



community ready

closing the distance, preparing together

Evergreen Back to Campus Guidance

Issued: April 14, 2021

April 14–August 30, 2021

This document provides April 14-August 30, 2021 guidance for Evergreen’s campuses, work units and personnel as we maintain mostly remote operations in spring and summer and prepare for more in-person operations in advance of fall quarter.

It is based in turn on two sets of state guidance. Governor Inslee’s [Healthy Washington-Roadmap to Recovery](#) plan sets out phases put in place to stem the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, Washington issued [guidelines](#) for higher education institutions. (The state’s community colleges have pulled both sets of guidance into a useful [issue brief](#).)

These state guidelines and requirements currently govern the college’s ability to gradually reopen in a safe way as the conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic change over time. They are expected to be updated soon as local health and safety conditions improve.

Thurston County is currently in Phase 3 of the governor’s plan, and Pierce County in Phase 2. We must be prepared to advance or return to prior phases as needed and directed.

More specific guidance for fall quarter and beyond, including campus vaccination policies, will be provided as state guidelines are updated and state vaccination efforts progress.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPRING, SUMMER AND FALL OPERATIONS

- Vaccination efforts are making substantial progress, and the state expects all adults to be vaccinated sometime this summer. **We strongly encourage all members of our Evergreen community to be vaccinated when they can be.**
- While COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations have diminished nationally and locally, community transmission is increasing in some areas. Additionally, the arrival of [new COVID-19 variants](#) in the region demand caution.
- State guidelines currently require six feet of distancing in higher ed classrooms and the workplace, and density restrictions remain in place for specific college functions.
- State guidelines still require face covering/masking in all college spaces.
- Employee support structures - such as public transportation, K-12 schools, and childcare -are recovering but may be constrained into the late spring and early summer.

WHAT IS CHANGING FOR SPRING AND SUMMER OPERATIONS

The college is extending telework flexibility to employees through **August 30, 2021 (extended from June 30, 2021)** to the extent it does not impact necessary operations.

The college's current interim telework policy can be found [here](#). If an employee can telework and it does not impede operations, they should continue to be allowed to do so, in coordination with their supervisor. Employees who are currently teleworking are not required to come to work in person unless it is required to support critical unit operations such as orientation programs and other fall quarter-related work.

If an employee *can* telework but would *prefer* to come to campus, unit leaders may authorize employees to return to the work environment so long as it is safe and operationally feasible.

- Any unit authorizing additional employees to return to campus must:
 - Follow [Evergreen's Standard Precautions and Safety Plans](#)
 - Review [Evergreen's Supervisor and Faculty Instructions for Health Verifications](#)
 - Ensure a COVID-19 site supervisor is available and appropriate personnel are on site to monitor compliance with COVID-19 safety protocols.
 - Keep total attendees within space capacity/occupancy limitations and
 - Complete [health checks](#) prior to arrival on campus.
 - Wear face masks at all times when working with or around others.
 - Keep social distance of at least 6' between people at all times.
 - Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.
 - Do your best to keep surfaces, common touchpoints, and shared equipment or tools clean and disinfected.
 - Keep attendance/visitor logs to facilitate contact-tracing if necessary.
- Virtual meetings are encouraged; however, in-person work or academic and other college-related meetings and gatherings may occur under the following conditions:
 - Any non-instructional meetings or gatherings with more than four people that are not already authorized must check in with Evergreen COVID Health and Safety Director Scott Morgan at Morgans@evergreen.edu at least two business days in advance for a safety plan.
 - Get authorization from your divisional/unit leadership for the meeting.
 - Designate a COVID safety supervisor.
 - Check with Scott for a plan and training.
 - Schedule space that is controlled and accessible by the work unit or division, or request a room from space scheduling.
 - Ensure that all participants have completed their safety training and are fully prepared before the meeting (COVID supervisor responsibilities)
- Many in-person functions and services (housing and dining, labs, studios, events, etc.) will require activity-specific guidance which will continue to be updated to align with state guidelines in appropriate phases.

