

On and Off Campus Housing for COVID-19 in Higher Education

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This document has been reviewed by MDH; this document was originally developed by the COVID-19 higher education workgroup focused on student housing, both on- and off-campus. This document will continue to be updated as new information is gathered.

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Purpose

To create optional strategies that higher education institutions can use to support social distancing and disease mitigation in the following locations: all types of on-campus residence halls/dorms, on-campus apartments and houses, and off-campus apartments and houses.

Critical Topics for Further Guidance/Discussion with MDH

Social Distancing

- The "ideal" 6 foot physical distancing reference is likely NOT possible in most housing facilities. What might be further insight or guidelines for disease mitigation and physical distancing within 6 feet?
 - MDH COMMENT: The ideal 6-foot guidance should be used as much as possible for this first term back to on-campus activities.

In addition, colleges can consider creating a second plan that targets a 4-foot guideline with additional safety measures like facial coverings, frequent cleaning efforts, proper hygiene, and proper coughing/sneezing etiquette. Although this is not the approach MDH is recommending for this fall, having this plan on hand may be helpful in the event a reduction in overall spacing can be achieved later in the school year.

Most Housing/Residence Life Units have returning students already assigned into shared bedroom

spaces and shared/common bathroom spaces. Similarly, most campuses have plans for assigning incoming students into shared bedrooms and bathrooms. We recognize that single bedrooms and private bathrooms are "ideal," but what might be guidance on sharing bedroom and bathroom space?

- Arrange bedroom furniture to create maximum distance from student heads?
 - MDH COMMENT: Yes
- Encourage the use of every other sink in a common bathroom?
 - MDH COMMENT: If possible and if it makes sense. Could also consider a plastic barrier between sinks.
- Wipe down/self-clean sinks, toilets and shower handles before use?
 - MDH COMMENT: No, cleaning bathrooms once a day is ok. If you start to have more cases in a dorm, then increased cleaning would be indicated.

Quarantine and Isolation Housing

Housing/Residence Life Units are likely preparing to set aside Quarantine and Isolation Housing that is separate from each other and from regularly assigned housing. Is there further guidance on these spaces?

- What percent of housing should be set aside for these spaces?
 - MDH COMMENT: MDH is still working on trying to find a percentage to provide as a guide.
- Are there detailed considerations for these spaces, such as, types of rooms and bathrooms, features or amenities to include, items to include, etc.?
 - MDH COMMENT: See above.
- What is recommended for campuses as a process for testing, contact tracing, determining who should be isolated and quarantined, and whether campuses should be sending students home (if possible and safe) or into special on-campus housing?
 - MDH COMMENT: We are currently looking at experiences in other congregate settings to help define this.
- How might guidance about "Surge Planning" impact the planning for Housing?
 - MDH COMMENT: Could change how you isolate and quarantine, could mean you have one dorm under a "Stay At Home" order so you would need to provide food, etc.. However, MDH is currently exploring what this would mean and what actions a higher institution would need to take and will continue to communicate and update this document.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Campuses are paying close attention to CDC and other cleaning/disinfecting guidelines. As campuses procure cleaning and disinfecting product, and PPE, is there any further guidance on cleaning and disinfecting with housing facilities?

- Guidance, based on effectiveness of disease mitigation) on the different approaches to cleaning and disinfecting - who does each (facilities staff, housing/residence life staff, student leaders/staff, student residents), how often, when is training needed, when is PPE needed?
- If campuses are struggling to secure product, are there alternatives?

Off-Campus Students

Most campuses have a much larger percentage of commuters than on-campus students. Knowing that off-campus may be cleaning/disinfecting and social distancing with less supervision or accountability than on-campus.

- What might be some guidance for campuses to address this risk to campus?
- What might be some guidance specific for landlords regarding disease mitigation in neighborhood rental settings?

Review of Literature on Disease Prevention and Transmission, Protocols Supported in the Literature, Suggestions for Housing Agreements/Contracts

Review of the Literature

Below is a brief summary of the COVID-19 virus.

- The disease is a respiratory virus. It's expelled in droplets from an infected person when they cough, sneeze, sing, etc. The droplets can stay in the air for a few seconds before settling to the ground or a surface. The trajectory of the droplets is usually within 6 feet.
- Infection primarily happens when the droplets land on a person or get to a person's mucous membranes (eyes, nose, and mouth). Infection is less common, but possible, when droplets are picked up from surfaces by hands and transferred to eyes, nose and mouth via unwashed hands. Droplets will naturally die on surfaces within hours to days.

