

# Recommendations for Different Levels of COVID-19 Transmission Among Higher Education Institutions

12/18/2020

At this time, in accordance with Executive Order 20-103 (EO), institutes of higher education must implement Scenario 4 mitigation efforts in this document from Friday, Dec. 18, 2020, 11:59 p.m. through Sunday, Jan. 10, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.

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## Clarification of definitions for Institutes of Higher Education

- Social gatherings are limited to groups of up to two household-like pods, up to a maximum of 10 people, indoors, and groups of up to three household-like pods, up to a maximum of 15 people, outdoors. Students studying together must maintain social distancing (be at least 6 feet apart) at all times and must limit to no more than two household-like pods, up to a maximum of 10 people total.
- Households:
  - Students returning home over a break are not considered a separate household; however, they should be following recommendations from MDH posted on [Institutes of Higher Education \(IHE\): COVID-19 \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihe.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihe.html).
  - For the purpose of residential campuses household like pods should be considered as those students living in the same smaller section of housing, such as a floor of a dorm or floor of a resident hall.

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## How to use this document

This guidance document is meant to be used in coordination with the [Guidance for Mitigating COVID-19 at Higher Education Institutions \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/guideihe.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/guideihe.pdf) and other guidance documents found at [Institutes of Higher Education \(IHE\): COVID-19 \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihe.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihe.html).

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

This document is organized into sections by scenarios based on levels of disease incidence occurring in or around a campus. Many campuses are using corresponding color codes to indicate their current scenario/transmission level, so those are referenced in this document. The recommended actions are meant to help minimize transmission of COVID-19 for students, staff, and faculty. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Office of Higher Education (OHE) recognize there are diverse learning environments that will require teams to use thoughtful strategies when applying guidance to meet the health and safety needs of all students, faculty, and staff.

Not all recommended actions will be possible in all settings, and therefore should be tailored as appropriate.

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### Assumptions

- MDH and local public health (LPH) will work with institutes of higher education to respond to cluster or outbreak situations; as such, MDH and LPH will also partner with higher education on how to increase mitigation efforts as disease outbreaks occur.
- The scenarios should be considered as “stackable,” meaning that Scenario 2 should include Scenario 1’s activities.
- IHE should develop methods to monitor the level of COVID-19 activity among students, faculty, and staff. Campuses that need help with this should reach out to their MDH or LPH contact.
- All recommendations apply to both residential and non-residential campuses unless otherwise indicated.
- Higher education institutions will follow direction and recommendations for responding to a surge or outbreak of COVID-19 offered by MDH, LPH, and other government officials.
- Due to sizes of student bodies and campus communities, different institutions may have different capacities to handle an increase in cases, thus the recommendations they put in place to respond may vary.

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### Transmission level indicator decision points

Level of risk of transmission is associated with the likelihood of viral spread or outbreak. The next section provides a list of strategies to consider implementing depending on the risk level of transmission on campus. Institutes of higher education can use these scenarios as they navigate activity this fall and to determine applicable conditions when students return to campus.

**The COVID-19 Weekly Report with number of infections and the K-12 14-day COVID-19 Case Rate referenced in each scenario can be found in:**

- [COVID-19 Weekly Report \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/stats/index.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/stats/index.html) “Weekly Case Rate by County of Residence” and “Weekly Percent of Tests Positive By County of Residence” slides.

- [Data for K-12 Schools: 14-day COVID-19 Case Rate by County \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/stats/wschooll.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/stats/wschooll.pdf)

## Scenario 1 – Indicators for low transmission levels (green)

### Transmission levels seen as manageable by the individual institution.

- Cases of COVID-19 on the campus are manageable by the IHE.
- Contacts are able to be identified at the time of case interview.
- Isolation and quarantine rooms are less than 50% full.
- K-12 indicators show less than 10 per 10,000 cases over a 14-day period in the relevant county or counties. In some cases, colleges/universities may look at neighboring counties, especially if the IHE sits on or near the border of two counties.

## Scenario 2 – Indicators for medium transmission levels (yellow)

### Transmission levels are beginning to tax campus resources.

If two or more of the following indicators are met, strongly consider implementing mitigation efforts suggested in Scenario 2 action items below.

