STUDENT GUIDE TO RETURNING TO CAMPUS

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-TEXARKANA

AUGUST 24, 2020
VERSION 3.0
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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This guidebook serves as a reference for the Texas A&M University-Texarkana (TAMUT) community as it deals with the current threat of contracting COVID-19. This document was prepared to implement the recommendations and requirements of The Texas A&M University System’s COVID-19 Response Plan for Reopening Member Campuses and Programs for 2020-2021 (approved May 21, 2020). Adjustments, additions, and deletions will likely occur based on local, regional, and national announcements. The campus has adapted to maintain a healthy workplace in light of the challenges presented by COVID-19. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this document, it is crucial to know that the situation is evolving, and plans are subject to change.

Key points are listed below.

- TAMUT will continue to follow guidance from the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Fall courses will transition to an online format after Thanksgiving to prevent COVID-19 spread due to holiday travel. Only a small percentage of students will need to return to campus after Thanksgiving to complete exams.
- Anyone displaying symptoms of COVID-19 is asked to stay at home.
- Face coverings are required in all public spaces.
- Sanitizing wipes will be available to clean work surfaces and other common areas.
- Hand sanitizer will be available at the entrances to each building and in common areas.
- Physical barriers will be in place in certain areas that traditionally require face to face contact.
- Seating arrangements will be made in classrooms to maintain appropriate levels of social distance.
- The custodial staff has the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and chemicals to sanitize all work and study areas.
Required Training
Online training for students’ return to campus is being finalized and will be available soon.

Symptom Monitoring and Self-Assessment
TAMUT students are required to self-assess for COVID-19 symptoms prior to coming to campus every day. If symptoms exist, students must not come to campus, and must contact the Dean of Students, Carl Greig, at carl.greig@tamut.edu or (903) 223-3062. The Dean of Students will provide the student with additional directions.

Guidelines
Texas A&M Texarkana began planning for an eventual COVID-19 pandemic in January 2020. Local resources and subject matter experts were used to form committees that shaped the guidelines in place for the TAMUT community.

These guidelines will be updated as appropriate and will remain in effect at least until there is a widely available reliable vaccine for COVID-19.

We can each do our part to limit the spread by:
• WEARING A FACE COVERING
• Not sharing food or drinks
• Maintaining appropriate social distancing of six feet
• Frequently cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and other objects
• Washing hands correctly and frequently
• Covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. Do this either with a tissue or your inner elbow.

Social Distancing
The CDC recommends maintaining at least 6 feet separation from other individuals.
• There are signs throughout the campus, reminding people to practice social distancing.
• Virtual meetings are encouraged.
• The elevator capacity has been reduced in all buildings.
• Social distancing must be practiced even when face coverings and masks are also being used.
Face Coverings

Requirement:
Face coverings are required in public settings for all students, employees, and visitors while on property owned, leased, or controlled by the university. A public setting is any indoor space other than one’s own private office, residence, or personal vehicle. For an office to be considered “private” it must contain full walls and a door that must be closed while a facial covering is not being worn. Areas with open walls, cubicle spaces, or open areas with multiple work spaces are not considered private. Facial coverings must be worn in these locations at all times. Face coverings must also be worn in private areas when occupied by more than one person. Public settings include but are not limited to lobbies, restrooms, cafeterias, classrooms, computer or other laboratory spaces, study areas, hallways, elevators, common spaces of residence halls, conference rooms, and break rooms. Face coverings are also required in outdoor areas where a 6-foot social distancing perimeter between people cannot be maintained.

Requirement waiver:
Exceptions/waivers for both specific areas and individuals will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Students who are asking for a modification to this policy due to a disability must contact the Office of Student Life.

Enforcement:
The university expects the TAMUT community to behave responsibly and with respect for the health and safety of others. Members of the Eagle family are encouraged to remind one another to wear face coverings as a community effort to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Any refusal to wear a face covering in the classroom is disruptive to the learning environment and will not be tolerated. Non-compliant students will be asked, first, to put on a face covering, and if that is refused, to leave the classroom. Students who refuse to leave the classroom will be escorted out of the setting, by university police officers, if needed.

Those not complying with use of face coverings will be asked to leave the restricted area and return with a face covering. Individuals who do not comply with face covering requirements will be referred to Student Life for appropriate action. Appropriate action may include disciplinary action up to and including suspension/expulsion from the university.

Face covering specifications:
Individuals will be responsible for providing their own face coverings. Face coverings must:
- Fully cover both nose and mouth
- Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face and allow for breathing without restriction.
- Include multiple layers of material and contain no open valves.