Below is a resource list pertaining to colleges and universities and student housing.

- **American College Health Association (ACHA)**
[Considerations for Reopening Institutes of Higher Education in the COVID-19 Era: www.acha.org/documents/resources/guidelines/ACHA_Considerations_for_Reopening_IHEs_in_the_COVID-19_Era_May2020.pdf](http://www.acha.org/documents/resources/guidelines/ACHA_Considerations_for_Reopening_IHEs_in_the_COVID-19_Era_May2020.pdf)
- **Association of College and University Housing Officers - International (ACUHO-I)** (Some information is available only to member institutions)
[COVID-19 \(Novel Coronavirus\) Resources: www.acuho-i.org/covid19?portalid=0?portalid=0?portalid=0](http://www.acuho-i.org/covid19?portalid=0?portalid=0?portalid=0)
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** - below are main pages with information. More information links are included at each page.
 - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

- [Colleges, Universities, and Higher Learning: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/)
- [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html)
- [Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html)
- [Living in Shared Housing: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/shared-housing/](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/shared-housing/)
- **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** – [List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 \(COVID-19\): www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2)
- **Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)**
 - [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\): www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html)
 - [Institutes of Higher Education \(IHE\): www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihe.html](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihe.html)
- **National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC)** - [Disinfectants and COVID-19: npic.orst.edu/ingred/ptype/amicrob/covid19.html](https://npic.orst.edu/ingred/ptype/amicrob/covid19.html)
- **Minnesota Testing Facilities:** mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/testing-locations/

Protocols Addressed in the Literature

Each campus should develop **SOCIAL DISTANCING** guidance/expectations based on the individual campus' physical space configurations and community living/dining and learning needs.

- While 6 feet social distancing is preferred, a 4 ft. distance may be more practical given campus space and operations. However, the 4 foot distance should only be used when absolutely necessary and face masks should be strongly recommended if not required in these settings.
- Encourage and promote a campus culture of social distancing through signage, graphics, displays, orientation, modeling, frequent communications, and at times enforcement.
- Adjust occupancy levels of various campus spaces, limit use of various recreation space or equipment, remove or rearrange furniture in study and lounge spaces, possibly close spaces where social distancing is not feasible, possibly close sinks or toilets or laundry machines to support distancing, and leverage outdoor spaces.
- Review, and increase if possible and safe, the number of entrances and exits to residential facilities, and the traffic patterns of residents within the facilities.

Each campus should review its protocols for **CLEANING** and **DISINFECTING**, both through professional staff and students.

- If possible, increase cleaning of public spaces per day with a target of two cleanings per day. Certain high-touch surfaces may need more frequent cleaning.
- If possible, increase the number of days cleaned or scope of cleaning, i.e., if weekend or

evening cleaning was limited, consider treating all 7 days similar.

- Ensure shared bathrooms have hand soap and cleaning products adequately available so students can be encouraged to hand wash frequently and to wipe down surfaces before and after personal use. Consider using paper towels vs. hand dryers.
- Consider adding hand sanitizer to all common spaces.
- Consider providing cleaning supplies, for student use, in all shared bathrooms, kitchens, computer, laundry, study, lounge, recreation, etc., spaces.
- Consider providing or encouraging self-purchase of cleaning supplies for student use in their personal spaces (bedrooms, private/semi-private bath, apartment kitchen, etc.), and include these items in pre-arrival communication.

Each campus should promote the wearing of **FACIAL COVERINGS**, both for students and staff/faculty.

- Encourage the wearing of masks in residential facilities especially when students will be within 6 ft. of each other, i.e., to, from and within common/shared spaces.
- Consider providing permanent masks for each student and staff, and consider providing permanent or disposable face coverings for guests. If campuses do not provide facial coverings then strongly encourage or require students to bring their own.
- Teach students how to use and care for their masks.

Each campus should review institution-wide liability statements and housing specific **AGREEMENTS** or **CONTRACTS**.

