

# COVID-19 RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

The COVID-19 Recovery Framework has been developed in order to facilitate a safe reopening effort at Arkansas Tech University. This plan outlines a university phased approach that aligns with local, state, and national guidance, while also being tailored to the ATU community. The goal is an adaptable plan that is both supported by and supports local, state, and national efforts to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Each department at Arkansas Tech University will need to develop its own individual recovery plans that are based on and supported by this framework. Additional guidance will be published separately to support this process. The Office of Emergency Management is available to assist individuals with their recovery plans. These plans are fluid as knowledge of COVID-19 progresses and changes.

## **Guiding Principles of the Plan:**

- Preserve the health and safety of our University, local community, and the state.
- Maintain University operations necessary to support mission critical activities throughout all phases of the plan.
- Whole community approach that assigns responsibilities to all students, staff, and faculty.
- Ensure plan is adaptable to scale up and down with the potential changes to the public health situation.
- Ensure scalability by promoting recovery planning at all levels to account for individual differences, needs, and issues across the University.
- Establish robust communication channels to disseminate information regarding the framework to all constituents.

## **Core University Preparedness Responsibilities for all Phases:**

These responsibilities will be developed by ATU in preparation for recovery efforts.

- Continue delivering a quality educational experience that can be delivered to students regardless of the public health situation or if curriculum must be delivered using a mix of online and face-to-face platforms.
- Ability to monitor students and employees for indicative symptoms and not allow symptomatic individuals to physically return to campus until cleared by their medical provider.
- Develop and implement policies and procedures for contact tracing following a student or employee COVID-19+ test or exposure to a COVID-19+ individual.
- Continue to develop appropriate policies, in accordance with national, state, and local regulations and guidance, and informed by industry best practices, regarding: social distancing, use of personal protective equipment, health and temperature checks, and University-sponsored travel and activities.
- Continue to ensure that all facilities, especially frequently used areas and surfaces, are sanitized.
- Communicate to the campus community the importance and shared responsibility of all persons contributing to recovery and sanitation efforts.
- Monitor and take steps to limit and mitigate a cluster of COVID-19+ cases by restarting or returning to an earlier phase of the plan, depending on the details and severity of updated public health information.
- Ensure that the current phase of this plan and current public health policies are communicated to the entire ATU community.

## **Guidelines and Core Responsibilities for all Students, Staff, and Faculty for all Phases:**

These guidelines are applicable to all students, staff, and faculty members at ATU, and are relevant for all phases of the framework.

1. During all phases of this plan, good hygiene practices will be important for all individuals:
  - a. Wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or high-touch surfaces.
  - b. Avoid touching your face.
  - c. Sneeze or cough into the inside of your elbow.
  - d. Disinfect frequently used items and high-touch surfaces as much as possible.
2. Do not plan or attend any event or gathering where the number of people in attendance exceeds those in this framework. This includes on and off campus events.
3. Continue to monitor the ATU website for updates to the public health situation.
4. Prepare for curriculum and work to be delivered in both face-to-face and virtual settings depending on the updated public health situation.
5. All individuals who feel sick or have symptoms should stay home and not come to ATU for any reason, along with contacting and following the advice of their medical provider.
6. Students, staff, and faculty must maintain the ability to switch from phase to phase at any given time during the semester in response to the updated public health situation.
7. Vulnerable individuals within the ATU community may continue to restrict activities within Phase 1-3 of this framework. Accommodations should be made, as possible, for vulnerable individuals.

## **Arkansas Tech University Phased Approach**

### **Phase 0:**

Phase 0 would mean that a shelter in place order or recommendation has been issued from either the state or local government. In this case, curriculum would move to a virtual only environment within 48 hours of the order or recommendation. Staff and faculty will work from home whenever possible. Exceptions to this will need Vice President level approval. All events physically held on campus will be canceled while in Phase 0 of this plan. Essential functions – such as food services, residence halls, and the library – may remain open but will have their offerings modified to comply with state or local guidance.

### **Phase 1:**

#### *Criteria for Phase 1:*

- There is no shelter in place order or recommendation from the state or local government.
- Local health officials have not observed an exponential increase in COVID-19+ cases.
- ATU has not observed a cluster of COVID-19+ cases within the campus community.
- Appropriate testing capability and personal protective equipment (PPE) exists in the community.
- Health care and public health systems can cope with the volume of current and potential cases.

#### *Guidelines for Phase 1:*

1. Must be able to maintain at least 6 ft from every person present at location.
2. Gatherings limited to 30 or fewer. This includes meetings, all physical events, and classrooms. This limit may be fewer if the space hosting the gathering does not allow for 6ft of spacing between individuals.
3. Meetings and events should be conducted virtually if possible.

4. Employees who can continue operations from home are encouraged to continue working from home.
5. Employees working on campus must submit a Health Screening Form before reporting to work each day.
6. All students will perform a daily self-screen before coming to campus.
7. The use of community areas, such as lounges, break rooms, and food service areas, should be limited as much as possible.
8. Masks are required by all students, staff, and faculty while on campus when in public spaces and when social distancing of 6 ft is not possible.
9. Vulnerable individuals may still decide to continue self-isolation as much as possible. Human Resources polices will outline vulnerable populations and self-isolation protocol. Students who are vulnerable due to a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services to seek accommodations.
10. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 must remain in isolation until at least 72 hours have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvements in respiratory symptoms such as cough and shortness of breath; and, at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
11. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should report their illness to the ATU Health and Wellness Center and assist in a contact tracing investigation to support the health and safety of the campus community.
12. Individuals awaiting test results should remain in isolation and report the situation to the Health and Wellness Center.
13. Individuals who learn they were in close contact (defined by CDC as being within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated) should self-isolate for 14 days and report the situation to the Health and Wellness Center.
14. All University-sanctioned travel must be approved at the Vice President level if University funding allows.

