University of Rhode Island
COVID-19 Task Force
Strategy for Campus Preparation (Fall 2021)

Introduction

Purpose and scope

The University of Rhode Island’s Kingston, Providence, and Narragansett Bay campuses will be prepared for the resumption of in-person classes on our campuses by the start of the Fall 2021 semester. This will represent as close a return to “normal” (i.e., pre-COVID) operations as possible, to the extent permitted by the State of RI and the judgement of the URI COVID-19 Task Force and URI Senior Leadership Team. This strategy addresses physical preparation of campus buildings to comply with any continuing State of RI requirements related to COVID-19 and to minimize potential transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Assumptions

This strategy assumes the following:

- A smaller COVID-19 Task Force will continue to be responsible for interpreting and applying CDC and State of RI COVID guidelines to URI's campuses and will facilitate/coordinate preparations for an in-person Fall 2021 semester.

- Requirements for physical distancing will be lifted altogether by September 2021 or, at the very least, remain at the present 3 foot spacing. This may require last-minute furniture moves and room reconfigurations depending on the State of RI’s timeliness in releasing updated parameters for the fall term.

- Campus preparation work will continue to be funded through the Office of Emergency Management’s Fund 111 account in anticipation of state and/or federal reimbursement to the extent it is available.

- The University will continue to manage COVID-related Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies from a centralized distribution point. (At an appropriate point in time, to be determined, this operation will transition to Central Stores along with all remaining PPE inventory.)

- All University departments will provide support to the Fall 2021 preparation effort and staff in each University facility will participate in the planning process as needed for their respective buildings.

Timeline

The goal is to have furniture moves and signage updates substantially complete for all buildings by the end of August. However, some buildings (or at least portions of them) will need to be completed sooner based on research needs, admissions, athletics, and other operational...
The following timeline is tentative and will be adjusted as work proceeds:

- **May 28**  New “3-foot” campus guidelines in effect based on updated State of RI executive orders. New, reduced requirements implemented for face coverings on campus.
- **June 1** Kingston Campus furniture moves begin, running a full crew 5 days/week throughout the month of June. All classrooms, offices, labs, and common areas returned to full occupancy furnishing.
- **July 30** Majority of furniture moves completed. Review and adjust occupancy of all classrooms and labs if 3-foot physical distancing is still in place.
- **August 15** All auditorium and lecture hall seating reviewed and adjusted as required for full occupancy or 3-foot physical distancing, as applicable.
- **August 30** All campus COVID-19 signage updated (or removed, if applicable) including revised room occupancies.

**General plan**

**Plans and guidance**

The University’s COVID-19 Task Force is preparing new guidance on readying campus buildings for the Fall 2021 term (the “URI COVID-19 Building Reopening Guide”). All University campuses and departments will utilize this guidance and the associated templates for COVID-related signage.

**Supplies and materials**

Signage and other preparation materials will be provided by the COVID Task Force for all University-owned buildings at no cost. Sign templates available to all other entities to print on their own.

PPE, hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, etc. will be provided to each University-owned building at no cost from the COVID Task Force Stockpile.

Existing hand sanitizer dispensers will be maintained in all locations. Distribution of wipe dispensers will be reduced in consultation with Custodial Services and based on updated CDC guidelines for surface disinfecting.

**Types of buildings**

Approximately 192 buildings need to be prepared across all campuses (once outhouses, pumphouses, ships, sheds, and buildings of less than 1000 square feet are discounted.)
Kingston Campus

- **Property & Support Services** will take overall lead on furniture moves with assistance from the **Office of Emergency Management** as needed.

- **Academic Affairs** will, if needed, oversee a team of student workers tasked with arranging seating in all general assignment, and some department assigned, classrooms to comply with physical distancing requirements in effect for the Fall 2021 term.

- **HRL and Dining** will take the lead on their respective facilities, using their own staff but following the same basic guidance, worksheets, and materials as other University buildings (adapted to their unique needs, of course.)

- The **Office of Research Integrity** will take the lead on dedicated research facilities and will oversee and approve plans for each individual research lab on URI’s campuses, including those located within academic buildings.

