Our dynamic pandemic action plan
Shaping the future

New Mexico State University is, first and foremost, a learning environment, and we have learned much about the global COVID-19 pandemic throughout the past year. We learned even more about the novel coronavirus in its various forms: how it spreads and how to reduce that spread. We learned about our students: how they have adapted and how to address their needs. We learned about our workforce: how we have responded to the pandemic with resilience and resourcefulness. We learned that we can meet the challenge of carrying out our mission as an academic institution.

More challenges are ahead, and among them is assisting in the vaccination effort for our community and state. The December approval of two vaccines for the coronavirus was a crucial milestone, and we are optimistic that this will have a significant impact on our well-being throughout 2021.

We know that this change will not happen overnight; there are still limited vaccines available and much to learn about the vaccine’s long-term ability to reduce the effects of the coronavirus. But we do know that the habits we’ve established – mask-wearing in some settings, hand-washing, sanitizing, maintaining distance between people and avoiding large groups – will continue to help keep us healthy in the months to come. Our university system will apply everything we have learned as we move into the spring semester. We’ll continue to employ the strategies and tactics that kept the rate of infection on our campus low, especially in our learning spaces, where we found no evidence of spread of the virus.

*NMSU Now* reflects our transformation into a community that successfully managed the spread of this virus and is focused on our commitment to our Land Grant mission. We move forward confident in our ability to shape the future of education in a post-COVID-19 world.

Just like our NMSU Ready plan, this is a living document, informed by plans from our colleges and service units, and continues to be subject to changing guidelines from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, New Mexico Department of Health, and our own NMSU experts. We also expect to continue to hear from you about ways that it can be refined and improved. Please visit our new site, now.nmsu.edu, to keep up with updates to the plan, and subscribe to our weekly *NMSU Now Pandemic Action Team Report*.

Sincerely,

Dan E. Arvizu
Chancellor

John D. Floros
President
Mask-wearing guidance

Fully vaccinated people are not required to wear face coverings outdoors or in most indoor settings, including classrooms and laboratories. This follows updated recommendations for higher education from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, previously released CDC guidance for fully vaccinated people, and the state’s latest public health order.

Unvaccinated individuals must continue to wear face coverings and practice social distancing in all indoor and some outdoor situations. Anyone, regardless of vaccination status, may continue wearing a face covering in any setting as added protection against emerging virus variants.

A few select programs may have a specific, programmatic need for continued mask requirements. Those needs should be evaluated and approved by senior leadership as part of return to campus plans. If a continued mask requirement is deemed programmatically necessary, those return plans must also be reviewed and approved by Environmental Health Safety and Risk Management. Any program-specific mask expectations need to be posted and communicated to affected employees and students.

Individuals with special considerations regarding face coverings should work with a supervisor, Human Resource Services, the Office of Institutional Equity, or Student Accessibility Services to explore potential accommodations. Vaccination status and use of face coverings should never be used to discriminate or stigmatize.

This guidance is subject to change in the event of a significant rise in COVID-19 infection rates or a change in policy or guidance at the state or federal level. More information is available in the updated CDC guidance for fully vaccinated people and the state’s latest public health order.

Approval for an exception

Some members of our community will not be able to wear a face covering in situations when one is expected by NMSU guidelines. Employees seeking to be excluded from the face covering requirement should notify their supervisor and contact the Office of Institutional Equity at 575-646-3635 for consideration for an exception. Part of the exception approval process will include protocols for the employee to follow (telework, change of office space or alternate controls) to help protect the health of other members of the NMSU community. Students seeking an exception should contact the Dean of Students Office at 575-646-1722.

Vaccine availability

All New Mexicans ages 12 and over are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. NMSU encourages all students, faculty, and staff – especially those who work in healthcare settings and clinical rotations – to register for the vaccine via the COVID-19 Vaccine Registration System. Vaccines are available through the Aggie Health and Wellness Center and many other providers.
The New Mexico Department of Health is leading New Mexico’s COVID-19 Vaccination Preparedness Planning in collaboration with other state agencies, as well as public, private and tribal partners. NMSU campuses are working with NMDOH to serve as vaccine distribution sites.

