THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

Division of Student Affairs

COVID-19 and Public Health Informed Policies

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2020-2021 ADDENDUM
COVID-19 and Public Health-Informed Policies

It is up to all members of the URI Family to keep ourselves and each other safe.

The University of Rhode Island (URI; the University) aims to deliver its mission while protecting the health and safety of our students and minimizing the potential spread of disease within our community. As a member of the URI community, the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (“COVID”) or similar public health crisis will impact your experience as URI continues to make public health-informed decisions. The below policies and guidelines are integrated into the Student Handbook and are applicable to all students. The policies in this addendum will take precedence over any existing policies in the handbook.

As always, we will endeavor to update you with timely information about specific health and safety guidance important for our students.

1. Health and Wellness

We expect that all members of the URI community—student, staff and visitors—to act in a manner that demonstrates respect and consideration for those around them, including respect and consideration for the health and safety of all community members. All members of the URI community are prohibited from creating a health or safety hazard within the University, and the University may request or require a resident to leave the University (including residential housing) if their continued presence in the community poses a health or safety risk for community members. Adherence to health and safety requirements applies to all students and extends to all aspects of University life, including academic buildings, classrooms, laboratories, residence halls, dining halls, meeting spaces, libraries, administration offices, bathrooms, lounges, computer rooms, courtyards and other common spaces.

Students are required to comply with state laws which include Rhode Island Executive Orders related to health and safety, ordinances, regulations and guidance adopted by the University as it relates to public health crises, including COVID-19. This guidance will evolve as the public health crisis evolves and may include, but is not limited to, the following:

**Cloth Face Coverings/ Face Masks are REQUIRED** to be worn by all community members when on campus and in the presence of others (e.g., classrooms, meeting rooms, common work spaces, etc.). Appropriate use of face coverings is critical to minimizing risks to others near you. There may be times and places where face-coverings will not be required, but that will be decided at the discretion of the faculty-member in a classroom setting or staff/administrator in an alternate setting (i.e. sports practice, theatre production or practice).
Cloth Face Coverings/ Face Masks are required in all classrooms, instructional areas, and laboratories. If you do not have a cloth face covering/ face mask you will be denied entry to or asked to leave the class and not return until you have one at the instructor’s discretion. You will be responsible for making up any content you miss because you do not have a mask.

Face coverings will be required in community spaces including but not limited to the Memorial Union, Multicultural Student Services Center, Gender and Sexuality Center, Campus Recreation, etc.

In the residence halls, you will be required to wear a face covering outside your residence hall room. Face coverings will be required in the hallways, bathrooms, and common areas.

You are required to put on a cloth face covering/face mask if you are asked to do so by any University faculty or staff member. Failure to do so will result in immediate removal from campus and additional conduct action.

Finally, you are to wear a face covering if asked to do so by another student. We are all in this together.

**Daily Health Self-Assessment.** All community members, including students, are required to complete a daily health self-assessment via the URI “Rhody Connect” app. You will be required to conduct symptom monitoring once per day, every day before coming to campus/going to class, events on campus, etc. Daily monitoring of your health and well-being prior to coming to campus/going to campus events will aid in early detection of infectious disease and is an effective measure to prevent community spread of COVID-19.

If you answer yes to any of the questions, **YOU MUST STAY HOME/IN YOUR ROOM** and notify URI Health Services via phone at 401-874-2246 immediately.

If you are already on campus and start to feel ill, you need to remove yourself from the public and notify URI Health Services via phone immediately at 401-874-2246 and go home/back to your room and self-isolate while you await direction from Health Services.

The current symptoms we will be asking you about include one or more of the following per the [CDC recommendations](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) as of August 11, 2020.

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

Members of the community will be required to show their completed attestation when asked to do so by a faculty or staff member, and may be denied access to the classroom or other spaces if it is not completed.

**Mandatory COVID 19 diagnostic testing.** COVID virus testing is considered an important element of our safe return to campus. Students are required to participate in a carefully designed and robust testing plan to monitor the health of our community and minimize the likelihood of outbreaks. This includes submitting to diagnostic and health surveillance testing when requested to do so by Student Health Services. Failure to comply with a testing request will result in immediate removal from campus (including on-campus housing) and additional conduct action.

**Physical Distancing. The 6-Foot Campus** – by modifying shared spaces with physical distancing – we can continue to fight the virus. All students are required to maintain at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people at all times.

**Group Gatherings.** All group gatherings, whether held inside or outside, will be limited to numbers based on current state recommendations. Failure to abide by group size regulations will result in immediate disbanding of the group, and possible additional conduct action if the size of the group is deemed to be intentional and egregious (i.e. hosting a party).

All residence hall students are expected to follow the guest restrictions for their specific residence hall room at all times. These guest policies and restrictions are determined by the occupancy of the room and your housing agreement.
Hosting a party in a residence hall space (room or common area) will result in immediate removal from on campus housing for the hosts pending the outcome of the conduct process.

