

Hygiene Policy of the University of Mannheim (as at 3 April 2022)

Policy for additional temporary measures to protect employees from infection with SARS-CoV-2

When it comes to working in times of the coronavirus pandemic, the safety and health of our employees comes first. Safety at work is key in this regard. In light of the present epidemiological situation, this hygiene policy lays out the necessary measures that must be followed by all employees within the buildings, premises, and vehicles of the university. The regulations for our employees also apply to our students and all other members and affiliates of the university.

The hygiene policy is regularly adapted to the latest provisions and recommendations of legislation, ordinances, and authorities as well as to the corresponding measures taken or adapted by the university to contain the spread of the coronavirus and the influence of such measures on the restrictions that the university is subject to or has to implement. The latest version can be found on the intranet at <https://intranet.uni-mannheim.de/en/news-room/coronavirus-current-measures-and-recommendations>

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1. General hygiene and distancing regulations and working from home

The occupational health and safety standard does not differentiate between vaccinated, tested or recovered persons or others. The following regulations apply:

- a. The President's Office recommends wearing a surgical face mask or a respirator that complies with the standards FFP2 (DIN EN 149:2001), KN95 or N95, KF 94, KF99 or a comparable standard on the premises and in the buildings of the university (in circulation areas) wherever the minimum distance of 1.5 meters to other people cannot be maintained.
- b. A surgical face mask in accordance with DIN EN 14683:1910 or a respirator that complies with the standards FFP2 (DIN EN 149:2001), KN95 or N95, KF 94, KF99 or a comparable standard must be worn by employees at their workplace. Wearing a surgical face mask may be waived, provided that the minimum distance of 1.5 meters can be maintained and rooms are aired intensively and adequately (see <https://www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Publikationen/Praxis-kompakt/F93.pdf? blob=publicationFile&v=9> (only available in German)), or other appropriate safety measures are in place (cf. no. 4). If employees are in contact with people not wearing masks, e.g. students, employees are obligated to wear an FFP2 mask or a mask with a similar standard.
- c. Consultations should still be held digitally, wherever possible, or by appointment and by taking the required distance into account.
- d. The recommendation or obligation for employees to wear a face mask does not apply to **kids** up to the age of six and for persons who are unable to wear a mask or **cannot** wear a mask for health reasons or other substantial reasons or when other appropriate safety measures are in place for other people. In order for employees to work on university premises, the university will provide them with appropriate masks (surgical masks or FFP2 masks) for use at the workplace/in the office and in circulation areas. Students are individually responsible for securing appropriate face masks.
- e. In particular, employees are to practice **cough and sneeze etiquette** and to observe hand hygiene regulations.
- f. Rooms must be aired frequently (please find important information on **airing** offices during the coronavirus pandemic on <https://www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Publikationen/Praxis-kompakt/F93.pdf? blob=publicationFile&v=9> (only available in German)).
- g. Office **equipment** and materials should always be used by the same person. If this is not possible, hands should be properly sanitized before using the utensils and the latter frequently cleaned, especially before being passed on to other people.
- h. Employees should carry out **office work** preferably from home or alternate between working from home and at the office provided this is possible in terms of technical equipment (for general guidelines regarding office workspaces, see no. 4). **Regardless of section 28b subsection 3 of the infection protection act (Gesetz zur Verhütung und Bekämpfung von Infektionskrankheiten beim Menschen - Infektionsschutzgesetz, IfSG)) ceasing to be effective after 19 March 2022, employees of the University of**

Mannheim are in any case given the option of continuing to work from home in consultation with their superiors up to and including 22 May 2022.

- i. Procedures are organized in a way as to ensure that employees have **as little contact as possible** to other people.
- j. **In case direct contact is unavoidable**, additional protection must be ensured primarily by setting up protective barriers, or, if not possible, by wearing surgical face masks or FFP2 masks (see nos. 1 b. and c.).
- k. People with flu-like **symptoms** and a suspected coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) infection (particularly fever, dry cough and shortness of breath, headaches, running nose, sore throat) are **not to enter** university premises. Employees with symptoms of a cold must leave the workplace or stay at home until their symptoms have been checked by a doctor.
- l. Additional **hygiene measures** such as provision of disinfectant dispensers and ensuring that student work spaces at the library are cleaned at frequent intervals are in place.
- m. All **employees** are provided with one **at-home test kit** per week, in order to offer those who have to work on the university's premises the possibility to test themselves. The tests are distributed by internal mail or can be collected at the university post office in L1,1.
- n. The collective safety measures need to be reviewed and possibly extended for **employees with particular needs** regarding their protection against an infection from co-workers or customers, if necessary in cooperation with the occupational medical service.
- o. Superiors should actively communicate to their units that their **health comes first** and make sure that the additional infection control measures and guidelines of the university are explained in a clear, comprehensible way.

