

Over winter break, the Forward Niagara Task Force has been reviewing and adjusting our restart policies and procedures to prepare to welcome faculty, staff, and students back to campus. While the foundation of our health and safety policies—wearing a face covering in all indoor and outdoor common campus spaces regardless of the ability to remain 6 feet apart, washing hands, and social distancing—remain in place, the following are important updates and information to keep in mind.

Purple Pledge

- Members of the university community—students, faculty, staff, and administration—will be asked to recommit to the Purple Pledge at the beginning of the spring 2021 semester.

Health and Safety

- Daily symptom screening will be required of all students, faculty, staff, and administration who come to campus.
- Students who exhibit signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during the semester are encouraged to call either Telehealth Ontario, at 1.866.797.0000 or York Region Public Health at 1.800.361.5653.
- Students who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate for a minimum of 14 days.

Academics

- The spring semester will begin on Monday, Jan. 18, for the Bachelor of Professional Studies in education program and on Saturday, Jan. 23, for the master's programs, and will continue until Friday, May 7. Please be sure to check the academic calendars posted at [Academic Calendars | Niagara University in Ontario](#) for exam dates and mental health days.
- The traditional spring break has been eliminated and the Easter break has been significantly shortened, as well. BPS students in Vaughan will follow the Ontario P-12 school district calendar for spring break.
- There will be three “Self-Care” days without classes during the semester, in addition to the Good Friday Holy Day observance, which will allow students and faculty a moment to pause and relax during the semester.
- Students enrolled in our graduate programs in both Lewiston and Vaughan will follow the posted calendar, with Saturday offerings that run in five-week cycles starting on Jan. 23.

Human Resources

- Overall procedures for staff will remain the same as in the fall. Specifically, employees will be required to complete daily screenings any time that they are on campus; however, employees who are not reporting to campus on weekends will not be required to complete a daily screening on Saturday and Sunday. For those visiting the Ontario campus, please be sure to complete the Workplace Screening Tool found at [COVID-19 Updates | Niagara University in Ontario](#).
- As the Office of Human Resources becomes aware of unique telecommuting arrangements where employees will not be working on campus during the spring semester, it will notify Health Services so that these individuals can be removed from the Mediat system.
- Employees who are working a hybrid schedule (working both remotely and on campus during the work week), will still be required to complete daily screenings Monday–Friday.
- If employees report signs or symptoms of COVID-19 or if they report being in contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19, they will be contacted by Health Services and advised to contact HR.
- The Office of Human Resources will track reports of employees, complying with appropriate regulations regarding the storing of medical information. Employees will be advised to reach out to their healthcare provider to determine if testing, isolation, or quarantining is required. Employees will be asked to provide certification that they are able to return to campus. This can be provided by their healthcare provider and/or a regulatory agency, such as the Public Health Ontario.
- If an employee reports that he or she does not have access to a healthcare provider and has consulted with Health Services staff, the Office of Human Resources will accept HS notices regarding that employee’s ability to return to work.
- Employees who test positive to the coronavirus may be able to provide HS with a copy of their test results by uploading the document in Mediat. This feature will be made available to employees, but employees will not be required to utilize it.
- The office calendar has been adjusted to align more closely with the academic calendar, including the shortening of the Easter break.

Questions?

- For general questions, the Forward Niagara Information Desk will continue to be staffed from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday and is accessible by phone (716.385.1967) and email (ForwardNU@niagara.edu).