

Regulations for university operations during the Coronavirus pandemic at Bielefeld University

Organizational decree of 23.03.2020

Updated version of 30.11.20, valid from 01.12.2020

The university is still in a 'university operation during the coronavirus pandemic'. This organizational decree has been updated on the basis of the Coronavirus Protection Ordinance of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia dated 30.11.2020, the General Order of the Ministry of Labour, Health, and Social Affairs dated 30.11.2020, and the Quarantine Ordinance NRW dated 30.11.2020. It summarizes the current measures at Bielefeld University.

All measures continue to pursue the goal of ensuring the health of students, teachers, researchers, and technical and administrative staff by interrupting the chains of infection.

In principle, and independently from the following contingency plan, the following still applies:

- In principle, a minimum distance of 1.5 m must be maintained between persons
- Irrespective of compliance with the minimum distance, there is a **principle obligation to wear a mouth-and-nose covering** in all university buildings (exceptions are: in employees' offices and other workplaces as long as the minimum distance is observed, persons with a medical certificate exempting them from wearing a mask, practical sports events, laboratory work, music lessons). Teachers are exempt from this obligation during their lessons provided they respect the minimum distance and ensure compliance with this. Until further notice, a mouth-and-nose covering must be worn at all student workplaces (library, university hall, gallery and bridges, seminar rooms). This also applies to outdoor courses with more than 25 persons.
- Persons with respiratory symptoms (unless diagnosed medically as having another cause) or fever are principally not allowed to stay on the university campus.

Contingency plan for temporary additional measures to protect against infection with SARS-CoV-2

I. Organizational aspects

Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, the crisis team at Bielefeld University headed by the Chancellor has been planning and coordinating the implementation of additional infection control measures, checking their effectiveness, and coordinating them with different interest groups.

The Vice-rector for Education and Teaching and the Head of the Department of Education and Teaching are responsible for developing the measures for education and teaching and coordinating

them with the deans of studies.

Heads of department are responsible for implementing these measures in their respective areas of responsibility and informing and instructing their staff accordingly (see point III.5).

Staff, students, guests, and external companies are obliged to cooperate in complying with the behaviour-related measures.

II. University operation during the Corona pandemic after 26.10.2020

Based on the current version of the Coronavirus Protection Ordinance of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia dated 30.11.2020 in conjunction with the General Order of the Ministry of Labour, Health, and Social Affairs dated 30.11.2020, the following regulations apply to the organization of courses, examinations, and other events at universities:

Academic conferences and academic events **are prohibited until 15 January 2021.**

Committee meetings must comply with the guidelines for running internal university committee meetings and appointment committees during the coronavirus pandemic (link: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-sl/wahlen/_doks/2020-12-01_Handlungsleitfaden_Gremiensitzungen_und_Wahlen.pdf). Onsite committee meetings may be attended by a maximum of 20 persons. For committee meetings with more than 20 persons, approval must be obtained from the Bielefeld public health authorities. Applications must give good reasons for why the meeting should be held in person during the month of December.

For the organization of discussions and working meetings at the university, see below.

1. **Regulations for study and teaching**

Winter semester 2020/2021

The lecture period of the winter semester 2020/21 began on 26 October. First semester students started on 2 November. The end of the lecture period was set for 12 February 2021.

The planning of courses in the faculties for the winter semester was based on the key points for the winter semester https://uni-bielefeld.de/themen/coronavirus/studium-und-lehre/2020-07-15_Eckpunkte-Lehr-und-Prufungsbetrieb-WiSe.pdf. Key points are currently being drawn up for the 2020 summer semester.

The general decree of the Ministry of Labour, Health, and Social Affairs dated 30.11.2020, orders a complete changeover to digital teaching. Onsite teaching is permitted only for teaching and practical courses that cannot be carried out digitally because they require special rooms, equipment, or other general conditions such as laboratories, work rooms, or sound studios; require coaching, practice, individual tuition, and work in studios in the arts; or are special events for first-year students requiring special consideration in their first winter semester. In addition, practical sports exercises when attending onsite study courses and onsite examinations are permitted as long as the applicable hygiene regulations are observed. For further details see below.

