

Tennessee State University Operations Guide

Fall 2020



Tennessee State University – Fall 2020 Operations Guide

Introduction

In March 2020, Tennessee State University, along with the rest of the United States and the global community, was impacted by COVID-19, a novel coronavirus that has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. In seeking to ensure the health and safety of the campus community, TSU responded to this unprecedented pandemic by modifying its academic and administrative operations.

TSU implemented some initial COVID-19 safety related measures, including transitioning students to an online delivery format and requiring students to move and otherwise depart from campus to continue their academic studies from their home or an alternative location.

In addition, TSU implemented an alternative operations model that shifted most employees to working remotely, while employees deemed essential to the operations of physical campus continued to work on campus under state and federal safety guidelines.

To ensure TSU maintained an ongoing response to the pandemic, President Glover appointed a Pandemic Task Force to meet daily to monitor COVID-19 related developments and evaluate operational options for TSU moving forward. Commencing in March 2020, the Task Force has met daily throughout the summer and will continue to meet to address operational and safety measures to ensure the protection of the campus community.

With the commencement of the Fall 2020 academic semester, TSU has developed an Operations Guide to set forth the policy statements and procedures under which the University will operate safely during the COVID-19 pandemic period. The Operations Guide includes the operational terms and conditions governing the return of students to campus during the Fall 2020 semester, the resumption of certain operations, and the terms under which employees will carry out their job duties either on campus or while continuing to work remotely during the Fall 2020 academic semester.

This Operations Guide is supplemental to existing TSU policies and applicable agreements governing students and employees. It is also subject to change in the event circumstances warrant modification of applicable guidance, policies and procedures. To the extent there is a conflict between existing policies and this Operations Guide, the provisions of the Operations Guide shall control.

The Operations Guide is organized in the following manner and order: 1) guidelines governing students and employees; 2) student related guidance, policies and procedures; 3) operational guidance involving academic affairs; 4) operational guidance involving employees; and acknowledgments; and 5) notices/acknowledgments.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Requirements Governing All Students, Employees and Visitors

Campus Health and Safety Access and Ongoing Presence Guidelines - Temperature Checks, Wearing Masks, Social Distancing, and other Requirements

To access the TSU campus, all students, employees and visitors must adhere to the health and safety requirements set forth below. Students and employees who do not adhere to health and safety requirements will be subject to disciplinary action. Visitors who do not comply with health and safety requirements will be subject to removal from campus.

Temperature Checks – All students, employees and visitors accessing or entering campus grounds will be subject to temperature checks at the point of entry to the campus grounds and when entering campus buildings. Each person in the vehicle authorized to be on the campus will be checked for appropriate temperature to access the campus. Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 or higher will be denied access to the campus/campus buildings. Individuals who refuse to have their temperature taken will be denied access to the campus/campus building.

Face Masks/Coverings - All students, employees and visitors accessing or entering campus grounds must wear a face mask (covering your entire mouth and nose) upon entry to campus and at all times while in public spaces and areas. In addition to wearing a face mask, individuals may also wear a face shield.

Social Distancing - All students, employees and visitors accessing or entering campus grounds must exercise appropriate social distancing (at least six feet apart) while on campus, including in public spaces and common areas in campus buildings.

Hand Washing and Sanitizing - All students, employees and visitors accessing or entering campus grounds are strongly encouraged to wash your hands and/or use hand sanitizer on a frequent basis while on campus. Hand sanitizing stations will be located in buildings throughout the main campus, Avon Williams Building and the TSU Incubation Center. The University has installed additional hand sanitizer dispensaries throughout campus to aid in this effort.

Follow these five steps every time for proper hand washing:

1. **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
4. **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
5. **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air-dry them.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

The Bursar’s office shall take appropriate action to protect the health and safety of employees, students and visitors. When possible, the Bursar’s office shall direct more services to the cashier window and avoid contact without PPE.

Business Services shall strengthen online functionality to reduce in-person activities and interactions while still delivering top-notch customer service for students.

Campus Vendors

The University has several vendors who require access to various areas of the main campus and downtown buildings. It is important that all contractors follow the established protocol.

- All contractors must provide a schedule of dates and times they plan to access the campus.
- For companies who have standing contracts, the employee's name should be provided prior to arrival.
- All contractors should have an officially issued company ID.
- Contractors should be approved through the department where the contract originated.
- Realizing there are extenuating circumstances, these should be coordinated through Parking/Traffic Services or Campus Police.
- Deliveries should be scheduled during regular business hours.
- Construction contractors should limit their movement on the campus and limit it to the agreed upon area(s).