At this time, the COVID-19 vaccination is not a requirement for return to work or class for the fall 2021 semester, but is strongly encouraged.

NMSU COVID-19 Safety Commitment

To minimize the public health risk of COVID-19 at NMSU, students, staff, and faculty are strongly encouraged to become vaccinated as soon as possible, and are expected to pledge to the following safety commitment:

- I will follow state and federal guidance for mask-wearing and other health safety measures based on my vaccine status.
- I will stay home if I have symptoms of COVID-19 or any illness.
- If I have a positive test for COVID-19, I will:
  - immediately notify my supervisor and Aggie Health and Wellness (575-646-7375 or campus_health@nmsu.edu), and
  - fully participate in contact tracing.

Anyone failing to meet any of these expectations may be subject to corrective action under university policies. Recommendations relating to COVID-safe practices will be updated in alignment with guidance from the New Mexico Department of Health. Changes will be communicated to the university community through our NMSU Now newsletter, campus-wide memos, and other communications as appropriate.

NMSU continually reassesses and adjusts its operational plans based on guidance from both the New Mexico Department of Health and the New Mexico Higher Education Department. Our campuses will follow this guidance, and may implement more-restrictive measures if our data indicates it is in the best interest of our students and employees.

Reporting & responding to a positive case

Any student or employee of the NMSU system or affiliated agencies who has tested positive for COVID-19 must report through the online portal or contact Aggie Health and Wellness Center (575-646-7375 or campus_health@nmsu.edu) immediately. The positive individual may not come to work or class and must follow current CDC guidance regarding self-quarantine or self-isolation.

When NMSU is notified of a person with a positive test for COVID-19, Aggie Health and Wellness Center (AHWC) or the affected branch campus will initiate contact tracing and coordinate the process to notify exposed individuals (those who have been within 6 feet for 15 minutes) and disinfect buildings. The identity of the COVID-19 positive person will not be disclosed. Supervisors of staff who may have been in the affected building (e.g. Facilities, ICT) will be alerted so they can alert employees as needed.
Once a report of a case is made, AHWC will identify and notify close contacts and provide additional guidance as needed. **COVID-19 positive individuals do not need to notify possible contacts themselves or lock down buildings or departments.**

Community college employees and students should report a positive test to the local COVID-19 contact point for their campus:

- Alamogordo campus: **Joan Hale** (575-439-3793)
- Carlsbad campus: **Karla Volpi** (575-234-9216)
- Doña Ana Community College campus: **Amy Collins** (575-528-7068)
- Grants campus: **Anne Semrau** (505-287-6661)

**Cleaning after a positive test notification**

Supervisors or department heads who receive notification of a positive test must coordinate with Aggie Health and Wellness Center by contacting Lori McKee at lomckee@nmsu.edu or campus_health@nmsu.edu. AHWC or the local COVID-19 contact point for the campus will rapidly engage with Facilities Operations to implement enhanced cleaning. The process flow chart is found under Cleaning and Disinfection on our [COVID-19 Health and Safety Resources](#) page.

A **COVID-19 enhanced cleaning and disinfection protocol** developed by EHS&RM will be applied in all cases in which a person with COVID-19 spent time in university spaces from 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms until seven days have passed since the person was present in a university space. This disinfection process used by Facilities and Services uses CDC-approved methods, supplies, and guidance.

**Returning to work or class after exposure to a person who has tested positive:**

If a person has been exposed to someone with COVID-19, there is a 14-day period during which they might become infected. That is sometimes called the “incubation period” for the disease. The 14 days run from the last date they had a close contact with the person with COVID-19. People who have had an exposure must quarantine at home for 14 days. Per current New Mexico Department of Health guidelines, this applies to vaccinated individuals, as well

Further information is available here: [Policies for the Prevention and Control of COVID-19 in New Mexico](#). NMDOH policies on quarantine and isolation are subject to change; if this occurs, and the below guidance no longer aligns with NMDOH guidance, all NMSU system campuses should follow the updated NMDOH guidance.