The respective courses should be taken from the eKVV and published. The eKVV also documents whether it is an onsite or online event or a combination of the two. In exceptional cases, it may be possible to postpone planned courses until the lecture-free period. Courses on Saturdays are also permissible. The number of participants attending necessary courses continues to be limited to a

maximum of 50 persons.

The 'Corona Order' of the Rectorate for Education and Teaching for the 20/21 winter semester can be found here: <https://uni-bielefeld.de/themen/pruefungsrecht/coronavirus/>

Teaching and practical courses

The online formats and tools developed and introduced in the summer semester can be used for **online courses**.

Courses and practical courses that cannot be held online and must therefore be held onsite because they require special rooms, equipment, or other special conditions (see point 1, paragraph 3), as well as special events for first-year students requiring special consideration in their first winter semester can be held within the framework of the available room capacities and in compliance with existing hygiene protection concepts. The hygiene protection concepts must be adhered to by the organizers. The actual number of participants allowed in the respective rooms depends on the size of the rooms and is specified in the hygiene protection concepts (Link: <https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/verwaltung/dezernat-fm/raum-flaeche/raumvergabe/wintersemester-20-21/>). Each event requires a registration of names and, if appropriate, where they are seated so that the public health authorities can trace contacts if there is a suspicion that any participant may have or is suffering from a communicable notifiable disease (e.g. Covid-19) For the registration of contacts in teaching and practical courses, see point III.1.

Oral and written examinations

In principle, oral and written examinations can be held in the winter semester either online or as onsite examinations within the framework of the available room capacities and taking into account the existing hygiene regulations.

Online exams can use the already developed online formats, especially the open-book and closed-book formats in the exam module, and, if necessary, using zoom and a computer lock (safe exam browser).

For onsite written examinations, the plan is to continue to use the application and registration procedure for exams already established in the summer semester (participation lists in the eKVV) using personally allocated seats and no QR code. For the examination phase towards the end of the winter semester (February to April), external rooms will also be rented. Further information on this will be provided at a later date.

Alternative forms of courses/examinations will be made available for students who cannot take part in courses/examinations due to relevant prior illnesses.

Bachelor/Master theses and research in laboratory work teams

Students who are involved in laboratory research teams as part of their bachelor/master theses and research work are subject to the same requirements as those applying to other research activities in laboratories (point 2). In addition to the measures for organizing workplaces, laboratory managers must prepare a supplementary risk assessment to prevent coronavirus infections. A sample hazard assessment can be requested from AGUS. Consultation and onsite inspection will be carried out by AGUS.

Examinations and graded work

Students should continue to submit their papers by email or via the submission folder in the

Lernraum [learning room]. All current examination regulations requiring the submission of a printed version have been suspended. In the case of final papers, an email containing the final paper corresponding to the printed version must be sent to the responsible examination office as well as to the examiners. Students are requested to meet deadlines for the submission of academic and examination papers (especially final theses) as far as possible at least in electronic form. Teachers are requested to offer generous deadlines.

Service units

Since 01.09.2020, service units such as the Info Point, the Student Office, the Central Student Advisory Service (ZSB), the Advisory Service at the BITS, or the examination offices have been open to the public again to a moderate extent. They can also still be reached online or by telephone. Further details can be found on the respective websites.

Workstations for students

In the faculties, rooms with individual workstations that comply with hygiene requirements have been set up for students to enable them to take part in both the summer and winter semester. Contact persons are the respective faculty administrations.

In addition, individual workstations (learning places) are available for students on the gallery/bridges in the main university building as well as in some seminar rooms. There are conditions of use (hygiene rules) for the workstations that must be observed. Information on this is available at: <https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/themen/coronavirus/studium-und-lehre/arbeitsplaetze-studium/>

The number of student workplaces in the library has also been increased again (see point 3 below).

2. Work and onsite options in the academic field

Academics are entitled to work from home or onsite in the university buildings. If work is carried out in university buildings, workplace regulations must be observed (see point IV).

