

Liberty University

In-Person Instruction & Campus Operating Plan

Fall Term 2020

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Plan Website: <https://www.liberty.edu/covid19>

Preface

For some time now, Liberty University has been developing its detailed plan for Fall 2020 term operations, based in large part on information derived from federal and state public health officials, as well as a variety of other sources. Liberty University's In-Person Instruction and Campus Operation Plan has now been enhanced to address all of the topics on which information has been requested by the State Council for Higher Education for Virginia, and put into the helpful format suggested by SCHEV for its review. Copies of Liberty University's fall operations plan in this format are being circulated to SCHEV and others working on the issues related to COVID-19 in the spirit of voluntary cooperation with hope of receiving feedback and suggested improvements. Like all general institutional policies, plans and goal statements in Virginia, they are not contractual. This fall operations plan and the University policies referenced within it are subject to revision and improvement as circumstances dictate, as Liberty University exercises its authority to make decisions in the best interests of its students, faculty, and administration.

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Section A: Repopulation of the Campus

1. Establishment of a COVID -19 coordinator/campus team

Liberty University officials have been meeting regularly and carefully monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic situation, maintaining contact with state public health officials, and following applicable guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) for college campuses. The decisions made rely heavily on the guidance received from the CDC and the Virginia Department of Health and are intended to help protect the health and welfare of our students, faculty, staff, and local community.

In accordance with the University's *Communicable Disease Exposure Control Plan* and the *Liberty University Flu Management Protocol*, on January 30, 2020 the COVID-19 Task Force convened. This taskforce comprises leadership from across campus (see [Appendix](#) for COVID-19 Task Force Membership) to review emergency operation plans, ensure compliance with CDC and Virginia Department of Health (VDH) guidance, and implement best practices to protect the community. University leadership and outside expertise continue to meet regularly in response to the evolving situation.

2. Contact information and procedures for reaching the local health department

Contact information for the local health department:

Central Virginia Health District Headquarters
Lynchburg Health Department
307 Alleghany Avenue
Lynchburg, VA 24501
Phone: 434-477-5900

Website: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/central-virginia/health-department-locations/>

Procedures

As detailed in the *Communicable Disease Exposure Control Plan*, the procedure for reporting/communicating a communicable disease is described below.

Liberty University Student Health Services and Residence Life routinely communicate with each other via the "on call report" as a way to track illnesses with students who live in a residence hall. However, this is not always a fail-safe method as sick students may bypass Student Health Services and go directly to a local hospital/clinic, which can delay reporting and response procedures.

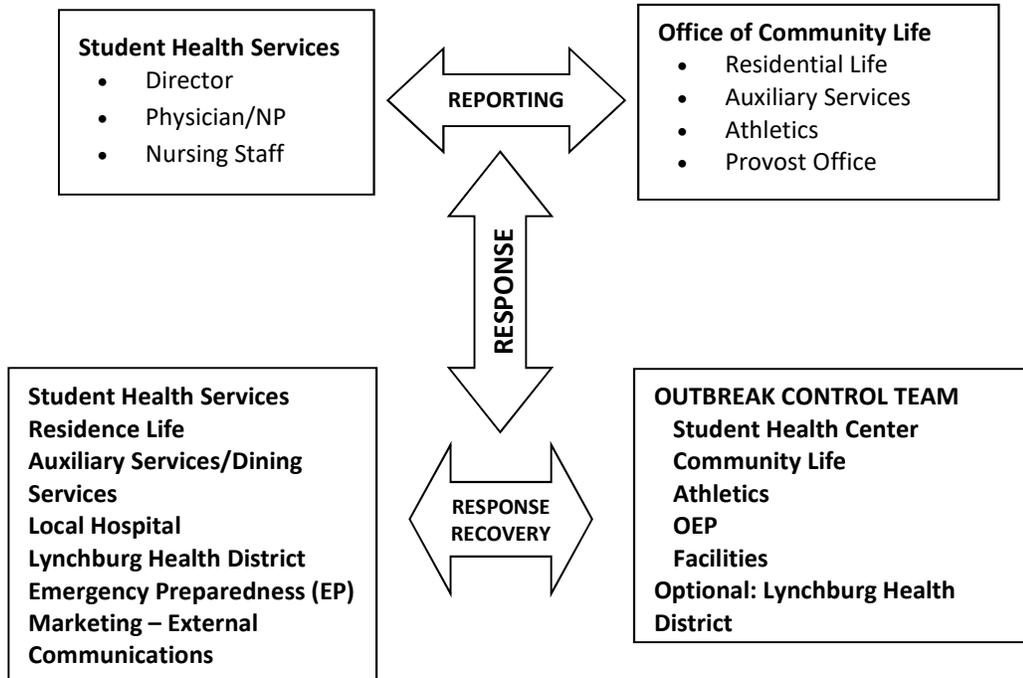
Liberty personnel who are responsible for managing communicable disease incidents implement timely notifications and effective communication. The following communication flow chart provides a guide for how an incident should be reported and how that information should be communicated and responded to as necessary:

- The significance of the flow diagram is to coordinate communications when different departments (i.e., **Student Health Services (SHS)**, **Office of Community Life**, or **Athletics**) become aware of a student(s) that has been confirmed to have a communicable disease or,

based upon medical history, appears to be ill with a communicable disease. In such cases, the information will be appropriately and confidentially communicated to each department (SHS – Community Life – Athletics)

- According to State Law, Student Health Services is required to report to the **Lynchburg Health Department** of the VDH any disease or condition on the Reportable Disease List. Entities other than the SHS may have first contact with the student and should refer the student to confirm a diagnosis so the protocols to initiate contact with departments as listed in the flow diagram below. From this process, contact tracing and required notification of third parties who are confirmed contacts and potential contacts occurs, in accordance with the policy and federal law on campus emergency notification.