- Consider adding or amending language regarding general risk to individuals while being present on campus, including living on campus.
- Review agreement/contract terms and durations, possibly even eligibility or residency requirements.
- Consider adding or amending cancellation/refund policies to include a refund if the student chooses to cancel and another refund policy if the university/college takes action (moves learning all on line, closes halls, sends a student home for quarantine or isolation housing, etc.)
- Review all policies pertaining to people in spaces (guests, room changes, re-assignment, rentals, etc.).
- Review handbooks, behavior codes, conduct codes, etc. and consider what expectations/guidance are encouraged vs. required.
- Consider responses to specific behaviors that could be bias motivated, Title IX, or other more severe violations that could be magnified in these instances.
- Review Political Candidate or Campaign policies **[Minnesota Statute 211B.20:](http://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/211B.20)**
www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/211B.20

On-Campus Facility Preparation and Usage

Cleaning and Disinfecting of Facilities

Prior to Move-In, review and follow recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting.

- Follow MDH Guidance about cleaning and disinfecting after Spring/Summer 2020 occupancy
- CDC Guidance suggests that normal cleaning may occur after the space has been vacated for 7 days - additional disinfecting is not necessary.

After students have moved in and during the occupancy period, campuses should follow and consider the following actions.

- Follow the [Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines for Institutes of Higher Education: www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/cleanihe.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/cleanihe.html) about cleaning and disinfecting shared/common spaces.
- Consideration should be given to performing multiple cleanings each day of shared spaces and high-touch point surfaces.
- Consideration of weekend cleaning adjustments, as noted in the Review of Literature section above.
- Consider providing cleaning supplies in shared spaces, as noted above.

Housing Assignments and Capacity

The University/College must address whether high-risk individuals (students with medical conditions most vulnerable to COVID-19), should return to living on campus in the early phases of reopening or should be properly notified of the risks. Please see the Agreements or Contracts section above.

Considerations and guidance for **STUDENT ROOMS** is complex and varied based on room configurations. Thus, it is not reasonable to issue a blanket recommendation, but the following ideas are good reference points.

- Review the possibility and pros vs. cons of assigning one student per bedroom. This may be the norm in suite or apartment style hall facilities, but less common or feasible in a more traditional shared bedroom and shared bathroom (dorm) facility.
- Review all sleeping spaces to assign an occupancy that meets housing demand and provides as much social distance as possible.
- Students sharing a living space would be considered a "family unit" much like those who reside together elsewhere.
- If reducing capacity in rooms, consider removing excess furniture, particularly beds, to help prevent unassigned occupants in the space.
- Consider how furniture arrangements may impact resident distancing, including the use of furniture to create barriers within the room if possible (dressers, wardrobes, etc.).
- If beds are closer together, encourage students to orient themselves such that distance

between heads is maximized.

- Capacity limitations for rooms may be impacted by bathroom capacities as noted below.

Considerations and guidance for **BATHROOMS** is equally as complex and varied as student rooms. Again, a blanket recommendation is not reasonable, but the following ideas are for reference.

- Review the possibility of one student per bathroom.
- Common bathrooms, typically located on a residence hall floor, often contain multiple sinks, toilets, and showers. These spaces can be shared by 6-10 residents or 40-50 or more. Some factors to consider:
 - Assign fixtures to rooms, i.e., residents of room 201 use sink A, toilet A, and shower A, and residents of room 202 use sink B, toilet B, and shower B.
 - Assign times to students, especially during peak time periods like mornings.
 - Encourage students to do personal preparation, such as styling hair or applying make-up in their personal rooms.
 - Encourage students to use caddies/bags that carry personal hygiene items and do not place these hygiene items on open surfaces.
 - Post signage encouraging proper hygiene and cleaning the space before and after use.
- Many housing facilities also have semi-private bathrooms, often located in suite or apartment style residence halls. These bathrooms usually contain 1-2 sinks, toilets and showers, are often shared by 2-6 students, and are often maintained by the residents during the occupancy period.
 - Consider providing residents with cleaning supplies and a cleaning schedule.
 - Consider having professional staff conduct weekly or monthly or quarterly cleanings of these bathrooms.
 - Consider posting signage in these spaces, like signage in common bathrooms.
- Most all housing facilities have guest or public bathrooms. Consider more frequent cleanings of these spaces by professional staff or possibly limit occupancy.