In addition, the regulations of the hygiene policies of the University Library (<https://www.bib.uni-mannheim.de/en/coronavirus/>) and the Institute of Sports (<https://www.uni-mannheim.de/en/sports/covid-19-special-rules/>) apply.

2. Restriction of the maximum number of people allowed to assemble

- a. The current version of the Corona Ordinance of the Land of Baden-Württemberg (Corona-Verordnung, CoronaVO) and the additional group-specific regulations for the non-public area determine the **maximum number of people that are currently allowed to assemble within the university buildings and premises**, provided the hygiene and distancing regulations specified above are observed (<https://www.baden-wuerttemberg.de/en/service/aktuelle-infos-zu-corona/aktuelle-corona-verordnung-des-landes-baden-wuerttemberg/>). **Work-related events** also need to comply with the occupational health and safety regulations that may stipulate stricter rules regarding the number of people and the minimum distances. This hygiene policy takes these

rules into account. Additional **hygiene policies** and regulations have been drawn up for the following areas and situations:

- the University Library (<https://www.bib.uni-mannheim.de/en/corona/>),
- meetings of university bodies, other work-related events, and external events (see no. 7 and 8),
- teaching operations (see no. 9),
- events of the Institute of Sports (<https://www.uni-mannheim.de/sport/informationen/covid-19/>), and
- job interviews and interviews for professorial appointments (see no. 10).

The President's Office may approve further exceptions. University operations are given priority when it comes to the allocation of rooms.

- b. In **public areas** (e. g. sidewalks in front of the university, bus stops), the provisions of the current versions of the Corona Ordinance of the Land of Baden-Württemberg and, if relevant, the decree of the City of Mannheim apply.

3. General guidelines for office workspaces

In addition to the general hygiene and distancing regulations, the following guidelines apply in the office environment (see also nos. 2.7, 4.1, 4.2 of the occupational health and safety standard, link listed under no. 12):

- a. In case it is necessary that several employees work in the same room, the number of people must be reduced to the minimum necessary for operation unless equivalent protection can be provided by other measures. Insofar as it is in terms of technical equipment and the type of work, **employees may carry out office work from home** or may combine working from home and working at the office (see no. 1 h).
- b. Employees who work at the office are to be given an **individual office space** insofar as this is possible. To ensure this by and large, all organizational possibilities should be exhausted (e.g. dividing employees up in teams, working in shifts, working from home, reorganizing working hours).
- c. If employees cannot be provided with an individual office, but several people need to be present simultaneously, the office desks should be set out in a way that ensures that employees are not sitting directly opposite of each other and that they can maintain the minimum distance of 1.5 meters from one another. If the latter is not possible, employees should be separated by protective desk dividers or wear a single-use surgical face mask or FFP2 mask (see no. 1b). Appropriate organizational measures need to be taken to ensure that the hygiene and distancing regulations are observed.

- d. Offices must be aired frequently (important notes on **airing** offices during the coronavirus pandemic at: [https://www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Publikationen/Praxis-kompakt/F93.pdf? blob=publicationFile&v=9](https://www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Publikationen/Praxis-kompakt/F93.pdf?blob=publicationFile&v=9) (only available in German)).

4. General guidelines for positions involving contact to customers or other people

In addition to the general hygiene and distancing regulations, the following guidelines apply to positions involving personal contact to customers or other people:

