

PIERCE COLLEGE



possibilities. realized.

**COVID-19 PLAN
DECEMBER 2022**

COVID-19 Plan

Pierce College’s goal is to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace, and keep everyone healthy and safe. All of us, managers, employees, and their representatives are responsible for supporting, complying with, and providing recommendations to further improve this COVID-19 plan.

Guiding Principles

The following principles will continue to guide our work:

1. Equity
2. Health & Safety
3. Quality of Educational Opportunities
4. Fiscal Impact

Jose Nieves, District Health and Safety Specialist, Human Resources has the authority and responsibility of implementing this COVID-19 Plan and is available to answer questions about the plan and update it as needed to comply with changing regulations.

Return to campus information website – COVID-19 Information

Please visit the college’s site: Returning to Campus - COVID-19 and Other Information. Here you will find COVID-19 related guidance and other related information.

The image displays a grid of eight informational cards, each with a title, a brief description, and a button with a right-pointing arrow. The cards are arranged in three rows: the first row has three cards, the second row has three cards, and the third row has two cards.

- Before You Come to Campus**: Get the information you need about masking, vaccine requirements and more. Button: [Coming to Campus >](#)
- Vaccination Requirements**: Pierce College students and staff must be fully vaccinated or have an approved exemption to visit campus. Learn how to verify your vaccine status. Button: [Vaccinations >](#)
- COVID-19 Testing Sites**: Pierce College Fort Steilacoom offers on-site COVID-19 testing. Find out more about this and other testing locations in the area. Button: [COVID Testing >](#)
- COVID-19 Dashboard**: Facts and numbers regarding infections and vaccinations at Pierce College. Button: [Dashboard >](#)
- Exposed? Having Symptoms?**: If you have been exposed to COVID-19 or are experiencing symptoms, find out who to contact and your next steps. Button: [Isolation Guidelines >](#)
- Frequently Asked Questions**: Do I need to wear a mask if I'm vaccinated? Are the fitness centers open? Get the answers to these and other frequently asked questions. Button: [Campus FAQs >](#)
- Monkeypox Virus (MPV)**: Resources and information about the monkeypox virus. Button: [MPV Resources >](#)
- Influenza (Flu)**: Resources and information about the seasonal flu. Button: [Flu Resources >](#)

Employee COVID-19 Training

Our employee COVID-19 training module on Bridge (link), provides employee training and instruction that includes:

- COVID-19 signs and symptoms,
- How employees can protect themselves from COVID-19,
- What to do if sick,
- What to do if exposed to COVID-19, and
- Employer policies and procedures related to COVID-19.

Training is provided to employees during the onboarding process (soon after hire). Current employees will be provided the opportunity to complete the module during work time.

Employee Masking

Though masking is not required on campus in general, Pierce College allows and supports employees in their decision to wear a facemask or face coverings. Masks help prevent the spread of COVID-19. You need to wash cloth masks daily. Discard disposable masks daily or more often as needed or if they are dirty.

In some circumstances, a COVID-19 hazard assessment will need to be conducted to determine whether masks, along with other known COVID-19 prevention measures like physical distancing, barriers, and ventilation improvements, are necessary to protect workers. As per CDC protocol, Individuals who isolate for 5 days with COVID-19 and who return to work around others may remain contagious for up to 10 days; steps are taken to protect others who work around them (e.g., require use of masks as a “source control”.) Additionally, mask wearing requirements may differ depending on the task being done, accommodation requirement, vaccinated status of the employee, or other factors.

Respirators

Respirators are more protective than face masks. A common respirator is called an N95. Respirators come in different sizes to fit different sized faces. A test can be done to make sure respirators fit correctly.