- Number of infections are increasing over a seven-day period in the county. See “Weekly Case Rate by County of Residence” and “Weekly Percent of Tests Positive By County of Residence” slides.
- Cases reported among those students who are routinely on campus comprise more than 1% of students over a 14-day period.
  - Should also consider the setting where cases are being reported when using this indicator. Is it mostly in-campus housing, off-campus housing?
- 50-75% of campus isolation and quarantine beds are full.
- Routine testing capacity (whether through on-site clinics, contracted labs, or other sources) is starting to be a concern, and regular routes of testing are being depleted or tests are taking longer than 24-48 hours to result.
- Less than a 10-day supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) is available for the campus.
- Other internal metrics are showing concerning signs, for example, increased absenteeism among faculty or staff.
- K-12 indicators show that there are 10-30 cases per 10,000 over a 14-day period in the relevant county or counties.

## Scenario 3 – Indicators for high transmission levels (orange)

**Transmission levels have further depleted or exhausted institutional resources.**

Increased case activity may be occurring on campus, in the community, or both. If two or more of the following indicators are met, strongly consider implementing mitigation efforts suggested in Scenario 3.

- Number of infections continue to increase over the two weeks after Scenario 2 mitigation efforts have been put into place.
- Cases reported among those students who are routinely on campus comprise more than 3% of students over a 14-day period.
- Consider where spread is occurring when using this indicator. Is it mostly on-campus housing or off-campus housing?
- More than 75% of isolation and quarantine beds are full.
- Students and staff are not complying with public health mitigation recommendations, such as masking, social distancing, and avoiding social gatherings.
- Other internal metrics of capacity and staffing suggest a more aggressive approach to mitigation.
- K-12 indicators show that there are more than 30 cases per 10,000 over a 14-day period in the relevant county or counties.

## Scenario 4 – Sustained level of high transmission in the community (deep orange)

**Transmission levels have seriously depleted or exhausted institutional, community, or state resources, or the state is experiencing extensive community-wide spread.**

## Scenario 5 – Sustained level of high transmission at institution (red)

**Transmission levels have exhausted institutional resources.**

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## Action items in response to scenarios

### Scenario 1 – Low level of transmission (green)

Transmission levels are not taxing the institution's resources. The assumption is that many of these recommendations will already have been implemented prior to students returning to campus and per the recommendations found at [Guidance for Mitigating COVID-19 at Higher Education Institutions \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/guideihe.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/guideihe.pdf).

#### General recommendations

- Have plans in place that follow the [Guidance for Mitigating COVID-19 at Higher Education Institutions \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/guideihe.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/guideihe.pdf).

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

- Ensure that information technology inventory can support students, staff, and faculty learning or working remotely.

### **Leadership and communication**

- Activate a communications plan for all faculty, staff, and students about what behaviors are expected in the fall to help mitigate further spread of the virus. Use the institution's main communications channels to disseminate as broadly as possible.
- Update and institute recommended MDH protocols for social distancing.
- Stand ready to provide training for use of education and communication platforms.
- Assign leader(s) to each of the following to ensure clear communication and direction:
  - Enforcement of policies, including social distancing, masking, and any code of conduct policies that may be applicable at a given institution relating to willful violations.
  - Team leads or groups to reinforce notions of ethical and moral responsibility for self and others in the institutional community.
  - Liaisons with local public health and other local officials as needed.

### **Academic programming**

- Follow MDH IHE guidance and reduce class sizes to conform to social distancing standards. Remove tables and chairs in accordance with ADA standards and in keeping with any expressed accessibility issues.
- Consider flexible and staggered scheduling of courses.
- Re-examine available resources to support a wide range of teaching strategies and scenarios (e.g., hybrid/blended learning, fully online, in-person with distancing, students connecting virtually, faculty teaching remotely).

### **Residence life and dining**

- Follow MDH IHE Guidance.
- Develop a communications plan for all students (on- and off-campus), that contains:
  - A list of available resources.
  - MDH protocols for household living.
  - Public transport options.

### **Employee support services**

- Ensure there is a designated human resources contact list for employees to call with questions or concerns.
- Communicate the institution's available employee assistance program (EAP) options.

### **Campus security**

- Reduce points of entry to buildings.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

- Communicate safety plans to campus communities. Regardless of the level of surge severity, regular communications are encouraged with all stakeholders that point to posted information about plans and solicits feedback.
- Reassess the use of facilities for events or rentals using recommended guidelines from local, state, federal governments, and university or college policies and procedures.

