

# Return to Campus Plan

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LAMAR STATE COLLEGE ORANGE – MAY 2020

REVISED – JUNE 30, 2020



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## **Introduction**

It's hard to believe that nine weeks ago, we completely transitioned the way we teach, learn, and work here at our beautiful campus on the Sabine. I am incredibly appreciative and impressed at how everyone within the Gator Family has adapted during these uncertain times. Thank you for your patience, flexibility, creativity, and especially, your resilience as we face these challenges together.

As we complete the spring semester this week and the economy begins to re-start, we must prepare for yet another stage of transition. With the decision to move our Summer I and II sessions to an online/hybrid format, we begin to look at a plan to bring our campus back to full operation and prepare for our Fall semester.

While we cannot eliminate all risks, we intend to be diligent in our mitigation strategies. In the weeks and months ahead, we will work diligently to refine our preparations to create a safe, productive educational environment for our Gator family.

In accordance with the Governor's Report to Open Texas, CDC Guidelines, and THECB recommendation, Lamar State College Orange has created the following plan to reopen our campus while working to ensure the safety and health of our Gator Community. As we roll out each phase of this plan, every member of our Gator family is called to act responsibly, to continue following all health precautions and sanitizing guidelines, and to continue supporting and caring for each other. The plan is contingent upon the following:

- Guidance from our Federal, State, and Local government and public health officials;
- A downward trend of documented cases of COVID-19 or a downward trend of positive tests as a percentage of total tests in our county and surrounding areas;
- Hospitals can treat all patients without crisis care; and
- A robust testing program is in place for at-risk healthcare workers, including emerging antibody testing.

## **Phase in Strategy**

Because the safety and health of our faculty, staff, and students is our first priority, we will strategically phase our return, mindful that if the virus reemerges, efforts to reopen our campus may be slowed or halted for a time until the situation improves. Please keep in mind the reality we are all navigating lacks predictable benchmarks, and the comprehensive understanding we all desire. In short, we will need to do the best we can, informed by government and health officials, and recommended best practices as we move forward.

While we cannot eliminate all risks, we will do everything we can to mitigate them, including:

- Adhering to social distancing protocols;
- Encouraging enhanced personal hygiene practices, including regular handwashing;
- Making hand sanitizer available, especially in areas where soap and water for handwashing are not readily available;
- Requiring facemasks/cloth face coverings or other protective equipment items to be worn when social distancing protocols are not possible;
- Requiring employees, student, and visitors to participate in health screening, including temperature checks when entering designated buildings;
- Maintaining groups of 10 or less;
- Sanitizing and disinfecting common and high-traffic areas;
- Encouraging self-screening and monitoring in accordance with the [\*Governor's Report to Open Texas Checklist for All Individuals\*](#);
- Prohibiting all College-related business travel until after August 31; and
- Preventing symptomatic people from physically returning to work until guidelines issued by the [\*Governor's Report to Open Texas Checklist for All Employers\*](#) is met.

No doubt, there will be inconveniences. We hope they are short-lived, but, in the interim, at least, we will be able to return to our campus, colleagues, friends, and eventually face-to-face learning.

We will take extra precautions to protect the most vulnerable among us, especially those with conditions we know heighten the risks of the most severe COVID-19 cases such as, chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, series heart conditions, chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis, liver disease, diabetes, obesity, and those whose immune system is compromised, such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.

### **Phase in Plan**

Below is an outline of our current approach to a phased reopening. Please keep in mind the guidance and knowledge are changing frequently, which may necessitate altering plans. Additionally, this should not be considered an exhaustive list of considerations, as inevitably items were unintendedly omitted, and/or special circumstances and considerations may require alteration.

**Phase I - May 11 to May 29**

*Continue Current State of Operations / Return limited number of technical hands-on classes to complete spring 2020 learning experiences*