Each individual must arrive on campus with appropriate face covering. The CDC has instructions

For safety, do not touch eyes, nose, or mouth when removing a face covering and wash hands immediately afterwards.
**Hand Hygiene**
Wash hands often for 20 seconds and encourage others to do the same.

If soap and water is not available use hand sanitizer and wash hands as soon as you can.

Handwashing is always preferred over hand sanitizer.

ALWAYS wash your hands:
• After removing disposable gloves
• After using the bathroom
• Before, during, and after preparing food
• Before eating food
• Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick
• After changing diapers or cleaning up a child
• After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
• After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
• After handling pet food or pet treats
• After touching garbage

**Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting**
• Hand sanitizing stations will be in place throughout the campus.
• Sanitizing wipes will be available in the classrooms and other common areas.
• Custodial staff are trained to sanitize rooms used by someone who has COVID-19.
• Campus departments are encouraged to clean common touch points within their offices/work areas throughout each day.

Maintaining a clean and sanitized environment throughout the university will require everyone to do their part. Students, faculty, and staff have a responsibility to disinfect their work spaces, tables, desks, and any common areas that will be used by others.

**Vulnerable Populations**
Some people are at a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 complications.

Based on the current data, vulnerable populations may include:
• People 65 years of age or older
Those with serious underlying health conditions such as high blood pressure, heart disease, chronic lung, kidney, or liver disease, diabetes, severe obesity or moderate to severe asthma

- People with weakened immune systems
- Other circumstances that enhance risks associated with COVID-19 exposure or illness

**Testing**

The Texas A&M University System has provided a limited number of tests to each campus to use to ensure the health and wellbeing of the campus community. **Students who are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or have had exposure to a person known to have been diagnosed with COVID-19 need to schedule a test via the university’s online testing portal at www.tamut.edu/covid-19.** Testing should not be performed until at least 3, or as many as 7, days have passed since exposure so as the individual may not have developed enough virus to give an accurate test result. For questions about testing email covid-19questions@tamut.edu.

Students who are Bringle Lake Village residents and are tested MUST use the BLV address and their room number in their testing record. Using your permanent address will initiate contact tracing at your home, rather than at the university and cause a delay in accurate tracing.

Any student who is tested for COVID-19 must immediately report the testing via TAMUT’s COVID-19 Reporting Portal at https://it-lf-ecmf2.ads.tamu.edu/Forms/COV19. For questions about reporting email covid-19questions@tamut.edu.

**Exposure**

Individuals who have been **exposed** to an individual who has a known diagnosis of COVID-19 will be required to quarantine in accordance with CDC guidelines. Exposure is defined as close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes), substantial contact (contact in close proximity to another person for more than 10 minutes or being within an enclosed space with them for more than 30 minutes), and physical contact (hugging, touching, kissing), providing at home care for someone who is sick, sharing eating/drinking utensils, or having been coughed or sneezed on. As of this writing, quarantine is for 14 days from last exposure. Note this means that roommates or members of the same household may have extended quarantine periods if they cannot fully isolate from the diagnosed individual. If at the end of quarantine, individual is without symptom, they may return to work/class. If during quarantine, the individual develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should be tested to confirm a diagnosis, at which time self-isolation as appropriate for an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 would begin. Quarantine means to remove yourself from further exposure by staying home and isolated from others while monitoring for symptoms. Those in quarantine must not be going to work/class or out in public.

Any student who believes they may have been exposed to someone with a diagnosis of COVID-19 must immediately report the exposure via TAMUT’s COVID-19 Reporting Portal at https://it-lf-ecmf2.ads.tamu.edu/Forms/COV19. For questions about reporting email covid-19questions@tamut.edu.

**Return-to-Work/Class**

Individuals who have been **diagnosed** with COVID-19 must follow CDC guidelines before returning to work or class. As of the date of this printing, individuals who had a mild to moderate case that
could be managed at home must only return to work/class after 10 days from the beginning of their symptoms has passed AND symptoms are improving AND they are fever free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medications. Individuals who tested positive but were otherwise asymptomatic will be allowed to return to work/class 10 days after they were tested. Healthcare providers may require that individuals with a more severe case, requiring hospitalization or oxygen, isolate for a longer period. In this instance, an individual must not return to work/class until released by their healthcare provider.

Contact Tracing
Contact tracing is a process used to prevent the spread of infectious disease. In general, contact tracing involves identifying people who have an infectious disease (cases) and their contacts (people who might have been exposed) and working with them to interrupt disease transmission. For COVID-19, this includes asking cases to isolate and contacts to quarantine at home voluntarily. While EHS and Risk Management staff have received training in contact tracing, this process will require community engagement. Steps to assist contact tracers are listed below.

