



University of Cape Town
Faculty of Health Sciences



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

**Occupational Health and Safety Protection and Management of
Staff, Students and Visitors in relation to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

SOP Category: Occupational Health and Safety	Review Date: May 2023 or as required
Compiled By: FHS Occupational Health and Safety Committee	
Approved By: Chair FHS OHS Committee	Signature: 
Approved By: Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences	Signature: 
Approved By: COO, UCT	Signature: 
Target Group: All staff, students, 3 rd Party Workers & Visitors	Date and Version: 4 June 2020 (Version 1)
(1) Purpose:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To describe the role of the UCT FHS Management (Legally responsible: 16(2) Designate) and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee with regard to COVID-19 during the state of national disaster. To ensure staff, students, 3rd party workers and visitors are protected against COVID-19 through risk mitigation strategies.
(2) Roles and Responsibilities:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16(2) Heads of Departments (HODs): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After appointment, HODs are legally bound to help and assist the CEO (Section 16(1)- VC, with safety management over their designated areas. Remember that a person may delegate responsibility but not accountability. The intention of the legislator is to enforce an official legal structure within the organization. These prescribed structures largely assist with the proper delegation of health and safety responsibilities within the University environment. In order to meet this responsibility, section 16(1) and section 16(2) appointees should familiarize themselves with all statutory requirements stipulated by the Occupational Health and Safety Act and regulations. Health and Safety Representatives (Health and Safety Subcommittee members): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be nominated, designated in writing by employer after consultation and agreement reached and must be a full-time worker. Must be familiar with circumstances and conditions at part of the workplace for which they are designated. Agreement must also be reached on the period of office and functions of the health and safety representative and must be settled amongst the employer and workers. Although Section 18 of the OHS Act lists the responsibilities, the employer cannot force him/her to do his/her duties as a safety representative, but they can be motivated by reminding them that they formally accepted their health and safety responsibilities. This person is not paid to perform these duties which include regular area

	<p>inspections, monthly/quarterly reports in the form of a checklist to be completed during an inspection and any non-conformances are to be raised immediately in the event of an unsafe act or unsafe area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The duty to inform applies here and this must be done in writing by way of checklists, incident/accident forms, near-miss records, feedback to health and safety committee. • The safety representative also has a duty to assist in incident and accident investigations if these occur in their area of responsibility. • In the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, health and safety representatives are encouraged to serve as monitors to ensure staff and students adhere to safe hygiene practices, always wear their PPE, adhere to the social distancing measures and assist when a person presents with symptoms. • All the relevant documentation must be controlled and communicated. • Ensure that sufficient hand sanitizer is always available in their designated areas of responsibilities. • Always adhere to the outcome of the risk assessments in ensuring that the preventive and corrective actions are implemented and monitored. • Ensure that all the General Principles (point no. 8 in this document) are adhered to. • Report any deviations to their Line Managers and Faculty Health and Safety Manager.
(3) Purpose:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To describe the role of the UCT FHS Management (Legally responsible: 16(2) Designate) and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee with regard to COVID-19 during the state of national disaster. • To ensure staff, students, 3rd party workers and visitors are protected against COVID-19 through risk mitigation strategies.
(4) Scope of Application	<p>This SOP is applicable to all UCT FHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Students • 3rd Party workers • Contractors • Visitors
(5) Legal Framework	<p>Disaster Management Act, 57 of 2002 Occupational Health and Safety Act No. 85 of 1993</p>
(6) Relevant policies and guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Gazette, Vol. 660, 4 June 2020, No. 43400. • Department of Health - Clinical management of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 disease, Version 4 (18 th May 2020).
(7) Abbreviations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019 • OHS – Occupational Health and Safety • PPE – Personal Protective Equipment • FHS – Faculty of Health Sciences
(8) Definitions	<p><i>COVID-19</i> – Disease caused by a Novel Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2).</p>
(9) General principles to be adhered to:	
(a) Before leaving for work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any person presenting with an acute (≤ 14 days) respiratory tract infection or other clinical illness compatible with COVID-19, or an asymptomatic person who is a close contact 1 of a confirmed 2 case • Do not report to work if you have ANY of the following cold- or flu-like symptoms in the past 14 days:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cough 2. Sore throat 3. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing 4. Loss of the sense of smell (anosmia) 5. Alteration of the sense of taste (dysgeusia) 6. With or without other symptoms which may include (i) fever, (ii) weakness, (iii) muscle aches and pains (myalgia), or (iv) diarrhoea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately, notify your line manager if you have any of the above symptoms. • Notify your your line manager if you are a close contact, face-to-face contact (≤ 1 metre) or been in a closed space for at least 15 minutes, of a confirmed COVID-19 case. • Notify your Head of Department or Director as soon as possible if you are diagnosed with COVID-19.
<p>(b) Screening of staff, students, visitors:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff, students, 3rd party workers, contractors and visitors may only enter or leave the FHS campus using the main entrance at the Bernard Fuller Building or vehicle entrance/exit off Anzio Road. • Staff and students must have their ID cards to enter the campus and buildings. • Security staff will keep a record of any visitors entering the campus and some buildings. • Complete the compulsory Self-Screening Questionnaire as outlined in the separate SOP. • The Faculty is required to appropriately manage, and report occupationally acquired COVID-19 cases at UCT FHS.
<p>(c) Face protection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cloth mask should be worn to and from work. • All staff, students, 3rd party workers, contractors and visitors will be required to wear their cloth mask on campus. • Two cloth masks will be issued to staff and students. You would be required to sign for these. • Staff and students who work in areas with increased risk will also be provided with the appropriate face mask and/or face visors as detailed in the SOP: PPE for all staff and students.
<p>(d) Clean hands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly use the hand sanitizer at all entrances/exits of the campus (including the bridge over Anzio Road between GSH and UCT) and buildings. • Use a hand disinfectant or preferably wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds after touching possible contaminated surfaces. • When coughing or sneezing do not use your hands, use a tissue/toilet paper or the inside of your elbow. • Use disposable tissues rather than a handkerchief, immediately dispose of these tissues in a closed bin and wash and sanitise your hands thereafter