- Employees **continue** to engage in alternative work configurations (i.e., telecommuting, flexible work options, rotations, etc.). Essential employees not working remotely continue to report to campus.
- Vulnerable individuals (as described by the CDC) should continue to shelter in place and work remotely where feasible;
- Faculty will teach from a remote location unless they are teaching one of the technical, hands-on classes that have been approved to meet on campus.
- A specific number of technical, hands-on classes returned to campus on Monday, May 11. This is voluntary – students who are at high risk, or do not feel comfortable returning to class should not do so.
- Gatherings of 10 or more people should be avoided;
- Virtual meetings will be encouraged whenever possible and feasible;
- Continue current campus hours of 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. Monday – Thursday, closed on Friday; Campus will remain closed to outside persons (only faculty, staff, students (current or future), or approved contractors permitted);
- Building closures/restrictions remain in effect for the following buildings: Welding Building, Wilson Building, Industrial Technology Building, Stark Nursing Classroom Building, Shahan Events Center, and Workforce Education Building
- Stringent cleaning practices are in place; and
- Divisions develop plans to best accommodate the return to work of their remaining employees;

**Advancement to Phase II is dependent on guidelines from federal, state, and local government and health officials with additional emphasis on number of cases in our local and campus community.**

**Phase II – June 1 to July 2** (Assuming Phase I has been implemented successfully)  
*Partial On-Campus Operations Resume*

- Maintain current campus hours of Monday thru Thursday, 8:00am – 2:00pm, closed on Friday; Campus will remain closed to outside persons (only faculty, staff, students (current or future) or approved contractors permitted).
- Vulnerable individuals should continue to shelter in place, and work remotely where feasible, or be aware that by returning to work or other environments where distancing is not practical, they could carry the virus back home and appropriate isolating precautions should be taken;
- Staff employees not approved for an alternative work option (i.e. telecommuting, flexible work options, rotations, etc.) or that cannot complete 40 hours of work in an alternative work option, will start physically reporting to their assigned place of work. Your immediate supervisor will provide further guidance on work schedules.
- Faculty will teach from a remote location unless they are teaching one of the technical, hands-on classes that have been approved to meet on campus.
- A limited number of technical, hands-on courses, with fewer than 10 people (faculty and students), will be allowed to meet on campus. Classes will be scheduled between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Faculty and students will be required to wear a face covering (when social distancing cannot be practiced), practice social distancing, and stringent hand washing guidelines;
- Workforce non-credit classes with fewer than 10 people (faculty and students) will be allowed to meet on campus between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Faculty and students will be required to wear a face covering (when social distancing cannot be practiced), practice social distancing, and stringent hand washing guidelines;
- Gatherings of 10 or more people should be avoided;
- Virtual meetings will be encouraged whenever possible and feasible;
- Buildings and offices will be open, but will have restricted access based on needs and occupancy rate;
- Stringent cleaning practices will remain in place;
- Elevators will be limited to one or two individuals (depending on size of elevator). Face coverings should be worn in elevators. For individuals not wishing to ride an elevator, all stairwells will be available for use; including the north emergency exit in the Ron Lewis Library building;

- College-related business travel is prohibited until after August 31; and
- Gyms and common areas where students and staff are likely to congregate and interact should remain closed unless strict distancing and sanitization protocols can be implemented;

**Phase II-A – June 6 to July 17**

*Partial On-Campus Operations Resume*

- Campus will be open to the public, Monday thru Thursday, 8:00am – 2:00pm. The campus will remain open to faculty and staff Monday thru Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm.
- Directors/Supervisors will develop alternating, flexible, and remote working arrangements where feasible to ensure all employees are working 40 hours per week;
- Vulnerable individuals should continue to shelter in place, and work remotely where feasible, or be aware that by returning to work or other environments where distancing is not practical, they could carry the virus back home and appropriate isolating precautions should be taken;
- Faculty will teach from a remote location unless they are teaching one of the technical, hands-on classes that have been approved to meet on campus.
- A limited number of technical, hands-on courses, with fewer than 10 people (faculty and students), will be allowed to meet on campus. Classes will be scheduled between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Faculty and students will be required to wear a face covering (when social distancing cannot be practiced), practice social distancing, and stringent hand washing guidelines;
- Workforce non-credit classes with fewer than 10 people (faculty and students) will be allowed to meet on campus between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Faculty and students will be required to wear a face covering (when social distancing cannot be practiced), practice social distancing, and stringent hand washing guidelines;
- Effective Monday, July 6, all faculty, staff, students, and visitors will be required to wear face coverings (cloth face covering, disposable face coverings) while on campus in accordance with Policy 5.23. Face coverings must be worn in the following areas;
  - Indoor public areas on campus (includes all non-private office, lobbies, restrooms, classrooms, teaching laboratories, conference rooms, common study areas, and break rooms); and
  - Outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain;

