



4 May 2020

Basic Safety Concept for the University of Zurich during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction

The University of Zurich's basic safety concept is based on the federal government's standard safety concept (as of 22 April 2020)¹. It describes the requirements that the organizational units of the University of Zurich must meet in order to resume or continue their activities in accordance with COVID-19 Ordinance 2. It contains internal safety measures that must be implemented with the cooperation of employees.

Aim of the measures

The aim of the measures is to protect everyone at the University of Zurich (employees, external service providers, visitors, patients, etc.) against infection with the novel coronavirus as best as possible. There are also special safety measures for people at high risk

Special requirements for University of Zurich staff working in clinics and diagnostic labs

There are specific recommendations from expert groups for clinics and diagnostic labs that treat or care for (COVID-19) patients or examine samples
(see www.bag.admin.ch/coronavirus-gesundheitsfachpersonen).

Legal basis

COVID-19 Ordinance 2 (818.101.24), Labor Law (SR 822.11) and its implementing ordinances.

Internal regulations

Directive from the Executive Board of the University on Working from Home and Transition to Normal Operations (Preventing the Spread of Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2) of 28 April 2020.

Using the Safety Concept

The UZH safety concept is comprised of two documents:

- The Basic Safety Concept for the University of Zurich describes the general rules of conduct and safety measures, and contains explanations of the questions to be answered in the Specific Safety Concept.
- The Specific Safety Concept serves as the basis for practical implementation by all organizational units.

All employees must be informed of the rules of conduct and safety measures contained in the concept and actively and independently help to implement them.

¹ <https://backtowork.easygov.swiss/musterschutzkonzept/>



Reducing the Spread of the Novel Coronavirus

Transmission of the novel coronavirus

The three **main transmission paths** of the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) are:

- Close contact: Maintaining a distance of less than two meters from people who have been infected.
- Droplets: If an infected person sneezes or coughs, the virus may come into direct contact with the mucous membranes of another person's nose, mouth or eyes.
- Hands: Infected droplets can end up on your hands if you cough, sneeze or touch your mucous membranes. The virus can then be transmitted to surfaces. Other people may unwittingly bring the virus into contact with their mouth, nose or eyes when they touch contaminated surfaces through a contact infection.

Preventing transmission

There are **three basic principles** for preventing transmissions:

- Maintaining a safe distance, cleanliness, disinfection of surfaces and hand hygiene
- Protection of people at high risk
- Social and professional distancing from those who are ill and those who have come into close contact with those who are ill

The principles for preventing transmission are based on the above-mentioned main transmission paths.

Transmission as a result of close contact and transmission via droplets can be prevented by maintaining a distance of at least two meters or through physical barriers. To prevent hand transmission of the virus, it is important for everyone to wash their hands regularly and thoroughly and for frequently touched surfaces to be cleaned.

Basic Rules

The University of Zurich safety concept ensures compliance with the following requirements. Sufficient and appropriate measures must be defined for each of these requirements. Line managers are responsible for the selection and implementation of these measures.

1. Everyone must wash their hands regularly.
2. Employees and others must maintain a distance of at least two meters from one another and adhere to the University of Zurich's other distancing rules. Line managers must create an environment in which it is possible to require compliance with hygiene and distancing rules by staff and managers.
3. Appropriate, independent and regular cleaning of surfaces and objects after they have been used, especially when they have been touched by several people. Facility management is responsible for this in public spaces. Users of labs, offices and other Central Services institute, seminar and department spaces are themselves responsible for carrying out this task.
4. Appropriate protection of people at high risk in accordance with the Directive from the Executive Board of the University on Working from Home and Transition to Normal Operations (Preventing the Spread of Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2) of 28 April 2020 in strict compliance with Art. 10b and 10c of COVID-19 Ordinance 2.



5. Send ill University of Zurich employees home and instruct them to self-isolate or self-quarantine in accordance with the Directive on Working from Home and Transition to Normal Operations (Preventing the Spread of Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2) of 28 April 2020.
6. Take account of specific aspects of work and work situations in order to ensure safety.
7. Provide information to employees and other affected people regarding the requirements and measures.
8. Implement the requirements in one's own area of management and responsibility in order to implement and adapt the safety measures efficiently.

1. Hand Hygiene

Everyone should wash their hands with soap and water regularly. In particular, they should do so immediately after arriving at their workstation, after any necessary contact with other people and before and after breaks **(measure (M) 1.1)**.

Hand sanitizer must be used at workstations where this is not possible. Facility management will provide and manage sanitizer dispensers in public areas. Users of Central Services institute, seminar and department spaces where employees cannot wash their hands are responsible for ensuring that hand sanitizer is available in the vicinity of these areas. Hand sanitizer can be obtained from the Materials Center / Shop Campus Irchel **(M 1.2)**.

