

Guide for Developing Healthy and Clean Environments Against COVID-19 at METU Northern Cyprus Campus and for Process Management

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3. HEALTH CENTER (MEDICO)

1. INTRODUCTION

This guide is based on the "Development of Healthy, and Clean Environments in Higher Education Institutions and the Process Management Guide" prepared by the TRNC Ministry of National Education and Culture. It has been prepared by the METU NCC Pandemic Board in accordance with the document "Operating Principles for the Prevention of the COVID-19 Pandemic at METU NCC" which was announced on the 17th of September 2021.

1.1. METU Northern Cyprus Pandemic Board

- The Pandemic Board is responsible for determining what needs to be done to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 throughout the Campus, to minimize the effect in case of transmission, and to take the necessary initiatives for its implementation. Decisions to be taken by the Board are implemented after the approval of the Campus President.
- The Board ensures that the necessary information and data are collected for awareness and accurate information, prepares necessary announcements to inform students and staff within the scope of pandemic measures, and takes steps to make announcements after the approval of the Campus President.

1.2. Minimizing the Risk of COVID-19 Transmission

1. **Communal areas** such as classrooms, the Library, laboratories, cafeterias, sports facilities, restrooms, and bathrooms within the Campus **should be cleaned periodically and ventilated well.**
2. Individuals who are asymptomatic, young people in particular, can still spread the virus to others in the classrooms. It is therefore necessary **to avoid group work that involves multiple people.** It is also necessary to determine the capacity of the classrooms and arrange the seating plan by allowing a safe distance of **1 meter between students.**
3. In closed areas, continuous use of masks should be ensured against the risk of not maintaining a safe distance.
4. **Instruments used by multiple people** such as microscopes, measuring devices, computers, etc. **should be cleaned** immediately after use **with disinfectants** that are effective against viruses and compatible with materials and **they should be kept clean.** (Isopropyl alcohol can be used instead of ethyl alcohol)
5. It should be ensured that masks are used on **public transport or shuttle buses** to/from the Campus, **hand hygiene should be performed** when getting on and off the buses.
6. **Posters** should be designed and displayed in appropriate locations to encourage students and all staff not to use each other's belongings and **to disinfect common use devices such as computers, laboratory equipment, telephones and desks, which are used by multiple people, before and after use.**
7. Students and instructors should have **hand sanitizer** with them at all times.

8. Smoking should not be allowed indoors in public places. **In special spaces reserved for smokers; it should be recommended to keep a physical distance of at least 2m from other people** as smokers take off their masks and blow out cigarette smoke.

Home/dorm quarantine for close contacts, suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19:

1. Such people should spend their isolation period at home or in a dormitory, in a single room **if possible. They should wear a medical mask when sharing space with others.**
2. Ideally, they should stay in a separate room, if possible, to reduce the risk of transmission to household members/other residents in the dormitory. If a separate room is not available, they should wear a medical mask and stay at least 1 meter apart from everyone else **in a well-ventilated room.**
3. In quarantine, at home or in the dormitory, movement of the individual who is infected/potentially infected should be restricted to a somewhat small space; **communal areas** such as toilets and bathrooms should be **disinfected** with bleach and **ventilated well.**
4. **Visitors will not be allowed** in the house/dormitory during the isolation period.
5. **They should not share their personal belongings** and should avoid sharing items such as glasses, plates, towels. If they do need to share items, they should wash them with soap and water.
6. The clothes and textile products such as sheets and duvet covers **should be washed** with normal detergent **at the highest temperature** recommended by the manufacturer.

1.3. Case Management

Confirmed cases should be traced, with active daily monitoring. For academic, administrative, and other staff and students with symptoms such as **fever, sore throat, headache, cough, respiratory distress, muscle aches, loss of taste and smell, or diarrhea**, **The METU Northern Cyprus Health Center should be called/notified (during working hours, Tel: 2183)** or people with such symptoms should be **referred to the nearest health care facility (Tel:1102, COVID-19 Hotline)**

It **should be ensured** that symptomatic people **wear masks** when traveling to/attending the healthcare setting they are referred to. It is recommended that accompanying people should also **wear masks**, pay attention to **physical distancing** as much as possible, and wear glasses or a visor especially if close contact is inevitable. Any resident or staff member who is considered a suspected case after being exposed to someone with COVID-19 and/or when beginning to experience symptoms of the disease, should be traced using the algorithm developed to trace contacts of suspected COVID-19 cases.