- Gatherings of 10 or more people should be avoided unless social distancing can be achieved;
- Virtual meetings will be encouraged whenever possible and feasible;
- Buildings and offices will be open, but will have restricted access based on needs and occupancy rate;
- Stringent cleaning practices will remain in place;
- Elevators will be limited to one or two individuals (depending on size of elevator). For individuals not wishing to ride an elevator, all stairwells will be available for use; including the north emergency exit in the Ron Lewis Library building;
- College-related business travel is prohibited until after August 31; and
- Gyms and common areas where students and staff are likely to congregate and interact should remain closed unless strict distancing and sanitization protocols can be implemented;

**Advancement to Phase III is dependent on guidelines from federal, state, and local government and health officials with additional emphasis on number of cases in our local and campus community.**

***Phase III – July 20 and beyond*** (Assuming Phase II has been implemented successfully)  
*Campus Operations Return to “Normal” Operations*

- Campus hours of 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday – Friday will resume;
- Directors/Supervisors will develop alternating, flexible, and remote working arrangements where feasible to ensure all employees are working 40 hours per week;
- All buildings on campus will be open to the public;
- Stringent cleaning practices will remain in place;
- College-related business travel is prohibited until after August 31; and
- Gatherings of more than 10 people should be avoided unless precautionary measures of physical distancing and sanitization are in place.
- Vulnerable individuals (as defined by the CDC) with a physician accommodation request, should contact Human Resources to discuss accommodations.



- All faculty, staff, students, and visitors will be required to wear face coverings (cloth face covering, disposable face coverings) while on campus in accordance with Policy 5.23. Face coverings must be worn in the following areas;
  - Indoor public areas on campus (includes all non-private office, lobbies, restrooms, classrooms, teaching laboratories, conference rooms, common study areas, and break rooms); and
  - Outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain;
- The Student Center will open on the first day of the fall semester, including recreation room, gym, weight and cardio rooms, and racquetball courts. Anyone entering the student center will be required to complete health screening, including temperature check. Face coverings will be required at all times while in the student center.
- The Gator Café will be open for take-out and dine in, but social distancing guidelines will be strictly enforced for dine in customers. The only exception to the face covering requirement will be for patrons dining in, but social distancing must be in place.

The safety and health of our Gator community will continue to be our priority.

### **COVID-19 Spread**

During the implementation of the return-to-operations plan, we will diligently monitor the COVID-19 situation. Until COVID-19 can be managed through widely available treatment – prevention and/or vaccination - this strategic, yet adaptable, phased approach will be implemented but monitored, and adjustments made to protect the safety and health of the Gator community.

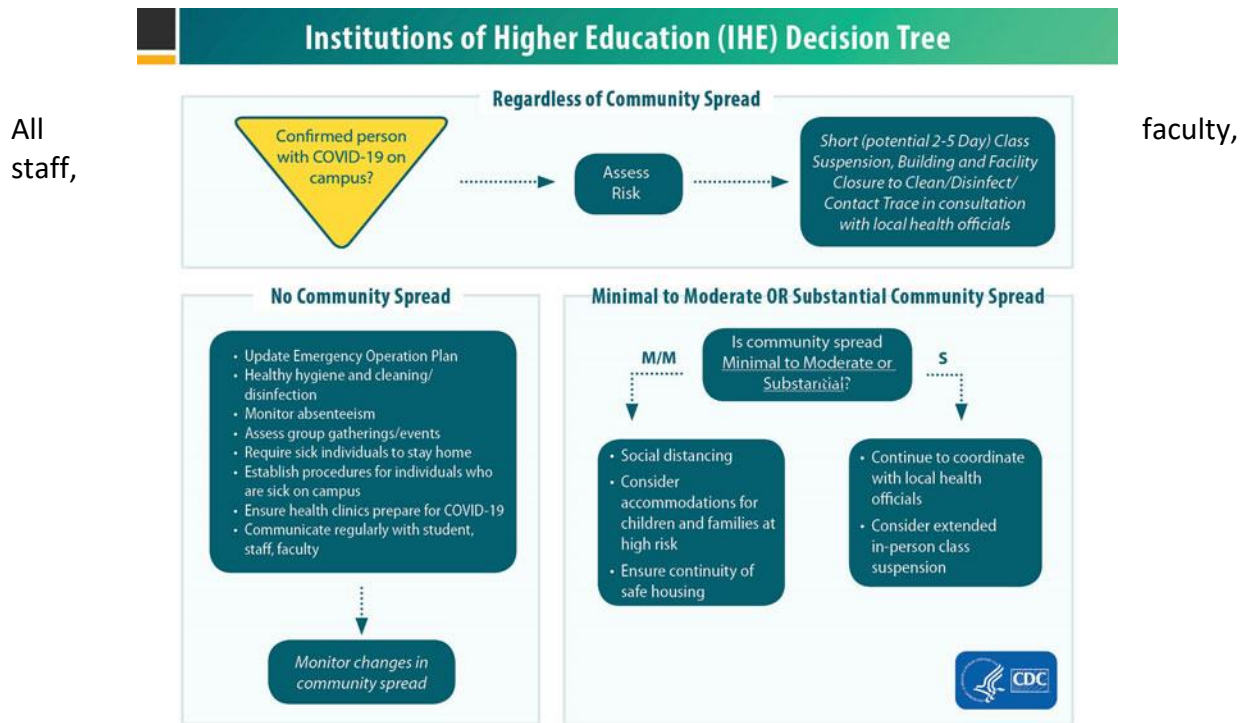
LSCO will take immediate actions recommended by the CDC Guidelines if an on campus COVID-19 infection is reported. A complete investigation will take place and local public health officials will be notified.