Be sure to protect/care for your hands when washing and disinfecting them frequently (skincare products can be obtained from the MUL Shop). **(M 1.3)**

Remove unnecessary objects, such as magazines and papers, from common areas, such as café areas and kitchens **(M 1.4)**.

2. Maintaining Distance

Everyone must maintain a distance of at least two meters from other people **(M 2.1)**.

Certain occupancy rules have been implemented to enable adherence to distancing requirements within workrooms.

- No more than four people may be in the same workroom (labs or offices) at the same time if the room is <math><40\text{ m}^2</math> **(M 2.2)**. Exceptions are possible for open-plan offices and labs. Such exceptions must be included in the specific safety concept, and additional measures (such as ventilation) must be reviewed (**→ M 6**).
- In large rooms (>40 m²), such as open-plan offices and labs, the standard is 10 m² per person. This is based on the federal government's guidelines, which take account of the flow of people **(M 2.3)**. In general, the maximum occupancy may at no point exceed 50% of the ordinary occupancy (occupancy prior to the lockdown) **(M 2.4)**.
- The maximum occupancy of meeting rooms is one person per 4 m² **(M 2.5)**.

Define areas where people may move about and congregate

Individual employee work areas or shared workspaces must be defined if there is a risk that the distancing regulations cannot be observed. This can be done with (floor) markings, room designations, with the help of floor plans or on the basis of clear arrangements.

The following areas where people may move about and congregate must be defined **(M 2.6)**:

- Areas where a large number of people gather (e.g. in front of libraries, at counters, in



- shops or cafeterias)
- Two-meter waiting area in front of frequently used appliances, such as copiers, scanners, etc.
 - Two-meter intervals in areas where people congregate (e.g. cafeterias, kitchens, common rooms)
 - Special rooms for people at high risk

If necessary, internal routes must be marked to indicate that the minimum required distance must be observed as well as possible **(M 2.7)**.

Partitioning

Counter and reception workspaces should be separated from other employees and customers with partitions **(M 2.8)**.

The maximum occupancy and – if appropriate – booking schedules (times/rooms) should be posted at the entrances to rooms or displayed in a reservation system **(M 2.9)**.

When maintaining a distance of less than two meters is unavoidable

Unavoidability is based on the activity, i.e. the activity requires close contact.

For example, the following activities may be assumed to be unavoidable:

- Caring for patients
- Essential research involving test subjects
- The provision of instructions to platform users by platform staff (e.g. core facilities)
- Working on technical installations or construction sites with heavy equipment (tools, parts etc.)
- Cleaning work in workrooms with higher levels of foot traffic (labs, toilets)

Failure to adhere to the minimum distance of two meters due to a lack of space and usage schedules is not permitted.

People must wear face masks and should keep contact during work as brief as possible, and **(M 2.10)**:

- Employees must wash their hands with soap and water or disinfect them with hand sanitizer before and after contact with other people,
- Cover wounds on fingers or wear gloves, and
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact (e.g. shaking hands) **(M 2.11)**.



3. Cleaning

Cleaning includes the appropriate and regular cleaning of surfaces and objects after they have been used, especially when they have been touched by several people. Safe disposal of waste and safe handling of work clothes.

Surfaces and objects

Facility management is responsible for cleaning surfaces and objects in public spaces. The users of workrooms are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects in these rooms.

- Surfaces and objects (e.g. work surfaces, keyboards, telephones and tools) must be cleaned regularly using standard cleaning agents, especially when they are used by several people (**M 3.1**).
- Do not share cups, glasses, dishes and utensils; wash dishes with soap and water after using them (**M 3.2**).
- Regularly clean door handles, elevator buttons, handrails, coffee machines and other objects that are often touched by many people (**M 3.3**).

Ventilation

The regular and sufficient exchange of air in workrooms must be ensured by ventilating them, for example, four times a day for about ten minutes (**M 3.4**).

As a rule, it should be assumed that rooms with ventilation systems (e.g. labs) have a sufficient exchange of air.

It should be assumed that special rooms, such as climate chambers and cold rooms, do not have a sufficient exchange of air. Additional measures must be defined for these rooms, such as requiring employees to work alone, wear a face mask, etc. (**M 3.5**).

Toilets

Facility management is responsible for cleaning toilets. In particular, it is responsible for

- regularly cleaning the toilets
- properly disposing of waste

Waste disposal

The cleaning service disposes of household waste from workrooms. Users are required to take all steps to avoid putting cleaning staff at risk. The University of Zurich's disposal guidelines must be strictly observed. The surfaces of special waste containers for medical and electrical waste must be disinfected or cleaned with a cleaning agent prior to disposal.