**DO NOT HOST PARTIES OR GATHERINGS** in excess of current Rhode Island Guidelines, and these guidelines are subject to change. IF YOU DO, YOU WILL FACE SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FROM THE UNIVERSITY. Students are responsible for remaining informed and are expected to comply with state laws, which include Rhode Island Executive Orders, and local ordinances related to gathering limits. Students should refer to University communications messages, the URI COVID Response website (https://web.uri.edu/coronavirus/), and the Rhode Island Department of Health website (https://covid.ri.gov/) for current guidelines. **This guidance pertains to both on-campus residents and off-campus students.**

**Knowingly participating in academic and campus events or activities after testing positive** will result in the immediate removal from campus and may result in additional conduct action that could result in sanctions up to and including suspension or dismissal from the University.

**Intentionally coughing, sneezing, or spitting on any individual (whether COVID positive or not)** will result in the immediate removal and trespass from campus and you will face suspension or dismissal from the University.

The following portions of the Code of Student Conduct allow for adjudication of alleged violations:

**Jurisdiction of the University (Student Handbook, pg. 15)**

The University of Rhode Island Student Code of Conduct applies to conduct that occurs on University premises, at University sponsored activities, and to off-campus conduct by a community member that adversely affects the University community, poses a threat to safety of persons or property, or damages the institution’s reputation or relationship with the greater community.

**Existing applicable policies (Student Handbook, pgs.17-18):**

- Abusive Conduct
- Endangering Behavior
- Failure to Comply
- Providing False Information
- Violation of Federal, State, or Local law
- Violation of University policy, rule, or regulation

Due to the serious impact of breaches to public safety, students can be removed from campus and will continue their education remotely, until their case is completed. At the discretion of the Dean of Students, the Office of Community Standards may hold administrative hearings in lieu of full conduct board hearings to resolve alleged COVID policy violations.

2. Quarantine / Isolation / Separation. At any time, the University may request or require a student to quarantine/isolate due to a positive COVID-19 test, COVID-19 like symptoms, and/or exposure to a person who has tested positive. The University will require students to return home for isolation/quarantine when able to do so safely. The University has a limited number of quarantine and isolation spaces that will be available on-campus or through contracted hotels for students that are unable to return home. Dining for quarantining/isolating students will be coordinated, as needed.

All students are required to adhere to any shelter-in place order issued by the Rhode Island Department of Health and URI Health Services. Students must fully adhere to isolation or quarantine for the duration of the time indicated in the order. If any student violates the conditions of their isolation or quarantine, they will be subject to immediate Emergency Suspension, removal, and additional conduct action including dismissal from the University.

Off-campus students that test positive for COVID-19, exhibit COVID-19 like symptoms, and/or are exposed to a person who has tested positive may be required to relocate to a quarantine/isolation space for the duration of their isolation if space is available.

3. Contact Tracing: One of the key elements to combating COVID-19 is the role of contact tracing. Staff from the Rhode Island Department of Health and Health Services may serve as contact tracers. Any student who tests positive for COVID-19 or is identified as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case will be required to participate in an interview with contact tracers and adhere to the requirements of isolation or quarantine based on the outcome of the interview.

If you are contacted by a contact tracer, you must answer the call or return the message. If it has been determined that a student is actively averting attempts at contact tracing to avoid possible testing, isolation or quarantine, they will be subject to immediate Emergency Suspension, removal, and additional conduct action including dismissal from the University. For more information on contact tracing please visit https://health.ri.gov/covid/contacttracing/.
4. **De-Densifying Efforts.** Residential students are required to comply with any de-densifying efforts needed on campus due to COVID or other public health emergencies, including, but not limited to, the relocation of all or some residential students to alternative housing. Relocation does not constitute a termination of a residential student’s housing contract. In the event Housing and Residential Life must relocate students as part of additional de-densifying strategy due to public health concerns for an extended period of time and alternative housing is not available, timely communication will be sent to residence hall students with instructions.

5. **Dining Services.** Dining services, including where and how they will be offered, are subject to the discretion of the University and are subject to modification to address public health concerns. Due to health and safety guidance adopted by the University or HRL, set forth in Paragraph 1, Dining Services may limit the amount of time students may remain in a dining hall or make other operational adjustments needed to address health and safety concerns. Entrance and service at any dining location will be denied if the proper face covering is not used at all times within the location.

6. **Travel Limitations:** Students are encouraged to limit their travel during this public health crisis. Students who travel to states with a daily positivity rate of greater than 5% will have to either quarantine for 14 days or receive a negative result confirmed by URI Health Services within three days of their return to Rhode Island. The list of hot spots is dynamic and you are responsible for checking the RI Department of Health [https://health.ri.gov/covid/](https://health.ri.gov/covid/)