If you are:

- **Asymptomatic (no symptoms of illness) and had a negative coronavirus test result following a known or suspected exposure** – a negative test does not end the need for quarantine. Continue to take precautions per public health orders and monitor for symptoms until your 14-day period is up.
- **Asymptomatic and have had a positive test** – stay home, work remotely and attend class online if possible, and self-isolate for a full 10 days after the date your specimen was collected that resulted in a positive test. Monitor your temperature twice a day and watch for development of symptoms. If you stay asymptomatic for the full 10 days, you may resume normal activities on day 11. If you develop symptoms during self-isolation, you may
resume normal activities after at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared and at least 1 day (24 hours) has passed without a fever (and without the use of fever-reducing medications) and your symptoms have improved.

- **Symptomatic and waiting for your coronavirus test results** – stay home and monitor for symptoms until you receive results. If you feel well enough to continue to work remotely or attend classes online, you may choose to do so. If not, employees should use leave, students should communicate with instructors about missed class sessions, and instructors should be flexible in allowing students to make up missed work.

- **Symptomatic and had a negative coronavirus test result** – stay home as long as you have symptoms of any illness and return to normal activities once you are completely symptom free for 1 day (24 hours), without fever and without the use of fever-reducing medications. If you feel well enough to continue to work remotely or attend classes online, you may choose to do so.

- **Symptomatic and have had a positive test** – stay home and immediately self-isolate for 10 days after the date your specimen was collected that resulted in a positive test. You can resume normal activities after you have been completely symptom free for at least 1 day (24 hours), without a fever and without the use of fever-reducing medications, and your symptoms have improved. If you feel well enough to continue to work remotely or attend classes online, you may choose to do so.

**What to do if you have a positive case in your area**

- If you are an employee who has had a positive test, you should notify your supervisor and report it to the Aggie Health and Wellness Center by entering a self-report or contacting the Aggie Health and Wellness Center at campus_health@nmsu.edu or 575-646-7375. This is the same protocol for branch campuses.

- Affected areas will receive enhanced cleaning and disinfecting if an individual who regularly enters the area tests positive. Your supervisor or department head will notify you when normal operations may resume.

- You can continue to work unless you are notified that you were identified as a contact by the contact tracing team. If you were identified as a contact, you must self-isolate at home for 10 days, get tested, and follow the guidelines above.

**Coming back to campus, August 2021**

Protecting the health and wellness of the Aggie community is important. As an educational institution, we also must support our students as they work to achieve their educational goals. For that reason, every office that directly works with students will continue to be operational during regular business hours. Fall return to campus plans for individual departments and units should be completed and submitted to the senior leader for the unit by June 15, 2021, and fully implemented by Aug. 2, 2021.

**Move-in schedule for campus residents**

Move-in for NMSU Las Cruces campus resident students will begin Aug. 13, 2021. More information for residents and their families is available at housing.nmsu.edu.
Faculty and staff
Although offices that serve students will be open, we will continue our reduced levels of staffing on campus overall to reduce opportunities for viral spread.

Offices and departments that can operate effectively through telework may continue to do so. Unit return to campus plans should detail employees’ arrangements for telework, hoteling of office spaces, and in-person work spaces. NMSU recognizes the importance of employee privacy regarding medical information. A decision tree for supervisors can assist in planning for staffing needs.

We’ve also developed an Alternative Work Arrangement (AWA) policy that promotes flexible employee density on the campus and allows for work to get done productively in remote locations. The options available in AWA include telework, flex time, short-term work modifications, and a compressed work week. Training modules have also been developed to assist managers and employees. Additional resources for telework are available at hr.nmsu.edu.

Resources on self-care and emotional wellness support are always available to faculty and staff from NMSU.

