Phase II Restart Guidance—NDSU Ag Affairs

Governor Burgum has the state in the Green Level (Low Risk) Category.

Phase II Guidance will become effective on June 15, 2020.

**Overarching Guidance (from Phase I Restart)**

- Employees must follow applicable Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and North Dakota Department of Health (NDDOH) guidelines
- At this time, main campus buildings will remain closed to the public.
- Prior to re-opening or having public visitors, each location is required to complete the NDDOH Work Place Assessment tool. This applies to all county offices, REC's and other off campus locations. The assessment tool can be found at this link: https://www.health.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/Files/MSS/coronavirus/Workplace_self_assessment_ND.pdf
  - For county offices, your District Director will review the completed assessment and determine approval. For REC's, the Experiment Station Director will review the completed assessment and determine approval.
- To the fullest extent possible, flexible hours and flexible work sites (remote work) are strongly encouraged. Specific questions and arrangements regarding remote work will be addressed by the employee’s immediate supervisor, as well as the appropriate REC Director, District Director, or Department Heads/Chairs/Director.
- County offices may resume normal work schedules congruent with guidance from the county.

**Phase II Guidance for Meetings and Events**

- This guidance applies to all counties in the state.
- This guidance includes pesticide trainings and exams, 4-H activities, individual on-farm visits, programs taught by volunteers and all events sponsored by NDSU Extension or carried out by Extension staff as well as other outreach activities conducted by departments, REC’s, and other NDSU Ag Affairs entities.
- Local county and tribal extension offices and REC’s may engage in outdoor activities using the following guidelines and in compliance with the ND Smart Restart guidance for Large Group Gatherings (available at: https://www.ndresponse.gov/covid-19-resources/covid-19-business-and-employer-resources/nd-smart-restart/nd-smart-restart-protocols/large-gatherings):
  - For outdoor events:
    - Social distancing strictly adhered to, including transportation to plot tours.
    - Food and beverages may be served in congruence with the Yellow Category of the ND Smart Restart Guidelines for restaurants, bars, breweries, distilleries, and food trucks.
      - Food options such as boxed lunches are strongly encouraged.
    - Consider alternative formats for vulnerable populations.
Portable restrooms and/or frequent cleaning of restrooms in facilities at least every 2 hours.

Crowd size up to the 250 max per Governor’s guidelines and local health unit restrictions (whichever is more restrictive).

Suggested that sub-groups of 25 people or less be managed to maintain social distancing. Invite-only or RSVP’s could be an effective tool to manage group size and is suggested.

Strongly discourage the use of invited speakers and participants (including NDSU Employees) from areas with widespread community spread of COVID-19.

For indoor events:

- Social distancing strictly adhered to.
  - Meeting rooms at no more than 50% of certified occupancy.

- Food and beverages may be served in congruence with the Yellow Category of the ND Smart Restart Guidelines for restaurants, bars, breweries, distilleries, and food trucks.
  - Food options such as boxed lunches are strongly encouraged.

- Consider offering the program alternative formats for vulnerable populations.

- Frequent cleaning of restrooms in facilities at least every 2 hours.

For all events

- All events must comply and operate within the confines of any applicable local health unit restrictions.

- Advertising for all events must strongly caution attendees in susceptible categories of the relative risk of attending.

- Events that involve more than 25 people must be reviewed and approved by your department head, REC Director, or District Director prior to the event. This review will include applicable safety protocols, advertising, and other applicable items.

- No events that specifically recruit participants from susceptible demographics.

- For NDSU Extension sponsored events such as 4-H activities which involve volunteers, transportation of non-household members is at the discretion of the driver. Consult CDC guidance related to COVID-19 and transportation, including use of personal vehicles, at: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/using-transportation.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/using-transportation.html)

- Gatherings planned at the 4-H club/group level involving more than 25 participants (adults and youth) must submit a written "one time blanket request" to their local Extension Agent that they will resume in-person meetings following Phase II guidelines. This notification will cover all gatherings of this group for the 2020-2021 4-H year, ending August 31, 2021. Documentation of this approval must be made available upon the request of the Extension Agent’s supervisor.

Phase II Guidance for Employee Travel for all locations except for Campus-based personnel

- At the onset of the pandemic Ag Affairs personnel were instructed that only one person per vehicle was allowed to reduce the risk of spreading COVID.

- Given the updated guidance related to risk level from the state of North Dakota, we will be moving to a new phase of travel guidance. This guidance will become effective June 15, 2020.
• Unit leaders (REC directors and district directors) are authorized to allow multiple people to travel in the same vehicle. This is not a unilateral guidance and unit leaders will evaluate each situation on its’ own merits. Factors to consider in this decision include but are not limited to the following:
  o The relative risk of COVID transmission vs the relative risk of miles driven, multiple drivers traveling to a worksite, and the resulting risk of a motor vehicle accident.
  o The relative risk of multiple members of the same work crews being potentially exposed to COVID and potentially requiring isolation and/or quarantine.
  o The overall health and safety of your workforce and any underlying health conditions that may potentially contribute to increased risk for employees under your supervision.
  o The need for additional safety measures including precautions such as requiring masks while traveling.
  o Other factors related to the COVID risk including whether or not your locale continues to have ‘widespread community spread’ of COVID-19.

Phase II Guidance for Employee Travel for Campus-based Departments and Units

• Due to the continuing widespread community spread of COVID-19 current travel restrictions continue for campus-based work crews and include:
  o Vehicles must have hand sanitizer or soap and water available along with appropriate disposable hand towels and an appropriate trash receptacle
  o Established NDSU work groups may travel together if the trip is less than 5 minutes in length and the occupants are wearing cloth face coverings
  o For trips greater than 5 minutes in duration, only one person per vehicle allowed

Phase II Guidance related to Employee Health and Safety

• The health and safety of our employees is of utmost importance.
• Employees who are in demographic categories that have increased susceptibility to COVID-19 may opt out of face to face activities if proper safety measures cannot be implemented that will reasonably reduce their risk of exposure to COVID-19.
  o Examples of susceptible categories include but are not limited include: age, underlying health conditions such as diabetes or heart disease, and living with or caring for another individual with these conditions.
• Your direct supervisor will review your particular situation and work with you to help plan activities and workplace features which can help reduce the risk of COVID-19.
• These measures may include remote participation, partnering with neighboring units or counties, split work shifts, or other reasonable accommodations.

Please be advised that the pandemic has and will continue to result in rapidly changing conditions. This guidance is subject to change and, if necessary, a return to heightened restrictions with little advanced notice.

Updated August 25, 2020
Face Coverings

NDSU Ag Affairs units and the programs and events sponsored by our units will comply with the face covering guidelines issued by NDSU on July 31. Those guidelines can be found here: https://www.ndsu.edu/covid19/face_covering_guidelines