• Record attendance in classes, meetings, activities, etc.
• Maintain accurate and detailed (date, time, contact, phone number) sign-in sheets in areas such as service counters or other locations with a substantial amount of traffic/public contact.

The campus community will be responsible for providing their contacts if they become ill. The contact tracer could ask an individual to reconstruct their previous week and list all persons they came into contact with, and it would be beneficial to have this information ready.

Additional Information:
• CDC Groups at Higher Risk for Severe Illness: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-increased-risk.html
**STUDENT EXPOSURE REPORTING**

### Bringle Lake Village RESIDENTS

- **Student notifies TAMUT** via portal: https://it-lf-eclm2.ads.tamu.edu/forms/COV19 or direct email to Dean of Students: cgreig@tamut.edu if they have symptoms or been directly exposed to COVID.

- **TAMUT Health and Safety Dept** is notified and contacts student via phone or email to arrange test.

- **Student is informed of isolation requirements by TAMUT Compliance office.**

- **Student isolates in current room. Roommates are moved to isolation rooms.**

- **Student Life Dept** notifies instructors that student will participate in class if possible or will make up work when able to return.

- **Housing and Student Life Depts will communicate with student to supply meals and other needed items.**

- **Once isolation period is over, student returns to normal schedule.**

### Off Campus STUDENTS

- **Student notifies TAMUT** via portal: https://it-lf-eclm2.ads.tamu.edu/forms/COV19 or direct email to Dean of Students: cgreig@tamut.edu if they have symptoms or been directly exposed to COVID.

- **TAMUT Health and Safety Dept** is notified and contacts student via phone or email to arrange test.

- **Student isolates off campus at hotel provided by the university.**

- **Student Life Dept** notifies instructors that student will participate in class if possible or will make up work when able to return.

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- **Housing and Student Life Depts will communicate with student to supply meals and other needed items.**

- **Once isolation period is over, student returns to normal schedule.**

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**To report a university COVID-19 case or a university member with COVID-19 symptoms, scan this code to reach TAMUT’s Online Reporting Portal.**
Circumstances under which students must not come to campus:

- Students who have tested positive or who are exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19 illness.
- Those who have had contact with others who have COVID-19 and are still within their 14-day quarantine window.
- Students who have recently traveled to areas with self-isolation requirements.
- Those who have recently completed COVID-19 testing with results pending.
- Students who are at a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 must contact advising@tamut.edu to speak with an advisor about available course delivery methods.
Texas A&M University-Texarkana will return to on-campus instruction this fall on Monday, August 24th, and we are excited to have students, faculty, and staff back together. We are prepared to be flexible in our planning and are building in contingency plans where necessary. As such, we are offering multiple modes of course delivery to ensure a safe and effective learning environment.

**Modes of Course Delivery**

During the fall 2020 semester Texas A&M University-Texarkana is planning to offer courses in five ways:

1. **Face-to-Face:** Class takes place in a traditional setting with reduced capacity and extra spacing allowed for social distancing.
2. **Online:** Course will be offered fully online with no face-to-face component.
3. **HyFlex:** Course will be taught face-to-face and will also provide real-time streaming of the course online allowing students to choose how to attend.
4. **Hybrid:** Some elements of the course will be face-to-face, and some elements of the course will be online.
5. **Synchronous Remote:** Course will be taught via real-time streaming.

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Slow the Spread of COVID-19

- **Wash Your Hands Often**
- **Wear a Cloth Face Covering**
- **And Stay 6 Feet Apart from Others**

**20 Seconds**
Classrooms have been adjusted to allow for physical distancing with reduced class sizes. Seats will be clearly identified so that students maintain a safe physical distance. Students who are under CDC-recognized quarantine guidelines for illness, such as possible COVID-19 exposure, must contact Carl Greig, Dean of Students, at carl.greig@tamut.edu. The Dean of Students will work with the students and their professors to find alternative methods of instruction.

Labs will be evaluated to ensure student health and safety in each particular setting. Please refer to the relevant syllabus or departmental document for additional information.

The fall 2020 semester will begin as scheduled with the first day of classes held Monday, August 24th. The majority of students will not return to campus following the Thanksgiving break, but will finish the semester online and take final exams remotely. The last day of on-campus instruction will be Wednesday, November 25th, with the university closed for the Thanksgiving break Thursday, November 26th and Friday, November 27th. The remainder of classes will be conducted online and final exams will begin remotely on December 4th and be completed by December 9th. For more information about the 2020-2021 academic calendar visit [http://catalog.tamut.edu/academics](http://catalog.tamut.edu/academics).