- a. Personal contact to or advising of customers or other people should be kept **digital wherever possible**.
- b. At the entrance of the respective area, a sign must be hung up advising customers of the **general hygiene and distancing** recommendations and the recommendation to wear a surgical face mask or a FFP2 face mask (see no. 1 b.).
- c. Certain measures such as access restrictions or appointment-only policies must be taken in order to ensure that the respective areas are occupied by as few people as possible and that the **recommended minimum distance of 1.5 meters** between individuals can be maintained.
- d. For employees working behind **counters**, adequate barriers must be installed between staff and customers.
- e. **Customers** should be enabled to **disinfect their hands** before entering the area, provided this is possible and sufficient disinfectant is available. The respective university institutions keep an eye on the hand disinfectants, make sure to fill up the dispensers, and take appropriate measures to prevent theft.
- f. If they come into contact with persons not wearing face masks and to whom the minimum distance of 1.5 meters cannot be maintained, e.g. students, employees must wear an FFP2 face mask or a mask with a similar standard, as long as there are no other appropriate measures in place (e.g. protective barriers in places of personal contact).
- g. **Employees** must be enabled to **wash** their hands with soap under running water and dry them off with disposable paper towels in close proximity to their workspace. Alternatively, they can use the disinfectant supplied or use disposable gloves.
- h. Plastic, glass or metal surfaces touched by customers are cleaned by the cleaning services in accordance with the respective [cleaning policy](#) in place.

5. Examinations

The President's Office recommends wearing a surgical mask or FFP2 mask until seated.

6. Contact with external persons and companies

- a. Any communication with non-university members should **take place in written form, via e-mail or telephone, or via video or telephone conference.**
- b. In addition, the following regulations apply to **external companies** entering the premises for technical work:
 - The company is required to notify the Reception Desk at the main university entrance beforehand.
 - Only the Reception Desk can grant access and hand over keys to the university buildings.
- c. Non-university members are recommended to **maintain distance to others and to wear a surgical face mask or an FFP2 mask** within the university buildings (see no. 11 a).

7. Meetings of university bodies and other work-related events

Meetings of statutory bodies of the University of Mannheim, or other work-related events that are necessary to maintain the operations of the university (e.g. team meetings at chairs, meetings of university bodies, meetings of doctoral students, academic conferences, and symposia) **may be held in person, if there is an operational or official necessity.** Otherwise, they should take place by electronic means of information and communication. Necessary decisions are to be made via telephone or video conferences and by way of circulation and accelerated proceedings. Operational or official necessity is given, for example, if necessary decisions made during telephone or video conferences or circulation and accelerated proceedings are legally not permissible or if a meeting in person is deemed necessary for research, teaching, and administration and cannot be replaced by an online meeting. A decision on whether a work-related event shall be held in person or online must be made carefully and in consideration of the general pandemic situation (incidence levels, etc.).

The operational **necessity is checked** and an event **must be approved** by

- the event organizer in case of max. 100 participants,
- the Service- and Marketing GmbH upon request in case of 101 participants or more. In case of doubt, the Service- and Marketing GmbH and the event organizer may contact the Task Force, and

Events must comply with the following provisions:

- a. All participants must keep a distance of 1.5 meters at all times. Under certain conditions and with reasons, the President's Office can allow for exceptions if need be, particularly in the following cases:
 - Events taking place outside

- Events with a majority of external participants (e.g. conferences).
- b. For meetings of statutory bodies of the University of Mannheim, or other work-related events the President's Office recommends wearing a surgical face mask or an FFP2 face mask to all participants except the speakers, who need to maintain the minimum distance; employees are obligated to wear a surgical face mask or an FFP2 face mask if other participants in the meeting are not wearing face masks. When seated, the mask may be taken off, provided that the minimum distance of 1.5 m can be maintained.
- c. Rooms must be aired intensively and frequently (important note on airing offices during the coronavirus pandemic: [https://www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Publicationen/Praxis-kompakt/F93.pdf? blob=publicationFile&v=9](https://www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Publicationen/Praxis-kompakt/F93.pdf?blob=publicationFile&v=9)).
- d. Catering may be offered under the conditions set forth in the [Information Sheet on Event Catering at the University of Mannheim](#). Participants must be able to maintain the minimum distance.
- e. To keep the groups as small as possible, guests are to join meetings via video or telephone conference.
- f. The rooms in which the meetings are held are sanitized by the cleaning services according to the respective [cleaning policy](#) in place.

8. External events

Events that are neither work-related events nor courses and that are organized by external persons not belonging to the University of Mannheim may take place under the conditions set forth in the Corona Ordinance (CoronaVO) or in a general ordinance of the City of Mannheim. Such events are approved upon request by

- the Service & Marketing GmbH in case of max. 100 participants. In case of doubt, the Service & Marketing GmbH will contact the task force.
- the task force (task-force@uni-mannheim.de) in case of 101 participants or more and

Catering can be offered under the conditions set forth in the Information Sheet on Event Catering at the University of Mannheim, if the minimum distance can be maintained. The university's regulations for the allocation of rooms remain unaffected. The event organizers must have a hygiene policy. The hygiene policy presented by the event organizers must at least fulfill the requirements of the hygiene policy of the University of Mannheim.