### **Scenario 2 – Medium level of transmission (yellow)**

**Transmission levels are taxing campus resources. All prior recommendations apply, with the following additional recommendations. Review all managed outbreak actions and then proceed.**

#### **General recommendations**

- Reinforce health etiquette expectations.
- Communicate expectations to students, faculty, and staff both on and off campus.
- Cancel events and activities that bring groups of students together when social distancing cannot be easily maintained; consider limiting social and activity gatherings to 10 indoors and 10 outdoors.
- Reach out to LPH and MDH for testing support.
- Reach out to LPH, regional health care organizations, and MDH for PPE support.
- Monitor and maintain proper inventories of critical supplies (e.g., cleaning and disinfectant agents, hand sanitizers, PPE-related supplies).
- Consider imposing a campus curfew.
- Establish relationships with city and county officials in case broader mitigation efforts are needed that would require support and buy-in from local officials and leadership.

#### **Screening for symptoms and testing**

- Find innovative ways to remind students to look for symptoms of COVID-19.
- Promote the importance of self-screening.
- In collaboration with MDH or LPH, consider broad testing for areas where there are clusters on campus (dorms, activities, etc.). Further considerations can be found in the testing section of the [Guidance for Mitigating COVID-19 at Higher Education Institutions \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/guideihe.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/guideihe.pdf).

#### **Leadership and communication**

- Provide messaging via the campus website, social media, and emails to campus constituents with concerns and needs to better adhere to guidelines as well as restrictions as noted above.
- Consider extra communication and precautions for people who are considered high risk for severe illness.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

- Ensure all communications with stakeholders (students, staff, faculty, and surrounding community) are current and the messages conveyed are uniformly delivered to ensure that everyone is informed.
- Adjust operations in human resources, facilities, finance, academics, etc., to account for shifts in services and demand with increased number of cases.
- Communicate and reiterate recommendations for staff, faculty, and students who feel sick to stay home.

### **Academic programming**

- Professors should be prepared to continue teaching students who are in quarantine or isolation, and ensure academic continuity for students at any point in the semester.
- Modify courses where students are not able to social distance.
  - Example: for lab classes, find ways to reduce the need for activities that need partners.

### **Residence life and dining**

- Move to more to-go options on campus and consider a curbside pickup option for meals.
- Ensure that social distancing expectations can be strictly enforced in dining rooms.
  - In some cases, leaving dining open but restricting flow and seating will be more effective than students going elsewhere and gathering.
- Work with MDH or LPH to consider initiating options for extra capacity for quarantine and isolation.
  - Decisions to raise capacity should be guided by local, state, and federal recommended guidelines. Each institution's ability to raise capacity is unique; confer with your designated leadership group for guidance.

### **Athletics and recreational programs**

- Consider not having spectators at games or practices.

### **Campus operations and maintenance**

- Consider modifying or limiting hours of operation (especially for areas where students tend to gather or cluster).
- Continue to monitor and enforce recommended MDH guidelines for social distancing.
- Ensure that enforcement strictly adheres with an institution's policies and procedures.

### **Community engagement and support**

- Communicate safety plans to campus communities. Regardless of the level of surge severity, regular communications to all stakeholders that point to available information about plans and solicit feedback are encouraged.

### **Third-party use of facilities, events, and rentals**

- Consider canceling or reducing events and rentals.

## Scenario 3 – High level of transmission (orange)

**Transmission levels have seriously depleted or exhausted institutional resources. All prior recommendations apply with these additions.**

### General recommendations

- Extracurricular activities/clubs/organizations should be significantly scaled back in terms of attendance, frequency of meeting, and moved to virtual wherever possible; consider postponing or canceling where feasible.
- If implementing Scenario 3 as a precaution to high levels of community spread, ensure seating assignments or partners in classes where 6-foot social distancing cannot be maintained. This will reduce exposures and facilitate contact tracing should a student become ill.
  - For health care worker students in labs or classes that cannot adhere to social distancing requirements, those classes should be using face shields and standard masks for personal protective equipment (PPE).
- If implementing Scenario 3 as a result of continued on-campus spread and as a progression from scenario 2, consider canceling all in-person classes for two weeks, or cancel in-person classes for one week and then allow classes that can maintain 6-foot social distancing back in session only if improvement is seen in student and staff buy-in to social distancing, wearing face coverings, and other related behaviors.
- Reach out to LPH and MDH for testing support.
- Reach out to LPH and MDH for PPE support.
- Monitor and maintain proper inventories of critical supplies (e.g., cleaning and disinfectant agents, hand sanitizers, PPE related supplies).
- Impose a campus curfew.
- Begin working with city and county officials for other community wide approaches to mitigate transmission.