### **Minimal to Moderate Spread**

- Work with local public health offices to determine cancellation of classes and closure of buildings (short-term closure, 2-5 days);
- Communicate with students, faculty, and staff potential class cancellation and building closures;
- Clean and disinfect thoroughly;
- Maintain confidentiality of infected or exposed person(s) as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

**Substantial Spread**

- Work with local public health offices to determine cancellation of classes, closure of buildings, and event/activity cancellations (long-term closure, longer than two weeks);
- Communicate with students, faculty, and staff the suspension of in-person classes and implementation of classes to a flexible learning environment;
- Clean and disinfect thoroughly;
- Maintain confidentiality of infected or exposed person(s) as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.



students, and visitors will be required to wear face coverings (cloth face covering, surgical mask, etc.) while on campus in accordance with this policy.

**Face Covering Requirement Policy**

The Face Covering Requirement becomes effective July 6, 2020 and may be modified or ended as COVID-19 conditions require.

The health and safety of the Gator community (students, faculty, and staff), especially of vulnerable individuals, is of utmost importance. In light of CDC guidance, and to protect fellow Gators against COVID-19, face coverings must be worn by all individuals (faculty, staff, students, and visitors) on campus in the following areas:

- Indoor public areas on campus (includes all non-private office, lobbies, restrooms, classrooms, teaching laboratories, conference rooms, common study areas, and break rooms); and
- Outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain.

This policy will be amended as needed in response to conditions on campus.

LSCO recommends that all individuals on campus have at least three face coverings available to use throughout a week in order to begin each day with a new or cleaned face covering. Those face coverings should follow the current CDC recommendations. At a minimum, a cloth face covering must be made of multiple layers of tightly woven cotton fabric. Some common household materials may block particles more effectively than cotton. Adding a layer of filter material within a cloth face covering is recommended.

The primary purpose of wearing a face covering is to reduce the amount of virus spreading from the wearer (who may not know they are spreading the virus) into the environment and to others. The secondary purpose of the face covering is to reduce the likelihood that large droplets containing virus that are generated by others may enter the nose and mouth of the wearer.

The use of a face covering does not replace the continued need to maintain physical distances from others, at least 6 feet, but instead augments physical distancing and helps us further reduce the likelihood of virus transmission.

Exceptions/waivers for both areas and individuals will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Students who are asking for a modification to a policy (including wearing a face covering) due to a disability should work with the Student Services Office. Employee and visitor requests for exemptions based on a disability will follow the Reasonable Accommodation Requests Under the Americans with Disabilities Act. For areas or occupations where wearing a face covering is not feasible and is not based on a disability, a request for an exception to this policy may be made by sending a written request to the [Executive Director of College Affairs](#) that includes: the request, the reason that face coverings are not feasible, and the additional safety measures taken to further mitigate the risk in the absence of face coverings.