Voluntary use of respirators

Voluntary use of personal protective equipment (PPE) refers to the optional use of a mask or other PPE by an employee or contractor in the workplace when it’s not required by a regulation or the employer. For example, an employee who isn’t required to wear a mask for COVID-19 prevention or any other hazard, decides they want to wear one anyway. See L&I information “What Workers Should Know About Voluntary Use of Masks”: <https://www.lni.wa.gov/agency/outreach/coronavirus/choosing-to-mask-up>

Can any employee choose to wear a respirator?

Yes. Any employee or contractor can, for any private reason, choose to wear one. This includes those who are up-to-date with vaccinations as well as part time, seasonal, and temporary workers. Employers are not required to pay for voluntary use of respirators or masks.

What must an employer do if an employee wants to voluntarily wear a respirator?

The employer will be required to:

- Ensure voluntary use doesn't create a safety or health hazard.
- Provide the employee a free copy of the [advisory information in Table 2](#) (available in multiple languages) from the L&I Respirator rule [Chapter 296-842 WAC](#).

What about medical clearance for respirator users?

Employers aren't required to provide or pay for medical clearance related to COVID-19 voluntary respirator use.

Is fit testing required?

Employers have no obligation to provide or pay for fit-testing respirators when voluntarily used; however, the college will provide in-house fit testing upon request. Contact Jose Nieves, District Health and safety Specialist at jnieves@pierce.ctc.edu for more information.

What safety requirements does an employer need to follow if employees must use respirators?

Employers must follow requirements in the Respirators rule, [Chapter 296-842 WAC](#) when respirators are worn to protect the wearer. Requirements include a written Respiratory Protection Program that ensure medical evaluations, fit testing, and training so employees can safely and effectively use respirators.

Fully Vaccinated Campus

Pierce has been designated a fully vaccinated college, where all students and employees have completed their primary vaccination series to protect against COVID-19, except those people who are unable to get the COVID-19 vaccine due to medical or religious exemption reasons. Please refer to the conditions outlined in [proclamation 20-12.5](#) for a full description of a fully vaccinated campus.

Note: Students or employees may have received a COVID-19 vaccine that is not currently authorized by the FDA for use in the United States. Please reference the CDC for more information on different COVID-19 vaccines and Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States. Students can work with their health care provider to consider their individual vaccination status and options.

Employee Vaccination

All Employees

Pierce remains a vaccinated college requiring all employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition of employment unless provided an approved exemption (religious or medical).

Employees requesting an exemption from the vaccine requirement must submit their request to the Human Resources Office prior to their employment start date. Failing to do so will revoke any conditional offers of employment. Having an approved exemption does not guarantee that Pierce College will be able to provide a reasonable workplace accommodation. Workplace accommodations are determined by many factors including the nature of work and the job description.

- **Exceptions** to our current policy:
 - Contractors are exempt from the vaccination requirements

Existing employees: Have already verified or have an approved exemption & accommodation in place

1. Starting January 1, 2023, in order to receive the voluntary booster incentive payment provided in the new WPEA Master Agreement, classified staff will need to provide proof of a COVID-19 booster shot according to the most up-to-date CDC guidelines. This agreement goes into effect on July 1, 2023, so payments will not take place until after that date.
2. Employees with a vaccine exemption and approved accommodation are no longer required to have a “60 day review” of their accommodation; however, the employee or Pierce College may ask to review and revise these accommodations at any time.

Newly-hired employees:

Must show proof of COVID-19 vaccination or request a vaccine exemption (for medical or religious reasons) within five days of job offer. New employees cannot begin work until their vaccine status is verified or an approved vaccine exemption accommodation is in place.