### Leadership and communication

- Ensure regular update on status.
- Review plans to cease in-person classes if Scenario 4 must be activated.
- Hold virtual town hall meetings with campus community.
- Plan social media outreach, monitoring, and response.

### Academic programming

- Consider moving classes that cannot adhere to 6-foot social distancing to online only.

### Residence life and dining

- Restrict outside access to dorms and residence halls.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

- Work with off-campus housing to consider limiting visitation.
- Consider allowing some students to move home to virtual learning and reduce number of students to one person per room in a residential facility.
- Keep dining halls open so students do not gather elsewhere, but reduce the number of people that can sit at a table to two.
  - Ensure social distancing of 6 feet or greater in all other arrangements.
  - Continue to promote grab-and-go options for dining.

### **Student support services**

- Move student support services to virtual/digital format (e.g., telemental health).
- Consider how to support students who already experience racial disparities; COVID-19 is exacerbating those disparities.

### **Employee support services**

- Share EAP contacts, mental health services, and retirement planning services.

### **Information technology**

- Ensure access to loanable computers, including desktops, laptops, tablets, Chromebooks, etc.
- Ensure remote access to computer labs.
- Check availability of Wi-Fi hotspots.
- Have local ISP providers for student access.
- Make troubleshooting guides available for student internet connectivity issues.
- Create a support plan for issues that may occur as faculty and staff work from home.

### **Athletics and recreational programs**

- Consider moving to individual development only for all athletics.
- Consider closing weight rooms.
- Allow only activities that can be done while wearing face coverings in a gym or fitness facility.

### **Campus operations and maintenance**

- Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfecting on campus.

### **Campus security**

- Lock and secure access points as appropriate
- Patrol access points and interior facilities.

### **Community engagement and support**

- Communicate pandemic plan and lock-down procedures in place.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

- Consider if and how college or university facilities and other resources could be made available for pandemic response actions.

### **Third-party use of facilities, events, and rentals**

- Consider canceling all third-party events and refund deposits, to the extent possible.

### **Plan for next phase if numbers do not decrease**

- Consider ways to reduce the number of residents in residence halls.

## **Scenario 4 – Sustained level of high transmission in the community (deep orange)**

**Transmission levels have seriously depleted or exhausted institutional, community or state resources, or the state is experiencing extensive community wide spread.**

### **General requirements**

- Mitigation efforts listed in this section are meant to be in combination with recommendations listed in Scenario 1 through 3.
- Implement a campus wide “lay low” period and direct students to stay at home and limit movement to attend courses when needed, study areas, work, or other essential services like healthcare, mental health, food service take out/pick up.
- Extracurricular activities/clubs/organizations should be significantly scaled back in terms of attendance, frequency of meeting, and moved to virtual wherever possible; consider postponing or canceling where feasible.
- MDH strongly recommends imposing a campus curfew of 10 p.m. to 4 a.m.
- Monitor and maintain proper inventories of critical supplies (e.g., cleaning and disinfectant agents, hand sanitizers, PPE related supplies).
- If currently experiencing elevated cases of COVID-19 on campus, follow this guidance:
  - [Guidance for COVID-19 Cases and Outbreaks in Higher Education \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihecases.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihecases.pdf).

### **Academic programming**

- To the extent possible move classes that cannot adhere to 6-foot social distancing to online only.
- If classes that cannot adhere to social distancing must still be in-session, seating assignments or partners must be assigned to reduce exposures and facilitate contact tracing should a student become ill.
  - For health care worker students in labs or classes that cannot adhere to social distancing requirements, those classes should be using face shields and standard masks for personal protective equipment (PPE).

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

- Libraries, student unions, conference rooms, etc. can be open for the purpose of studying, but must adhere to social distancing. As much as possible students should limit who they study with in-person to one other person.
- To the extent possible cancel or postpone all in-person group music, choir, or theatre rehearsals or performances, unless social distancing and masking requirements can be strictly adhered to.
  - In person spectators are not allowed, consider using virtual methods to broadcast performances.
- One on one music and voice lessons can continue, but virtual options should replace in-person to the maximum extent possible. Review other classroom requirements in [Guidance for Mitigating COVID-19 at Higher Education Institutions \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/guideihe.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/guideihe.pdf).