- **Athletics, Campus Recreation, and Spectra Venue Management** will jointly manage planning for the Kingston Campus athletics complex including Keaney, Mackal, Tootell, and the Ryan Center along with associated support facilities (Meade Stadium, etc.)

- **Greek Affairs** will oversee preparations to fraternities and sororities, but each Greek organization will be responsible for their own planning and preparation using FMA and/or other vendors.

- For all other buildings, individual **Building/Department Leadership** will be responsible for completing the COVID-19 Building Reopening Worksheet but preparation tasks will be handled by Facilities Operations and Property & Support Services.

*NOTE: Leadership does not mean “building managers” but rather the senior decision-makers (deans, department heads, and/or their designees) for each department in question, who must ultimately approve the plans for their facilities.*

Narragansett Bay Campus (NBC)

- **Narragansett Bay Campus Facilities** will work with the Graduate School of Oceanography to handle all planning and preparation for Bay Campus buildings with support from Research Integrity as needed.

Providence Campuses

- The **College of Education and Professional Studies** will be responsible for the Providence Campus (Shepard Building) with assistance from the URI Police Department.

- The Providence **Nursing Education Center** is to be determined.

In all cases, the University’s COVID-19 Task Force will provide technical assistance to whatever extent is needed and will review/approve the completed plans before work orders are initiated. Progress for buildings in all categories is being tracked in the Veoci “Reopening Plans” dashboard. [https://veoci.com/veoci/129835/dashboard/192405](https://veoci.com/veoci/129835/dashboard/192405)
Roles and responsibilities

Office of Emergency Management
- Overall planning coordination and funds administration for the campus preparation process
- Update the COVID-19 Building Reopening Guide to reverse previous COVID-related measures while implementing any new guidance from the CDC and State of RI
- Assist Property & Support Services with coordinating furniture moves, as needed

Property & Support Services
- Work with staff from each campus department/building to coordinate furniture moving, storage, and tracking
- Coordinate removal, storage, and/or disposal of unneeded plexiglass shields, wipe dispensers, and other COVID-related equipment
- Track building preparation using the University’s Virtual Emergency Operations Center (Veoci) platform

Deans and Directors
- Designate Building Team members for each department/college building and delegate necessary authority to make planning decisions for each building

Building Team
- Work with Property & Support Services to coordinate furniture moves and classroom preparations

Kingston Facilities Operations

Maintenance & Repair
- Remove outdated signage and post new signage per updated COVID-19 Building Reopening Guide and carry out other building preparations as needed

Custodial Services
- Determine cleaning procedures and schedules for each building based on updated CDC and State of RI guidelines/requirements.

Plumbing Shop
- Reactivate water fountains, sinks, urinals, and other fixtures per the updated COVID-19 Building Reopening Guide and carry out other building preparations as needed

Central Stores
- Order supplies and materials as needed to help with the functions above
Campus Planning

- If necessary due to 3-foot physical distancing requirements, track revised classroom/lecture hall capacity and forward updated data to Enrollment Services

Fire & Life Safety

- Provide technical review and assistance on matters related to life safety and fire code compliance
- Assist in the building planning and preparation process as needed

Environmental Health & Safety

- Manage the COVID-19 Stockpile for PPE and related supplies, with support from the Office of Emergency Management
- Provide technical review and assistance on matters related to environmental health and safety, including occupational health and safety and lab safety
- Assist in the building planning and preparation process as needed

All Campus Community Members

- Follow all University policies and practices for personal hygiene, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), workspace cleaning, and illness reporting

Community outreach and messaging

Communications and Marketing is launching a community outreach/engagement initiative to keep all campus stakeholders informed about campus preparations.

Finance and administration

A Fund 111 account has been established within the Office of Emergency Management and will be used to cover all costs associated with campus preparations for reopening including the COVID Stockpile.

Priority and progress for each building will be tracked in the University’s Virtual Emergency Operations Center (Veoci) “Campus Reopening” dashboard, accessible to all members of the COVID-19 Task Force and those with key building preparation assignments.