

**Eastern Shore Community College**  
**Institutional Plan for Offering In-Person Instruction**  
**and Campus Reopening**  
**Last updated July 24, 2020**

While making decisions throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Eastern Shore Community College (ESCC) has relied heavily on the guidance of the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), the governor's office, and a variety of state agencies, including the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). ESCC has, and will continue to, operate on the premise that only absolutely essential in-person activities will take place on campus until such time as health experts deem in-person interactions to be safe. While acknowledging that some instruction, services, and events cannot take place virtually, our twin motivations will remain focused on the health and safety of employees and students and on the delivery of excellent instruction and services.

We adjusted our operations, practices, and delivery to provide instruction and services to our students and our communities at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis. On March 23, we moved to offering all instruction remotely. On March 24 all ESCC faculty and nearly all staff moved to teleworking. While our campus may have been shut down, we did keep virtual doors open through remote instruction and responding to student and community needs via email, phone, and/or on our website.

We are now moving to a staged process as we begin to resume face-to-face instruction and repopulate our campus. The three stages will transition us to offering face-to-face classes with limited student/faculty interaction, to the addition of more classes and services being offered on campus, to our full on campus activities being resumed during the second 8-weeks of Fall 2020 semester in mid-October. The timing of each phase is dependent upon the status of COVID19 in our community, in compliance with the Commonwealth's guidelines surrounding the gGovernor's phases, and CDC recommendations. It should be noted that the governor's phases will impact our stages, but do not mean the same thing in terms of sizes of gatherings.

**Stage TR (Testing Reopening)** commenced in concert with the governor's phases and began with very limited instruction on our campus beginning June 15. We allowed our welding students to come back to campus to finish their Spring 2020 courses as well as offering limited clinical and lab experiences . We also opened the campus for limited services and with limited staff and faculty building access. We anticipate that we will remain in Stage TR until the start of Fall 2020 on August 24.

**Stage LR (Limited Reopening)**, if allowed by the governor's indicators, will begin at the start of Fall semester on August 24 with a limited number of students on campus. In Stage LR ESCC will increase the number of on-campus courses. We will assess each class based on the characteristics of (1) the course, such as a course that requires lab instruction, (2) students, such as GED and developmental, who especially benefit from in-person instruction, and (3) instructors, such as one who has risk factors that merit safer-at-home instruction or who would like to conduct periodic live test proctoring. We will identify one of six delivery methods for each class: (1) all on-campus, (2) alternate days on campus plus live Zoom, (3) on-campus a few times during the term, (4) live on-line (synchronous), (5) anytime online (asynchronous), and (6) hybrid instruction, in person. During this stage, we will also expand access to campus and student services, including opening our library and possibly one other computer lab for computer access.

**Stage ER (Expanded Reopening)** of reopening the campus could start with our second 8-week session beginning October 21. As part of our second 8-week offerings, we are making multiple plans from full access, restricted access, and fully remote. Because ESCC moved to offering courses in 8-week sessions, we are prepared to adjust our plans as circumstances warrant.

Our staged approach and the use of 8-week courses also positions us very well in case of a resurgence. If a resurgence should happen, we are prepared to return to offering all courses remotely.

ESCC's reopening/repopulation plan is in compliance with the June 11, 2020, governor's order regarding colleges' plans for offering in-person instruction and reopening campuses for the 2020-21 academic year. ESCC's plan follows the outline of criteria in the Higher Education Reopening Guidance. Our guiding principle in our plan is promoting and fostering the health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and surrounding communities as equitably as possible and the delivery of excellent instruction and services.

ESCC is committed to compliance with all directives of the CDC and VDH. The health of our campus community members is a priority. The college will take the steps outlined in this document to support the health and safety of our campus community.

The following considerations will guide our decisions for reopening the campus of ESCC.

## **A. REPOPULATION OF THE CAMPUS**

### **1. ESCC COVID 19 Campus Team**

ESCC established a small group that provides recommendations regarding the opening of the ESCC campus. This group shares recommendations and guidance to the President and his Cabinet. This group includes:

James Shaeffer, President  
Patrick Tompkins, Vice President  
Eve Belote, AVP for Administration  
David Branch, Chief of Police

### **2. Contact for Local Health Department**

The Associate Vice President of Administration (AVPA) is responsible for coordinating communication with the local health department. The Vice-President of Academics, Student, and Workforce Programs (VPASW) will serve as the backup to the AVPA.