### **Fitness facilities, gyms, weight rooms, and field houses**

- Gyms, fitness facilities, weight rooms, and field houses can be open up to 25% with no more than 100 people for recreational use.
  - People must be spaced at least 12 feet apart.
  - People must wear face coverings at all times.
  - No group classes are allowed, unless part of a course or practicum.
  - Further guidance can be found at [Stay Safe Guidance For Gyms, Studios, and Fitness Centers \(staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/gyms-studios-fitness-centers.jsp\)](http://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/gyms-studios-fitness-centers.jsp).
- Additionally, consider offering online exercise, yoga, or other activities for students, faculty, and staff. Encourage students to go for walks/runs in the park as weather permits.

### **Athletics and recreational programs**

- Intramural, club, and other recreational sports are not allowed until at least Jan. 4, 2021. However, people may gather to participate in outdoor recreational activities that allow for social distancing so long as that group does not exceed three household-like pods, plus a coach or instructor, up to a total of 15 people.
- MDH strongly recommends that intercollegiate athletic activities be postponed or cancelled.
- If a higher education institute chooses to continue intercollegiate athletic programming, athletes must be tested for COVID-19 three times per week even during weeks when there is no competition and there is only practice. At least one of the three tests must be by Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR).
  - This testing criteria only applies to teams that are part of a Minnesota institute of higher education, this criteria does not apply to teams from colleges and universities from out of state. However, Minnesota teams should review COVID-19 plans and mitigation efforts of teams from outside of Minnesota to review that adequate measures for minimizing transmission of COVID-19 are in place.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

- Any coach or staff who is going to have regular interaction with the athletes must also follow the testing recommendations.
- Multi-team events or tournaments are not allowed.
- Take extra precautions when travelling with a team, including extra busses to ensure the ability to spread out, testing before leaving for travel, contingency plans if a player tests positive while at an away game.
- Team meetings should be held virtually; if must be in-person then ensure 6 foot social distancing and masking.
- For further guidance on sports activities, please see sports guidance for higher education at [COVID-19 Sports Guidance for Higher Education \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/sportsihe.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/sportsihe.pdf).

### Residence life and dining

- To the extent possible, restrict access to dorms and residence halls to residents or necessary staff only, do not allow outside visitors.
- Have students stay in household like pods, for students living in residential facilities they should be limited to interacting with smaller sections of housing, such as a floor of a dorm or resident hall.
- In general, study lounges, kitchens, or other common areas located in residential buildings should not exceed more than five people at any given time unless space allows for strict adherence to 6 foot social distancing.
- Continue to promote grab-and-go options for dining.
  - Keep dining halls open so students do not gather elsewhere, and to the extent possible reduce the number of people that can sit at a table to two.
  - Accommodate students with dietary limitations or restrictions.
  - Ensure social distancing of 6 feet or greater in all other arrangements.
  - Continue to follow [Campus Dining Services Guidance for Higher Education Institutions \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihedining.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihedining.pdf).

### Student support services

- As much as possible, move student support services to virtual/digital format (e.g., tele health).
- Support students who already experience racial, ethnic or socio-economic disparities; COVID-19 is exacerbating these disparities.
- Follow guidance for isolation and quarantine of students:
  - [Isolation and Quarantine Quick Reference Guidance for Higher Education \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/iheisolation.pdf\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/iheisolation.pdf).

### Employee support services

- Share EAP contacts, mental health services, and retirement planning services.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

- Ensure proper PPE for staff working with students who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, including health services staff and facilities staff.
  - If PPE supplies are low and shortages exist, reach out to LPH first and then to MDH IHE team to be connected to possible resources
  - [COVID-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance for Institutes of Higher Education \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/cleanihe.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/cleanihe.html)

### Information technology

- Continue mitigation efforts from Scenario 3.

### Planned breaks – Winter and holiday breaks

- Encourage students to minimize interactions with others before traveling for the holidays or winter break.
- Once students return:
  - If residential campuses, promote testing seven days after returning from travels.
  - If non-residential campus, encourage students to get tested seven days after returning from travel, especially if their travel involved being around a lot of other people (airports, bus, etc.).

### Campus security

- Continue mitigation efforts from Scenario 3.

### Community engagement and support

- Continue mitigation efforts from Scenario 3.

### Third-party use of facilities, events, and rentals

- Consider postponing or canceling third party events.
- Follow updated guidance for events and other venues per Executive Order 20-103 found at [Stay Safe Guidance \(staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/index.jsp\)](http://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/index.jsp).

### Leadership and communication

- Ensure regular updates on status of cases on campus and in Minnesota.
- Communicate aggressively about what is changing and how students, staff, and faculty can all help curb COVID-19 spread by changing behavior.
- Hold virtual town hall meetings or other regularly scheduled communications with the campus community.