♦ Aggie Health and Wellness Center offers the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). EAP is a confidential counseling and referral service available to all NMSU faculty and staff. Call 575-646-6603 for more info.
♦ Well-Being Solutions, the new employee assistance program from the State of New Mexico, also provides services to eligible employees and their family members. You can schedule up to five free counseling sessions by calling 833-515-0771 or visiting www.guidanceresources.com and using SONMEAP as the web ID.

Research and creativity
NMSU Research continues to follow a phased approach adopted from Association of Public and Land-grant Universities Council on Research. Progress along phases is based on COVID-19 data from the CDC and New Mexico Department of Health, plus guidance from state, local, and university administrative policies. Research activities conducted under Phases 1 through 4 require review and prior approval from research unit directors, department heads, deans and the vice president for research (VPR). The detailed plan and timeline are available at research.nmsu.edu.

Using data to understand COVID-19
Each member of the NMSU community should continue to screen their health for COVID-19 symptoms. We have developed an online self-check and self-reporting portal, available on the homepage and the now.nmsu.edu site, to help with screening and contact tracing. Students, employees and visitors should perform a daily self-check and, as relevant, register locations visited on campus to help Aggie Health and Wellness contact tracers identify additional potential contacts.
People with who feel ill or have symptoms of COVID-19 must remain at home or in their residence halls. They need to contact a health care provider, Aggie Health and Wellness at 575-646-7375, or the relevant branch campus contact.

- COVID-19 testing for students and employees is available daily at Aggie Health and Wellness Center
- In the Las Cruces area, COVID-19 tests are also available at the Department of Health Office and other sites.
- Free home COVID-19 test kits are available to all New Mexico residents. To order a test, visit learn.vaulthealth.com/nm.

Monitoring data

NMSU leadership closely monitors daily reports from the New Mexico Department of Health to understand, down to the level of ZIP codes, the trends of COVID-19 in the community. An online COVID-19 data dashboard provides a snapshot of that data daily, Monday through Friday, and for each week. These reports help us understand trends in data like new infections, recoveries, and hospital capacity.

A careful review of the data from the fall semester suggests that our campus was successful in preventing widespread outbreaks of COVID-19 during the 2020-21 academic year. As COVID-19 cases in Doña Ana County rose, we saw a corresponding, but much lower, rise of cases on campus in employees and students.

Responding to a surge in COVID-19 cases

Under certain conditions, the NMSU administration is still committed to limiting campus activities as needed to reduce viral spread. Possible triggers include:

- Levels of COVID-19 that are statistically higher on campus than in the age-matched population in Doña Ana and El Paso counties.
- Local hospitals approach capacity for ICU beds. In this case, we could not assure that sick students or staff could get the care they need.
- A cluster of positive cases that can be traced to on-campus transmission associated with a particular campus setting, such as within a classroom or building (or multiple buildings); within residence halls; within athletics, band, or other units or groups of students; and within on-campus employees.

In addition to daily monitoring, NMSU leadership meets frequently with campus experts to assess trends in critical metrics. These meetings could trigger actions and data collection to better assess the situation. Examples of these actions include:

- Increased testing for COVID-19 for specific groups of students, faculty and staff, with contact tracing for positive cases;
- Investigating outbreaks to understand contributory factors such as social events, and taking corrective action as needed;
- Reviewing related rules and policies;
- Closing buildings to instruction and restricting campus activities; and
- Communicating with the campus community.
In the event of a surge in cases or a change in state or federal guidance, the university – or specific departments or classes – could pivot to fully online course delivery and stay-at-home restrictions. Student services such as residential life and dining would continue as essential services.

**Maintaining flexibility**

Pedagogies such as hybrid teaching allow faculty to switch from face-to-face to online environment quickly. NMSU’s Alternative Work Arrangements policy facilitates telework and is supported by a decision tree for managers. Every department must review and revise continuity of operations plans to include plans for a return to telework.

**Communication and information sharing**

Communication and transparency are top priorities as we continue to adapt to a changing environment. All members of the NMSU community are encouraged to contact system leaders at covid19@nmsu.edu with questions and comments. Your input helps us to understand your questions and concerns.

