



July 9, 2020

SENT VIA EMAIL

Association of Employees Supporting Education Services (AESES)
103-900 Harrow Street East
Winnipeg, MB R3M 3Y7

Attention: Laurie Morris, President

Dear Ms. Morris,

Re: Safe Reopening of the Campuses

Thank you for your email dated June 23, 2020. We appreciate and share your concerns regarding a safe reopening of the campuses. To this end the university has formed the COVID-19 Recovery Working Group and it is their responsibility to create and implement a detailed return to campus strategy reflective of the following guiding principles:

- The health and safety of students, staff, faculty and visitors is the over-arching priority.
- All students, staff and faculty will work remotely unless approval has been granted to work on campus.
- Any activity on campus, whatever its nature, will be carried out while strictly respecting the constraints of public health authorities and in accordance with government guidelines and directives.
- Recovery of on-campus activities will be gradual and in keeping with the University's stated principles and recovery plan.
- The University will continue to take into consideration and accommodate special circumstances for staff, faculty and students, including health conditions.

Below are responses to your specific questions:

- 1) Is the University working with government health officials and/or following government health guidelines for re-opening?

The university has been working closely with government health officials including the chief provincial public health officer. All of our plans are being created in accordance with government guidelines and strictly respect the constraints outlined by public health authorities.

2) What are the health guidelines that are being followed to ensure the safety of staff and students?
We are following the health guidelines developed by the provincial public health authorities. Given its close proximity to HSC, the Bannatyne campus has also ensured they are following the additional directives of Shared Health.

3) Once an area is cleared for re-opening, will there be supplies of cleaning products, hand sanitizers, and face masks for those who require them, along with appropriate COVID-19 barriers for staff who deal with students and/or the public?

Each unit must submit a recovery plan for approval before they can proceed. In these plans they must detail the following:

- How they will ensure health and safety protocols are followed
- How they will ensure preventative measures are followed
- How areas that are accessed will be monitored and cleaned
- If hand hygiene stations exist and where
- Any additional supports they may need in terms of PPE, hand sanitizers, screening equipment and caretaking supports

The University of Manitoba has centralized the coordination and purchasing of hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes utilizing the University's purchasing power through volumes and the professional procurement department. These supplies will be stored centrally and dispatched to faculties and units by Operations and Maintenance (O&M), based on the recovery plans submitted to the COVID-19 Recovery Working Group and approved by University leadership.

The University is also working with units to source and access appropriate levels of PPE where required, signage/floor markers and screening barriers.

4) Will the University be providing specialized PPE for those likely to experience extended physical contact with students and/or the public?

As much as possible the University is trying to ensure that required social distancing is supported. Where appropriate social distancing cannot be supported then the university will ensure that appropriate PPE and/or screening barriers are provided

5) What are the standards for the maximum number of people permitted in a space and how is that space defined?

Our occupancy rates are governed by the province and based on our ability to maintain effective social distancing within that space. The university is aware of the maximum occupancy rates for all of their buildings and has also conducted site reviews to determine how many people can safely be in a given space while still supporting the required social distancing. The COVID-19 Recovery Working Group is also tracking who is expected to be on campus and where, to ensure we stay well within our occupancy requirements.

6) What safety training will be provided to staff prior to a return?

The university is launching a new COVID-19 Recovery website that will feature a number of training videos on proper hygiene, proper mask wear, cleaning and disinfecting workspaces, how

to stop the spread of COVID and how to ensure proper social distancing. Individual units will also provide area specific training as required.

7) Will there be an online resource dedicated to returning to the workplace and communicating the expected standards for safety at work?

Yes – as mentioned above, the university is launching a COVID Recovery webpage that will include a variety of information related to a safe return to campus.

8) How is the University going to manage medically vulnerable or high-risk staff?