### **3. Students' Initial Return to Campus**

Effective June 15, 2020, as noted above, certain students were allowed to return to campus to complete the hands-on or clinical portions of the spring 2020 semester. In addition, Student Services opened to receive cash payments, provide in-person service where remote service was not possible or significantly diminished quality, and receive documents and forms from WIOA clients. These very limited openings allowed us to begin implementing screening and distancing protocols, which will be expanded as we move into Stage LR. In the initial return:

- No more than two (2) employees will be in the Student Services Suite at a time, not including the cashier in the business office
- All other employees will continue to telework
- When possible or advisable, curbside service will be provided where possible instead of having people enter the building
- Security and/or maintenance staff will be present at all times
- Signage will be posted regarding the COVID symptom checklist as well as requiring facecoverings.
- Procedure for students/customers to access the building
  - External doors will be locked and outside signage will direct those who arrive to call 757-789-1720 for service and/or permission to enter the building
  - Greeter will answer the phone and respond to request
  - If someone needs to enter the building, they must wear a mask (See Face Coverings protocols on page 5).
  - The customer will be met at the front door and escorted to the Student Services Suite. Two student services personnel will be there to work with students. Only two students will be allowed in the Student Services Suite at a time. Once a student has completed their meeting they will be directed to exit the building.
  - Any areas and/or services used will be immediately disinfected by persons on duty

- Wellness shields will separate workstations used by students and protect employees from student contact.
- Employees will observe social distancing guidelines and will wear masks in common areas and when interacting with others.
- All employees, except police and buildings and grounds, will continue to telework every Friday during their regularly scheduled hours allowing time on Friday for a thorough cleaning of the building.

#### **4. Education / Training of Staff and Students**

We will follow the CDC guidelines utilizing several strategies to inform and foster behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19, and promote empathy for victims. Our orientation for students will include training on:

- knowing the symptoms of COVID-19
- conducting self-screening each day
- determining and encouraging those who have been sick to stay home and self-isolate
- emphasizing hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and appropriate use of cloth face coverings;
- providing adequate supplies from soap to disinfectant wipes

On-going education and training will focus on ESCC's mitigation and strategies. This will include reinforcing all strategies with the use of signs and messages and using CDC print and digital resources obtained from CDC's [communications resources](#) main page. In addition, we will utilize the CDC's and other sources guidance for preventing and addressing social stigma. We will also use the CIFRC, UNICEF, and WHO "[Social Stigma associated with COVID 19 as a teaching tool.](#)" This guide for preventing and addressing social stigma highlights that words matter, we all need to do our part to drive stigma away, and provides communication tips and messages that can be used.

The following links also contain examples of such guidance:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/reducing-stigma.html>
- <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/covid19-stigma-guide.pdf>
- <https://www.apa.org/news/press/statements/combating-covid-19-bias.pdf>

#### **5. Physical and Social Distancing and Restricting Occupancy**

- We will use the new Academic and Student Services building as our primary/default main building
- We will use the Workforce Development Services building on an ad hoc basis
- The main doors to the Student Services suite will remain propped open during operating hours to limit contact with door handles.
- ESCC will have a skeleton crew for Student Services (no more than two employees at a time). Limited services within the building will be provided by two professionals in one of the following areas: financial aid, enrollment, advising, coaching, and workforce services. If these professionals cannot answer a question, they will help visitors to connect by phone-video conference to appropriate employee.
- Faculty will not need to be on campus except to access essential supplies and tasks associated with the certain career and technical education (CTE) classes (such as welding and nursing classes) and possibly for classes that may be broadcast from campus, e.g., biology / chemistry labs and nursing. As we move closer to the start of the fall semester, faculty and staff will need more frequent campus access to prepare for classes starting on August 24 and October 21.
- Individuals on campus will only use designated spaces, and provide curbside service where possible There will be no access to breakrooms or refrigerators.
- Selected staff will continue to come in one day a week, such as Business Office, Learning Resources, and Educational Foundation. IT staff will come to campus on an

as-needed basis. Other staff must request building access permission from their supervisors.