2. MEASURES TO BE TAKEN IN COMMON USE AREAS

2.1. Classrooms/Meeting-Conference Halls/Multipurpose Halls/Laboratories/Library

- **Class sizes** should be kept to a **minimum.**
- The **seating plan** should be arranged in a way that allows a **physical distance of at least 1 m.** However, in cases where students need to speak loudly, sing a song or participate in a debate, they should be seated at least 1,5-2 m apart depending on the nature of the course, if possible.

- **Large halls should be used** instead of small classrooms to run singing, choral singing and theater **rehearsals**, which are based inherently on gathering and on being close, **to avoid droplet spread** when they sing or speak loudly.
- Everyone entering the halls must wear a **mask (medical or fabric)** that covers both the nose and mouth properly.
- **Common use of educational materials** by students should be **avoided** as much as possible.
- Educational materials that are accessible to multiple users should not be used in class. If this is inevitable, **necessary hygiene measures should be taken by users.**
- Windows should be opened **frequently** on a regular basis **to bring in fresh outdoor air** as much as possible.
- **Air conditioners and fans**, which could spread infectious droplets, **should be turned off** when possible, when there are people in the rooms.
- Informative materials such as **banners, posters, etc. about ways of protection and precautions** should be on display in visible places.
- Particular attention should be paid to the **cleaning of areas that are touched by multiple people** (e.g., desk surfaces, door handles).
- Visual **warnings indicating the maximum student capacity of that classroom** should be displayed at the entrance of the classroom, **seating and distances should be arranged in advance.**
- Events and activities should be held **within the shortest time possible, with the minimum number of participants.**
- **Hand sanitizer** must be made available at the entrances.
- **Materials that are frequently touched** (books, magazines, etc.) should not be kept on the desks.
- Ventilation of areas with central ventilation systems should be arranged in a way to ensure **100% natural air circulation**, if possible, **maintenance of ventilation systems and filter changes** should be performed in accordance with recommendations of the manufacturer.
- Microscopes and **devices** alike that are **touched by multiple users** should be **properly cleaned after each use.**
- Classrooms should be disinfected thoroughly with **1:100 diluted bleach** or a suitable disinfectant before each session. To this end, there should be **sufficient time between the sessions.**
- **Refreshments should not be served** at the meetings.
- **Hand sanitizer** should be used **before and after** touching the books in the Library.
- It will be mandatory to wear a protective face mask inside the Library.
- Returned materials and any opened cargo materials will be cleaned using the book sterilizer before they are placed on the shelves.

2.2. Student Development and Counseling Center

The Student Development and Counseling Center will be offering its services in a hybrid format (in-person and teleservices). The principles of such services within the scope of COVID-19 Pandemic prevention measures are summarized below:

Individual Counseling

Students will be provided with individual counseling services between the hours of 8:30 – 12:30 and 13:30 – 17:30 during weekdays. In order to receive individual counseling assistance, an appointment can be made by filling out the Individual Psychological Counseling Application form in the "Health Information System (HIS)" (<https://his.ncc.metu.edu.tr/>). Students will be informed about their intake session appointments via email within one week at the latest.

Students will use the Health Center door for the necessary checks to take place. It will be mandatory to wear protective face masks at the Center and during individual counseling sessions.