In areas where the users themselves are responsible for waste disposal, it must be ensured that:

- Wastebaskets are emptied and special waste containers disposed of regularly;
- Avoid touching waste directly and instead use implements (broom, shovel, etc.) to do so;
- Wear gloves when handling waste and dispose of them immediately afterward; and
- Do not press waste bags together (**M 3.6**).



4. People at High Risk

People over the age of 65 and those with serious chronic illnesses (see COVID-10 Ordinance 2) are considered to be people at high risk of suffering serious illness (**M 4.1**).

For this reason, additional measures must be taken for people at high risk to ensure they do not become infected. Only in this way will it be possible to prevent a high mortality rate as a result of COVID-19. People at high risk should continue to observe the safety measures defined by the FOPH and – whenever possible – remain at home. The protection of people at high risk is defined in detail in COVID-19 Ordinance 2. More information can be found at www.foph-coronavirus.ch. Examples of measures include: working at home, working in areas that do not require close contact, physical barriers, setting up time windows for people at high risk.

In accordance with COVID-19 Ordinance 2, a review of the workplace situation for people at high risk will be carried out in stages:

1. Priority: The current activity can be carried out from home if the necessary technical and organizational measures are taken.

2. Priority: A substitute activity can be carried out from home.

3. Priority: If the employee's presence on site is essential for some or all activities, the employee may carry out the activities on site according to the following conditions (**M 4.2**):

- Close contact with other people is avoided (individual room or a demarcated work area separated by at least two meters).
- Other appropriate individual safety measures must be taken if close contact cannot be avoided at all times. These safety measures must be discussed with the Safety, Security and Environment Office, Occupational Health and Safety (arbeitsmedizin@su.uzh.ch).

4. Priority If options 1-3 cannot be implemented, a different activity can be carried out on site provided this activity does not involve close contact with other people or if appropriate and individual safety measures are defined in consultation with the Safety, Security and Environment Office, Occupational Health and Safety.

The options are evaluated in consultation with employees. If they view the individual safety measures as insufficient, employees have the right to reject the on-site activity that is offered if they submit a doctor's note.

Compliance with the safety measures is reviewed by the employee's direct line manager. The Occupational Health and Safety team can be consulted for advice.

5. Workplace Access to People Who are Ill with COVID-19

We must ensure that those who are ill do not infect other people. People who are ill should remain at home. The FOPH has issued self-isolation and self-quarantine² guidelines for those who are ill (with typical COVID-19 symptoms) or those who have come into contact with people infected with COVID-19. These guidelines must be followed as appropriate and the isolation and/or quarantine period specified by the FOPH observed. Employees are required to adhere to the FOPH guidelines in order to protect the health of all other employees.

² <https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/en/home/krankheiten/ausbrueche-epidemien-pandemien/aktuelle-ausbrueche-epidemien/novel-cov/selbst-isolierung-und-selbst-quarantaene.html>



6. Special Work Situations and Deviations

Consideration of specific aspects of work and work situations to ensure safety must be described in the specific safety concept. Deviations from and additions to the basic safety concept must likewise be described in the specific safety concept (**M 6**). **If the answer to a question in the specific safety concept is "No", the reason why the measures cannot be implemented or the alternative measure for achieving the safety objective must be indicated under measure M 6.**

Safety, Security and Environment can assist managers and the relevant employees with special situations and assess the planned measures: info@su.uzh.ch

7. Information

Employees must be informed of the required rules of conduct and precautionary measures. Specific instructions, for example, regarding the use of face masks or about special organizational measures, must be provided. In addition, external parties entering University of Zurich premises must be informed of the most important measures.

Informing employees

Line managers inform employees and other people at the University of Zurich about the contents of the University of Zurich safety concept. In particular, they are responsible for providing information to people at high risk about their rights and the safety measures at the University of Zurich (**M 7.1**).

General information

The rules of conduct and precautionary measures defined by the FOPH must be posted in a clearly visible location. In public areas this is done by facility management (**M 7.2**).

Specific information for external parties

The relevant organizational units are responsible for ensuring that specific information for external parties (e.g. contractors, patients, test subjects) is provided and, if necessary, posted in a clearly visible location (**M 7.3**).

8. Management

Managers ensure that

- the general and, where applicable, specific measures are implemented (**M 8.1**);
- regular training and instructions are provided to employees regarding the rules of conduct and precautionary measures (**M 8.2**);
- cleaning agents and, where applicable, disinfectants are refilled and the use of face masks is regulated and stocks are checked regularly (**M 8.3**).