Communication Flow chart for Reporting/Communicating a Communicable Disease



3. Students’ initial return to campus (such as initial screening, move-in)

Fall 2020 Calendar Changes

Liberty’s revised academic calendar for Fall 2020 includes the following changes:

- The date for students to check into the residence halls will be a few days earlier than originally planned to allow for more staggered arrival times.
- Fall Break will be combined with Thanksgiving Break, which will start later than previously scheduled so that students will not need to return to campus until the start of the spring semester, if they choose.
- The final days of the fall semester will be offered online so that students can participate remotely for their reviews and exams.

Students' Return to Campus

All students will complete an electronic **COVID-19 pre-screening questionnaire** before arriving on campus for the fall term. In an effort to educate all students on the importance of handwashing and other personal hygiene, the prescreening questionnaire has an educational video embedded.

In light of COVID-19 concerns, several measures are being taken to promote a safe move-in experience. These safety measures include:

- Residence hall move-in has been extended to create less density on campus during the move in period.
- Ensuring lower numbers of students scheduled to arrive on the residence halls at the same time by spreading new student move-in over three days instead of two, and returning student move-in over four days instead of three.
- Encouraging social hygiene and mask use for students, parents, and student leaders
- Sanitizing move-in bins after each use.

Fall 2020 Move-In

New Students

New Student Move-In for Fall 2020 will take place Mon.-Wed., **August 17-19**. When new students arrive during move-in time, student leaders will be available at residences hall to complete check-in and assist with moving in belongings, if desired. If a student needs to arrive any earlier than August 17, the student must submit an Early Arrival request (see below for more information).

To ease congestion on move-in days and to maintain safety precautions related to COVID-19, we have coordinated a staggered check-in schedule.

Commons & South Tower

Residential Commons (001-003) & South Tower (033)

- Floors 1, 4, & 7 will move in on Monday, August 17.
- Floors 2, 5, & 8 will move in on Tuesday, August 18.
- Floors 3, 6, & T will move in on Wednesday, August 19.

Move-In Time:

- Rooms ending in 1 or 6, move-in time is 8-10 a.m.
- Rooms ending in 2 or 7, move-in time is 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
- Rooms ending in 3 or 8, move-in time is 12-2 p.m.
- Rooms ending in 4 or 9, move-in time is 2-4 p.m.
- Rooms ending in 5 or 0, move-in time is 4-6 p.m.

East Campus & Quads

East Campus (140-194) & the Quads (029-032)

- Odd-numbered apartments will move in on Monday, August 17.
- Even-numbered apartments will move in on Tuesday, August 18.

Move-In Time:

- **A** rooms, move-in time is **8-10 a.m.**
- **B** rooms, move-in time is **10 a.m.-12 p.m.**
- **C** rooms, move-in time is **12-2 p.m.**
- **D** rooms, move-in time is **2-4 p.m.**
- **E** rooms, move-in time is **4-6 p.m.**

Hill & Circle

The Hill (017-023) & the Circle (025-028)

- Floor 3 will move in on Monday, August 17.
- Floor 2 will move in on Tuesday, August 18.
- Floor 1 will move in on Wednesday, August 19.

Move-In Time:

- Rooms ending in 1 or 2, move-in time: 8-10 a.m.
- Rooms ending in 3 or 4, move-in time: 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
- Rooms ending in 5 or 6, move-in time: 12-2 p.m.
- Rooms ending in 7 or 8, move-in time is 2-4 p.m.
- Rooms ending in 9 or 0, move-in time is 4-6 p.m.

Source: <https://www.liberty.edu/residence-life/housing/move-in-move-out/>

Returning Students

- Returning Student Move-In for Fall 2020 will take place Thur.-Sun., **August 20-23**. If a student needs to arrive any earlier than August 20, the student must submit an Early Arrival request.
- To ease the congestion during move-in and to maintain safety precautions related to COVID-19, all returning students are to sign up for a move-in time slot. Time slots will be available in July for sign-up in the Res Life Portal in two-hour blocks from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. for each day of move-in.
- When returning students arrive during their designated time slot, the student may go directly to his/her residence hall and check-in with his/her RA upon arrival.

4. Education/training of students: consider COVID-19 prevention education as part of student orientation. (Hand washing, staying home if ill, etc.)

Pre-screening and Welcome Week

As part of welcoming new students to Liberty's campus, there will be a variety of events that will help students acclimate to life at Liberty. [Welcome Week](#) is all about getting students connected to Liberty's community and culture. Students will connect with their respective residence hall, and department faculty and staff. Large group events will be sub-divided and held outdoors, where possible. Other precautions to avoid spread of infection will be utilized such as video streaming and recordings.

All students will complete an electronic **COVID-19 pre-screening questionnaire** before arriving on campus. In an effort to educate all students on the importance of handwashing and other personal hygiene, the pre-screening questionnaire has an educational video embedded.

Students, faculty and staff are instructed to **stay home if they are sick**. Anyone who has been tested for the virus is to utilize the web-based COVID-19 self-report form.

Liberty University is committed to maintaining high standards of cleanliness across all university facilities. Students, faculty, and staff are also to practice **frequent disinfection of personal items, common areas, and high touch surfaces**. Hand sanitizer stations are readily available at building entrances and in multiple locations at all dining and food service locations.