9. Courses

In-person classes take place in accordance with the Coronavirus Ordinance and this hygiene policy.

In addition to the general hygiene and distancing regulations, the following recommendations apply to in-person classes:

- a. **Wearing masks:** Inside the university building, wearing a surgical face mask or FFP2 mask is recommended. In class, the persons presenting may remove their masks provided that the minimum distance of 1.5 m to all other persons can be kept.
- b. **Airing:** If the room is not automatically ventilated, teachers must make sure that the rooms are aired at regular intervals during class. Signs in the rooms inform about the mode of airing. The room has to be manually aired by opening the windows every 20 minutes for 5 minutes. At the end of class, the lecture hall must be aired with windows and doors wide open.

10. Job interviews and interviews for professorial appointments

Job interviews and interviews for professorial appointments may be held in person. Furthermore, the general hygiene and distancing regulations as well as the additional regulations for meetings of university bodies and other work-related events (see no. 7) must be observed.

By decision of the interviewing chair, job interviews and interviews for professorial appointments can also be held via electronic communication channels using a system recommended by the University IT (see <https://www.uni-mannheim.de/it/digitale-jobinterviews>).

In any case, applicants with disabilities must be offered an interview in person. If requested by an applicant with a disability, the interview can also be conducted electronically.

11. Preventive occupational health measures

Employees can seek individual medical advice from the occupational medical service, including consultation on special risk factors such as underlying conditions or personal predispositions. Employees can also consult the medical service about psychological stress.

Consultation is offered by telephone or by means of electronic telecommunication.

12. Legal bases and recommendations of the public authorities

The hygiene policy is based on the following laws and recommendations:

- Infection protection act (Gesetz zur Verhütung und Bekämpfung von Infektionskrankheiten beim Menschen - Infektionsschutzgesetz, IfSG) as of 20 July 2000 as amended on 18 March 2022 (<https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/ifsg/>).
- Decree of the state government from 1 April 2022 ordering measures to protect the population from infections and prevent the further spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus (**Corona-Verordnung - CoronaVO**) – current version: https://www.baden-wuerttemberg.de/fileadmin/redaktion/dateien/PDF/Coronainfos/Corona_2022/220401_12te_CoronaVO.pdf
- SARS-CoV-2 occupational health and safety regulation (SARS-CoV-2-Arbeitsschutzverordnung) as of 17 March 2022 (BAnz AT 18.03.2022 V1), http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/corona-arbschv_2022-03/Corona-ArbSchV.pdf
- SARS-CoV-2 occupational health and safety rules of the working committees at the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) as of 24 November 2021: <https://www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Rechtstexte-und-Technische-Regeln/Regelwerk/AR-CoV-2/pdf/AR-CoV-2.pdf?blob=publicationFile&v=8> (in German)
- Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs: SARS-CoV-2 Occupational health and safety standard (SARS-CoV-2-Arbeitsschutzstandard), as at 22 February 2021: <https://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Arbeitsschutz/sars-cov-2-arbeitsschutzstandard.pdf?blob=publicationFile&v=1>
- Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA): COVID-19 – Guidelines for employers and employees working primarily in an office environment as at 21 March 2022: https://www.baua.de/DE/Themen/Arbeitsgestaltung-im-Betrieb/Coronavirus/Coronavirus_node.html (in German)
- Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BAuA): Airing offices during the pandemic, 1st edition November 2020, <https://www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Publikationen/Praxis-kompakt/F93.pdf?blob=publicationFile&v=9>
- Robert Koch Institute: Guidelines for sanitization and disinfection as at 3 July 2020: https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/Reinigung_Desinfektion.html (in German)
- Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA): Information on the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) and COVID-19 as at 10 February 2022: <https://www.infektionsschutz.de/coronavirus/wie-verhalte-ich-mich/im-beruflichen-umfeld.html#c13971> (in German)
- Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA), available materials for download as at 19 March 2022: <https://www.infektionsschutz.de/coronavirus/materialien-downloads.html> (in German)