We’ll continue to provide frequent updates on the activities and findings of the Pandemic Action Team; data from the campus, county, and state; changes to policies and guidelines; and any other relevant information. Communication channels include:

- NMSU Now – Pandemic Action Team Report [Subscribe]
- Family Outreach Home [Visit]
- Family Outreach Newsletter [Subscribe]
- Presidential town hall sessions [View archive]
- NMSU Hotline announcements [Subscribe]
- President’s Communication and Dan’s Dispatch [Subscribe]
- Campus leadership memos
- Social media posts [Facebook] [Twitter] [Instagram]

**Personal accountability and COVID-19**

Because COVID-19 is a disease that spreads primarily from person to person, all employees, students and visitors must take personal responsibility for their own health, protect the health of others, and keep the Aggie community safe from the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses.

Every individual – whether student or employee – should exercise common courtesy and patience. Vaccination status and use of face coverings should never be used to discriminate or stigmatize.
Travel guidelines

Decisions regarding travel must be made in accordance with current New Mexico travel guidance. Travel to high-risk locations is discouraged.

Decisions about domestic travel should be made at the supervisor level, according to normal university policies and procedures. Decisions about international travel should be routed through the Office of the Provost.

When using university vehicles, if all individuals are vaccinated, masking and social distancing is not required. If unvaccinated, those individuals are required to wear a mask and not exceed 50% capacity for the vehicle from others. If unsure of vaccination status, masks should be worn and capacity should not exceed 50% for the vehicle.

Questions related to education abroad, including faculty led international programs (FLIPs), should be directed to Education Abroad at 575-646-5107 or to educationabroad@nmsu.edu.

Questions related to National Student Exchange should be directed to the Office of Experiential Learning at 575-646-5107 or to Kari Cena, National Student Exchange Coordinator at klrakin@nmsu.edu.

Travel resources
- CDC guidelines for travel
- NMDOH travel recommendations
- Public Health Orders

Facility readiness

Classrooms and public spaces at NMSU will operate at their full capacity beginning in the fall semester. Individuals who are fully vaccinated are not required to wear a mask indoors or outdoors. Those who are unable to be vaccinated must continue to wear a mask in indoor settings, in accordance with CDC guidelines.

Students or employees who wish to request social distancing accommodations because they are unable to become vaccinated for medical or religious reasons should contact Student Accessibility Services or the Office of Institutional Equity for assistance.

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems

Facilities and Services has reviewed all HVAC systems to ensure they are operating at their peak. Assessment and performance testing noted:
- Overall system type, location, and age
- Mechanical condition
- Equipment performance
- Areas served
Instructional readiness

Our Academic Technology team has created FAQs, workshops, and other resources to help both faculty and students get the most out of their online and hybrid teaching and learning experiences.

A syllabus generator and additional syllabus resources are now available online for all campuses. Updates have been made to prioritize class content and utilize a Syllabus Addendum for additional information. A new Student Resources & Policy page is a one-stop resource for faculty and students containing information and links regarding student services, grading policies and important contact information. Updated COVID-19 Suggested Classroom Management guidelines and other resources are also available. For questions on syllabus resources, contact Carley Casey at carleycc@nmsu.edu.

Classroom spaces

Information about the availability and capacity of classroom spaces available for classes or meetings is available through the AdAstra system.

At the Las Cruces campus, outdoor instructional spaces have been created using tents, and additional temporary shade structures are set up across campus to provide areas for students to rest, eat or study outdoors between classes.

Tent locations are noted on our NMSU COVID 19 Las Cruces Campus Map, available on our Facilities and Services Space Planning page.

Classroom technology

Many classrooms on the Las Cruces campus have upgraded technology that allow classrooms to be used for hybrid synchronous online delivery. Faculty can use Zoom to broadcast their classroom sessions to students who are not physically in the classroom, as well as record the lecture for future viewing. ICT and Instructional Innovation and Quality have resources to support using Zoom and other technology in the classroom.