5. Physical Distancing, according to CDC guidance

The Liberty University community will adhere to safe **physical distancing** practices where practicable in accordance with applicable CDC guidelines and applicable governmental orders. While in effect:

To practice social or physical distancing stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people where practicable. Where physical distancing is not practicable, facial coverings and masks are encouraged and will be furnished by Liberty for any employees and students who request them.

Physical distancing is especially important for [people who are at higher risk](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html) for severe illness from COVID-19. (Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>)

In places where required physical distancing is not possible or practicable, using a face covering is permissible and is encouraged in certain circumstances specified elsewhere in this plan.

INSTRUCTION PROTOCOLS

In order to mitigate risk in teaching environments, applicable Virginia Department of Health guidelines and Executive Orders will be closely followed. The necessary reduction of student capacity in all scheduled teaching spaces operates as follows:

- Reduce student occupant capacities in all classrooms and limit large classroom occupancy such that either appropriate adequate spacing can occur or mitigation measures like face coverings can be utilized. Digital options may be used where available, as dictated by need.
- In classrooms, maintain a distance of eight feet between the instructor and the nearest student while teaching occurs and where requested or where required in the case of faculty who are at higher risk for COVID-19 (see above), instructors may utilize a see-thru barrier between instructor and students, such as glass shields or Plexiglas shields.
- Utilize additional barriers in instructional labs where not all students can face the same direction. In some lab or studio settings, face covering or masks may be required.
- Daily screening protocols will be instituted, as well. This may be as simple as a questionnaire that verifies students and faculty members are symptom free.
- Undertake additional sanitation and hygiene measures on common contact points for the more interactive teaching environments.
- Online exams will be administered through the University's Learning Management System. However, programs that necessitate in-person assessments may have all or part of an exam scheduled at a time in the term before Thanksgiving break.

Students can expect that any residential courses could be offered in a format modified to some extent as determined to be necessary to contain an outbreak or as mandated by health department or state guidelines. This means that, although each student will be able to experience some face-to-face classroom engagement and some amount of face-to-face instruction, the amount and type will vary dependent on the course. For some courses, the majority of the instruction could be conducted face-to-face; this might be the case for experiential learning courses, labs, or smaller discussion-based courses. For other courses, only a limited portion of the course or certain specific components of the course will be delivered face-to-face. For example, the lecture portion of a large enrollment lecture course might be delivered online, whereas the labs associated with that large enrollment lecture course could be delivered face-to-face. Alternatively, in large enrollment lecture courses, the instructor may be giving students and those in his/her assigned group the choice to come to a face-to-face lecture on certain established days, while the group watches the lecture online on other days and completes associated assessments and activities online. If Liberty moves into a mode to contain an outbreak, Students can expect a lot of variety depending on the type of courses, the physical classroom space, and the design decisions instructors will make in collaboration with their dean.

Lab-based courses will be planned and implemented differently according to faculty preference if it is determined to be necessary to contain an outbreak. There are several possible approaches. No matter how lab classes are conducted, adequate spacing and other protection procedures would be a component, screening protocols will be implemented, and lab stations will be distanced apart.

The courses are intentionally designed to allow Liberty to quickly move to another delivery option, or move all aspects of the course online, later in the semester, if necessary. Likewise, all courses can be delivered 100% in the traditional in-person mode if conditions warrant.

CAMPUS DINING

Physical Distancing

- Floor signage installed at all dining locations to help spread patrons 6 feet apart
- Campus security stationed at locations to help enforce physical distancing
- Continual review of CDC, government, and health department procedures to provide updates in guidelines
- Dining areas are de-densified
- Tables at dining locations have been removed or spaced apart for physical distancing

6. Hygiene practices and cleaning/disinfecting protocols

The University Facilities Division immediately implemented a proactive response with the first knowledge of the COVID-19 outbreak and risk of community spread of the virus. The Custodial Management group implemented established standard flu prevention management procedures as described below while monitoring and adhering to applicable CDC protocol on a daily basis. In addition, they have made changes in daily priorities for cleaning and frequencies. Employees in the facilities group are well supervised, trained, and experienced to handle this task. The Custodial Management group has a combined 60 years' experience at Liberty working in this

field. The Custodial team is well trained at working in highly sensitive and critical areas such as medical and science labs and are well equipped for the task. The cleaning chemicals and processes are effective and meet all of the EPA and CDC recommendations for the Coronavirus as well as all other viral concerns. Some of the additional measures taken are as follows:

- Providing hand sanitizer in various locations throughout the campus including nearly every building entrance.
- In addition to regular, daily cleaning tasks, custodial employees are to wipe and disinfect all high-touch surfaces on a regular basis, between the hours of 6am and 10pm. This is performed with EPA approved/CDC recommended disinfectants, in compliance with CDC recommendations. The primary resource is a Hydrogen-Peroxide-based cleaner and disinfectant. This is used when custodial employees can afford a 10-minute dwell time to disinfect properly. Also utilized is another Hydrogen-Peroxide-based disinfectant when circumstances call for only a 1-minute dwell time, further this is the resource used when cleaning high-touch surfaces in heavy traffic areas. These surfaces include (but not limited to):
 - Crash bars/doorknobs
 - Door push plates
 - Light Switches
 - Faucet handles
 - Flush handles
 - Dispenser levers
 - Hand dryer buttons
 - Hand sanitizer buttons/levels
 - Restroom stall latches
 - Vending machine buttons
 - Water fountain buttons
- A sufficient supply of chemicals is readily available, and the University has re-prioritized all custodial staff to wiping touch surfaces. The goal is to wipe everything on an hourly basis where possible. Further, there have been many employees reassigned exclusively for wiping in high usage area.