While there is campus-wide wifi available at TAMUT, this map shows locations with stronger signals for those who need access.
**Student Housing**

Bringle Lake Village (BLV) has made adjustments to the move in process for the fall semester. In an effort to promote the health and safety of our student community, the following policies are in effect for move-in and the remainder of the 2020-2021 academic year.

- BLV residents must complete a COVID-19 Blackboard Course prior to move in.
- If someone arrives too early or late for their assigned move-in time, they will have to wait until a space becomes available to move-in.
- If someone arrives on the wrong day, they will either be assigned a new move-in time on the same day or need to wait to move-in on Sunday, August 23, 2020.
- Students will only be allowed TWO movers/guests TOTAL and will not have access to additional volunteers.
- All parties moving items into BLV MUST wear a mask when in public areas. The assigned COVID-19 course contains a module on how to make a mask.
- Students and families must stick to a one hour, move-in, time frame.
- Bringle Lake Village has single flow traffic both in and outside of the building. Failure to follow the flow of traffic could result in a guest being removed from the building.
- Once move-in is complete, NO GUESTS will be allowed in BLV unless you are completing a full move-out.
- The university will identify living spaces on and/or off campus to be used for quarantine and isolation purposes based on availability. However, students need to be prepared to move home for quarantine and isolation, if possible.

Beyond move-in, other preparedness measures include minimizing common areas occupancy to two people and providing hand sanitizer in common areas. The study areas will be closed. The kitchen area will have limited furniture and, if left dirty or overcrowded, will be closed. The laundry room light switches are now motion activated to eliminate touch points. COVID-19 reminders will be posted in every dorm room, and additional signage will be on all bulletin boards.

**Dining Services**

- Plans are in place for physical distancing and traffic management.
- Contactless service and payment plans will be implemented.
- Plexi-glass shields will be installed at points-of-service.
- All food service employees will perform daily wellness checks.
- Food Service employees will receive COVID-specific health and sanitization training.
- Food service employees will wear face coverings and gloves when handling food.
- There will be increased cleaning and disinfection in all food service, food preparation, and dining areas.
- Plans are in place to adjust dine-in seating and food packaging as needed due to current conditions.

**Student Travel**

While the university does not prohibit Bringle Lake Village residents or other university students from traveling on weekends and during breaks it is **strongly discouraged**. Traveling to other areas puts students at a much higher risk of contracting COVID-19 and possibly passing it on to other members of the university community. Likewise, the university strongly encourages students to avoid large gatherings or situations where you are indoors in close contact with others for longer
than 30 minutes. Limiting outside contact will play an important role in keeping the university community safe.

**Student Gathering Guidelines**

Student programming must adhere to University, local, state, and federal guidelines, which are fluid and subject to evolve. Therefore, organizations and students are encouraged to be flexible. The Office of Student Life will keep clubs, organizations, and others responsible for programming updated as policies change.

- Clubs and organizations will be limited to 3 in-person gatherings per month. An in-person gathering is defined as any organization or club meeting, event, or other activity. Exceptions may be granted on a limited basis and must be approved by the Office of Student Life. Clubs and organizations will be required to track attendance at all events, including meetings, in EagleSync for potential assistance with contact tracing.
- Indoor events, meetings, or other gatherings are limited to the posted attendance for the room and attendees are required to sit as indicated by the room arrangement.
- Clubs or organizations are permitted to have their meetings indoors provided that the following rules are followed:
  1. Attendees are required to wear masks at all times.
  2. Attendees are required to maintain appropriate social distance (minimum six feet) from each other at all times.
  3. All other University guidelines are followed.
- While a limited number will be allowed, indoor in-person events are strongly discouraged and justification will be required when submitting the event request in EagleSync. Exceptions will be granted by the Office of Student Life.
- Off campus events are not permitted.
- Clubs, organizations, and students will not be restricted with regard to the number of virtual events they can host.
Campus Visitors
Any requests for outside visitors to campus must be approved by the President or their designee and will require appropriate justification. Visitors will also need to complete COVID protocol training and self-assessment certification.

Mental and Emotional Health
The counseling center will remain available to students. Services could be performed remotely to limit exposure. More details will be available at the beginning of the semester.
Student Counseling Services contact: Office Phone: (903) 223-3186; After Hours Crisis Line: (903) 276-8276; Email: counseling.services@ace.tamut.edu or cthomas@tamut.edu

Advising & Student Success
The Office of Student Success will offer a blended approach (in-person/remote) for tutoring, supplemental instruction, academic advising, and mentoring.