Pierce College communicates the vaccination requirement:

- On our web site
- On individual job postings
- In candidate interview confirmations
- In candidate offer letters

For questions about the process for vaccine verification/exemption, please contact Human Resources at: HR@pierce.ctc.edu

Workplace Cleaning

Regular cleaning of our workplace helps prevent the spread COVID-19 and other diseases. Extra cleaning will be conducted should an employee report they have suspected or confirmed

COVID-19. It is standard operating procedure for our custodial services to wipe down high touch surfaces once a shift, such as door handles or shared equipment. Also, custodial services provides hygiene supplies (disposable wipes, hand sanitizer)

Handwashing

All Pierce College facilities will provide access to water and soap for hand washing. Washing hands can keep you healthy and prevent the spread of COVID-19 from one person to the next. Germs can spread from other people or surfaces when you:

- Touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Prepare or eat food and drinks with unwashed hands.
- Touch a dirty surface or objects.
- Blow your nose, cough, or sneeze into hands and then touch other people's hands or common objects.

The college also places hand sanitizer in various locations, classrooms and kiosks throughout campus

Employees Sick with COVID-19

Employee's sick with COVID-19 may not enter the workplace. Employees who become sick while at work must leave the workplace.

What do I do if I test positive for COVID-19 or have COVID-19 symptoms?

Regardless of vaccination status, you must notify Pierce College if you were on any Pierce College site within 48 hours before taking your positive test or the start of your symptoms.

- Fill out the [COVID-19 Reporting Form](#), AND
- Contact the College Exposure Officer, Jose Nieves at jnieves@pierce.ctc.edu.

One of the best ways to stop the spread of COVID-19 is to stay home and to have those you were in contact with notified. Protocols for exposure and isolation: are available on the college's website: <https://www.pierce.ctc.edu/covid-exposure>

Cleaning will be conducted of the area the sick employee was in within 24 hours (if it becomes known within that timeframe).

Testing

If you think you have COVID-19, get tested! Tacoma Pierce County Health Department maintains a list of testing resources on their website:

<https://www.tpchd.org/healthy-people/diseases/covid-19/testing-information>

What if I have been exposed to COVID-19?

When the college receives a report of an active case of COVID-19 on campus, steps for contact tracing are taken. Students who are identified as potential close contacts are notified via text, email and automated voice mail. Employees are provided with written notification via email to

include instructions for precautions to take after exposure and instructions for isolation should the employee contract COVID-19.

Other COVID notifications. The college will also provide written notice to the:

- Employee-authorized union representative(s) of any covered employee-receiving notification.
- Temporary help service, employee-leasing service, or personnel supply service employers of a covered employee.

Written notices to covered employees do not include any employee name(s) or personal information. For example: notices sent by email use methods that avoid inadvertent disclosure of names or personal information: Sending email using our system's blind carbon copy function (bcc) or by sending individual emails to each employee (email contains a single recipient and no other individuals sees the email) to meet the requirement.

Outbreak reporting

Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) outbreak reporting

The college reports COVID-19 outbreaks to L&I within one business day when they involve 10 or more workers at a workplace or job site (with more than 50 employees). This regulation applies specifically to COVID-19 outbreaks of ten or more test-confirmed employee COVID-19 infections with test collection dates that occur during a period of time that starts when any two (or more) cases have occurred within 14 consecutive calendar days of each other and ends when 28 consecutive calendar days have passed without a new infection

Tacoma Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD) outbreak reporting

The college reports COVID-19 outbreaks to TPCHD within one business day. This regulation applies specifically to COVID-19 outbreaks of two or more test-confirmed employee COVID-19 infection onset with test collection dates that occur during a period of time that starts when any two (or more) cases have occurred within 14 consecutive calendar days of each AND there is a plausible epidemiological link in the workplace (e.g., case patients work on the same

Assessing COVID-19 Hazards - COVID-19 Community Levels (CDC)

Employers must continue to assess COVID-19 hazards in their workplaces, because the level of hazards may change. This depends on the amount of disease in the community, how close workers are to others, whether the worker or others they interact with are vaccinated, and ventilation.

The college, in accordance with local health department guidance adheres to the CDC's [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) system of assessing COVID-19 spread in the community and implementing appropriate mitigations, such as mandatory wearing of masks indoors.