Quarantine and Isolation Housing

It is ideal if students, who become confirmed with COVID-19 or in direct contact with someone who is confirmed COVID-19, can return home and not be on campus while ill. Recognizing that some students will not be able to return home or should not return home for health or extenuating reasons, it is ideal if campuses have spaces on or off campus to move students into quarantine or isolation housing.

- Provide information to students in advance of move in, making them aware of the institutions policies, practices, capabilities and limitations regarding treating and supporting students who become ill.

- Consider identifying and setting aside spaces on or off campus to be used for quarantine and isolation housing.
 - Quarantine = spaces for students that have been in contact with confirmed cases, but are not symptomatic. Could be in this space for up to 14 days or sooner if tested.
 - Isolation = spaces for students that are displaying COVID-19 symptoms or have been confirmed with COVID-19.
 - These spaces are ideally on campus, but may need to be contracted off campus at hotels or other facilities if space on campus is not available.
 - Communicate a process of notification for the students including who to call for testing/care.
- Develop detailed policies and practices for each type of space - quarantine and isolation
 - Step by step process from moment of notification
 - Quarantine and isolation spaces should be separated, and the students should have access to separate bathroom facilities. Ideally, each student has access to their own bathroom, if not possible, limit the number sharing a bathroom. All spaces should be properly labeled "Private" or "Authorized Use Only" but not a medical term or reason that could violate FERPA or HIPPA.
 - Identify who will interact with these students in the process and what support do they need - communication training, PPE, interaction training, cleaning training, etc.
 - Identify who will provide medical support (health monitoring), emotional support (mental health), academic support (academic continuity), dietary support (providing meals), spiritual support (religious or other), and personal support (moving to the new space, personal items, hygiene, medication pick up, school supplies, etc.)
 - Equip the spaces with proper living items (bed and possibly linen, dresser, seating, etc.) and with access to toiletries, soap, hand sanitizer, cleaning wipes, thermometer, waste recovery bins, etc. Consider a "Kit" for each student.
 - It is not recommended that institutions provide quarantine or isolation housing for students permanently residing off campus in non-institution owned or managed facilities.

Indoor Ancillary Spaces

Housing facilities often include a variety of ancillary spaces that provide amenities to and support the students living in the facilities. These are spaces that are ideal for posting relevant COVID-19 information. These are also spaces that should be reviewed for necessity or re-purposing based on the circumstances. All spaces should encourage the campus guidelines for staying healthy, i.e., wear a facial covering, socially distance, cough/sneeze into arm/clothing, maintain good hygiene, etc. All spaces should also consider reducing capacities and posting guidelines.

- Lobbies, lounges, and congregating spaces - should rearrange furniture and possibly re-direct traffic flow to support social distancing.

- Community kitchens should have increased professional cleaning and possibly encourage student cleaning before and after use.
- Laundry rooms should have increased professional cleaning and possibly student cleaning, if possible students should utilize monitoring software to limit the amount of people in the room at a time, and encourage students to wait for their laundry elsewhere.
 - Consider using a scheduling system if possible.
- Classrooms, conference rooms or multipurpose rooms should be reviewed for necessity. It may be more risky to use the spaces or consider limiting their use especially if they are frequently used by guests. These spaces may be ideal spaces for re-purposing as considerations are made for dining to-go or storage or quarantine/isolation housing, etc.
- Computer labs should consider spacing out computers or removing some, and plan for frequent wiping down of the keyboards, monitors and printers.
- Recreation spaces should be reviewed for necessity and may be re-purposed. If remaining open, consider limiting items to be checked out, item usage, furniture arrangement, etc.
- Waste Recovery rooms and items (trash, recycling, composting bins), could have lids propped open and entry doors propped open. Encourage proper handling of waste items.

Service Points

Housing facilities often have service points within them, immediately adjacent to, or commonly used by residents. These Points should also be reviewed.

- Hall or Information desks should be treated similar to other "points of service" on campus. This may mean installing barriers, new processes for handling items, review which items are essential for the area, use of PPE, training for staff, etc.
- Mailrooms and/or package pick up locations should also have barriers at desks, consider new policies like not signing for a package, signage for proper hygiene and cleaning, etc.
- Housing usually provides access to equipment, games and other items through service points. These common items should be thoroughly cleaned between uses or withheld from service.

Policies and Practices

Living on campus is often accompanied by a set of policies or expectations for communal living. A review of all policies should be conducted, and below are a few to consider.