Employees who are at risk of developing complications to COVID-19 should follow the recommendation of the government and work from home. [Provincial government directives](#) state that higher risk individuals may include those older than 60 year and those living with a compromised immune system or chronic condition. If working from home is not possible and/or the employee provides necessary activities and functions, a case-by-case evaluation will be carried out by the supervisor, in consultation with their HR Consultant and Employee Wellness. Medical documentation will be required to support any accommodation plans.

9) Who in the Health & Safety Office will be managing compliance of these new safety standards?

The COVID Recovery Working Group and its sub-committees are ultimately responsible for managing compliance to these new safety standards. Committee members include:

- Co-Chair – Andrew Konowalchuk, AVP (Administration)
- Co-Chair – Todd Mondor, Deputy Provost (Academic Planning & Programs)
- Member – Lisa O’Hara, Vice-Provost (Libraries)
- Member – Laurie Schnarr, Vice-Provost (Students)
- Member – Mark Torchia, Vice-Provost (Teaching & Learning)
- Member – Darlene Smith, AVP (Human Resources)
- Member – Naomi Andrew, AVP (Legal Services)
- Member – Jay Doering, AVP (Partnerships)
- Member – Gary Glavin, AVP (Research)
- Member – Stefi Baum, Dean, Science
- Member – Doug Brown, Dean, Kinesiology & Recreation Management
- Member – Peter Nickerson, Vice-Dean (Research) & Distinguished Professor, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences
- Member – Greg Smith, Associate Dean, Faculty of Arts
- Member – Alan Scott, Chief Risk Officer
- Member – Raman Dhaliwal, Director, Admin/Operations, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences
- Member – Andrea Edmunds, Director, Ancillary Services

- Member – Steve Cumpsty, Director, Operations & Maintenance
- Member – John Dodd, Director, Risk Management
- Member – Rick Jansen, Director, Security Services
- Member – Myrrhanda Novak, Interim Director, Government Relations and Strategic Communications (to represent External Relations)
- Support – Colleen Limon, Director, Office of the VP (Admin)
- Support – Blake Minaker, Office of Change Mgmt & Project Services
- Support – Tannis Campbell, Manager, Office of the AVP (Admin)

We are still in the early phases of reopening with most employees still working remotely. While we are aware of what buildings/areas will be opening and to what extent through the plans that are submitted, we are not currently tracking which associations returning employees belong to. We can certainly advise you of what buildings/areas currently have or are planning on some level of returning staff but we are unable to tell you specifically if AESES staff are part of those returning numbers.

A Response Committee has also been formed to work with Manitoba Public Health and UM faculty, staff and students if a positive case is identified in our community. UM will respect privacy protocols while ensuring we provide timely communications to support the health and safety of our University community and limit the spread of COVID-19.

If a member of the UM community reports to us that they are positive for COVID-19, they must contact the designated Response Committee contacts below, who will ensure an immediate, organized, and respectful response:

Fort Garry Campus and UM satellite sites:

Karen Meelker, Access & Privacy Officer

Karen.Meelker@umanitoba.ca

Tel: 204-227-8205

Bannatyne Campus:

Raman Dhaliwal, Director of Administration/Operations, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences

Raman.Dhaliwal@umanitoba.ca

Tel: 204 789 3492

As part of the overall Recovery Plans the university has also created guidelines for returning the university to lockdown status in the event of a setback in community transmission rates or a second wave of the virus. All of the unions will be advised as soon as possible if a decision is made to return to lockdown status

Finally as the province continues to open up daycares and returning children to school in the fall, it is hoped that employees will once again be able to access their normal childcare supports. In the event that employees are unable to do so, the university is encouraging units to work with staff in terms of flexing hours of work and continued access to remote work arrangements to help support them as they the return of their normal childcare supports.

Hopefully this addresses all of your concerns. We appreciate AESES support in ensuring that communications reach their members and will look for ways that we can partner in this regard.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Darlene Smith
Associate Vice-President (Human Resources)

DS/lm