CAMPUS DINING

Hand Sanitization is emphasized

- Additional hand sanitization stations placed at all on-campus restaurants
- NanoSeptic® self-cleaning surface strips installed on all doors and handles within dining locations
- Signage in restrooms encouraging handwashing

Employee Protocols are emphasized

- Masks and gloves are worn by all employees
- Daily employee temperature checks
- Plexiglas shields installed at all counters and pick-up locations
- Enhanced hand-washing procedures required for all employees

7. Housing

HOUSING/RESIDENCE LIFE

- Health and safety practices for all Liberty community members are encouraged in the residence halls, including wearing face coverings or masks, as appropriate.
- Residence hall move-in will be extended to create less density on campus during the move in period.
 - New students are assigned a time to move in based on their residence hall and room number
 - Returning students are required to sign up for a move in time slot
- Rooms at the off-campus Annex I facility are identified for isolation and quarantine
 - All students who test positive for COVID-19 will quarantine at the Annex I facility.
 - Through partnership with Sodexo, meals will be delivered to those who are quarantining.
 - Students will be monitored medically by VDH.
 - Staff will deliver necessities.
 - Wi-Fi is available for maintaining academic progress.
- All common areas in residential spaces are being de-densified.
 - To promote a healthy environment, some seating in residential commons spaces has been closed.

Additionally, virtual learning and telework options are available for students, faculty, or staff who stay home or self-isolate in their living quarters if they have recently had a close contact with a person infected with COVID-19.

8. Consideration of vulnerable individuals

Liberty will continue to make special accommodations for individuals at higher-risk for COVID-19 infection to participate and will implement screening protocols, procedures to identify and isolate any COVID-19 infection, enhanced sanitation, and other special measures as appropriate. Additional accommodations are being made for students based on documentation recorded with the Office of Disability Academic Support. Special accommodations and courtesies have been made for students and employees on an individualized basis to date but Liberty will institute various blanket protocols for ease of administrative during the fall term. For instance, faculty members at risk and those who are not at risk but who request, will be provided protective equipment and protective environments from which to teach and may handle office hours and other one-on one interactions with students via phone or video conference from their homes or offices. More details on extra precautions will be released as plans are finalized.

9. International student considerations (e.g. COVID-19 travel health risks, CDC returning travelers guidelines, travel registry, etc.)

Any person returning from traveling abroad will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days. Liberty University encourages individuals to arrange for how they will quarantine before arrival in Lynchburg. The requirement to quarantine for travel inside the U.S. has been lifted.

Therefore, if an individual does not travel outside of the U.S., he/she will not need to quarantine. If an individual arrives in the United States 14 days before entering campus, no self-quarantine will be required. If and when students vacate the residence halls, whether at the end of the term or pursuant to a mandated closure, international students will not be forced to move if they do not have a safe and legal way to both return to their permanent residence and return to the US when in-person instruction resumes.

10. Partnership and communication/information sharing with local community, health systems and other stakeholders.

Local Community Health Partnerships

The Liberty University Student Health Center has partnered with nationally recognized CVFP Medical Group to provide students with quality medical and mental health services, health promotion, and preventive care.

In addition, Haley Evans of the Virginia Department of Health is a member of the Liberty University COVID-19 Task Force. This provides two way communication and information sharing simultaneously with both local and state public health officials.

Further, Liberty University is in contact with CENTRA Health, the local hospital provider, to appreciate what hospital capacity is for admitting and treating COVID-19 patients.

General Communication Reporting/Communicating a Communicable Disease

As detailed in the *Communicable Disease Exposure Control Plan*, the procedure for reporting/communicating a communicable disease is described below.

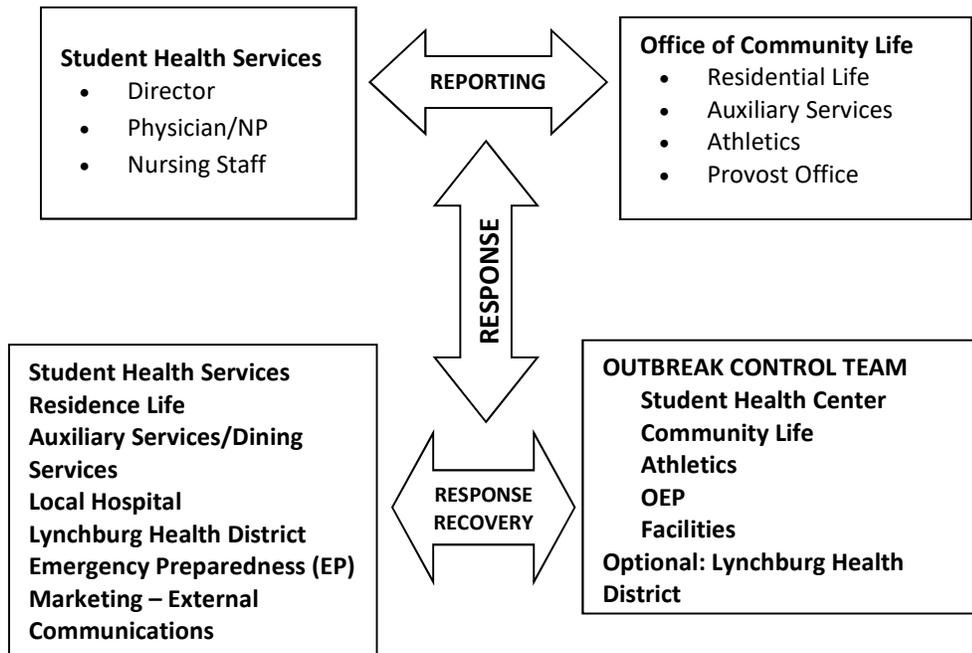
Liberty University Student Health Services and Residence Life routinely communicate with each other via the “on call report” as a way to track illnesses with students who live in a residence hall. However, this is not always a fail-safe method as sick students may bypass Student Health Services and go directly to a local hospital/clinic, which can delay reporting and response procedures.