- Consider restricting building and floor access to only residents of the building.
- Consider limiting guest access and overnight policies.
- Review protocol and process of conducting "welfare checks," when can this be done virtually?
- Consider maintenance requests and which are essential. If essential, what is the process for staff notification, entry, PPE and follow up.
- Review student conduct codes, behavior standards, etc. and consider the difference between guidance, recommendations, and requirements as it relates to COVID-19 student behavior (social distancing, facial coverings, cleaning, etc.)

Outdoor Spaces

Housing facilities often have adjacent outdoor spaces that students regularly frequent. Consider doing an assessment of the spaces and making any necessary adjustments to support campus guidelines or policies.

- Recreation or Sport facilities (basketball courts, volleyball courts, baseball/softball diamonds, playgrounds, lawn game, fire pits, grill areas, etc.) should be reviewed to support spacing and limited social gatherings. If equipment is provided for these activities, a review of check out and cleaning procedures should also be considered.
- Designated smoking areas should be review for social distancing accommodations.
- For students in quarantine or isolation housing, outdoor space should also be provided so consider a separate space for these students, if possible.

Dining Services

Dining Services can be managed by Housing or within a housing facility or it can be a separate Unit that is utilized by resident students. Close partnership and coordination with dining services staff will be crucial for a successful opening to campus. A separate MDH taskforce is providing guidance for Dining Services, but below are a few key areas for student housing to consider.

- Additional space on campus or in housing may need to be utilized for "to-go" meals or to allow for social distancing in traditional dining locations.
- Meal delivery programs may be implemented and access to housing or process for distribution may need to be coordinated.
- Meal delivery or pick-up may need to be implemented for students in quarantine or isolation housing.
- Dining Services may implement a grocery program to support more student cooking in private/semi-private kitchens as to limit the traffic in dining facilities.

Move In

Each institution has its own move-in needs related to arrival schedules (summer to fall moves, athlete move in, early move in programs, move in week, orientation, welcome days/week, etc.) and related to location or space accommodations, so below are items to consider.

- As a campus, determine your goal for social distancing (6 ft., 4 ft.,) and create a schedule accordingly. You should have two plans, one for each. This may mean moving roommates in separately, or limiting resident move-ins per floor/section/hall, or limiting vehicles on a certain area of campus. Consider using applications or software to assist in scheduling/managing this process.
- As a campus, determine your guidance or expectation for facial coverings, self-cleaning, etc. and communicate this effectively.
- Consider having students be self-sufficient in their move in (suitcases, own hand carts, carrying own boxes) and not using helpers/"move-in crews". Also consider whether you should provide move-in bins/laundry carts, and if so, how to properly clean these carts in-

between use.

- The less students bring the less time they need to pack up should they have to leave campus again, or should the institution need to ship their belongings back.
- Consider utilizing furniture move-in days or room-set-up days, without allowing them to stay overnight.
- Encourage or limit the number of people per resident to assist with move in (2 per family, etc.)
- Consider process for key pick up, room check in, condition reports, and other traditionally used process that may need adjusting.

Additional Considerations

Housing/Residence Life, Facilities Management, Custodial, Dining, Public Safety/Police and other service/support staff are frequently on-call and are often the first responders to the needs of residential students. Special consideration should be given to the need for PPE, training, physical and mental health support, work schedules, etc.

Student Engagement and Learning

The ways we engage students and provide learning are directly connected to the ways we provide services to them and operate our living on-campus programs. This section provides some key areas to consider when planning for student engagement and learning.

Communication and Communication Strategies

Knowing that our communication for Fall 2020 has been taking place and evolving, we recognize that it will increase in volume and importance as we **APPROACH FALL**.