Children on Campus

The university values the family atmosphere. However, due to COVID-19 health and safety related concerns, the University will not permit employees or students to bring or keep children on campus until further notice, except as specifically authorized by the appropriate Vice President or in connection with the Early Childhood Center.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Requirements Governing Students

TSU Fall 2020 Move-In Plan

Move-in Schedule¹ and Logistics - Move-in will take place August 11-17, 2020. Based on students' room assignment, students will be able to select a specific move-in time and date beginning on July 24th. Students will be scheduled in 2-hour blocks with a maximum of 100 students moving in per day, per building based on building capacity and classification. At the entrance of every residence facility there will be a check point to verify that student has completed the check-in paperwork and is assigned to that hall. If a student does not complete the online check in form prior to arrival, a QR code will be provided for them to complete on their phone.

¹ Early Arrival Groups - August 7th -Football and volleyball; August 8th – Resident Assistants; August 9th Track and Field; August 10th – Student Leaders

Any student that cannot make their scheduled time will have the option to change their move-in request online. These time changes will only be approved if the date requested is available. A student registered with Disability Services will have to contact that department to request special arrangements at least two (2) days prior to their move-in date. All early arrivals must receive permission from the University and notify Residence Life to set up move-in schedules.

Our priority is keeping students safe and healthy in their room as much as possible. With proper regard to safety, the University will observe the CDC guidelines for physical distancing, face coverings, hand washing and enhanced cleaning of our facilities.

Move-in Health and Safety Measures:

- Limited contact - The check-in process has to offer a low-contact process in a large venue where physical distancing can be maximized. Students are required to wear face coverings while going through the check-in process. Check-In paperwork is now offered online. Paperwork will need to be completed in order for students to receive their key. Student and guests will have 90 minutes to move their heavy items into their room from the unloading area located next to the building. Once a student's 90 minutes have passed, the student will be asked to move to a designated parking lot to finish their move-in.
- Reduced density - During move in, students, and up to two guests, may enter the residence hall to unpack. Similarly, a limited number of staff members will be on hand to allow for increased physical distancing. Students are encouraged to come in one vehicle and to limit the number of items they are bringing to campus.
- Elevator capacities - Elevators will have limited capacities to promote physical distancing. This will be monitored during move-in times. Capacity limits will stay in effect after the move-in period.
- Designated traffic flow - Students and guests will be expected to follow directional signs that signal traffic flow throughout buildings. Stairwells will indicate a one-way flow (*except in case of an emergency). Directional traffic flows will stay in effect beyond the move-in period. Location of the residence facility will determine which entrance students will be directed to enter onto campus.

- Hand sanitizer stations - Hand sanitizer stations will be available in all halls and in elevators.
- Protective Face coverings and gloves required - Students and guests are required to wear protective face coverings while in the buildings and encouraged to wear gloves to help protect others around them. Disposable masks and gloves will be available.
- Trained staff to assist - University staff and volunteers will be proficient in health and safety protocols to assist students while respecting measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Shelter areas- Designated emergency areas will be identified in case of inclement weather. The TSU Emergency Management team will provide the move-in committee with weather updates to ensure proper communication is sent to parents and students on where to seek shelter.

Student COVID-19 Testing

Students are encouraged to get tested when they possess any COVID-19 symptoms. Students living on campus will be subject to COVID-19 testing based on the results of screening conducted by the University prior to the student's entry to residential facilities. Other students that wish to be tested may go to the Student Health Center to get tested. Students may also contact the University's Office of Emergency Management to obtain information regarding other testing location sites.

Housing and Residence Life

Students Living on Campus – Students living on campus will be subject to the terms and conditions of their Housing Agreement, Addendum Agreement, and other applicable Student Affairs/Housing policies. These agreements and policies cover health and safety requirements, including temperature checks, wearing face masks, social distancing, social gatherings, and actions to be taken in connection with students who have COVID-19 symptoms or test positive for COVID-19. Please contact Housing Staff regarding applicable agreements and policies and/or go to the Student Housing website for more information.

Residential Staff - Residential staff will continue ensuring that residence halls are secure and promoting a healthy environment for students to focus on their

academics. This includes doing rounds, as well as our on-call rotation 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- Communication - Residents can expect their student staff members to be reaching out in more online formats. Students should check their TSU email, and other agreed upon systems for more information.
- TSU professional staff and student staff will continue to be available for support and engagement via digital platforms.

Meals

Meals will be set up in a designated area and students will be scheduled to go to the location and return to their assigned area.

Individuals who are not on a meal plan can purchase a meal utilizing non-cash methods.

Student Athletes

By August 17, 2020, the Department of Athletics shall submit a COVID-19 operational plan setting forth health and safety related measures to protect the health and safety of student athletes and employees while engaging in training, practices and games during the fall 2020 academic session.

TSU Band, Choir, and other Musical Activities

By August 17, 2020, the Department Chair of the Music Department shall submit an operational plan covering the Aristocrat of Bands, Instrumental Music and Vocal/Choral Music activities to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Chief of Staff. The plan shall address proposed COVID-19 related measures to protect the health and safety of students and employees participating in classroom work, practices, and performances involving musical activities.