- Faculty will have limited access to the building for essential tasks that cannot be accomplished remotely without significant diminution of outcomes.
- Visitors are discouraged from coming to campus. All common seating areas are closed. Employees and students will be discouraged from using hallways and entrance ways for any activities except passing through.
- Classroom access will be limited to schedule activities. If services are expanded in areas such as the library, computer labs, testing center, and tutoring center, safety guidelines provided by the governor's office, DHRM, VDH, CDC, and this reopening plan will be followed.
- Welding students will be assigned a welding bay for the entire course. Any other students who have classes on campus will have assigned seats throughout the session to facilitate contact tracing in the event it becomes necessary.
- Faculty will record attendance and seat location for each class meeting. This will assist with any contact tracing if needed.
- Classrooms will have limited seating allowing for appropriate social distancing
- All classrooms will have signage designating social distancing, as well as COVID symptoms, self-assessing, and health / safety guidelines.
- There will be limited access to hallways, which will have directional signage as well as signage reminding / reinforcing social distancing.
- Employees are responsible for their own offices in terms of wiping down during and at the end of the day. Student Services personnel will be responsible for wiping down student workstations and work areas after each use. Employees will be responsible for taking trash to central garbage receptacle.
- Barriers will be utilized as follows:
  - Plexiglass has been installed between computer stations and in front of the main help desk in the Student Services Suite
  - Common areas will be cordoned off to prevent access or taped off with dividing lines and directional signage
  - Classrooms will be set up with a minimum of 6 feet between desks and between the instructor and students. Schematics will be developed and displayed in classrooms
- Elevator - Only one person is allowed to use the elevator at a time, unless physical assistance is required. Signs will be posted on each floor by the elevators.
- Extracurricular activities:
  - These activities would be limited to student clubs and groups. In Stage TR and LR, all meetings for these entities will be done online and gathering will not be permitted. As campus access is expanded, meetings of club officers and others will only be permitted with prior approval of the VPASW or designee in collaboration with members of the reopening planning committee.
- Limitations on gatherings:
  - Will be consistent with Executive Orders 65 or other subsequent orders which may be issued.
- Food/Dining Areas:
  - ESCC does not have any dining facilities except for vending machines in the Student Lounge. The Lounge will not be open for use and the machines will not be accessible

## **6. Hygiene Practices and Cleaning/Disinfecting Protocols**

- We will follow CDC guidelines in [maintaining healthy environments](#) which includes cleaning and disinfecting, discouraging use of shared objects, modifying areas to foster social distancing, use of physical barriers and guides, and closing shared spaces.
- We will recommend and reinforce [handwashing](#) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

- If soap and water are not readily available, we will provide access to hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol through large bottles placed at reception areas and wall units in hallways and other common areas
- We will encourage students, faculty, and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or using the inside of the elbow. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- We are exploring the option of purchasing a fogger for disinfecting spaces as needed. In addition, we are bulk purchasing disinfecting wipes and cleaner to be used by all faculty and staff in offices, instructional space, computer labs, and the library.

**7. Housing: NOT APPLICABLE**

**8. Consideration of Vulnerable Individuals:**

ESCC recognizes that we have some individuals on staff and in our student body who are considered high risk from COVID 19. With this in mind, we will work with employees to allow the use of teleworking where appropriate. In addition, to protect employees and students, most of our coursework will be delivered remotely during the first eight of the Fall semester. This will allow ESCC time to determine if on-campus instruction would be safe and also provides flexibility if there is a resurgence.

Flexible sick leave policies will remain in effect indefinitely until DHRM guidance advises otherwise.

In returning after COVID we would follow our infectious disease response plan (attached).

**9. International student considerations**

Generally, ESCC does not have a large international student population with the possible exception of migrant families from Central America. If we determine through our screening process that a student has been out of the US, we will follow the CDC guidance on returning from international travel which suggest that the student stay home for 14 days from the time of return home from international travel and self-monitoring of health.

**10. Partnerships and Communication / Information Sharing with Local Community**

CDC recommends that institutions of higher education participate with state or local authorities in broader COVID-19 community response efforts (e.g., sitting on community response committees). To that end, we've established the Eastern Shore Regional Recovery Ad Hoc Committee with the mission of taking a regional approach to emerging from the COVID 19 crisis by sharing information across local, county, and state governmental agencies, educational institutions, health care facilities, and private businesses about steps each agency is taking to emerge from the crisis. While this committee has no authority to mandate any action, it will have the power to convene these stake holders and facilitate discussion to maximize coordination between and among agencies as we emerge from this crisis. Members of the Ad Hoc committee are:

- Robie Marsh—Executive Director ESVA Chamber
- Mike Mason—Accomack County Administrator
- Chris Holland—Accomack County School Division Superintendent
- Eddie Lawrence—Northampton County School Division Superintendent
- Charles Kolakowski—Northampton County Administrator
- Laura Dodson—Northampton Chamber Executive Director
- Nancy Stern—Chief Executive Officer-Eastern shore Rural Health
- John Peterman—Vice President, Administrator Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital

### **11. Face Coverings**

Face coverings will be required of anyone entering ESCC buildings. This requirement will be reinforced through signage provided by DHRM through EO 63 as well as faculty and department heads / supervisors reminding students and employees if necessary. If a student refuses to wear a face covering, it will be considered a student conduct issue and will be turned over to the VPASAW for further action. In the event a student becomes belligerent or threatening, campus police will be notified and will deal with the student. If an employee refuses to wear a face covering, this will be considered a personnel issue and will be dealt with between the employee and his / her supervisor.