- Ideally, coordinate all housing messaging with institutional messaging plans. If there is a campus-wide messaging/marketing strategy/brand for communicating social distancing, facial coverings, proper hygiene, proper cleaning, cultural norms, community expectations, etc., it may be best to have the same or similar messaging/branding within the on-campus living facilities.
- Utilize multiple forms of media to communicate with students, including email, mail, social media, text, parents/guardians, hard and digital signage, flyers, student leaders, staff, etc.
- Provide clear communication for students on what is a "guidance", a "recommendation", and a "requirement". Further, provide information on accountability or norms related to the recommendations or requirements.
- Communicate any changes that may have been made to a risk/liability acceptance form, a housing agreement/contract, a student code of conduct, a handbook/manual/policy document, or anything related to COVID-19 behavior. Examples could include:

- "Signing off" on recognition of risk by living on campus
 - Changes to housing agreements including occupancy and cancellations
 - Behavior expectations/requirements with social distancing, facial coverings, gatherings, etc.
 - Changes to guest policies, travel, facility usage, etc.
 - Changes to student conduct codes and when will COVID-19 related student conduct violations be enforced, and what might be changes to sanctions (educational vs. punitive vs. removal)
 - Changes to off-campus behavior expectations and possible impact on on-campus living
- Communicate steps the campus has taken and will take to mitigate risk and respond to confirmed cases.
 - Does your campus have a "testing" and a "contact tracing" plan, and if so, communicate it clearly to students.
 - Consider a "public service announcement" campaign in the on-campus facilities. Specifically addressing community responsibility, impact on each other, creating an inclusive and socially just environment, accountability, etc.
 - Review your Accommodation housing for any changes that may need to be made to communication, processes for requesting, assigning, and on-boarding students.

As students move onto campus and **BEGIN CLASSES FOR FALL 2020**, communication will need to be reinforced and likely adapted as the circumstances evolve.

- Consider whether communication or expectations change based on a student's status with the virus (was positive and now negative test results, actively positive, actively exposed to a positive case, immunocompromised, etc.).
- Implement and monitor communication specific to all the various areas of this Report (bedroom, bathroom, common areas, expectations, etc.).
- Continue to review guidance from the CDC and MDH and communicate up-to-date information with residents.
- Review and assess student behavior and provide affirmation for positive behaviors, and learning opportunities or consequences for negative behaviors.
- Review Roommate Agreements/Contracts and consider making changes to roommate recommended communication, roommate mediations, etc.
- Involve students in reviewing communications, expectations, and operational responses, etc., to improve innovation, fairness, equity, effectiveness, etc.
- Have a plan for student leader and staff communication so they can role model, inform, and enforce expectations/behavioral standards.
- Be in close partnership with campus partners, especially facilities, dining, public safety/police, to assess the plan.

- Have a campus plan and a residential plan for communicating confirmed cases, risk levels, changes to guidelines or expectations.

Student Connection and Belonging

Student connection can be difficult with any measures limiting interaction, and this Fall could see students with a blended approach to in-person and online classes, no large gatherings, limited in-person interaction with each other, limited informal interactions within the residential facilities, limited club and organization or arts or athletic participation, etc. How might we **BUILD COMMUNITY** and create **CONNECTION/BELONGING**?

- As we would normally, have a plan for belonging, inclusion, equity, and addressing behavior that does not meet these standards/values.
- Explore methods to create community identity (t-shirts, signage, social media, virtual groups, etc.)
- Utilize "lessons learned" from this Spring to incorporate more virtual engagement and learning even when in person this Fall.
- Create smaller communities, i.e., instead of a floor community, create a pod/cluster/social circle community so it's easier for the students to connect and respect established guidelines.
- How might strategies for incoming/new students differ from returning students?
- If new plans are put in place for bathroom schedules, study/lounge spaces, community space, etc., how might we amend existing programs/events to fit these new spaces or guidelines? How can we be creative and even have fun with the "new normal."
- Review your residential curriculum or learning outcomes and adjust them, especially the strategies, to align with the new plan for engagement and learning.
 - Passive learning or "grab-and-go" learning
 - Virtual 1:1 and Community meetings with clear guidelines and protocols
 - In-person and virtual options for students to pick from
 - Incentives may look different, so involve student leaders and residents
- Review plans for your Residence Hall Association or Hall Clubs or Hall Student Groups. Recruitment timelines may need to be adjusted, events may need innovation, meetings and other forms of communication may need adjusting, and even the general purpose of the group may need adjusting.

An important element to our student engagement and learning plans on campus are our **STUDENT LEADERS AND LIVE-IN STAFF**. Review all elements of their roles and how might they be best supported.

- Review their living environments against plans for mitigation and response.
- Consider whether they will need any additional training and/or PPE.
- Review general operational roles regarding their use of facilities, equipment, hall walks, room

checks, desk work, etc.

