

Visitors to Penn State Campuses

March 16, 2021

Introduction and Philosophy

During the current pandemic, the University's overarching strategy has entailed limiting the density of its on-campus population in order to reduce the chances of incidental contact that spreads illness. During this time, the University has focused on critical activities that could continue to be performed in person, such as some classes, student support functions, and essential research work. In support of this strategy, units are strongly encouraged to continue to engage with visitors remotely whenever possible. This document discusses the general principles that should continue to govern decisions about inviting visitors to campus.

It is the sole responsibility of individual visitors to [adhere to guidelines and procedures](#) to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. A participant's vaccine status does not impact their obligations to adhere to these guidelines. While Penn State has adopted or issued rules and precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health, there is no way to entirely eliminate the risk of exposure or infection; however, the University will strictly enforce its policies and procedures and reserves the right to cancel functions and/or expel any attendees who do not adhere to its policies.

Acknowledgments of risk may be utilized to communicate the institution's expectations regarding COVID-19 and require visitors or participants to agree to various protocols. Administrators are strongly encouraged to consult with Risk Management and the Office of General Counsel regarding their in-person or other programming.

The Coronavirus Operations and Control Center team (COCC) must be notified by either the event organizer or the unit executive if a campus visitor, either visiting campus alone or attending a meeting or event, subsequently tests positive for COVID.

Individual Visitors

Employees wishing to have a non-employee visit campus for any period of time must make a request to their unit executive. More information is available [here](#).

Group Events

Generally, units should avoid large group events that may increase the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and/or require additional employees to come to campus who may not currently be working on campus. Meetings and event organizers should consider holding events outdoors where possible, should avoid serving food, and must follow the [University's Meetings and Events guidance](#), which helps define allowable group size and more.

Employees working at multiple campuses/traveling to multiple campuses

Employees who will be working from multiple campuses or traveling to multiple campuses should inform all impacted unit(s) (i.e., the campuses to which the employee will be traveling) of their planned travel.

Hiring

Generally, searches should be conducted remotely to every extent possible, and only finalists should be considered for a campus visit. If possible, only a candidate who is at the "offer" stage should be invited to visit campus. Additional guidance pertaining to on-campus visits as part of faculty searches is available [here](#).

Effective date of this guidance

This guidance is effective as of the date listed above, as are all policies or guidelines referenced within this document. Penn State reserves the right to amend this guidance should virus conditions change.