The requirement for face coverings does not apply to the following:

- While eating or drinking
- Alone in personal offices
- Any person who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance
- Any person seeking to communicate with the hearing impaired and for which the mouth needs to be visible
- Persons with health conditions that prohibit wearing a face covering
- Faculty in classrooms where physical distancing of at least six feet can be maintained

We will follow and update face covering requirements based on guidance from the CDC.

### **12. Student Health Services: NOT APPLICABLE**

### **13. Large Events**

Large events will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be limited to the current governor's phase (i.e., Phase 1 no more than 10, Phase 2 no more than 50, Phase 3 no more than 250). Currently ESCC has cancelled all community events scheduled to be on the ESCC campus. Any college committee meetings have been conducted remotely and the first ESCC Advisory Committee meeting will be held on July 14 will be offered by face to face and by Zoom. We will set up our large conference room to maximize social distancing and other than the President, only one of other ESCC staff member will be in the room. If greater spacing is necessary we will have an overflow room with video and audio capability.

### **14. Communications Strategy - Communication Plan for ESCC Reopening**

- Establish a webpage within [www.es.vccs.edu](http://www.es.vccs.edu) to host reopening information and FAQs, with frequent updates to content. This will serve as the reopening "hub". All efforts will point to this page as a source of current reopening information.
- Produce monthly updates that incorporate the inevitable changes and refinements that will occur approaching reopening. June, July, and August editions both in audio and video formats would be appropriate to distribute on social media and the above webpage.
- Stage highway signage directing people to the reopening webpage.
- Email blasts utilizing the "HealthSafety" branding that we established in March that updates staff, faculty, and students on the latest information.
- Stage a series of Facebook Live events from campus where we share the latest reopening info and incorporate "open house" and "orientation" content as well.
- Dedicate several longform weekly radio ads to elaborate on reopening (1 week each in June, July, and August).

- Schedule multiple live or pre-recorded segments on local radio stations.
- Dedicate our monthly page feature in the August edition of Eastern Shore First to an article solely based on reopening information and details
- Conduct a mid-August ZOOM Town Hall to answer questions about reopening
- Produce a series of short videos of student ambassadors welcoming students back on campus while imparting some important reminders.
- Include appropriate messaging in all print ads in June, July, and August promoting Fall Classes that address important reopening points and point to reopening webpage.

## **B. MONITORING HEALTH CONDITIONS ON CAMPUS**

### **1. Daily health screening questions**

All students and staff will be asked to self-assess as they enter the building by reviewing the following questions regarding experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Additionally, faculty will restate the symptoms, again asking students to self-assess, at the beginning of each class period. If a student or staff member answers yes to any of the above items, we will ask them to stay at home until these symptoms end and consider being tested for COVID-19. Faculty and staff will reinforce that students personally respond to this self-assessment with announcements in classes and with signage in the building.

### **2. Campus Level Disease Surveillance:**

**All Faculty, Staff, and Students will do a DAILY HEALTH SAFETY SELF-ASSESSMENT**

#### **PERSONAL HEALTH SAFETY ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENT**

All faculty, staff, and students are required to follow ESCC's health and safety guidelines, including:

- All students enrolled in an ESCC class must sign and abide by the Student Health Safety Agreement.
- Any faculty, staff, or student not wearing an applicable face covering or not abiding by social distancing requirements may be asked to leave the campus.
- Consistent with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), faculty, staff and students must complete the following COVID-19 health self-assessment each day **PRIOR** to coming to campus for any reason. This tool is not meant to take the place of talking to healthcare providers to diagnose or treat conditions.

#### **HEALTH SAFETY SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

Please review and answer each question YES or NO. You do not need to consider any chronic conditions you may have.

1. Have you been told to quarantine by a healthcare provider or the health department?

2. In the last 14 days, have you had face-to-face contact with someone who has or is suspected of having COVID-19, or had a family member who has or is suspected of having COVID-19?
3. In the last 14 days, have you traveled to a location with a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or Virginia COVID-19 travel warning?
4. Do you have any of the following new symptoms?
  - Fever or chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea

### **IF YOU ANSWER YES TO ANY QUESTION**

After completing your health self-check, if you answer “yes” to any question, please notify your instructor/supervisor or the ESCC COVID-19 Campus Team ([healthsafety@es.vccs.edu](mailto:healthsafety@es.vccs.edu)) and await instructions **BEFORE** you come to campus for any reason. To respect your privacy, answers to specific questions will not be collected.