In addition to wireless internet access available in campus buildings, AggieAir wireless hotspots are in many outdoor locations around the Las Cruces campus, including open tents throughout campus, green areas, food courts, parking lots and outdoor seating areas.
COVID-19 safety in classrooms

Faculty and instructors are not expected to enforce mask-wearing and social distancing compliance while in the classroom. Department heads must communicate with faculty about their rights, responsibilities and the resources available to them regarding handling confrontation during a class.

At the start of the semester, faculty and instructors should review face covering and social distancing expectations for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.

- Students who are vaccinated are not required to wear a mask in indoor and outdoor settings.
- Students who are not vaccinated or are not comfortable disclosing their vaccination status are required to wear a mask and practice social distancing in indoor settings.

Instructional delivery

Adding flexibility to instructional delivery allows social distancing and provides the ability to move instruction to partially or fully online platforms, if necessary. Departments may choose to apply the in-person or hybrid model when it is pedagogically necessary to have in-person instruction and/or assessment. Examples include music lessons or ensembles, sports medicine courses and lab sections. Hybrid course delivery can be implemented in multiple ways. Some classes may rotate students through, with students assigned to attend in person on certain days and view lectures either synchronously or asynchronously on other days. If physical presence in the classroom is a preference of students, but not a requirement, departments may choose to have two cross-listed sections of the same course in which one section meets in a technology assisted classroom and the other meets synchronously online.

Some definitions:

- **100% online asynchronous delivery**: Students complete work independently, on their own schedule, no matter what time of day. Students are given deadlines by which they need to login and complete assignments.
- **100% online synchronous delivery**: Classes occur on set schedules through remote delivery. Students and instructors are online at the same time, and lectures, discussions, and presentations take place at specific hours. All students must be online at that time in order to participate in the class.
- **Hybrid (a combination of online and in-person)**: Content delivery incorporates more than one modality, e.g., face-to-face and remote synchronous or asynchronous delivery. Face-to-face attendance is limited and may include alternating in-person and online synchronous or asynchronous attendance; may also provide recordings of lectures or experiential components for later reference to supplement concurrent transmission of lectures or experiential components. All students participate in all delivery modalities.

Schedule types that appear when registering for classes at [my.nmsu.edu](http://my.nmsu.edu) include:

- **HY**: Online with Req In Person Mtgs (online with required in-person meetings)
- **ONL**: Online with Synchronous Mtgs (100% online with synchronous meetings)
- **WB**: Online no Synchronous Mtgs (100% online asynchronous)
- **CL**: Classroom/Lecture (fully in-person)
- **LB**: Lab (in-person labs)
- **IND**: Independent Meeting
Note for students in clinical programs

Special precautions are required for students and faculty in clinical and other programs (such as nursing, allied health, athletic training, communication disorders, band, or student teaching). These precautions are unique to each program and are guided by the program’s accreditation or governing authority, as well as medical and public health guidance. The university will provide oversight of these arrangements as appropriate.

Aggie Student Life

Public health recommendations will continue to guide our plans regarding everything from club meetings to attendance at sporting events. Our Student Life office continues to create safe ways for all students to engage in the activities that make college life vibrant.

Clubs, lectures, fraternities, sororities, study sessions, intramurals, and other activities that occur in person must follow recommended public health practices.

NMSU will provide in-person activities to the extent that it is safe and practical to do so. Field trips and other experiential learning activities will occur where possible. We expect all of these activities to adhere to the precautions recommended by state and local health authorities.

Athletics

The NMSU system supports the university’s continuation of athletics in the 2021-2022 academic year. Timing and format depend on conditions and direction from the state of New Mexico, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the Western Athletic Conference (WAC).

Athletic events will allow spectators at 100 percent capacity. Decisions about changes for sporting events, including the presence of spectators at events, will be made in accordance to guidance from the NCAA, WAC, university leadership and state and local officials.

Aggie Health and Wellness

The Aggie Health and Wellness Center offers daily health and wellness services to the NMSU community. This includes counseling for students provided by seeking help with a crisis, mental health, and personal growth and well-being. Services are free and confidential to NMSU Las Cruces campus students.