2.3. Guesthouse/Dormitories

- Beds should be spaced **at least 2 meters apart**. Side-by-side beds, bunk beds and the top and lower beds of the bunk beds are arranged **head to toe**.
 - Room change requests **should not be granted** unless essential.
 - All enclosed spaces should be **ventilated** regularly.
 - **An adequate number of toilets/baths** should be provided depending on the number of students staying in the dorm rooms. Physical distancing should be observed in showers and toilets.
 - **Surfaces that are touched frequently by hands** and toilets and washbasins in communal areas should be **cleaned at least twice a day**.
 - Toilets should be disinfected with **1:10 diluted bleach**.
 - **Visitors are not allowed** in any building.
- When registering for dorms, students will be required to provide proof that they have completed their vaccine series. Those who have not completed their vaccine series, will be asked to get their vaccinations.
- Students residing in our dormitories are required to follow the social distancing guidelines and wear protective masks to comply with the COVID-19 protective measures. When they are admitted to the dormitories, our students must read and consent to observe the rules and regulations stated in the Terms and Regulation of Residence that regulates the rules of common life and explains the ways of protection from the pandemic.

2.4. Canteens/Cafes/Dining Hall

- Indoor spaces should be **ventilated frequently** on a regular basis.
- **Air conditioners and fans**, which could spread infectious droplets, **should be turned off** when possible when there are people inside.
- **Hand sanitizer** must be made available at the entrances.
- The seating plan should be arranged in a way that allows **a physical distance of at least 1 m**. Since the virus is spread by droplets and masks are removed while eating, it is recommended that **people avoid having loud talking or shouting during meals and wear masks before and after eating**. In student cafeterias in particular, people should sit **as far apart as possible** depending on the seating capacity of the location.
- **Informative materials** such as banners, posters etc. should be made available.
- **Contactless payment methods** should also be made available, if possible.
- Water dispensers and vending machines must be **contactless**.
- Table surfaces should be cleaned **properly and frequently**.
- Venues should be arranged in a way that staff can stay **at least 1 m apart** from service users.

- To facilitate contact tracing; whenever possible, **groups can be encouraged to come and eat at a set time of the day** that fits them and **to eat at the same table** every day.

- Arrangements should be made to allow the implementation of personal hygiene rules such as washing hands with soap under running water for at least 20 seconds before and after meal, drying hands with **disposable towels**, etc.

- Guests must wear **masks at all times, except while eating/drinking** at the table.

- Proper operation of dishwashers should be ensured; **the dosage of chemicals used** in the dishwashers and water temperature of the dishwasher in particular, should be checked.

2.5. Technical Units/Workshops

- Where possible, the equipment and materials should always be used by the **same staff members only**. If this is not possible, they should be **cleaned with water and detergent** and wiped and disinfected with **70% alcohol or other disinfectants effective against viruses** before each use.

- Particular attention should be paid to **the cleaning of frequently touched surfaces** (such as door handles, telephone handsets, table surfaces).

- **Cleaning** should be performed **on a daily basis**.

- Indoor spaces/venues should be **ventilated frequently** on a regular basis.

- **Hand sanitizer** should be made available at the entrances.

- **Informative materials** such as banners, posters etc. should be made available.

- **Hand-free waste containers** should be made available.

- The seating plan should be arranged in a way that allows **a physical distance of at least 1.5 m**.

2.6. Indoor Gym

- During the pandemic, indoor gyms located in METU NCC Sports Center should continue to be available to students. Gyms will admit **a restricted number of students/participants** at a time, preferable **by appointment, for a limited period of time**. Students must stick to the appointment time.

- **Rules to be followed** in gyms should be posted at the entrance of the gym.

- The maximum capacity of participants/users inside a gym at any one time is **one person per 6 square meters**.

- After entering the gym, **hands should be washed**, or **hand sanitizer** should be used.

- Those with symptoms such as cough, runny nose, shortness of breath should not be admitted to the Sports Center.

- Physical activity could produce **more droplets** and may significantly increase **the velocity of droplets** when they are expelled into the air. For this reason, arrangements should be made for the maximum physical distance possible among gym users, maintaining a minimum distance of at least 2 meters.

- Pieces of gym **equipment** such as treadmill/bike etc. should be kept **at least 2 meters apart**.

- Gyms should be **cleaned at regular intervals** and **ventilated frequently**.

- Sports equipment lending service of the Sports Center should be stopped within the scope of COVID-19 measures.

- Gym users are required to use **personal towels, mats, etc.** in the gym.