**Face coverings made by an individual must meet the CDC guidelines:**

- fits snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- completely covers the nose and mouth
- is secured with ties or ear loops
- includes multiple layers of fabric
- allows for breathing without restriction
- can be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape
- launder masks daily

**Disposal face coverings:**

- disposal face coverings should be only be reused if they are not visible dirty, soiled or torn. Disposal face coverings should be placed in a clean brown paper bag, plastic container, or bag for a few days prior to wearing again.

**Face Coverings NOT recommended:**

- Neck gaiters and simple bandanas, as they are single layer material and do not fit snug to the mouth and nose
- Face coverings with exhaust valves
- Scarves, which tend to be made of porous material
- Face shields in most cases. (Face shields do not protect the wearer from aerosols containing the virus, and others from an infected wearer. Face shields are appropriate in situations where close contact with a potentially infected person may expose the wearer to respiratory droplets caused by speech, cough, or sneezing.)

**TIPS for wearing a face covering during the COVID-19 pandemic:**

- Face coverings must be used in conjunction with physical distancing (6 feet social distancing), engineering controls (barriers between people) and/or administrative controls (reduced number of people at events).
- Face coverings may reduce the spread of viruses and droplets from the wearer to others.
- Face coverings may reduce the likelihood that droplets from others enter the wearer's nose or mouth.
- Face coverings may reduce the spread of aerosols from asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic COVID-19 carriers.
- Face coverings become contaminated as you wear them, both from yourself and from the environment around you. You should treat them as contaminated and avoid self-contamination or contamination of others by unsafe handling.
- Remember to wash your hands frequently and to avoid touching your face as much as possible.

**Face coverings must be put on properly:**

- Face coverings should fully cover your nose and mouth.
- Face coverings should be held in place firmly with straps.
- When you are putting on a face covering, do so by the straps and adjust the covering to cover your nose and mouth, being careful not to touch your face in the process.
- Once your covering is in place, wash your hands, and wash your hands after each time you adjust your covering.

**Face coverings must be taken off properly to avoid self-contamination:**

- Remove face coverings by the straps and move it gently away from your face. Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing.
- If your face covering is disposable, then promptly throw it away; do not place it into your pocket, backpack or where it may contaminate your belongings.
- If you have a disposable face covering that you have to reuse, it should be only be reused if they are not visible dirty, soiled or torn. Disposal face coverings should be placed in a clean brown paper bag, plastic container, or bag for a few days prior to wearing again.

- If you have a reusable cloth face covering, make sure you wash it after each use (a washing machine is fine). Learn more about how to wash your face covering (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wash-cloth-face-coverings.html>).
- Wash your hands after handling a used face covering.

#### **Compliance:**

- Noncompliance with face covering requirements will be handled through existing employee discipline, faculty discipline, and student judicial processes.
- We understand some people may disapprove of wearing a mask. While the college respects those individual opinions, research has shown that wearing a face mask is the most important, and a potentially life-saving tool to slow the spread of COVID-19. We did not take the decision to require face coverings lightly. In the interest of public health, however, we are committed to this practice for the greater good of the community.
- Some people who disagree with the concept of requiring face coverings have called it “unconstitutional.” However, to be unconstitutional, a restriction must infringe a fundamental right such as freedom of speech or invasion of privacy or otherwise treat people unequally. Requiring faculty, staff, students, and visitors to wear face coverings in a campus building, is a narrowly tailored and minimally intrusive mechanism, which is justified by the significance of the college’s interest in helping to stop the spread of a highly contagious and deadly virus for the safety of the campus community.

#### **Related Information:**

- [How to Make Cloth Face Coverings](#)
- [Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)
- [Recommendation Regarding the Use of Cloth Face Coverings, Especially in Areas of Significant Community-Based Transmission](#)
- [How to Safely Wear and Take Off a Cloth Face Covering](#)

#### **Questions**

Many of you will have questions, concerns, and input about the return to campus. Please stay connected by checking your campus email for the most up to date information and visit the frequently asked questions located on our COVID-19 webpage at <http://www.lsc.edu/covid-19/covid-19-faqs.asp>. Questions may also be submitted through the “[Questions ?](#)” form located on the COVID-19 page and will be forwarded to the appropriate department or person to respond.

I remain confident and optimistic about LSCO’s future as I have watched you respond to challenges, roadblocks, and obstacles that have been thrown our way throughout this COVID-

19 pandemic. I am grateful to stand beside each of you and continue to support each other and our students. We truly are transforming lives and providing hope and opportunity at LSCO.

Your humble servant,

Tom