COVID-19 Community Levels - What you need to know

- COVID-19 Community Levels help individuals and communities decide which prevention actions to take based on the latest information.
- Each level helps convey how much COVID-19 is impacting our community using data on hospitalizations and cases.
- Using these data, communities are classified as low, medium, or high.
- For each level, CDC recommends actions you can take to help you [protect yourself and others](#) from severe impacts of COVID-19 and what the college should do at the institutional level to reduce the spread of disease. See the CDC's [Community Levels site](#) for the search tool to find COVID Community Levels by county and:
 - **Individual-Level** Prevention Steps You Can Take Based on Your COVID-19 Community Level
 - **Community-Level** Prevention Strategies

Reasonable Accommodation and Discrimination

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, employers must ensure workplaces remain safe and healthy for all, including workers with medical issues or disabilities.

Additionally, the [Health Emergency Labor Standards Act](#) protects high-risk workers from being discharged, permanently replaced, or discriminated against in the workplace for seeking accommodation from exposure to an infectious or contagious disease during a public health emergency. This law is administered by L&I and currently applies to accommodations related to COVID-19.

For more information regarding COVID-19 accommodations, please visit the Human Resources page: [Human Resources - Workplace Accommodations](#)

Questions concerning this safety plan

Please contact Jose Nieves, District health and Safety Specialist for any questions, comments or concerns pertaining to this document

Office: 253-964-6632

Email: jnieves@pierce.ctc.edu

Additional requirements may apply to your workplace.

Add these sections to this policy as needed:

- Social distancing
- Barriers
- [Industry specific requirements](#)
- COVID-19 Hazard Assessment
- Managing break rooms
- Documentation of employee vaccination status
- COVID-19 testing
- Employee screening.
- Customer/visitor screening
- Ventilation
- Outbreak policy
- Work related in-patient hospitalization or death reporting requirements
- Coordination with other employers
- System for communicating changes in COVID-19 policies and procedures
- Shared temporary spaces such as vehicles or touchdown desks
- Local city specific COVID-19 rules

Appendix A: Sample COVID-19 Employee Training Log

Instructor name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date of training: Click or tap to enter a date.

Employee Name	Employee Signature

1 - Accident Prevention Program (APP):**YES NO N/A**

- | | YES | NO | N/A |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Does the employer's APP address COVID-19, or do they have a separate COVID-19 safety program? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Does it cover how employees will be educated on the hazards of COVID-19? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Does it cover the requirement for use of face coverings or more protective masks regardless of vaccination status? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Does it address the requirement for regular workplace cleaning/sanitizing? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Does it cover ensuring sick employees are not present in the workplace | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2 – Vaccinations

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Is this business in an industry where vaccination of all employees has been mandated? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. If "yes", then does the employer have a process in place to verify employee vaccination status? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. If "yes", is the employer taking steps to ensure only staff who are vaccinated or exempt are working at the location? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3 - Masking and Social Distancing:

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Is the employer taking steps to prevent COVID-19 transmission, to include requiring face coverings or more protective masks for employees regardless of vaccination status? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Is the employer requiring and enforcing mask use and social distancing for unvaccinated employees and those whose vaccination status is unknown? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Are barriers or shields present in areas where social distancing cannot otherwise be accomplished between employee work locations, and other locations as appropriate (such as checkout in grocery and retail)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. If the business is "public facing", is there appropriate signage in place regarding use of masks by visitors/public? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. If the business is "public facing", are there procedures established and followed to provide curbside service or somehow accommodate visitors/public who are unable to wear masks? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4 –Is sufficient cleaning/sanitizing for the prevention of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases being done? **5 – Handwashing:**

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Are handwashing facilities available in sufficient quantity? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Are handwashing facilities appropriately supplied with soap and water? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Where employers cannot provide unlimited access to full handwashing facilities at all times, have they provided alternate means for frequent hand cleaning (portable wash stations, wipes or towelettes with water and soap, or hand-sanitizer solutions)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |