

Corona Pandemic: General Work Safety Standards at the University of Bremen

After the university was placed in emergency operation mode and the university buildings were closed due to the corona pandemic, it has now become ever more clear that this situation cannot continue for several months. Thus, measures to ensure the university is functional during the times of corona are required so that you can fulfill your legal duties in the fields of teaching and research. Everyone is aware that the controlled opening can only take place step-by-step. In order to restrict the risk of infection, it cannot be ruled out today that the following general standards will need to be continually amended in accordance with the general development of the infection.

The aims of these work safety standards are:

- to make working at the university under adherence to the possible protective measures against infection risks possible,
- to restrict the risk of infection for all staff,
- to especially protect staff who belong to a high-risk group.

Should the individual areas of the university need to implement work safety standards based on organizational and operational grounds that exceed the following standards to reduce the number of COVID-19 infections, the further developed regulations will apply.

The University of Bremen has based its work safety standards on the regulations implemented by the Leibniz Institute for Prevention Research and Epidemiology – BIPS. The Administrative Units for Occupational Health and Safety at the University of Bremen and the Occupational Medical Service of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen were involved as experts.

The measures that will be initiated at the University of Bremen are based on four pillars:

1. Hygiene measures
2. Reduction of personal contact
3. Protection of high-risk groups
4. Shielding from potential infection carriers

1. Hygiene Measures

- Personal Hygiene
 - o Regular washing of hands
Please take note of the posters in the washing rooms and the detailed advice from the [Federal Centre for Health Education \(in German only\)](#).
 - o Please adhere to the general coughing and sneezing etiquette.
 - o Usage of disinfectant when entering buildings

The university will provide hand disinfectant at the entryways to the central buildings. Please use it if you are entering a university building. Do not use too much – 3 ml is a sufficient amount.

- Avoidance of dry and torn skin
Washing your hands regularly and the contact with disinfectant may damage your skin. Please regularly care for your skin by applying your own hand care agent.
- Regular Cleaning of Certain University Rooms
 - In order to reduce the risk of infection, the university will increase the cleaning intervals with regard to the sanitary facilities if these rooms are used more frequently due to increased numbers of people being present on campus.
 - If there is special/irregular usage of the facilities, e.g. in the case of examinations taking place successively, intermediate cleaning will take place.
- Cleaning of Jointly Used Objects
 - The joint usage of objects should generally be avoided.
 - If the joint usage is unavoidable, increased hygiene measures are necessary. The university will provide surface disinfectant so that objects can be disinfected prior to being handed over to another person.

2. Reduction of Personal Contact

- A general distance of a minimum of 1.5m is to be kept at all times in the buildings and on campus.
The distancing regulations also apply to elevators, on stairs, and in doorways. If this distance cannot be kept (e.g. for technical work), then additional protective measures must be applied (e.g. wearing of mouth-nose-coverage).
- It should be avoided that several people use the regular offices at the same time.
- If the permanent usage of a room by several people is unavoidable, there should be at least 12 m² available per person.
- Instead of personal contact, alternative communication means (email, phone, video conference) should be used.
- If it is possible to carry out tasks in the fields of research, teaching, and administration/technical facility management at home, working at the home office can be done as such.
- Rooms must be ventilated/aired regularly (recommendation: hourly ventilation) so that the potential viral load of the room's air is reduced.
- The following additional regulations apply to the areas that cannot waive personal consultations and similar:
 - The application of floor markings, warning tape or similar in waiting areas and offices.

- The implementation of plexiglass panes or other shielding measures should the distance of 1.5m not be able to be kept.
- Determination of entry regulations and appointment-only entry, as far as is possible.
- Staff members with respiratory symptoms should not carry out consultation work or similar (see statements under point 4.).
- In cases of doubt, the wearing of mouth-nose-coverage is recommended.
- Third parties are not granted building access. Companies commissioned by staff members (see University of Bremen House Rules) and scientific cooperation partners are exempt from this regulation.

3. Protection of High-Risk Groups

- Persons belonging to the following groups must adhere to the stated protective measures – and possibly specially agreed upon individual measures - with particular care:
 - a. Staff with relevant prior illnesses, e.g. serious respiratory illnesses, serious heart/circulatory illnesses, serious liver or kidney illnesses
 - b. Staff with illnesses that are connected to a weak immune system (cancer, the intake of medication that suppresses the immune system)
 - c. Pregnant women
 - d. Staff members above 60 years-of-age and who suffer from a relevant primary disease
 - e. Staff who reside with a person who is exposed to a high risk of infection, e.g. clinic staff
 - f. Those who are caring for a relative who has an increased risk of suffering from a difficult course of COVID-19 infection.
- The needs of the university to maintain functions required for operation will be considered in the frame of deciding on additional individual measures.
- It is recommended that these people complete their tasks at home, if possible.
- The occupational doctors can be contacted for a consultation with regard to special dispositions.

4. Shielding from Potential Infection Carriers

- Persons that have been diagnosed as having COVID-19 or have a suspected case of COVID-19 (as stated by a doctor) are not permitted to come onto the university campus. This also applies when the University of Bremen has not (yet) stated an access ban.
- Persons who have close contact (e.g. family contact) to a person that has been diagnosed as having COVID-19 or a person who has a suspected case of COVID-19 (as stated by a doctor) may only come onto the university campus after self-isolating at home for the current period required.
- The current, valid isolation regulations according to the Corona Update FAQ apply to persons who have returned to Germany from a private or work stay abroad.
- Persons who have been told to isolate by a doctor may not come onto campus for the duration of said isolation.

- Superiors who have noticed obvious flu-like symptoms in their employees are asked, as part of their duty of care, to ask the employees concerned to stay at home.

The individual measures initially apply until October 31, 2020. This is the case unless the protective measures regarding the corona pandemic are annulled or tightened by the responsible authorities prior to said date.

Bremen, July 20, 2020

signed Dr. Martin Mehrtens, Director of Finance and Administration