COVID-19 Fall 2020 Student Related Notices and Acknowledgments

Updated Financial Responsibility and Enrollment Related Statements

Tuition and Fees. Tuition and fees are set regardless of the mode of instruction, and Tennessee State University reserves the right to set and modify the mode of instruction based on the totality of the circumstances, including its determination as to what will best serve the student and protect the health and safety of the campus community. Such modifications, determinations and actions shall not be considered a breach of contract and the University shall not be obligated to refund any amount already paid to the University.

Course Delivery Notice. In the event of an unforeseeable cause beyond the control of and without the negligence of Tennessee State University, including, but not limited to fire, flood, other severe weather, acts of God, interruption of utility services, acts of terrorism, current or future pandemics, including the current COVID-19 coronavirus and future COVID-19 related developments, epidemics, disease at the housing facility or in the surrounding area/city/county, or government restrictions, Tennessee State University reserves the right to maintain the safety of the premises by any means, including but not limited to, transitioning on-ground classes to online courses, implementing a hybrid course delivery, or temporarily suspending classes. Such actions by the University shall not be considered a breach of contract and the University shall not be obligated to refund any amount already paid pursuant to applicable agreements.

Student Dining Agreement

In the event of an unforeseeable cause beyond the control of and without the negligence of the University, including but not limited to fire, flood, other severe weather, acts of God, interruption of utility services, acts of terrorism, current or future pandemics, including the current COVID-19 coronavirus and future COVID-19 related developments, epidemic, government restrictions, or the like, the University reserves the right to maintain the safety of the premises by any means, including but not limited to closing or limiting access to campus and/or temporarily closing or restricting use of University residence or dining facilities. Such actions shall not be considered a breach of contract and the University shall not be obligated to refund any amount already paid pursuant to this agreement.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Requirements and Operational Guidance Governing Academic Affairs

Academic Affairs

Course Delivery. The University will conduct ongoing assessments to determine the best possible delivery mechanisms for the classes being offered. The University will work with faculty and students to ensure quality content. The University will utilize the following course delivery methods, as appropriate:

- Hybrid Classes
- Fully in-person
- Online Classes
- Immediate class conversion from in-person or hybrid to online course delivery, as deemed appropriate for the health and safety of the campus community during the COVID-19 period

Faculty Teaching Assignments – Faculty shall coordinate with their respective Department Chairs to determine appropriate course delivery methods with respect to each assigned course.

In-person Classroom Standards – Students shall wear masks at all times while in the classroom. Faculty shall wear masks, when possible, and may wear face shields, as appropriate. In the event a student declines to wear a mask or wear a mask properly, the faculty member shall ask the student to leave the class, and if the student refuses to leave, the faculty member shall contact the Department Chair or College Dean for instructions, or may contact the TSUPD. Students who refuse to wear a mask in the classroom are subject to disciplinary action.

Social Distancing and other Standards – The University shall configure classrooms in a manner to encourage social distancing. The campus has installed a number of shields in classroom and offices where the duties and responsibilities of faculty members dictate close proximity.

Office Standards – Faculty shall coordinate with their Department Chair on developing office hours, including the manner in which office hours are delivered.

Academic Affairs – Research Issues

Research Labs and Related Areas

Protocols – In addition to the existing protocols regarding access to labs and research areas on the campus of Tennessee State University, the University reserves the right to implement additional authorization and use processes to address COVID-19 health and safety standards. Recognizing the vast amount of research being conducted throughout the campus, individuals are expected to provide a cleaning plan for their respective lab.

Lab Access - All persons that are approved to access a lab are required to follow the protocols developed for that particular lab. The approval process will begin with the applicable Principal Investigator (PI). The PI and the student requesting access will sign the necessary documentation stating they understand and will agree to abide by the rules governing access to the designated approved areas(s).

Authorization Standards - Student or requestor will not be allowed to access the facility/campus until the form has been signed by all authorizing persons coordinating the research. Each individual must have the necessary clearance in order to access the research labs.

Lab Requirements – Students, faculty and other authorized personnel shall adhere to the following standards in working in research labs:

1. Adhere to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines regarding social and physical distancing, including maintaining at least six feet distance from anyone else occupying the lab in which I am located.
2. Wear masks while in the presence of others in the research facilities also wear any other laboratory required protective gear.
3. Persons approved for this clearance cannot allow friends, family or unauthorized persons in the lab to accompany them.
4. Persons granted clearance cannot block door(s) open for any reason.
5. Persons approved for access cannot open door(s) for classmate to enter for any reason. All persons must use their Identification Card to enter the area or be allowed entry by a designated staff member.