- Events guidance has been updated to both incorporate state guidelines and specific college operational needs. Evergreen is currently planning a remote 2021 commencement.
- It may be operationally necessary to call additional employees back to on-site work prior to August 30 as we prepare to return to more in-person campus operations in the fall. (Many essential/critical employees have been working in person on campus throughout the pandemic.) In cases where an employee has been teleworking but is now needed in person to support operations as your unit prepares for a fall quarter return, **units must provide employees with at least 14 calendar days' notice** (in writing and maintained for record keeping) before they ask them to report back to work in person. Exceptions can be made for emergency situations, for health accommodations in coordination with Human Resources and in accordance with relevant collective bargaining agreements.
- We strongly encourage all Evergreen community members to get vaccinated. In the event an employee is unable to secure an appointment outside of work hours, the college is granting up to two hours of release time (per shot) to get vaccinated. Employees should work with their managers to ensure that time away from work does not impede critical operations.

WHAT WILL NOT CHANGE FOR SPRING AND SUMMER OPERATIONS

- Evergreen's classes will continue on a primarily remote footing. Hybrid offerings with in-person instruction must be approved by the academic deans.
- The state still requires six feet of distancing in the classroom and workplace. These requirements and associated capacity restrictions could be re-evaluated as the state adjusts its guidelines and recommendations.
- The state and college require masks/face coverings, regardless of vaccination status.
- Evergreen will continue to use a [health verification form](#) to permit staff and students access to campus. Permission to come on campus is contingent on this form's submission each day. Community members should not come to campus unless they have passed this health check or have been cleared by the health assessment team, regardless of vaccination status.
- Any employee who is sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, *regardless of vaccination status*, must stay home. Employees with COVID-19 symptoms should also get tested and are required to notify the Evergreen Health Assessment Team at covidsymptomsalert@evergreen.edu if they test positive.
- High-risk employees can [request accommodation](#).

PLANNING FOR FALL QUARTER

As President Bridges communicated to staff, students, and faculty in [a letter January 28](#), and in an on-line campus forum March 1, Evergreen intends to safely welcome students, staff and faculty back for more in-person activities and study this fall. This transition will require time and patience. The objective of extending telework flexibility through August 30 is to allow units to plan, employees to get vaccinated, and for the college to be ready for students, staff, and faculty.

As we plan more in-person for fall quarter, we will use what we have learned over the past year of remote instruction while remembering our student-centered mission and responsibilities. Evergreen's human resources team is updating the college's telework guidance and policies with this balance in mind. **We estimate having newly updated and approved Evergreen telework guidance by the beginning of July 2021.**

In the meantime, here are some things everyone can do to help ensure we can be together safely:

- Stay healthy – Wash your hands, wear a mask, and watch your distance.
- Get vaccinated – [Every adult in Washington age 16 and older is eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine as of April 15](#). Vaccination is a powerful tool against this deadly virus. Track vaccination opportunities [here](#).
- Take care of yourself and each other.

Here are some things Evergreen deans and managers can do to help ensure we can be together safely:

- Keep your COVID-19 prevention plans up to date and monitor practices.
- Remember that your decisions have impact on others. Decisions to bring people back to work, hold events, or increase operations requires additional support from Evergreen's essential workers – please be mindful of their health and safety and workload demands.
- Keep lines of communication open, request support early so we have time to plan and, when in doubt, ask for help.
- Stay informed of Evergreen's application of current guidelines by visiting Evergreen's [COVID information](#) pages, following Community Ready emails, and attending our upcoming forums.
- Consider your actions from an equity as well as from a COVID safety lens. Pay particular attention to essential worker and caregiver supports.

- Communicate early and often with colleagues. To the greatest extent possible, make sure that any changes in work status or requirements are made and communicated with time to plan and transition.
- Be ready for new policy guidance as state health restrictions change.

Here are some things Evergreen is doing to ensure we can be together:

- Communicating information about testing and vaccine access for Evergreen students, faculty and staff as supplies and eligibility expand.
- Adhering to or exceeding all state and local COVID-19 regulations and requirements and advocating for safe strategies so we can return to more in-person operations.
- Monitoring guidance from official and academic sources in order to implement health and safety best practices in line with peer organizations.
- Advocating for state and federal support to mitigate COVID-19 financial losses.

Thanks for your help in keeping our community safe! Please continue to take care of yourself and others.

COVID-19 Communications and Promoting Safe Behaviors Team

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