Individuals who are responsible for managing communicable disease incidents implement timely notifications and effective communication. The following communication flow chart provides a guide for how an incident should be reported and how that information should be communicated and responded to as necessary:

- The significance of the flow diagram is to coordinate communications when different departments (i.e., **Student Health Services (SHS)**, **Office of Community Life**, or **Athletics**) become aware of a student(s) that has been confirmed to have a communicable disease or, based upon medical history, appears to be ill with a communicable disease. In such cases, the information will be appropriately and confidentially communicated to each department (**SHS – Community Life – Athletics**)
- According to State Law, Student Health Services is required to report to the **Lynchburg Health Department** of the VDH any disease or condition on the Reportable Disease List. Entities other than the SHS may have first contact with the student and should refer the student to confirm a diagnosis so the protocols to initiate contact with departments as listed in the flow diagram below. From this process, contact tracing and required notification of

third parties who are confirmed contacts and potential contacts occurs, in accordance with the policy and federal law on campus emergency notification.

Communication Flow chart for Reporting/Communicating a Communicable Disease



11. Face coverings (students, faculty and staff)

Pursuant to applicable Face Covering and Phase 3 Executive Orders, students and employees are required to wear cloth face coverings (or facemasks) while in campus restaurants (except while eating or drinking), while in campus retail establishments, while attending indoor and outdoor event venues and recreational activities (except when exercising), while at bus stops and riding busses, and while working in restaurants and customer facing areas in non-restaurants, unless exempt (e.g., health condition prohibits wearing; causes difficulty breathing; unable to put on or remove). Students and employees are encouraged to wear cloth face coverings (or facemasks) while in other campus locations outside their living area and where social distancing is not practical or impossible to maintain (except during praise, worship and religious services). Similarly, if not exempt, students and faculty may be required to wear face coverings when in a lab, studio, ensemble, or other situation that prevents distancing of at least 6 feet of space, such as in large crowd situations where physical distancing cannot be maintained, close seating in mass venues, and when bottlenecks occur for entry and exit at large scale events.

12. Student Health Services

The Student Health Center and Wellness Initiatives department will continually educate students on hygiene best practices through multiple avenues. As the Liberty University

community prepares for the fall semester, following public health measures are imperative to help prevent the spread of coronavirus, flu, and other viruses. These are the promoted practices of personal hygiene and health:

- Wash your hands often for 20 seconds
- Practice cough and sneeze etiquette
- Get adequate sleep
- Eat healthy and well-balanced meals
- Exercise
- Stay home if you are sick
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Reduce stress

Student Athletes

Education and training of all **personnel** regarding prevention of the spread of COVID-19 is in place and required.

- Athletic staff currently self-check daily and are required to stay home if they are not well.
- Student-athletes are required to check-in daily with sports medicine staff prior to any activity.

13. Large events, including athletic events, and others such as ceremonies or performances

Athletic and Performance Events

Under current Phase 3 Executive Orders and business sector guidelines, attendance at sports venues, performing arts venues, concert venues, and theaters is limited to 1,000 (unless 50% capacity would be lower). This includes posting health signage, marking queue lines for six foot spacing, planning for flow adjustments to limit bottlenecks, seating with 6-10 feet of separation between parties, providing sanitation and hand washing stations, compliance with face covering requirements (discussed above), and more. Liberty will comply with applicable governmental orders regarding events. The Virginia Department of Health and Executive Orders from the Governor are continually reviewed and have changed frequently. As events will occur, updates about attendance policies will be available on Liberty's website. All gatherings will be in compliance to all guidance to support public safety. Liberty University may require face coverings in large crowds where physical distancing cannot be maintained, such as close seating in mass venues, and when bottlenecks occur for entry and exit at large scale events.

Campus Life and Socializing

Liberty's Campus Recreation continues to serve students by positively impacting their holistic well-being. This fall, students can expect to participate in a variety of fitness and recreational programs with additional safety protocols and modifications that meet applicable local, state, and federal guidance. We expect students will be welcome to visit the LaHaye Recreation and Fitness Center, the Hydaway Outdoor Center, the Liberty Mountain Snowflex Centre, David's Place, the Montview Bowling Alley and Game room, the Liberty Mountain Gun Club and the Liberty Mountain Equestrian Center. Exciting programming opportunities such as intramural sports, group exercise, outdoor rec trips, and special events will still occur even if they need to adapt to current health guideline or regulations. Currently, fitness centers are operating at 75%

capacity, health screenings and posted signage, 10-foot separation between equipment and users, several offerings closed (e.g., rock wall and pickup basketball, soccer, volleyball, racquetball). The Virginia Department of Health and Executive Orders from the Governor are continually reviewed and have changed frequently. As changes occur, updates about policies will be posted at the relevant venues and recreational areas. Up to date information on hours of operation and other details are posted at www.liberty.edu/campusrecreation.