### **3. Testing Strategy:**

While ESCC does not have the facilities or personnel to do testing, we will work with Eastern Shore Rural Health to facilitate testing. Eastern Shore Rural Health System Inc. is now offering community wide COVID-19 testing at its Atlantic, Eastville, and Onley centers. The Onley center is only 10 minutes from ESCC. ESRH is offering this service at no charge, the fee will be billed to test participants' health insurance with no copay. For those without insurance, there is no charge. Results are typically available in a few days – Eastern Shore Rural Health will contact those tested with the results.

Since many people infected with COVID-19 have no symptoms, participants do not have to be experiencing symptoms to be tested. Those being tested do not have to be an ESRH patient to be tested.

## **C. CONTAINMENT TO PREVENT SPREAD**

### **1. Partnership with VDH for contact tracing**

- Any contact tracing will be done in partnership with VDH
- To assist with contact tracing, all students will be assigned seats within every class. If someone has symptoms, we will be able to identify students who were in close proximity.

- Once we are aware that someone has symptoms, we will contact VDH and Eastern Shore Health District, to report the case.

## **2. Quarantining and Isolation**

ESCC will not provide space for quarantine and isolation. If someone is sick, we will ask the individual to follow the CDC steps to help prevent the spread of COVID, including:

- Stay at home except to get medical care
- Separate yourself from other people
- Monitor your symptoms
- Wear a cloth covering over your nose and mouth
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Clean your hands often
- Avoid sharing personal household items
- Clean all “high-touch” surfaces everyday

## **3. Campus Outbreak Management**

As part of managing an outbreak on campus, ESCC has created a Course Delivery Template, which offers several different instructional delivery options that could be utilized as follows:

- All on-campus / in-person (these should also have a Zoom option and should have remote instruction plan in the event we have to leave campus)
- Alternating students’ days on-campus (e.g. 1/2 on Monday, the other 1/2 on Wednesday)
- On-campus a few times during the 8-week instructional period, with the remaining class days via remote option
- Anytime online (asynchronous instruction)
- Live online (synchronous instruction)
- Hybrid (50/50 or specify)
- Minimal outbreak  
We will work with local health officials to determine a set of strategies appropriate based on the overall community’s situation. We will continue using the preparedness strategies implemented for no community transmission, and consider the following social distancing strategies, including determining which instructional offering would be appropriate given the circumstances. Other actions would include, but not be limited to:
  - Cancel any scheduled large gatherings
  - Cancel or modify courses where students are likely to be in very close contact.
  - Increase space between desks.
- Substantial outbreak (as defined by local health authorities)  
We will work with local health officials who will have determined if there is substantial transmission of COVID-19 within the community. We will look to them to provide guidance on the best course of action for ESCC.

## **4. Partnership with local health systems**

Once we are aware that someone has symptoms, we will contact Virginia Department of Health and work with the Northampton County Health Department (located at 7114 Lankford Hwy, Nassawadox, VA 23413) ad the Accomack County Health Department (located at 23191 Front St, Accomac, VA 23301) to report any cases. We would work jointly with these agencies to set an appropriate course of action.

## **D. Shutdown considerations if necessitated by severe conditions and/or public health guidance.**

1. Any decision about school dismissal or cancellation of events at ESCC will be done in coordination with our local health officials.

2. Depending on guidance we are prepared to move our courses to remote delivery and staff are prepared to offer college services via phone, email, and through our website.
3. We will use any dismissal time to allow local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school and for custodial staff to clean and disinfect the affected facilities. We will work with our local health officials to determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.
4. Continuity plans for teaching and student services.
  - i. ESCC has prepared all classes with a CANVAS shell allowing the movement of most classes to remote delivery to assure that students are able to complete the semester. Classes which require on-campus lab instruction that cannot be accomplished remotely will be put on pause until it is safe to resume or necessary to cancel the class.
  - ii. Staff will have access to appropriate information at a distance to keep the virtual doors of ESCC open through phone, email, and website.
5. Determining when to reopen the campus
  - i. ESCC will seek guidance from local health officials, the Governor's Office and VCCS to assess when students, staff and faculty can return to campus.
6. Communicate with students, staff, and faculty.
  - i. Coordinate with local health officials to communicate dismissal decisions and the possible COVID-19 exposure. ESCC will use its alert system to keep the campus community up to date. Our alert systems uses email, voicemail, and text messaging.