## Scenario 5 – Sustained level of high transmission at institution (red)

Transmission levels have exhausted institutional resources.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

The above mitigation efforts have not resulted in an improvement over a two- to three-week period after Scenario 3 or 4 has been put in place. Campus should move to online only until the next semester or after break.

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## Development of this document

This document was created using the following resources and in collaboration with partners in higher education, including guidance from the MDH IHE Surge Capacity Workgroup. Transmission risk level thresholds were created based on current MDH higher education and K-12 guidance, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance, MDH and IHE workgroups, and EAB (formerly the Education Advisory Board) threshold indicators:

- [Institutes of Higher Education \(IHE\): COVID-19 \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihe.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ihe.html)
- [2020-2021 Planning Guide for Schools: Health Considerations for Navigating COVID-19 \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/k12planguide.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/k12planguide.pdf)
- [CDC: Interim Guidance for Administrators of U.S. Institutions of Higher Education \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-ihe-response.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-ihe-response.html)
- [EAB: How will we know that an outbreak on campus has become uncontainable? \(eab.com/insights/expert-insight/academic-affairs/when-an-outbreak-on-campus-has-become-uncontainable/\)](http://eab.com/insights/expert-insight/academic-affairs/when-an-outbreak-on-campus-has-become-uncontainable/)

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## Resources

### General

- [ACHA Guidelines: Consideration for Reopening Institutions of Higher Education in the COVID-19 Era \(www.acha.org/documents/resources/guidelines/ACHA\\_Considerations\\_for\\_Reopening\\_IHEs\\_in\\_the\\_COVID-19\\_Era\\_May2020.pdf\)](http://www.acha.org/documents/resources/guidelines/ACHA_Considerations_for_Reopening_IHEs_in_the_COVID-19_Era_May2020.pdf)
- [CDC: Interim Guidance for Administrators of U.S. Institutions of Higher Education \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/guidance-administrators-college-higher-education.pdf\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/guidance-administrators-college-higher-education.pdf)
- [State of Connecticut: Governor Lamont Receives Recommendations for a Phased Reopening of Colleges and Universities in Connecticut \(portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2020/05-2020/Governor-Lamont-Receives-Recommendations-for-a-Phased-Reopening-of-Colleges-and-Universities\)](http://portal.ct.gov/Office-of-the-Governor/News/Press-Releases/2020/05-2020/Governor-Lamont-Receives-Recommendations-for-a-Phased-Reopening-of-Colleges-and-Universities)
- [Inside Higher Ed: Fall Scenario #13: A HyFlex Model \(www.insidehighered.com/print/blogs/learning-innovation/fall-scenario-13-hyflex-model\)](http://www.insidehighered.com/print/blogs/learning-innovation/fall-scenario-13-hyflex-model)
- [Minnesota COVID-19 Response: Who should get tested? \(mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/is-it-covid/\)](http://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/is-it-covid/)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVID-19 TRANSMISSION  
AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

- [CDC: Caring for Someone Sick at Home \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html)

**Signage**

- [CDC: COVID-19 Print Resources \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html?Sort=Date%3A%3Adesc)

**Campus recreation**

- [NIRSA: Coronavirus Updates and Resources for Campus Recreation \(nirsa.net/nirsa/covid19/\)](http://nirsa.net/nirsa/covid19/)

**Housing**

- [CDC: Clinical Questions About COVID-19: Questions and Answers \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html)
- [ACUHO-I: COVID-19 \(Novel Coronavirus\) Resources \(www.acuho-i.org/covid19\)](http://www.acuho-i.org/covid19)
- [CDC: Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html)

**Mental health support**

- [HEMHA College Counseling from a Distance: Deciding Whether and When to Engage in Telemental Health Services \(hemha.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/HEMHA-Distance-Counseling\\_FINAL2019.pdf\)](http://hemha.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/HEMHA-Distance-Counseling_FINAL2019.pdf)
- [American Counseling Association: Counseling in a Time of COVID-19 \(www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/mental-health-resources/trauma-disaster/mental-health-professional-counseling-and-emergency-preparedness\)](http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/mental-health-resources/trauma-disaster/mental-health-professional-counseling-and-emergency-preparedness)
- [SAMHSA: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) \(www.samhsa.gov/coronavirus\)](http://www.samhsa.gov/coronavirus)
- [Mental Health America: Mental Health and COVID-19 Information and Resources \(mhanational.org/covid19#ForMentalHealthProviders\)](http://mhanational.org/covid19#ForMentalHealthProviders)



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