Convocation

Convocation is an integral part of the student experience, and as such, will continue to be offered this fall in formats that remain in full compliance with applicable state and CDC guidelines for the health and safety of the student body. If current guidelines on large gatherings are still applicable in September, Convocation will be made available through digital streaming, and students will be expected to follow the check-in protocol established by the Office of Residence Life to ensure their digital presence is verified. In the event applicable guidelines and protocols are adjusted, the Office of Spiritual Development is prepared to hold the event in several different venues across campus, and students will be assigned a specific viewing area. Face coverings may be required with the exception of certain medical conditions in the larger group settings due to potential bottlenecks at the beginning and end of events. In any such format this fall, Convocation will be closed to the public, and any University-approved visitors or guests will be appropriately screened to help promote the overall health of the university community.

Campus Community

Campus Community will meet this fall at Thomas Road Baptist Church, and will follow all applicable state guidelines specifically as they pertain to religious gatherings. For instance, under current Phase 3 state guidelines, occupancy is limited to 50% capacity (with a cap of 1,000) and 6-feet of separation is required for seating. In order to accommodate the usual attendance, two services will be made available. Face coverings will be required with the exception of medical conditions due to potential bottlenecks at the beginning and end of events, except during praise and worship.

Student Ministries

- Community Groups will gather Wednesday evenings after Campus Community. Face coverings will be encouraged with the exception of certain medical conditions, and Community Group Leaders' rooms will be sanitized regularly using proper disinfectant.
- Connect Classes and All Other Mid-Size Student Gatherings will be held with face coverings being encouraged with the exception of certain medical conditions, and sanitizing stations will be established at all entrances and exits.
- 24-Hour Prayer events will continue as planned and will be held in the Worley Prayer Chapel. Face coverings will be encouraged with the exception of certain medical conditions and sanitizing stations will be established at entrances and exits.

14. Communications strategy

Regarding a case of COVID-19 infection within the university community:

- Students, Faculty and Staff will utilize the COVID self-report form
- Health and Wellness will notify VDH for verification
- Quarantine notifications given as needed (Housing notified if Annex I to be used)
- Health and Wellness coordinates cleaning and sanitation of potentially contaminated areas
- Emergency notification is coordinated with LUPD
 - General exposure message sent
 - Direct exposure message is sent
 - Indirect exposure message is sent
- COVID-19 website updated weekly or as needed pertinent to student or employee status for closures and updates.

In addition to the above and the continually updated website, Liberty University will communicate any campus dismissals and/or campus shutdowns in an immediate fashion to all students, faculty, staff, the local health department, accrediting bodies, and other third parties as necessary. These communications will occur by the methods outlined below:

1. Students: Will receive the communication via e-mail, Learning Management System (LMS) announcement, and text/phone call announcement.
2. Faculty: Will receive the communication via e-mail, LMS announcement, and text/phone call announcement.
3. Staff: Will receive the communication via e-mail, LMS announcement, and text/phone call announcement.
4. Local health department: Will receive the communication via e-mail and/or phone call.
5. Accrediting bodies: Will receive the communication via e-mail and letter.
6. Other third parties: Will receive the communication via e-mail and/or phone call, internet webpage announcements and media releases.

15. Orientation and education/training, including anti-stigma training

The Student Health Center and Wellness Initiatives department will continually provide educational resources for students on hygiene best practices, campus COVID-19 policies and protocols and sensitivity training to avoid stigmatization of persons who test positive or are exposed to COVID-19 through multiple avenues.

- A Blackboard/Canvas course on health and wellness and how to remain safe and in compliance with videos will be live July 15th
- Orientation for students will include these educational resources
- Orientation for faculty and staff will include these educational resources
- Fall 2020 Health Expo focused on Community Wellness with emphasis on fighting the spread of COVID

Section B: Monitoring Health Conditions to Detect Infection

1. Daily health screening questions/and or other health monitoring approaches

A daily health-screening reminder will be given to students by professors at the start of each class period. Additionally, students, faculty and staff are instructed to **stay home if they are sick**. Everyone should utilize the web-based COVID-19 self-report form if they have been tested. Additionally, screening takes place at the health and fitness centers entries and health reminders are posted at entries to various places on campus, including each dining facility, each recreation facility, each retail establishment, and each sports venue, performing arts venue, concert venue, theater and museum.

2. Campus level syndromic (disease) surveillance using electronic health record data or other disease surveillance methods as feasible.

Professors will give a daily health-screening reminder to students at the start of each class period. Additionally, students, faculty and staff are instructed to **stay home if they are sick**. Everyone is to utilize the web-based COVID-19 self-report form if they have been tested.

Testing to diagnose COVID-19 is one component of a comprehensive strategy and will be used in conjunction with promoting behaviors that reduce spread, maintaining healthy environments, maintaining healthy operations, and preparing for when someone gets sick. Liberty will follow applicable public health guidance on who should be tested for COVID-19 and when. Additionally, Liberty will offer testing to any student or employee who requests it, as such tests are available.

Symptom screening and testing are strategies to identify individuals with COVID-19. In addition to screening and testing, COVID-19 contact tracing is an effective disease control strategy that involves identifying individuals and their contacts. Any local positive test of a Liberty University student or employee is flagged as such in the health records, which results in a prompt contact to Liberty University for assistance with contact tracing. Liberty will continue to work in coordination with local public health officials to facilitate and assist with contact tracing for any students and employees, including using its electronic monitoring of campus access records to identify where persons of interest have been. Such methods are tied together in our community with electronic health records sharing and public health databases so partners in health care (both campus and community) and public health have access to the same vital information to track individual cases and trends. These strategies will be carried out in a way that protects individuals' privacy and confidentiality and is consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

3. Establishment of a testing strategy. Testing strategies should consider testing for all students, faculty or staff with symptoms and access to testing for close contacts of cases as recommended by public health. Institutions may consult with their local health department, local health systems and other relevant partners.