3. Regulations for the library

The library offers its services onsite with restrictions. Only the main library entrances D1 and U1 in the main university building and the specialized libraries in Building X are open. Visitor registration will take place. You will need to present your valid personal library card (UniCard or barcode card) or enter your name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number (optional) in a registration form. In the library, all persons must wear a mouth-and-nose covering in public spaces and at student workstations. In principle, a minimum distance of 1.50 m must be maintained between persons. A limited number of individual and PC workstations are available for the exclusive use of students at the university after making a compulsory (online) reservation. In addition, the use of specially marked PC workstations for short-term searches is possible without reservation. The group workstations (learning places and discussion rooms) may not be used. Lending and return of media are possible and should be done as far as possible via the self-service terminals. Some special lending periods and extensions of lending periods have been introduced.

For details and opening hours, the University Library provides information on its website:

<https://www.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/ub/coronavirus/>

4. Regulations for the support areas

Some technical and administrative areas are necessary onsite to ensure current teaching, research, and service operations. Hence, employees in these areas are unable to switch to home office. Managers will decide who is affected by this and in which areas. This decision is based on the respective requirements and circumstances (especially spatial conditions). All other persons are

strongly advised to work at home until the 15 January 2021. Anyone who nevertheless wishes to work at the university—which is basically acceptable—should discuss this with their superiors.

When organizing work or occupancy teams, the same persons should, if possible, be assigned to the same shifts or working groups in order to further reduce contacts between people at work.

The precise organization and implementation of staffing is the responsibility of heads of departments who are best acquainted with the specific circumstances and needs in their departments and, in cooperation with the employees, can agree practical solutions to suit all staff.

An important measure to prevent infection is that **only one person should work in each office. This principle should be assigned priority in relation to the targeted staffing levels.**

If employees develop, for example, symptoms of respiratory diseases, they should carry on working exclusively from home and not at the university (unless they are unfit for work anyway) (cf. point 2. d. in the Introduction)

In agreement with the staff councils, the university already switched to trust-based working hours in March. This regulation will continue to apply up to and including 30 June 2021. Normally, staff compensate themselves for overtime and reduced working hours during this trust-based period. Anyone who, due to the current coronavirus situation or for other reasons (projects, seasonal peaks), is working more than can be compensated within this framework should consult their supervisor in advance. In such cases, staff should document the extra work so that they can compensate for it later.

III. Regulations/Procedures

1. Registration of contacts for tracing purposes

Principle

Traceability of contact chains of infected persons is one of the key strategies for containing the coronavirus pandemic. Based on the Coronavirus Protection Ordinance NRW, the University is obliged to collect contact data for the purpose of traceability. Should an infected person have been at the university, there may be a short-term obligation to provide information to the public health authorities. In this case, contact persons must be identified and informed (see point III.2 suspected and confirmed cases below).

Students (teaching and practical courses, student workplaces)

Students are obliged to register for onsite courses (lectures, practical courses, onsite examinations), at student workstations, and in the library.

Contact registration is preferably performed with a QR code at the entrance to the lecture hall or place where the course is held. This can then be scanned with a smartphone. For participants without a smartphone or guests, registration is carried out by the **organizer**. Further Information on registration: www.uni-bielefeld.de/anwesenheit

Hence, students do not need to additionally register contact details in the (main) entrance areas (QR code or scanner) of the university buildings.

More detailed information can be taken from the respective hygiene protection concepts <https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/coronavirus/sicherheitskonzepte>.

University staff

Technical requirements

Since 26.10.2020, a digital registration has been available in all university buildings. Registration is carried out with scanners and a building-specific QR that can be operated without contact. It is performed at the open entrances to the university buildings (see point III.7) by swiping the UniCard or by reading the building QR code using a suitable smartphone. Anyone who does not have a UniCard or a suitable smartphone or does not wish to use them must fill out a registration form at the entrance with the relevant contact details (name, address, e-mail address, telephone number, period of stay) or drop an appropriately completed registration form in the letterboxes provided. Access forms can be downloaded here: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/themen/coronavirus/registrierung/2020-08-21_Zugangsbeleg_Fomular.pdf.

Please use your own pen to complete forms onsite. The scanner records only the ID number stored on the UniCard; the QR code records the Uni-ID and the day of presence in specific university buildings. If there is no request for tracing, data are deleted after four weeks. This also applies to the registration forms. It will only be necessary to trace the registered ID numbers with contact details (name, address, telephone number, e-mail address) of the relevant persons if there is a coronavirus case in one of the university buildings. These data will then be processed by only a very small circle of authorized persons and only for the purpose of tracing. There is no recording of working time and no attendance controls either via electronic recording or via registration with a form.

