

Bennington College is committed to providing a healthy and safe work environment. To that end, the College will follow the Vermont Department of Health and CDC guidelines regarding return to work protocol for employees. We have developed the following expectations for staff as we look to Fall return to work planning.

Commitment to Shared Responsibilities

The [Commitment to Shared Responsibilities](#) is a key part of Bennington College's effort to protect health and safety when bringing community members back to campus for the Fall term. A culture of safety, responsibility, and accountability is imperative as we address ongoing and new challenges of COVID-19. Bennington College, in compliance with the State of Vermont, requires all staff, faculty and students to sign this Commitment of Shared Responsibility. The Commitment outlines the required health and safety protocols and behavioral expectations of our community, because the individual actions of each of us directly impacts the health and safety of us all. All members of the College community must adhere to these regulations. All campus constituents - staff, faculty and students - will be expected to show our shared commitment to one another by adhering to these responsibilities at all times. Failure to comply with the regulations outlined in the Commitment of Shared Responsibilities will result in disciplinary action. Employees must review and sign the Commitment [here](#) by August 14.

Employee Health and Safety Training

- All employees must complete a mandatory training on health and safety requirements related to COVID-19. If you have not already, employees will be required to complete the [Protecting the Safety and Health of Workers Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) training program and [confirm completion here](#).

Employee Health Screening and Testing

- Employees shall not report to, or be allowed to remain at, work if sick or symptomatic. Employees who are symptomatic should contact their health provider and should notify their supervisor.
- Employees who are not working on campus or coming to campus on a given day are not required to submit a daily health screen form.
- Prior to the commencement of each work shift, all staff will be required to self-screen and certify the results by completing the [daily health screening form](#) to confirm that their temperature is within a range that does not exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit and employees must also certify that they are asymptomatic for respiratory illness (fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, congestion or runny nose, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea). Employees who are unable to access the form remotely should speak with their manager directly to arrange an alternative process that meets these requirements. Employees may use their own thermometer to conduct the temperature check or may [request a thermometer](#) from the College.
- All employees working or coming to campus (including those living on campus but working from their on-campus residence) will be tested for COVID-19 in advance of the start of the term and as a preventive measure the College will conduct rolling testing of asymptomatic employees (those without symptoms) on a schedule to be determined by the College. Employees who are sick or symptomatic should not report to campus. The College will use a minimally-invasive nasal swab test, and all testing will be coordinated by Health Services. Employee test results will be

maintained and managed in a confidential manner, consistent with other personal medical information. If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, the employee will be directed to their healthcare provider and will not be allowed to return to work on campus until cleared by their healthcare provider. All employee COVID-19 testing will be free. Additional details regarding the commencement of testing will be forthcoming.

- Staff are encouraged to keep a contact journal – a list of other people with whom they have been in close contact with each day. If the staff member gets sick, this would make it easier to get in touch with those people so they can take proper precautions to prevent further spread of COVID-19.

Employee Illness

- Employees shall not report to, or be allowed to remain at, work if sick or symptomatic (fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, congestion or runny nose, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea).
- No symptomatic or COVID-19 positive employee is allowed on site and any employee who has contact with a worker or any other person who is diagnosed with COVID-19 is required to quarantine for 14 days.

On the Job Expectations/Requirements

- Employees must wear cloth face coverings when in the presence of others and in public. When outdoors, and more than six feet apart from one another, masks are not absolutely required, but discretion must be exercised, and masks should be carried on the person at all times while at work in the event circumstances warrant their use. Masks are also required in any public space on campus including outside spaces where 6 feet / 2 meters distancing is not possible, and in private spaces where 6 feet / 2 meters distancing is not possible. Masks must cover the nose and mouth, and it is recommended that masks fit snugly under the chin and have two layers of fabric; woven fabric is recommended over knitted.
 - All staff members are encouraged to use their own cloth face coverings. Disposable masks and washable cloth masks are available if needed; contact [Campus Safety](#) for assistance. Masks are available for purchase in the Bookstore, and employees can also make their own per [CDC instructions](#). The College will provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to staff as required.
- The College will provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to all essential staff whose job responsibilities require it.
- Employees are expected to stay 6 feet from other people, where feasible, and not to gather in groups.
- Employees must observe the occupancy limits in designated common areas, such as break rooms and shared work spaces so that occupants maintain strict social distancing of no less than 6 feet per individual.
- Handwashing or hand sanitization is required frequently including before entering, and leaving, job sites.
- All common spaces (when open) and equipment, including bathrooms, frequently touched surfaces and doors, tools and equipment, and vehicles must be cleaned regularly *and*, when possible, prior to transfer from one person to another, in accordance with [CDC guidance](#).