6. Persons approved for access should have their TSU ID card with them at all time.
7. Violations or any of the rules regarding access can be withdrawn at any time.
8. Agree to adhere to any changes in standards and guidelines, understanding that events may require new or modified standards of conduct and access governing the facilities.

COVID-19 Health and Safety Requirements Governing Employees

Requirements and Guidelines for Employees who return to Work on a Regular or Periodic Basis

Introduction

The University values the health and safety of its employees. The University has undertaken measures to protect employees' health and safety. In addition, all employees are expected and required to take reasonable and prescribed measures to protect their safety and health, as well as the health and safety of other employees, student, and campus visitors.

Fall 2020 Updated Policy Governing Remote Operations

For the Fall 2020 academic session, the University will operate in a healthy and safe manner that meets the needs of students, adheres to state and federal COVID-19 guidelines, and reasonably addresses employee health and safety concerns.

Unit Heads are required to comply with the Fall 2020 Updated Policy Governing Remote Operations in preparing to operate for the Fall 2020 academic session. Unit Heads must submit remote operations plans to the appropriate Vice President/Cabinet Member, detailing how their respective units will operate in the Fall 2020, including identifying employees who will be physically present at work regularly or in a hybrid manner, and employees who will work remotely. The Updated Policy sets forth the points of consideration for Unit Heads as they developed their respective plans.

Prior to Arriving for Work.

Employees are expected to self-screen daily, before coming to work, for any new or worsening symptoms of possible COVID-19.

Below is a list of symptoms currently associated with COVID-19. Check the CDC website or your healthcare provider for the most current information.

- A fever greater than 100.4°F (37.8°C)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath,
- Any other symptoms of ill health
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea
- Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed for COVID-19
- Headache
- Loss of taste or smell

If an employee displays one or more of the above-referenced symptoms within fourteen days before arriving to work, the employee shall take reasonable measures to quarantine and may return to work only if the conditions set forth below (Developing COVID-19 Symptoms While at Work) are met.

An employee who tests positive for COVID-19 within fourteen days prior to returning to work shall obtain a negative COVID-19 test result before the employee may return to work on campus.

Upon Returning to Work

Employees working physically on campus must adhere to COVID-19 health and safety standards. Effective August 17, 2020, employees will be required to affirm in writing or electronically their commitment to compliance with COVID-19 health and safety standards to ensure their protection, as well as the protection of the other members of the campus community.

The health and safety measures to which employee must adhere, include, but are not limited to:

- Rigorously practice hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness and sanitation.

- Employees must wear masks/face coverings at all times while in public spaces and common areas.
- Maintain at least 6 feet separation from other individuals. If such distancing is not feasible, other measures such as wearing a cloth face covering (over the nose and mouth) are highly recommended for your protection as well as others.
- Continuously self-screen for the symptoms listed above. If you begin to show symptoms, please notify your supervisor and leave work immediately. Limit contact with other individuals on campus and contact your healthcare provider for further guidance.
- For University-related meetings, it is highly recommended that employees continue to meet via phone, Zoom, Microsoft Teams or other methods rather than in person. In-person meetings of 3 or more individuals must be approved by the Unit Head. For in-person meetings, please keep such meetings to 10 people or less and utilize an appropriate meeting space that will allow the meeting participants to exercise social distancing (at least six feet apart). Employees shall also wear masks, when possible, during meetings.
- Wash or disinfect hands while at work and after any interaction with other employees, other constituents, or items in the workplace.
- Maintain office cleanliness through removal of unnecessary personal items and debris to create clean counter space and support of cleaning efforts on common surfaces. If additional cleaning is needed, please complete a work order request.

Developing COVID-19 Symptoms While at Work

If an employee develops COVID-19 symptoms, the employee should notify his or her supervisor and make arrangements to go home immediately. Employees are strongly encouraged to get a COVID-19 test if symptoms persist.

Employees that go home from work due to COVID-19 symptoms may return to work under the following conditions:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications)

- They have improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
- At least 7 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared

Employees may also be required to provide a fitness for duty certification from their health care provider with a COVID-19 negative test result.

An employee who tests negative for COVID-19 and meets the conditions set forth above should confer immediately with their Unit Head or Human Resources regarding the timing of their return to work.

Work Related Equipment and Work Areas

TSU will provide PPE to employees based on the nature of the employee's position. Shields are being installed in certain high traffic customer service areas, when appropriate.

The University is working with all units and divisions to ensure as safe as possible environment. This will require everyone to fulfill a role in accomplishing this objective. Concerns and questions should be initiated in your department or with the Office of Human Resources who will assist you in knowing what area to contact regarding your concern.

Modifications and Adjustment As Needed

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a very fluid matter. TSU will modify and adjust its health and safety related guidelines and requirements as needed to ensure the continued protection of the campus community.