By registering and entering the university buildings, you consent to the processing of your data as described above. The privacy policy can be viewed at: https://uni-bielefeld.de/themen/coronavirus/registrierung/2020-15-10_DS-Erklarung_Corona-Registrierung1.pdf.

In principle, the following applies: University buildings may be entered only through the officially open entrances (see point III.9). Open emergency exits and side exits must be kept closed. This procedure is being applied exclusively for tracing Covid-19 contacts. It is therefore limited in time and will end at the latest when the university returns to normal operation. The data processing procedure has been checked for data protection conformity. Link : <https://uni-bielefeld.de/themen/coronavirus/registrierung/>

Registration rules

Access to the university buildings is possible only after registration. **Because this applies to all employees, registration is mandatory.** Those who do not register are not allowed to enter the university. Registration is required only once a day in each building that is entered. It is not necessary to 'check out' on leaving the university.

In addition to the above-mentioned registration of your own presence in the university buildings, the following points must also be observed for contact tracing and any potential obligation to provide information to the health authorities:

- It is not necessary for supervisors to document the presence of employees, because this is done via the access control system to the university buildings.
- In the case of events, meetings, and gatherings arranged for official purposes, the organizer, the superior, or the promoter must keep a list of participants/persons attending for contact tracing purposes (for the formats for doing this, please refer to point III.6.).
- Employees are personally responsible for documenting official contacts (e.g. work meetings 6

with colleagues, lunches with colleagues) lasting longer than 15 minutes and not organized by superiors (e.g. in the Outlook calendar).

- If guests are invited to official appointments such as work meetings, the inviting persons must personally keep a record of these contacts and attendances (e.g. in the Outlook calendar).
- If external companies are ordered and deployed onsite and there is a possibility of personal contacts (longer than 15 minutes), those responsible must also keep a record of these contacts.
- A record has to be kept of contacts and attendances of students at student counselling centres in which a contact/counselling interview can usually last longer than 15 minutes.

2. Instructions on what to do in suspected and confirmed cases

Particularly a fever, coughing, shortness of breath, and disturbances to smell and taste can be signs of infection with the coronavirus.

Staff with corresponding symptoms are requested to leave the university campus immediately or to stay at home. Until their health status has been clarified medically, they are deemed to be unfit for work. As usual, superiors must be informed of the inability to work.

Superiors will forward the information regarding the suspected case to the email address coronavirus@uni-bielefeld.de.

Affected persons should immediately contact a doctor or the public health authorities by telephone for clarification. If the suspected infection is confirmed, the staff member concerned must either send the relevant information her- or himself to the email address coronavirus@uni-bielefeld.de or ask the superior responsible to do so.

After a positive test result has been determined, affected persons may not enter the university buildings for at least 14 days (from the date of diagnosis)—irrespective of any quarantine order issued by the public health authorities. They may enter the university again only after 14 days and after being at least 2 days without symptoms (exception: if the public health authorities extend the 14-day obligatory quarantine).

In the case of a confirmed positive case of coronavirus, the following guidelines must be used for contact tracing:

1. Guidelines for contact tracing students (Link: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/agus/2020-12-03_handlungsleitfaden_Studierende_final.pdf)
2. Action guide contact tracing staff (Link: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/agus/2020-12-03_handlungsleitfaden_Mitarbeitende_final.pdf)

In accordance with § 7 of the Quarantine Ordinance NRW of 30.11.2020, persons testing positive are required to immediately inform all persons (private and official contacts) with whom they have been in close personal contact either in the four days prior to the test, or before the appearance of symptoms, or since the test was carried out. These are those persons with whom there has been contact for a period of more than 15 minutes and at a distance of less than 1.5 metres in which both parties were either not wearing a regular mask or in which a poorly or unventilated room was shared for a longer period of time.

For information on contacts while carrying out official duties, persons who test positive must inform 7

their superior as soon as possible so that this superior can take all further action.

If a person living in your home falls ill and shows such symptoms (suspected case), please contact your supervisor and clarify the further procedure (e.g. remaining in home office).