## **Phase 2:**

### *Criteria for Phase 2:*

- The state continues to progress forward with their plans to reopen Arkansas.
- Local indicators of COVID-19 transmission show stable or decreasing community transmission.
- ATU has spent at least 14 days in Phase 1 of this plan with no evidence of community transmission.
- ATU has not observed a cluster of COVID-19+ cases within the campus community.
- Health care and public health systems can cope with the volume of current and potential cases.

### *Guidelines for Phase 2:*

1. When possible, continue to maintain at least 6ft from every other person at location.
2. Gatherings limited to 50 or fewer. This includes meetings, all physical events, and classrooms. This limit may be fewer if the space hosting the gathering does not allow for 6ft of spacing between individuals.
3. Masks are required by all students, staff, and faculty while on campus when in public spaces and when social distancing of 6 ft is not possible.
4. Meetings and events are encouraged to be continued virtually when possible.

5. Employees working on campus must submit a Health Screening Form before reporting to work each day.
6. All students will perform a daily self-screen before coming to campus.
7. Vulnerable individuals may still decide to continue self-isolation as much as possible. Human Resources policies will outline vulnerable populations and self-isolation protocol. Students who are vulnerable due to a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services to seek accommodations.
8. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 must remain in isolation until at least 72 hours have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvements in respiratory symptoms such as cough and shortness of breath; and, at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
9. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should report their illness to the ATU Health and Wellness Center and assist in a contact tracing investigation to support the health and safety of the campus community.
10. Individuals awaiting test results should remain in isolation and report the situation to the Health and Wellness Center.
11. Individuals who learn they were in close contact (defined by CDC as being within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated) should self-isolate for 14 days and report the situation to the Health and Wellness Center.
12. All University-sanctioned domestic travel can resume where social distancing guidelines can be followed and University funding allows.

### **Phase 3:**

#### *Criteria for Phase 3:*

- State is in phase 3 of its own plan to recover from COVID-19.
- Local indicators of COVID-19 transmission show minimal or decreasing community transmission.
- ATU has spent at least 14 days in Phase 2 of this plan with no evidence of campus community transmission.
- ATU has not observed a cluster of COVID-19+ cases.
- Health care and public health systems can cope with the volume of current and potential cases.

#### *Guidelines for Phase 3:*

1. When possible, continue to maintain at least 6ft from every other person at location.
2. Gatherings limited to 90 or fewer. This includes meetings, all events, and classrooms. This limit may be fewer if the space hosting the gathering does not allow for 6ft of spacing between individuals.
3. All employees may return to work.
4. Employees working on campus must submit a Health Screening Form before reporting to work each day.
5. All students will perform a daily self-screen before coming to campus.
6. Masks are required by all students, staff, and faculty while on campus when in public spaces and when social distancing of 6 ft is not possible.
7. Vulnerable individuals may still decide to continue self-isolation as much as possible. Human Resources policies will outline vulnerable populations and self-isolation protocol. Students who are vulnerable due to a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services to seek accommodations.

8. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 must remain in isolation until at least 72 hours have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvements in respiratory symptoms such as cough and shortness of breath; and, at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
9. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should report their illness to the ATU Health and Wellness Center and assist in a contact tracing process to support the health and safety of ATU.
10. Individuals awaiting test results should remain in isolation and report the situation to the Health and Wellness Center.
11. Individuals who learn they were in close contact (defined by CDC as being within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated) should self-isolate for 14 days and report the situation to the Health and Wellness Center.
12. All University-sanctioned domestic travel can continue where social distancing guidelines can be followed and University funding allows.

### **Phaseout: Return to Normal Operations**

#### *Criteria for Phaseout:*

- State has continued to see stable or decreased transmission and has continued to progress in its recovery plan.
- Local indicators of transmission continue to decrease and are at a minimal level in comparison to previous phases.
- Clusters of cases are promptly identified, contained, and do not indicate community spread.
- Local health systems can cope with the volume of current and potential cases.
- Vaccinations or therapeutic treatments are available for prevention or treatment and have a measurable impact on disease activity and treatment options.

#### *Phaseout Guidelines:*

- Activities may return to normal.
- All University-sanctioned travel can resume if university funding allows.
- No restrictions are in place for any activities, but some limitations may be imposed on a case-by-case basis.
- Very large gatherings (those with more than 300 people) are allowed on a case-by-case basis, depending on specific public health risk and local and state guidance.

### **Plan Maintenance and Implementation:**

This framework may be updated as the current public health situation continues to evolve. Updates to this framework will be published on the ATU website. Individual department and office plans should apply this framework to their own university functions.

Planning criteria is being published to assist individual departments and offices with their recovery planning efforts. There will also be a mechanism within the criteria document for departments to request planning assistance from the ATU Emergency Manager.

The COVID-19 Task Force and the ATU Executive Council will determine the current operational phase of the framework. This phase will be announced to the community so that the appropriate guidelines can be implemented across the University. Wherever possible, moving from phase to phase will include a 48-hour notice to allow for individuals and departments to prepare.

## **Important Contacts:**

### **Health and Wellness Center**

479-968-0329

[hwc@atu.edu](mailto:hwc@atu.edu)

### **Campus Emergency Manager, Heath Whorton**

479-964-0583 Ext: 4756

[mwhorton1@atu.edu](mailto:mwhorton1@atu.edu)

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