Testing protocols are established in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and utilizing CDC guidelines. Liberty will follow applicable public health guidance on who should be tested for COVID-19 and when. Currently, such guidance does not recommend testing all college students and employees. Current standards involve testing symptomatic persons, exposed persons, job-required persons, and persons who request testing, if available. Even so, Liberty will offer testing to any student or employee who requests it, as such tests are available.

The clinical services offered through the Student Health Center will continue to be offered to all of our students. When students visit the Student Health Center, they first go to a triage area to be preliminary screened for COVID-19 symptoms before entering the Student Health Center. The Student Health Center is a Well Site only.

The Student Health Center also has asymptomatic testing available. Currently, symptomatic testing is available at an off-campus Central Virginia Family Practitioners (CVFP) location. If students are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, they are to call the Student Health Center to schedule a virtual visit. Additionally, individuals with COVID-19 symptoms are to refrain from direct contact with others until they have consulted with a healthcare provider. All students, faculty, and staff are to self-monitor for mild symptoms.

Section C: Containment to Prevent Spread of Disease When Detected

1. Partnership with VDH for contact tracing

Testing, contact tracing, and timely isolation or quarantine of ill and exposed community members are all vital for a successful return to campus. Liberty will continue to work in coordination with local public health officials to facilitate and assist with contact tracing for any students and employees.

Contact tracing will continue to be used to locate individuals who have been identified as a close contact of a person from the university community who has tested positive for the virus. The purpose of contact tracing is to identify cases, limit the spread of the virus and provide appropriate care for individuals who have been exposed to the virus. When we discover that a member of our community has tested positive for the virus, we will continue to follow standard public health protocols to identify and communicate with those who had close contact with the individual and share that information with local public health officials. This tracing is conducted in concert with Student Health and Wellness, the Lynchburg Health Department, and Human Resources. Should those officials wish to conduct their own interviews, Liberty will continue to facilitate those with students and employees and provide contact information to that end.

When a university community member has tested positive, Liberty will take every reasonable step to notify the individuals who may have had contact with that member who tested positive and to instruct those individuals to quarantine or self-isolate.

Liberty has built a mechanism for actively tracing the contacts of those who test positive for the virus, through a combination of technology and phone interviews, and providing emergency notifications on an expedited basis.

The Liberty IT department has developed a contact tracing application that allows for self-reporting by or on behalf of persons who are positive or presumptive positive for COVID-19 due to exposure. By using these data collected by the reporter, Health and Wellness staff members can then use the administrative functionality to conduct “contact tracing investigations.”

Containment is most effective in reducing the spread of the disease. This automation also utilizes data gathered through Flames Pass swipes to identify specific parts of campus that were accessed and potentially exposed individuals, then generate electronic notification for appropriate recipients within the required timeframes.

These strategies will continue to be carried out in a way that protects individuals’ privacy and confidentiality and is consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

2. Quarantining and isolating (provision of housing, basic needs, medical case management)

Liberty will continue to require quarantine of students who have been exposed to the virus and require isolation of students who have tested positive. Students living on campus will be both isolated and quarantined in a dedicated overflow housing facility three miles from campus and the Chief Medical Officer and Executive Director of Student Health and Wellness will provide leadership and medical oversight for these students. Liberty will make all reasonable efforts to

assure that students in quarantine and isolation will have their basic needs met through staffing and delivery of meals and necessities. Wi-Fi is available for maintaining academic progress. Students and employees who live off campus will be required to isolate and quarantine at either their homes or some other safe place off campus.

3. Campus outbreak management

The COVID-19 Task Force has determined the conditions that would prompt the University to close the campus to in person instruction and move classes online.

These “triggers” include:

1. Being 7 days from reaching Liberty’s quarantine capacity space for residential students.
2. Having positive test results that approach or reach a specified percent of our population (see below)
3. Testing for symptomatic individuals becoming unavailable.
4. Local hospitalization care is within 10 days of reaching capacity for treatment of COVID-19 patients.
5. Applicable governmental order.

The University’s *Communicable Disease Exposure Control Plan* provides more details on outbreak management.

4. Partnership with local health systems to assure care for symptomatic individuals as needed, (e.g. a local health system representative could serve on the COVID-19 team)

The Liberty University Student Health Center has partnered with nationally recognized CVFP Medical Group to provide students with quality medical and mental health services, health promotion, and preventive care.

In addition, Haley Evans of the Virginia Department of Health is a member of the Liberty University COVID-19 Task Force.

Further, Liberty University is in contact with CENTRA Health, the local hospital provider, to appreciate what hospital capacity is for admitting and treating COVID-19 patients.

Section D: Shutdown Consideration if Necessitated by Severe Conditions and/or Public Health Guidance

1. Plans regarding the criteria and process for campus dismissals or shutdowns. Decisions regarding dismissals and shutdowns should be made in consultation with local and state public health officials.

The COVID-19 Task Force has determined the conditions that would prompt the University to close the campus to in-person instruction and personnel who can work from home.

These “triggers” include:

1. Being 7 days from reaching Liberty’s quarantine capacity space for residential students.
2. Having positive test results that approach or reach a specified percent of our population (see below)
3. Testing for symptomatic individuals becoming unavailable.
4. Local hospitalization care is within 10 days of reaching capacity for treatment of COVID-19 patients.
5. Applicable governmental order.

