



Emergency Management

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Massachusetts Higher Education Working Group Framework for Reopening Update for 8am call

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SAFE ON CAMPUS:

A FRAMEWORK FOR REOPENING
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

RECOMMENDATIONS

SUBMITTED BY THE MASSACHUSETTS HIGHER
EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

TO THE GOVERNOR'S REOPENING ADVISORY BOARD

MAY 22, 2020

EMBARGOED UNTIL 12 PM 5/27/20

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Link to full report:

<https://d279m997dpfwgl.cloudfront.net/wp/2020/05/Higher-Ed-Framework-.pdf>



Governor's Reopening Guidelines: Higher Ed

HIGHER EDUCATION

Massachusetts' diverse higher education institutions continue to foster teaching, learning, student support, and essential research remotely throughout this time. They are working together and in partnership with the state to ensure a safe and gradual return to campus life. In the upcoming weeks, institutions will develop customized reopening plans to ensure the safety of their communities.

Four key principles will guide the return to campus life for Massachusetts' higher education institutions



Protect the health and safety of students, faculty, staff and people in surrounding communities.



Enable students to make meaningful progress towards their educational goals.



Contribute to research and innovation.



Minimize adverse economic impact on families, employees and the Massachusetts economy.

Institutions will craft their own campus reopening plans for each phase, to be implemented once common key enablers are met

In all phases: Safety guidelines and health monitoring protocols will be implemented throughout all elements of campus life – including classrooms, housing, dining, facilities and services.

In Phase 1: Higher education institutions can repopulate **research laboratories and medical, dental, veterinary and allied health clinical education and services, and restart functions** necessary to prepare campuses to reopen. All activities must observe applicable social distance guidance.

In Phases 2 and 3: Following public health guidance, each institution will develop its own plans for course delivery which will likely involve a combination of in-person and remote learning in order to allow for social distancing on campus.

Massachusetts Higher Education Working Group Framework for Reopening

- ❖ 14-member working group led by WPI President Laurie Leshin
- ❖ Developed a framework to guide the 106 Massachusetts colleges and universities as they plan to repopulate their campuses
 - 500,000 students
 - 130,000 employees
- ❖ Matches the Governor's four phases for reopening and adheres to the guiding principles
 - Protect health and safety
 - Enable meaningful progress towards education
 - Advance research and innovation
 - Minimize economic impact



Massachusetts Higher Education Working Group Framework for Reopening

❖ Key takeaways:

- This report contains *recommendations* and has not yet been endorsed or approved by the Governor
- Report based on a survey of college/university presidents
 - Institutions generally have low confidence in their ability to put into place protocols for contact tracing and testing by the fall.
 - Most institutions can wait until ~July 1st to make a final decision about fall.
- Emphasis that higher education institutions are still open, just in a limited capacity
- Can only move forward in phases if public health metrics allow
- Each institution should develop a reopening plan specific to its unique community

Massachusetts Higher Education Working Group Framework for Reopening

1. The Governor should call on each college and university to develop reopening plans for their own campuses. At a minimum, these plans should include:
 - A plan for a phased **repopulation** of the campus.
 - A plan for **monitoring** health conditions to ensure detection of infection.
 - A plan for **containment** to prevent the spread of the disease if detected.
 - A plan for **scaling back** operations if necessary.



Higher Education Testing Working Group

- ❖ A subgroup of the Higher Education Working Group has been established to provide advice about testing protocols
- ❖ Chaired by Paula Johnson, MD, President of Wellesley College
- ❖ Develop recommendations for testing protocols
 - Access to testing is critical for repopulation of campuses
 - The science and technology is evolving; plans must be flexible
 - Large numbers of tests will be needed for the higher education population
 - Contact tracing and quarantine and isolation procedures must also be developed
- ❖ *Recommendations will focus on implementation in Phase 3*

Recommendations for how the Commonwealth can help

1. Emphasize that each institution must develop a comprehensive reopening plan.
2. Assist with procurement of PPE, testing, and cleaning supplies as well as technical assistance for contact tracing programs.
3. Require MA health insurers to cover testing costs.
4. Enable licensure and certification in accordance with public health guidance.
5. Provide a safe harbor from liability for institutions with comprehensive reopening plans.

