has leadership and experience to balance both our pre-pandemic and COVID-19 cleaning requirements. Our cleaning protocols have been adjusted to focus on cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces in all areas. NSCAD will have cleaning products and disinfectants that are able to eliminate/kill many or all pathogenic microorganisms, except bacterial spores, on inanimate objects and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Plan details:

Our cleaning team will thoroughly address all high touched areas twice daily. This includes but not limited to:

- Doorknobs, light switches, toilet handles, faucets and taps, elevator buttons, railings.
- All visibly dirty surfaces will be cleaned before disinfecting (unless otherwise stated on the product).
- Dispenser type hand sanitizers will be placed at all building entrances and exits as a minimum standard.

Given the nature of the learning environment, the cleaning team will not be able to address specialized equipment or immediate work spaces.

- Specialized equipment that requires enhanced cleaning will be completed by Technicians.
- Employees are expected to disinfect work areas after use (for example: desk, computer, printer, filing cabinet).

For communal areas:

- Additional cleaning/disinfection will be done for shared areas, especially before and/or after a change in personnel or students. Instruction will be provided in advance of approved access.
- NSCAD will ensure a supply of disposable towels and spray cleaners, or disposable wipes, to regularly clean/disinfect commonly used surfaces and remove all communal items that cannot be easily cleaned, such as newspapers, and magazines.

Cleaning staff safety:

- NSCAD will notify cleaning staff of any known risk of COVID-19 in any given space.
- Cleaning contractors are provided with their usual personal protection equipment (PPE) for cleaning where this is necessary. Additional PPE to protect against COVID-19 can be used as needed. Masks will be required.
- NSCAD will enforce the importance of maintaining social distancing while cleaning spaces. Also, will enforce proper hand hygiene with soap and water when they finish work or any cleaning task. NSCAD will supply alcohol-based hand sanitizer of more than 60% if a wash station is not close by.
- Ensure cleaning staff receive good instructions and understand the importance of carrying out thorough cleaning properly while ensuring their own safety.
- Information will be given to cleaning staff on how to properly dispose of their PPE so they do not risk contacting COVID-19 once they have completed their tasks. Also, a safe work practice will be given for their review on how to properly use a mask.
- Cleaning staff will limit the use of sharing cleaning equipment unless, if this is unachievable, the cleaning equipment will only be shared if sanitized properly.
- NSCAD recognizes the employees right to refuse unsafe work and will ensure that cleaning staff are reminded about their rights under *the Act* and will address any concerns with employees.

Cleaning protocols in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case on NSCAD property:

The University will take all reasonable precautions to ensure spaces that have the possibility of exposure to a COVID-19 case are properly cleaned and sanitized. This may include closure of the space while the cleaning protocol is undertaken.

In the instance of a confirmed case of COVID-19, all impacted spaces will be closed until cleaning is complete. This may include: disinfecting by cloth, misting, and ventilation by internal or external cleaners. Public health guidelines will be adhered to in the cleaning of spaces where a confirmed case of COVID-19 came in contact.

Facilities will limit access to potentially affected areas until a proper cleaning and sanitation of the space has been completed.

NSCAD will inform employees, staff and students of a potential workspace/learning space exposure, only to the extent necessary to adequately inform them of their potential workspace/learning space risk. This will be done while maintaining complete confidentiality, without revealing the infected individual's name. All aspects of case investigation and contact tracing will be confidential and culturally appropriate.

7. Infection Control and Monitoring

Plan details:

For the purposes of mitigating risks to the NSCAD community posed by COVID-19, NSCAD is required to monitor the health and wellness of all NSCAD community members by NSHA.

Quarantine / Self-Isolation

- Anyone travelling to the Atlantic Provinces must self-isolate for two weeks (14 days) and follow the requirements in the active public health order, in accordance with the guidelines from NSHA.
 - Students entering from outside the Atlantic provinces on or after August 20, 2020 from outside Atlantic Canada (or who have traveled outside the region within 14 days) to attend university or NSCC must complete the [Nova Scotia Safe Check-in](#). These students will be required to self-isolate for 14 days; additionally, three COVID-19 tests will be administered by public health during their self-isolation. In addition to the requirement by the Province, students, staff and faculty who will be coming to or re-entering Nova Scotia from outside the Atlantic Bubble will need to complete the self-isolation plan form
 - Students who came to Nova Scotia before August 20, 2020 from outside Atlantic Canada and are currently self-isolating in a campus residence will need to get tested at least once.
 - All students who self-isolate **must** complete a daily digital check in with NS Public Health to confirm their self-isolation status and also the NSCAD self-isolation plan form. All aspects of the Nova Scotia Safe Check-in for students are also requirements within the NSCAD Campus Response Plan.
- Anyone living with someone required to self-isolate must also self-isolate, or make arrangements to live elsewhere.
- Anyone who comes into contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 must self-isolate, in accordance with the guidelines and direction of NSPA.
- Anyone who is required to self-isolate must complete a [self-isolation form](#), so that NSCAD can follow up and provide support to the general well-being of those in isolation.
- NSCAD requires that all members of the NSCAD community have a self-isolation plan detailing contact information and plans for accommodations and provisions (where will you stay? how will you get groceries? etc.) which is logged at NSCAD.
- Because NSCAD does not have residences, we do not have dedicated residential accommodation for quarantining community members. We have arranged preferential rates at local hotels, contact Student Services for more information.