Wash your hands as often as you can, but especially:

After using the toilet or changing nappies.	Before preparing or eating food.	After caring for the sick.	After touching frequently touched public surfaces like door handles, ATM keypads and taxi seats.
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How to wash your hands

• Use these steps to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds.
 • Roll up your sleeves, rinse hands in clean water and apply soap to palm of hand.

20
seconds


1	2	3	4	5	6
					
Rub palms together.	Rub tips of nails against palm. Swap hands.	Rub fingers between each other.	Place one hand over back of other, rub between fingers. Swap hands.	Grip fingers and rub together.	Rub each thumb with opposite palm. Swap hands.

• Rinse your hands with clean water and dry on paper towel or allow to dry on their own.
 • If you have hand sanitiser use it if your hands are not dirty and only if you have no soap and water.

(e) Physical distancing

- Always maintain a safe physical/social distance of at least 1.5 meters from other people.
 - Only one person in an elevator or other small spaces (such as kitchenettes, bathrooms) at a time.
 - Arrange table and chairs in eating areas and other common spaces so that social distancing can be practiced.
 - Do not meet in groups.
 - Avoid all physical hand contact such as handshaking.
 - Avoid sharing belongings and equipment such as stationery, keyboards, cell phones food, etc.
 - Avoid touching objects before sanitizing, like trollies, toilet seats, turnstiles, tables, chairs, stair railings, etc.
 - Staff and students will be required to leave campus once their work or shift is complete.
- Social Distancing - why and how do we keep apart from each other?**

 - Coronavirus causes cough and fever. Most people with coronavirus get it mildly.
 - When a person with coronavirus coughs or sneezes, they leave the virus on surfaces and in the air.
 - You may catch coronavirus if:
 - You touch these surfaces and then touch your face, eyes, nose or mouth or
 - You have close contact (1,5 metres) with a person who has coronavirus.



(f) Laboratory, Clinical and Other Specialized Areas

- For laboratory work and other areas, staff and students will work in shifts to improve social distancing.
- Research groups will be split into smaller teams to improve social distancing.
- Each team will be allowed to work in the laboratory during different time slots.
- Each person will be allocated a zone within the laboratory to do his or her own work.
- Additional measures are detailed in separate SOPs.

(g) Office and General Spaces

- Rearrange shared offices and other spaces to maximise social distance.
- Measures in place, such as screens, where social distancing can't be adhered to are to be implemented in shared offices and other spaces.
- When possible, staff and students will be allowed to work in different shifts.
- Measures in respect of workplaces to which public have access: Physical barriers and 1.5 m distance
- Regular cleaning of door handles and elevator buttons. Disinfect interior and exterior doorknobs and any other common surfaces that have been touched

and thus potentially contaminated. Use 70% ethanol or 4-5 teaspoons of household bleach per litre of water.

- Disinfect work surfaces (also when using a kitchen). Wipe down any surfaces with 70% ethanol or diluted bleach you have worked on and touched when you are finished in the area.
- When using desk phones, try to use the speaker function and wipe down with paper towel sprayed with 70% ethanol.
- Use a dedicated keyboard for computer use at your designated office space. Consider wearing gloves when using shared keyboards.

Keep your work environment clean.

Clean all frequently touched surfaces in the workplace, such as workstations (e.g. telephones, keyboards), counter tops and doorknobs using soap and water. Then disinfect using household bleach (4-5 teaspoons per 1 litre of water).



References: -

1. Government Gazette, Vol. 660, 4 June 2020, No. 43400
2. Department of Health - Clinical management of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 disease, Version 4 (18 th May 2020)
3. Western Cape Government: Health, Circular H58 of 2020: COVID-19 Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy, 26/04/2020
4. Western Cape Government: Health, Circular H46 of 2020: Best Practice Guidance for the use of Cloth Masks only in Non-Healthcare Settings
5. Western Cape Government: Health, Circular H70 of 2020: Preventing and Managing Coronavirus Infection in the Workplace
6. National Health Laboratory Services - Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Quick Reference for Clinical Health Care Workers, 25 May 2020
7. Cape Town HVTN Immunology Laboratory (CHIL) Standard Operating Procedure for: Best Practices for work at CHIL during COVID-19 pandemic
8. Occupational Health and Safety Act no. 85 of 1993