The Aggie Health and Wellness Center offers both in-person and telehealth services for access to medical and counseling providers, laboratory, and pharmacy services. Appointments for telehealth screening are available at 575-646-7375 from 8 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Appointments can also be made for in-person laboratory services and pharmacy refills.
Aggie Health and Wellness Center also offers COVID-19 vaccines and testing (symptomatic or asymptomatic) several days a week. Appointments are available by calling 575-646-1512.

**Housing and Residential Life**

NMSU’s Housing and Residential Life office supports a healthy on-campus living environment, and is committed to providing students with a positive, engaging, safe, and supportive campus experience. Our COVID-safe practices are based on advice from NMSU health experts, New Mexico Department of Health, CDC and other resources. We will continue to provide information and education for students and expect they will do their part to stay healthy and protect the health of the NMSU community.

**Protecting health**

Housing and Residential Life supports healthy habits for resident students. Students who need to isolate or quarantine will be supported by a team of staff members through regular contact and meal delivery. Isolation housing is located in units that are private and separated from other residential areas.

Residents are responsible for keeping their living spaces (rooms, restrooms, and shared areas) clean. Residents must supply their own cleaning supplies and materials. In addition to regular cleaning of rooms, restrooms, and shared areas, residents should wipe down or spray shower, toilet, sink and counter surfaces with disinfecting cleaner frequently and leave restroom doors open for ventilation to dry the restroom.

Residents are responsible for removing trash and placing it in parking lot dumpsters. More specific information for residential students can be found at [housing.nmsu.edu](http://housing.nmsu.edu).

**Dining facilities**

In November 2020, NMSU became the first university in Sodexo’s portfolio to achieve the Rise Safe certification, after passing a 37-point safety and sanitation audit and an independent verification of compliance by Bureau Veritas. It was created to standardize processes and procedures for education, training, safety, sanitation and communications in response to the pandemic and in adherence with CDC guidelines and additional rules set by state and local health officials.

Food service around campus serves the NMSU community with multiple options in ordering and delivery, consistent with the current quality, standards, and regulations. More information about dining options and hours is available at [dining.nmsu.edu](http://dining.nmsu.edu).

A Dining Sanitation Team of frontline staff designated by yellow vests sanitize all customer-side touch surfaces every 20 minutes and as needed. The team serves as information experts to answer questions on COVID-19 procedures, navigation, and daily menus, and help to politely remind patrons about COVID-19 safety procedures such as social distancing and mask usage.

Technological and physical accommodations to reduce the exposure to COVID-19 include:

- Mobile app ordering
- New offerings for delivery through Bite Universities app
- Barriers and social distancing signage to control lines
Touchless cashiering and acrylic barriers at cashier stations
- Elimination of self-service and buffet options
- Menu adaptations to accommodate to-go and delivery items
- Signage, maps and menus at the entrance to facilities
- Flexible and layered protective equipment for all employees
- Additional shaded and outdoor seating for dining near Corbett Center Student Union
- Tabletop acrylic barriers and social spacing of tables where appropriate

Protecting your health and safety

Cleaning for prevention
NMSU will continue to take appropriate measures to reduce community spread of COVID-19 through daily enhanced cleaning and disinfection procedures created by Environmental Health Safety and Risk Management (EHS&RM) based on guidance from the CDC and the NMDOH for cleaning and disinfection.

We can all contribute to a healthier campus by following these general guidelines:
- Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting, focusing on high-touch surfaces such as residence hall communal rooms, public restrooms, computer labs, exercise rooms, library tables, buttons, handrails, tables, faucets, doorknobs, and shared keyboards. Cleaning and disinfecting daily and between users for shared workstations with attention to these areas helps remove bacteria and viruses, including the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Practice good hygiene after cleaning:
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
  - If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Facilities and Services will continue to provide building monitors with disinfecting wipes for classrooms for distribution to instructors. Instructors or building monitors can call the Facilities and Services Work Order Desk, 575-646-7114, if supplies need to be replenished.