Screening

NSCAD will encourage and reinforce the need for all NSCAD community members accessing the campus to **self-screen daily** prior to departing for the university. If any one or more of the

following new or worsening symptoms:

fever, dry cough, tiredness, aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhoea, conjunctivitis, headache, loss of taste or smell, a rash on skin, or discolouration of fingers or toes.

NSCAD community members will be required to stay home and, for staff and students, contact their manager/supervisor/instructor. They will be advised to complete public health 811's self-assessment tool and follow public health guidance for testing, treatment, monitoring, and/or return to work.

NSCAD community members will be advised to self-screen each workday before departing their household for the signs or symptoms of COVID-19. If symptoms are present, members should follow the current guidance from Public Health plus refrain from traveling to campus and, for staff, faculty and students, notify their manager, supervisor, or instructor.

In addition, NSCAD community members who are exposed to COVID-19 suspected cases within their household should remain home and follow NSHA advice on when they may return.

Members of the NSCAD community are expected to keep up-to-date on symptoms associated with COVID-19 which are updated by the Government of Canada. Symptoms of COVID-19 can vary from person to person. Symptoms may also vary in different age groups. A list of symptoms can be found [here](#).

In an event where an outbreak occurs at NSCAD University, these are the steps Senior Leadership, Facilities Management and Occupational Health and Safety will take in response:

- Alert Public Health.
- Communicate transparently to NSCAD community to alert them to monitor for symptoms and to self-isolate for 14 days
- Determine who is at risk.
- Facilitate interviews and collect information/data.
- Co-operate with Public Health on investigation and contact tracing
- Communicate regularly with NSCAD community members as information arises if it helps protect their health and safety.
- Organize a thorough disinfecting that aligns with Government cleaning regulations in each campus.

Community Outbreak

Two* or more unrelated cases** with similar illness that can be epidemiologically linked to one another (i.e., associated by time and/or place and/or exposure).

Institutional Outbreak

Three* or more cases with similar illness that can be epidemiologically linked to one another (i.e., associated by exposure, within a 4-day period, in an institutional setting).

* For certain illnesses, 1 case of the disease may constitute an outbreak.

** Cases who do not live in a common household, exclusive of an institutional event.

Additional details on the Province's definition of outbreak management can be found [here](#).

8. Addressing Symptomatic Cases

Plan details:

- If a member of the NSCAD community is confirmed as positive, a [safety incident report](#) will be completed to record the occurrence.
- Infected employees or students will not be identified to their colleagues as having contracted the virus, as this will be treated as confidential medical information.
- Employees and students who are known to have close contact with the infected individual will be isolated/sent home to await being contacted by Public Health.
- NSCAD will start immediate temporary closure of areas until additional cleaning/disinfection can be completed.
- Management will work with Public Health to assist their investigation and/or contact tracing and notify Facilities Management to arrange a thorough disinfection of the area.
- NSCAD understands that some employees may be very uncomfortable working in a setting where someone has tested positive for COVID-19. Accommodations will be made when necessary.

Human Resources and Occupational Health and Safety is available to assist where these difficult situations may occur.

9. Monitoring and Communicating the Plan

Everyone needs to be adaptable and considerate as we move forward together. It is critical to maintain and adapt our plan to return to campus as the situation changes. We also understand the need to communicate our plan to the NSCAD community and make sure people understand it. NSCAD will err on the side of over communicating to support extreme transparency.

Plan details:

Monitoring:

- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE) will be monitored by the Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator and leaders in each department.
- Physical distancing will be monitored by Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator and leaders in each department.

Communication:

- Fact sheets and posters will be posted in prominent locations (i.e. safety boards, website, corridor walls, stairwells and entrances) and visible to external parties who may seek access to campus
- Communication to NSCAD community via email will be on going, clear and transparent to get messages across.
- Direct communication between manager/supervisors and employees, faculty members/technicians and students will be on going. Training and information will be provided when/if needed.
- Information will be uploaded to virtual technologies such as Brightspace and Teams.
- NSCAD will facilitate frequent team updates and foster Q&A opportunities.
- Information posted regularly to NSCAD navigator which will include a designated space for COVID-19 related documents, plans and procedures. Resources and links to official website for more information will be provided. Social media will also be updated accordingly for members of NSCAD community.
- Encourage our NSCAD community to keep up to date on Health Canada and NSPHA website. We will provide links in our communications for convenient access.

Addenda:

[Code of Conduct COVID-19](#)

[Self-Isolation Form](#)

[Code of Conduct Questionnaire for Employees](#)

[Additional COVID-19 OHS Resources](#)