Academic support programs will offer a blended approach to maximize physical distancing while giving students multiple options for in-person or small group support throughout the semester and virtual meetings will be available as well.

Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, Advising, and Mentoring*

*This includes Student Success Center, First-Year Experience, Advising and I-CARE offices, TRiO, and PATH

• Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction will be offered face-to-face using safe physical distancing guidelines in conference rooms and classrooms and remote delivery will be utilized when this is not possible due to space constraints.

Appointments will be required for face-to-face and online tutoring, supplemental instruction, advising, and mentoring to ensure physical distancing guidelines are followed and virtual meetings will be available as needed.
• Students will sign in at the front desk when entering the Student Success Center and sign out again when leaving.
• In-person and/or small group sessions with physical distancing will be scheduled throughout the semester.
• Hand sanitizing stations will be available at check-in and in common areas.
• Physical distancing will be enforced by indicated markings on the floor and by removing chairs.
• Staff and student-workers will clean and disinfect between appointments as much as possible by wiping down counters, tables, chairs, writing utensils, whiteboards, markers, erasers, computers, door handles, etc.
• A fifteen-minute window will be scheduled in between appointments for disinfecting.
• Equipment and textbook check out will be limited and items will be disinfected before being redistributed.
• In-person and small group sessions will take place in larger settings (classrooms, atriums, etc.) using social distancing recommendations.
**IS 1100, University Foundations**

- IS 1100 courses will be limited to 20 students per section and will meet face-to-face weekly in a classroom that ensures safe physical distancing. An online IS 1100 section is available for students who are unable to meet face-to-face.

**Library Changes**

The library is actively working to have safety plans in place for the return of students, faculty and staff to the campus. There is now a designated third floor entrance and exit to help coordinate traffic flow. Since the library is a public area, face coverings must be worn. Hand sanitizer and cleaning wipes will be available for users.

The number of soft seating chairs, study tables, and computer workstations has been reduced and rearranged to adhere to physical distance guidelines. Users can select the type of workspace needed and will be limited to that space. A library seat reservation system will enable one to view available seats and reserve a spot from an electronic device or the Library Kiosk located outside the third floor entrance. Users will then check in and out of the space with their smartphone by scanning a QR code or using a mobile-friendly webpage. This process will help identify areas that were occupied so library staff can disinfect the space between uses. Because of limited seating, an initial two hour time slot will be imposed but not enforced unless the space is needed by another person.

The stacks will be closed for browsing but the library will fill requests to retrieve books or media items to checkout for library pickup. Gloves will be used to pull items and all returned items will be disinfected between uses. Curbside Pickup/Contactless Checkout options will also be available. Users will place holds through the library catalog and the staff will contact the requestor to coordinate check-out/pick-up option.

Normal library hours are under review and will be posted closer to the campus reopening.

- The library chat, email, or phone contact at [http://libguides.tamut.edu/help](http://libguides.tamut.edu/help).
- For library updates see [http://libguides.tamut.edu/blog](http://libguides.tamut.edu/blog).
- For FAQ’s see [https://libanswers.tamut.edu](https://libanswers.tamut.edu).
For updates and FAQs on COVID-19, visit [https://tamut.edu/About/Administration/COVID_19/](https://tamut.edu/About/Administration/COVID_19/).

For questions or concerns, email covid-19questions@tamut.edu.

**Reporting COVID-19 Cases**

All COVID-19 Cases (student and employee) must be reported to the university via TAMUT’s Online Reporting Portal at [www.tamut.edu/covid-19](http://www.tamut.edu/covid-19). The Director of Compliance, Jill Whittington, will work with Human Resources and the Dean of Students to manage the cases and ensure that contact tracing is occurring with local officials as required. For questions about reporting contact Jill Whittington, Director of Compliance, at jwhittington@tamut.edu or 903-334-6755.
Executive Leadership
Dr. Emily Cutrer, President
Jeff Hinton, Vice President Finance and Administration and Chief Financial Officer
Vicki Melde, Chief of Staff
Kathy Williams, Vice President Student Enrollment, Engagement and Success
LeAnne Wright, Associate Vice President for University Advancement

Academics
Dr. Del Doughty, Dean College of Arts, Sciences, and Education
Dr. Gary Stading, Dean College of Business, Engineering and Technology

Faculty Senate
Dr. David Allard

Communications
John Bunch

Environmental Health and Safety
Matt Pope

Housing/Student Affairs
Carl Greig

Risk Management and Compliance
Jill Whittington

Staff Council
Michael Stephenson

Information Technology
Robert Leitgeb

University Police Department
Chief Alex Serrano

Student Representatives
Brent Baldwin
Phillip Barnes