Stage 1 of partial closure is when transition to distance learning only and reduction of campus personnel occurs. Stage 2 being when dismissal/campus closure occurs to all but essential personnel and students who cannot safely or legally move from campus.

1. A transition to distance learning-only formats with a return to as much work as home as is practical will occur during a severe outbreak where greater than five percent (> 5%) of the total institution population (i.e., students, faculty, and staff) present with COVID-19 symptoms based on the CDC’s COVID-19 health screening, or test positive for COVID-19 within a two (2) week period.
2. A shutdown with dismissal of students from campus and only essential personnel reporting to work will occur during a severe outbreak where greater than fifteen percent (> 15%) of the total institution population (i.e., students, faculty, and staff) present with COVID-19 symptoms based on the CDC’s COVID-19 health screening, or test positive for COVID-19 within a two (2) week period, and if the local healthcare infrastructure is being overwhelmed or staging for emergency response. Alternatively, a shutdown/dismissal will also occur in accordance with applicable orders of the Virginia Department of Health and/or the governor of Virginia.
3. These decisions would be made in consultation with local medical experts, the department of health and state government authorities.

2. Nature of reduced campus activity in the event of severe conditions/public health direction or guidance.

Reduced campus activity will occur in the event there are severe conditions of COVID-19 cases within the local community and the University’s population (as defined above), and/or applicable governmental orders requiring the university to do so. Except for those who are

essential to maintaining operations from campus workplaces and those who cannot move from campus safely or legally, students, faculty, staff, and visitors will not be allowed onto the University's campuses until the orders are lifted. Didactic, laboratory, and simulation will not occur on campus during the period of reduced campus activity

3. Considerations regarding student health and safety on campus versus returning home.

Liberty recognizes some students may not have a safe place to go, or any place to go, and that many of the University's international students would simply be unable to return legally to their home countries. Moreover, many students have permanent residences without high-speed internet, which would be necessary to continue their residential classes in the alternative format the Institution would move to, but the entire campus is high-speed internet accessible through both Wi-Fi and Ethernet.

Students remaining on campus during a dismissal/shutdown will be provided with dining services grab-and-go meal options, be required to maintain healthy social hygiene practices, and wear face coverings in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health, with Liberty making continual adjustments to be in compliance with applicable Executive Orders as issued by the Governor of Virginia. Students would have access to Health Services and would be required to self-monitor on a daily basis.

4. Communications plan for dismissals/shutdowns.

The Liberty University COVID-19 team coordinators will communicate campus dismissals and/or campus shutdowns in an immediate fashion to all students, faculty, staff, the local health department, accrediting bodies, and other third parties as necessary. These communications will occur by the methods outlined below:

1. Students: Will receive the communication via e-mail, Learning Management System (LMS) announcement, and text/phone call announcement.
2. Faculty: Will receive the communication via e-mail, LMS announcement, and text/phone call announcement.
3. Staff: Will receive the communication via e-mail, LMS announcement, and text/phone call announcement.
4. Local health department: Will receive the communication via e-mail and/or phone call.
5. Accrediting bodies: Will receive the communication via e-mail and letter.
6. Other third parties: Will receive the communication via e-mail and/or phone call, internet webpage announcements and media releases.

Appendix: COVID-19 Taskforce Membership

**Liberty University
Executive Leadership/COVID-19 Taskforce
Dr. Keith Anderson, Campus Coordinator
Executive Director of Student Health & Wellness**

Executive Leadership

Jerry Falwell Jr.
President

David Nasser
Senior Vice President for Spiritual Development

Dr. Scott Hicks
Provost & Chief Academic Officer

Trey Falwell
Vice President of University Support Services

Dr. Rob Ritz
Chief Financial Officer

Dr. Mark Hine
Senior Vice President of Student Affairs

Laura Wallace
Executive Vice President for Human Resources

Chris Misiano
Vice President of Campus Recreation &
Logistics

Ron Kennedy
Executive Vice President of Enrollment
Management & Marketing

John Gauger
Chief Information Officer & Vice President of
Analytics

Dr. Shawn Akers
Online Provost

Charles Spence
Senior Vice President of Campus Facilities &
Transportation

David Corry
General Counsel

Louis Cambeletta
Vice President of Auxiliary Services

Ian McCaw
Director of Athletics

Scott Lamb
Senior Vice President of University
Communications

COVID-19 Task Force

Dr. Brian Yates
Dean, College of Applied Studies & Academic
Success

Greg Bennett
Director of Health & Environmental Safety

Colonel Richard Hinkley
Chief, Liberty University Police Department

Major Marcus Tinsley
Deputy Chief of Police

Dustin DuBose
Executive Director of Residence Life

Dr. Jonathan Giles
Administrative Dean, Public & Community
Health

Appendix: COVID-19 Taskforce Membership

Dr. Mark Hyde
Associate Dean, Office of Community Life

Chris Casola
Associate Athletic Director for Sports Medicine

David Welch
Executive Director, LU Send

Dr. Dana Woody
Associate Professor of Nursing

Vickey Jaynes
Risk Manager

Joanna Thomas, MD
College of Osteopathic Medicine, Clinical
Education

Steve Foster
Director of Employee Relations

Bethany Williams
Assistant Director of Health & Wellness

Ashley Reich
Vice President of Student Financial Services

Ron Sloan
Associate Vice President for Security & Public
Safety

Jeff Boettger
Senior Athletic Director

Josh Rutledge
Vice President of Spiritual Development