- Review training program in general - method, content, etc.
- Review duty process and protocol, including duty phone/radio handling, rounds, in- person contact, response to incidents/calls
 - Wiping down duty phone/radio
 - How many respond to a call/incident?
 - Who responds to quarantine or isolation housing incidents?
 - Limit people in or around a hall desk area, install plexiglass, cleaning product, PPE.
 - Changes to student leader role vs. hall professional staff?
 - How do you manage social distancing when doing rounds, lock outs, etc.?

Off-Campus Student Housing

The following recommendations encompass considerations for the multitude of places and ways students live off campus, their varying financial circumstances, and the likelihood that they live among neighbors at high risk if exposed to the virus.

General Considerations

- Recommendations to students, landlords and neighbors have legal ramifications and may need to be voluntary, but public health will require a revised relationship.
- It will be essential to increase knowledge of where students live off campus and methods of communication.
- Students come to campus from across the region, country and world, and may increase potential exposure to neighbors and campus.
- Off-campus students will enter campus facilities having come from where social distancing may or may not be properly followed. How might campuses address this potential risk?
- Student cooperation with State or Local orders is essential to safety and to protecting the relationships among campuses and neighbors.
- If students are involved in an outbreak or spike, campuses will likely be involved in the response off campus.
- Operational decisions of our campuses, like classes online, could impact the business of local landlords. The impact could impact off-campus housing capacity long-term.
- Create a centralized digital space, hosted on the MDH web site or another organization, with guidelines, recommendations, and best practices for working with landlords and students.
- Develop an internal communication plan so that on-campus plans for disease mitigation and

response are communicated and adopted by off-campus student services.

Student Focused Recommendations

- Establish or activate a campus liaison office to interface with off-campus students. This could include providing virtual events, educational programs, informing about off-campus living opportunities, and providing updates to COVID-19 related information.
- Create or activate communication channels for off-campus students - ideally separating commuter students from neighborhood students. This could include a robust web site, active social media, send a newsletter, develop online COVID-19 resources, prepare an FAQ, and create a non-credit or minimum credit course.
- Promote responsibilities: Students are part of a high risk setting and have a responsibility to the community as a student and member of the institution.
- Review and consider enforcing a "Code of Conduct" for students living off-campus and requiring them to provide a "local address". Consider tying compliance to registration or grades. Consider communicating with the local area to provide a means for neighbors and students to report conduct issues. Restorative Justice practices may be an effective manner to resolving conduct vs. punitive.
- Educate off-campus students to comply with health-related guidelines established for on-campus students such as reporting illness or contact with an infected individual. This would also include information on testing, cleaning, quarantine, travel, taking personal responsibility for impact on others, and engaging with Public Safety/Law Enforcement and health providers.
- Familiarize students with the Center for Disease Control and Minnesota Department of Health. These organizations have up-to-date relevant information for students and their families, and include information about locations outside of campus that these students live in or likely visit frequently.

Landlord Focused Recommendations

- Alter daily practices and enhance communication to protect the health and safety of the tenants.
- Conduct more thorough cleaning of units between tenants during move-out and move-in times. Allow units to sit empty for 24 hours before new occupants arrive. Identify vendors that are certified to perform infectious waste cleanup with proper personal protective equipment.
- Review office and staffing procedures for large buildings and complexes.
- Be as flexible as your business model will allow with tenants facing extenuating financial circumstances due to COVID-19.
- Collaborate with the university/college to ensure that off-campus students (tenants) comply with conduct, health and safety, and other campus-based guidelines/requirements that benefit the larger community.
- Partner with the Neighborhood Liaison or Student Life office to ensure they have the address

and property management contact information for your student properties. Campus officials can then cross-reference names with the student registry if needed for contact tracing.

Resources and Idea Sharing

- Consider designating staff, including student staff, to liaison with groups of off-campus students. They can provide online information, check in, help problem solve, etc.
- Consider partnering more directly with the local area on providing space for quarantine, supplies, marketing/communication, online/virtual meetings, and basic outreach and support of local challenges.
- **How to protect yourself and others:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html
- **Living in shared housing:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/shared-housing/index.html
- **Living in close quarters:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/living-in-close-quarters.html
- **Running essential errands:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/essential-goods-services.html
- **Visiting parks and recreation areas:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/visitors.html
- **Minnesota Department of Health Coronavirus resources:** www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html