Custodial teams clean and sanitize spaces on a daily basis in academic buildings, including classrooms, computer labs, and restrooms, including building entryways, break rooms, elevators, conference rooms, and common areas.

Custodial teams use two methods of enhanced cleaning: manual sanitation and disinfection of surfaces throughout the normal work day, as well as daily electrostatic disinfection. Teams perform enhanced daily cleaning between 6 a.m. and 2 p.m. in classroom buildings.

COVID-19 supplies
NMSU provides supplies needed to maintain a healthy environment. All faculty, staff, and students should ensure that their personal workspaces are sanitized, and NMSU will ensure availability of supplies. Employees and students will be provided masks if needed, or they may use their own.

For assistance with COVID-19 protective supplies purchases or barrier purchases that don’t require installation by Facilities and Services, contact the Aggie Service Center at
asc@nmsu.edu or call 575-646-2000. For more information, visit the Aggie Service Center COVID-19 Protective Supplies webpage.

Signs and informational posters
In addition to signage installed by Facilities and Services, printable informational posters, checklists, and fliers are available for download at now.nmsu.edu, along with guidelines about where and how they should be posted by building monitors. These include reminders about the NMSU system’s COVID-19 Safety Commitment, rules and expectations regarding personal responsibility, checklists for self-monitoring of health and wellness, information about reporting a positive COVID-19 test, and other topics.

Guidelines for campus visitors and events

Much like NMSU students and employees, visitors to each of New Mexico State University’s campuses are responsible for following all current public health orders and travel restrictions and for taking all steps needed to minimize the possible transmission of COVID-19.

Any visiting faculty, vendors, contractors, outside community members or other campus visitors who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should not come to any NMSU campuses. These individuals should stay home and contact their healthcare provider.

Visiting faculty are subject to current public health orders and NMDOH travel restrictions that apply to travelers entering New Mexico for business purposes.

Anyone visiting an NMSU campus must follow all signage and instructions posted indoors and outdoors regarding face coverings, social distancing, the use of access doors, and traffic flow directions.

Guidelines for events and gatherings

New Mexico State University has a strong relationship with the communities we serve. Under normal circumstances, NMSU invites alumni, donors, community members and other guests to each of our campuses to take part in events and gatherings. These activities help NMSU bring our educational mission to our community, as outlined in our strategic plan, NMSU LEADS 2025, Goal 3: Amplify Extension and Outreach.

Decisions regarding gatherings must be made in the interest of the health and safety of our university community and in accordance with current public health guidance. NMSU will continue to reassess this guidance and update as appropriate.

Student events and gatherings
◆ The normal Activity Request process is in place for student events.
◆ Requests that require academic space, can be submitted to University Student Records via the Event Scheduling website following approval by Campus Activities.
◆ All student organizations should review the revised and updated Student Organization COVID-19 Policies.
**Employee, department and NMSU-sponsored events**

- Employee gatherings, outside of normal business, must follow all rules and public health guidance, as outlined by the NMDOH.
- The event request process begins by submitting the **Event Request Form**.
- Requests requiring a reservation of academic space can be submitted to University Student Records via the **Event Scheduling website** upon approval.

**NMSU special events**

- Special events at NMSU will follow all rules as outlined by the CDC, NCAA, Western Athletic Conference and NM Department of Health.
- Concerts and other performing arts presentations must be scheduled in accordance with rules outlined by the CDC and NM Department of Health.

**Community events and gatherings**

- Community members seeking to rent space at NMSU for an event must ensure the event follows all rules and public health guidance, as outlined by the NM Department of Health. For information about renting space at NMSU, please visit [conference.nmsu.edu](http://conference.nmsu.edu).
- Outdoor spaces at each NMSU campus are available to the general public, unless otherwise indicated by sandwich boards, signs or notices to the community.

**Resources for events and gatherings**

- [CDC guidance for events and gatherings](#)
- [COVID Safe Practices (CSPs)](#)
- [NM Public Health Orders](#)