- **It should be ensured that gym staff are provided information** on ways of transmission of contagious diseases and preventive measures.

2.7. Restrooms

- **Automatic doors** should be installed at the entrance to the restroom areas where possible.
- If this is not possible, the **door handles** should be **disinfected frequently**.
- Floors of toilets, closets and urinals should be cleaned frequently and disinfected with **1/10 diluted bleach**. Washbasins, faucets and taps, door handles should be cleaned and disinfected with **1/100 diluted bleach**.
- **Cleaning hours** of restrooms and washbasins **should be recorded** and displayed visibly.
- All restrooms must be equipped with **sufficient liquid soap, toilet paper and paper towels or contactless hand dryers**.
- Cleaning **staff** should use **gloves, masks and glasses/visors** in restrooms.
- **Hygiene information and signs** should be displayed in restrooms.
- **Pedal waste bins** should be placed near the exit, if possible, to facilitate the disposal of paper towels and similar waste.

2.8. Elevators

- The use of elevators **should be limited**.
- **One-third of its capacity** can be allowed in the elevator at one time and this information should be displayed on the elevator entrance door.
- **Floor markers should be used** to help people **stand in designated areas on elevators**, keeping a physical distance of 1.5 meters from others.
- **Masks should never be removed** on the elevators.
- People should turn to face away from the others on elevators to help minimize the likelihood of spreading germs and **try not to talk**.

2.9. Waiting Halls/Lobbies/Corridors

- **Maximum number of doors** should be provided to avoid crowds and congestion **in the entrance and exit areas**.
- Floor markers should be placed in waiting areas with **a distance of at least 1.5 meters** in between.
- **Separate doors** should be used **to enter and exit**. Where not possible, the same door can be used, however, a strip must be used to separate the entry and exit flows, **one-way entrance and exit signs** should be placed **on the floor**.
- **Individuals who do not have a mask** should not be allowed inside.
- **All non-essential items**, including books, brochures, and magazines, **should be removed** from the lobbies/waiting areas, other communal areas and lounges.

2.10. Campus Entrance, Security, Information Desks

- **Maximum number of doors** should be provided to avoid congestion and crowds **in the entrance and exit areas**.
- **Individuals who do not have a mask** should not be allowed inside.
- Physical distancing measures (at least 1.5 meters) must be observed at the entrances and exits. People should be **allowed in one-by-one** and social distance markers should be placed on the floor, with **a distance of at least 1.5 meters**, to show people where to stand **in line**.
- To avoid crowds, people should stand in **single lines separated by strips**, with a distance of at least 1.5 meters between each row. **Floor markers** should be used wherever required, with **a distance of at least 1.5 meters** in between.
- At the entrances, **informative posters** should be displayed in areas visible to staff, students, and visitors.
- **Necessary personal protective equipment (PPE)** should be provided for security/information desk staff.
- **Hand sanitizer** should be made available wherever appropriate.

2.11. Offices/Administrative Rooms

- Arrangements should be made to ensure that staff members can maintain a **minimum physical distance of 1.5 meters** from each other.
- It should be ensured that **staff members** are **provided information** on COVID-19 transmission routes and protective measures.
- Staff members should keep maintaining a **physical distance of at least 1.5 meters** in resting spaces and **wearing a mask**.
- All staff members **must wear a mask** that covers both the nose and mouth properly.
- The workplace **should be cleaned** with water and detergent **every day**.
- Windows and doors should be opened **frequently** to naturally **ventilate** the workplace.
- **High-touch surfaces** (such as door handles, telephone handsets, cabinet and table surfaces) **should be paid particular attention** during the cleaning and disinfection process.
- Ventilation of areas with central ventilation systems should be arranged in a way to ensure **100% natural air circulation**, if possible, **maintenance** of ventilation systems and **filter changes** should be performed in accordance with recommendations of the manufacturer.
- **Sharing office equipment** (such as computer keyboard, mouse, telephone, pen, eraser, etc.) **should be avoided** where possible.
- **Staff members with symptoms** such as fever, cough, runny nose and shortness of breath **should not be allowed to work**.
- Whenever possible, documents should be processed through computer systems. E-signature can be used whenever possible and where there is no legal requirement to use a wet-ink signature. In cases where a wet signature is required, the document should remain fixed, and participants should sign it in turn taking into account the social distancing measures. People should use their personal pens when signing any documents and these pens should not be shared among meeting participants.