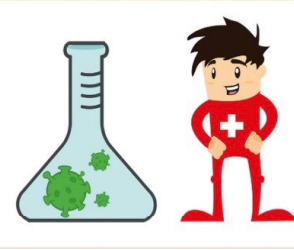
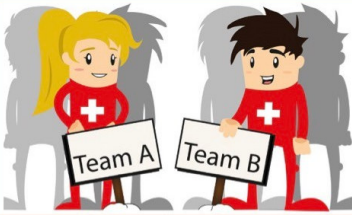

Safety Measures

The aim of safety measures is to prevent the spread of the virus. The measures must take account of the latest technology, occupational medicine and hygiene research as well as other significant work-related findings. The measures must be planned in a way that permits technology, work organization, other work conditions, social relationships and the impact of the environment on the workplace to be taken into account appropriately.

First of all, technical and organizational safety measures must be taken. Personal safety measures are subordinate to the aforementioned measures. Additional measures must be taken for people at high risk. All affected people must observe the requisite instructions for the safety measures. The workplace safety objective is also to reduce the transmission of the novel coronavirus through distancing, cleanliness, cleaning surfaces and hand hygiene.

"STOP" principle

The STOP principle defines the order in which safety measures are taken (available in German only).

S	S steht für Substitution, was im Falle von COVID-19 nur durch genügend Distanz möglich ist (z.B. Homeoffice).	
T	T sind technische Massnahmen (z. B. Acrylglas, getrennte Arbeitsplätze, etc.).	
O	O sind organisatorische Massnahmen (z. B. getrennte Teams, veränderte Schichtplanung).	
P	P steht für persönliche Schutzmassnahmen (z. B. Hygienemasken, Handschuhe, etc.).	

Personal safety measures

Personal safety measures should only be used when other measures are not possible and adequate protective equipment (e.g. face masks) is available. They are less efficient as substitution for technical or organizational measures.



Employees must have the knowledge required to correctly use the protective equipment as well as the corresponding training. If this is not the case, protective equipment can lead to a false sense of security and failure to abide by fundamental and effective measures (maintaining distance, washing hands).

Masks

Face masks³ (also called surgical masks, medical masks, etc.) are designed to protect against the transmission of pathogens. They provide only limited protection to the wearer. The distribution of masks has been rationed. Wearing a mask is only required or recommended for certain activities or work situations. Masks must be provided at no charge by the organizational unit. In areas where the University of Zurich recommends wearing a mask, a face mask can, if available, be purchased in the Materials Center / MUL Shop.

The use of FFP masks, which if worn correctly offers the wearer a high level of protection, is reserved for special activities in labs (e.g. isolation of SARS-CoV-2 virus), patient care involving aerosol-generating procedures in clinics (e.g. when intubating patients) or to protect people at high risk following medical procedures.

It is very important that employees be instructed how to use the masks correctly (**see the video "How to use a face mask" in German and English; link below**). Before putting a mask on, first wash your hands thoroughly using soap and water. Carefully place the mask over your mouth and nose and fasten it securely to make sure there are no openings between your face and the mask.

Avoid touching the mask while you are wearing it. If you touch a used face mask, for example, when you take it off, wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.

Video: "How to use a face mask"

German

https://bag-coronavirus.ch/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/BAG_Corona_MASKE_QUER_DE_v04.mp4

English

https://bag-coronavirus.ch/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/BAG_Corona_MASKE_QUER_EN_v02.mp4



Additional Provisions

Hand hygiene and disinfectant measures

Washing your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 to 30 seconds is sufficient as a hygiene measure. Hand sanitizer is only provided by the University of Zurich in areas where it is not possible to wash your hands (because there is no sink) or there is frequent contact with potentially contaminated objects (e.g. at counters, returned books, etc.). Hand sanitizer is also provided in areas where there is frequent customer contact.

Video: "Wash your hands thoroughly"

German

<https://www.bag.admin.ch/dam/bag/de/dokumente/cc/Kampagnen/covid-19/gruendlich-haende-waschen.mp4.download.mp4/gruendlich-haende-waschen.mp4>

Partitions for workrooms

A limited number of partitions are available for customer counters from the Safety, Security and Environment Office.

Traveling to the University of Zurich

Travel to the University of Zurich should be planned in a way that makes it possible to avoid the use of public transport, at least during peak hours, to the extent possible. Unfortunately, the University of Zurich is only able to provide a limited number of parking spaces. People at high risk who must travel to the University of Zurich should inquire about a parking space at the University of Zurich as soon as possible.

Other members of the University of Zurich community who have no other option than to use public transport should adhere to the recommendations of the federal government. Line managers may, where operationally feasible, permit employees to arrive outside of peak hours. Employees bear the risks of traveling to work. If traveling to work by public transport, the FOPH recommends wearing a face mask during peak hours.