- Employees are required to wipe down their area after use (or the College shall ensure cleaning of the common areas at regular intervals throughout the day.) Cleaning of office spaces will be a collaborative effort between Buildings and Grounds cleaning staff and community members who use the space, as outlined in the Commitment of Shared Responsibilities, which asks users of shared spaces and tools to help clean and disinfect shared surfaces after use. Supplies will be provided to support this.
- Employees must observe the signs posted at all entrances that clearly indicate that no one may enter a campus facility if they have symptoms of respiratory illness.
- If working in a campus building that does *not* have a mechanical ventilation system, staff should open doors and windows to promote air flow to the greatest extent possible but should first contact Buildings and Grounds for guidance and questions. The College will limit the number of people occupying a single indoor space; employees must observe this limit.
- No more than 2 people shall occupy one vehicle when conducting work. Vehicle occupants should be seated as far away from each other as possible, wear masks, and keep windows open as practicable.
- Use of shared workspaces, desks, offices, etc. or sharing of office supplies and equipment is discouraged to the maximum extent practicable.
- Employees may be required to take staggered break times where possible.
- Face-to-face staff meetings should be limited, and physical distancing must be observed.
- Staff and faculty with offices designated as 1-person capacity will need to schedule appointments with colleagues and students via video conferencing or phone unless they are able to secure an alternative space where they can maintain 6 feet physical distance from one another. Faculty, staff, and students will need to wear cloth face coverings when meeting and maintain 6 feet physical distance from one another. Staff and faculty with health conditions may need to conduct all meetings remotely for the fall.

Business and Personal Travel

- All but the most essential Bennington College-sponsored travel for faculty and staff is suspended for Fall 2020. Travel requests will be reviewed by the Provost (for faculty) and the Director of Human Resources in conjunction with the employee's direct supervisor and senior staff representative (for staff) to determine the necessity of the travel.
- Employees who reside in Vermont may travel outside of the state to *select areas* in Northeast - those counties that have 400 or fewer active COVID-19 cases per million - and return without quarantining if they do so in a personal vehicle. Each Monday, the State of Vermont will publish a [map of Cross State Travel](#) identifying quarantine and non-quarantine counties throughout Northeast. Individuals should follow any travel restrictions and quarantine requirements for the states they plan to visit. Employees who reside in MA or NY should follow these same guidelines but should also refer to any additional home state travel regulations.
- Employees who travel to areas 400 or more active COVID-19 cases per million (based on the [map of Cross State Travel](#) or areas out of such), may be subject to self-quarantine for 14 days. Employees must notify their supervisor if they plan to travel. In some cases, the employee may be required to use their own vacation or leave time to cover this absence. For more information about how to quarantine, visit the Vermont Department of Health's [quarantine chart](#).

Alternate Work Arrangements

- The College will work with employees who have personal health or other individual concerns about returning to work on campus. If an employee has a serious health condition (underlying health condition), the employee may request a **workplace accommodation**. An employee may request to work from home or request another accommodation by contacting **Human Resources**. We have a confidential process for managing these requests. All personal health information will be considered confidential and will be released only in accordance with the requirements of the ADA and the VFEPA.
- Employees may request a temporary schedule change including an adjustment to work hours or work schedule. Requests should be submitted to your manager.

Staff Campus Life

- Dining Services and the Meyer Recreation Barn will be limited to student use only during the Fall term.
- In an effort to minimize the potential risks associated with Covid-19, along with giving access to staff who will work remote, events will take place virtually whenever possible (Zoom/Google Hangouts/online chat rooms etc.)
- Staff and faculty with offices designated as 1-person capacity will need to schedule appointments with colleagues and students via video conferencing or phone unless they are able to secure an alternative space where they can maintain 6 feet physical distance from one another. Faculty, staff, and students will need to wear cloth face coverings when meeting and maintain 6 feet physical distance from one another. Staff and faculty with health conditions may need to conduct all meetings remotely for the fall.
- We encourage staff and faculty to limit visitors to campus. Visitors will be required to follow all health and safety protocols established by the College.

Reporting Concerns

Bennington College believes that employees have a shared commitment to ensuring the health and safety of our campus community. To report health and safety concerns or concerning behavior of an individual who is not adhering to the established safety protocol, please contact your supervisor or Human Resources or the Provost and Dean's Office.