2.12. Shuttle Buses

- Passengers should observe the social distancing rules while waiting for the school bus.
- Passengers should maintain social distancing while getting on and off the bus.
- Persons with symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, runny nose, difficulty breathing, etc.) should not be allowed in vehicles and should be directed to a healthcare institution,
- Physical distancing should be maintained by keeping **one of the seats empty** in buses with two seats per row, for example.
- **Markings** should be provided on the seats to create a **diagonal seating arrangement**.
- **A protective barrier** should be installed between **driver's seat** and front passenger's seat to provide an extra layer of protection.
- **Air conditioners should not be operated** in buses and **natural air circulation** should be provided as much as possible by opening windows. Indoor air circulation should never be used when it is necessary to operate the air conditioner.
- A **physical distance of 1.5 meters** should be maintained in buses with a standee capacity/that can carry **standee passengers**.
- **Physical distancing** and **mask wearing** rules must be observed in buses. Students not wearing a mask will not be able to use the shuttle buses.
- **Food and beverage consumption** should not be allowed in order not to cause mask removal during public transportation.

2.13. Places of Worship

- Face masks should be always worn and a physical distance of at least 1.5 meters should be maintained.
- Ablution facilities of the place of worship should not be used during the pandemic.
- Materials such as books and prayer beads should not be used in common.
- Worshippers should bring their own prayer rugs to the facility.

2.14. Market/Shops/Post Office

- Posters regarding the measures to be taken within the scope of COVID-19 (about hand disinfection, mask use and the rules to be followed inside) should be hung at the entrances.
- In order to prevent crowding inside, a warning/blocker should be placed on the outer door to prevent entry.
- Hand sanitizer should be made available at the entrance.
- Entry should be permitted according to the "one person per three square meters" principle.
- It should be ensured that customers do not touch the unpackaged products. When picking open products (fruits, vegetables, etc.), the customer or staff should use disposable gloves. After each use, the gloves should be removed and thrown into the covered waste bin.
- Customers should be encouraged to make non-cash payments, preferably contactless payments.
- Particular attention should be paid to the cleaning of the frequently touched surfaces (such as door handles, telephone handsets, cabinet surfaces, table surfaces). These surfaces are cleaned initially with water and detergent and then they are disinfected with 1/100 diluted bleach (half a small tea glass per 5 liters of water)
- It should be ensured that places are ventilated frequently by opening their doors and windows.

2.15. Disinfection of Areas Where COVID-19 Positive Cases are Detected

- Measures should be taken **to prevent entry** to offices/classrooms where a positive case is detected.
- All surfaces should be cleaned after 24 hours with **1/100 diluted bleach** or **70% alcohol** or **surface disinfectants effective against viruses**.
- The room should be **ventilated for 24 hours** by opening windows.
- Cleaning staff should wear surgical masks, visors, disposable gloves and long-sleeved disposable gowns.

3. HEALTH CENTER (MEDICO)

In line with the decision taken by the TRNC Council of Ministers and published in the Official Gazette, rapid antigen testing will be available once a week for **free** to individuals who have completed their vaccine series (and who have an AdaPass code). People who need more regular testing should go to other testing centers, where they will have to pay for tests, when they need to have a rapid antigen test. Those who will have a test at such centers should apply through the link <https://basvuru.lab.gov.ct.tr/?signup=true>.

According to the information provided by the TRNC Ministry of Health, those who have been vaccinated abroad can apply to the TRNC ADAPASS vaccination system by filling out the form on the following website: <https://asi.saglik.gov.ct.tr/vaccination/verify> If the message "Your vaccine verification request has been successfully created. If your information is approved, you can apply for your vaccination card within 3 working days." is received after completing the form, an ADAPASS card can be created using the link below: <https://adapass.gov.ct.tr/>