Employees who live in a household with a person who has tested positive (confirmed case) are obliged under § 3 paragraph 1 of the Quarantine Ordinance of 30.11.2020 of North Rhine-Westphalia to also self-quarantine immediately after the household member's positive test result is known and to inform the appropriate health authorities. This does not apply to persons who have had no contact with the person who tested positive since the time of the test, no contact with the person who tested positive in the last ten days prior to this time, and who themselves do not show any symptoms of illness.

3. Preventive occupational medicine and guidelines for groups of people in need of protection

All staff have access to occupational health care (as a provision or on request). They can obtain individual advice from the university medical service, including advice on special risks due to a prior illness, an individual disposition, possible risks of infection, concerns about the risk of infection, or psychological stress. Advice from the university medical service can also be given by telephone.

Staff with a higher risk (particularly vulnerable persons/high-risk and possibly particularly vulnerable persons/risk group) of a serious COVID-19 illness (technical and administrative staff, teachers, researchers)

Particularly in the case of certain underlying diseases, there is—regardless of age—a generally increased risk of a serious disease course when infected with the coronavirus (COVID-19). For this group of people (particularly vulnerable/high risk or possibly vulnerable persons/risk group), special protection is necessary in general. **Determining whether staff belong to one of these groups cannot be generalized** due to the variety of different potentially predisposing pre-existing conditions and their severity (e.g. already existing organ damage) as well as the multitude of other variables involved (e.g. age, gender, bodyweight, specific behaviour, adequate drug/therapeutic treatment) and the individual ways in which these can be combined. **This therefore requires an individual risk assessment in the sense of an (occupational) medical evaluation.**

An occupational health plan is available (though not compulsory) for all staff who potentially belong to the above-mentioned groups of people (high-risk group or risk group). Staff can seek individual advice from the university medical service, and an occupational health assessment will be carried out (if required, in consultation with the doctor treating them) to determine whether they belong to a risk group.

If employees then inform their superiors that they have been identified as belonging to one of the above-mentioned groups, then the following procedures for (high) risk groups must be observed:

High risk group

If, due to the severity or nature of the underlying illness, a (family/occupational health) doctor has certified membership of the 'high-risk group', the entitlement to work exclusively in home office continues. It is urgently recommended that this entitlement be used in full.

In view of the current incidence of infection in Bielefeld (Germany), attendance at the university workplace is not advisable. Working exclusively in home office is advisable until the 7-day incidence rate for the city of Bielefeld drops below 35 again (i.e. no longer a risk area). An exception to this is temporary entry to the campus buildings to exchange working documents/working materials during so-called off-peak hours (before 07.30 or after 18.00).

The following also applies to all persons for whom an individual risk assessment was carried out **before** the increased 7-day incidence rate of greater than 50 (Bielefeld risk area) and who requested and were granted permission to carry on working in university rooms: exclusive work in home office is indicated until the 7-day incidence rate for the city of Bielefeld drops below 35. The individual risk assessment will be adjusted accordingly and forwarded to the managers and the persons concerned.

If it is not possible to perform work from home office, persons are to be released from work until 15 January 2021 upon request.

All staff belonging to the high-risk group are strongly urged to exercise special protective measures (here home office). Nevertheless, the decision to exercise these protective measures (home office) lies with staff. If, at their own request, they use workplaces in university rooms during the current general increase in infections, the manager must be informed of this, and an individual risk assessment will be carried out. The individual risk assessment for the workplace is carried out together with the supervisors, AGUS, and the university medical service, with the involvement of the employee concerned.

Risk group

In order to determine whether employees belong to the 'risk group', a university medical service examination is absolutely necessary. **An employee only has the right to remain exclusively in home office after the university medical service has classified that employee as belonging to the 'risk group' (if necessary, in consultation with the attending physician) and the need for special protective measures (in this case home office) has been determined.**

The assessment of the university medical service may show that the person does not belong to the 'risk group'. In this case, the general hygiene protection measures and the other general rules of service apply.

If the university medical service confirms membership of the 'risk group', and in view of the current incidence of infection in Bielefeld (Germany), such persons are also entitled and strongly advised to work exclusively in home office initially until 15 January 2021.

For all persons in the risk group for whom an individual risk assessment was carried out **before** the increased 7-day incidence rate of more than 50 (risk area Bielefeld) and for whom working in university rooms was confirmed, the following also applies: they should initially work exclusively in home office until 15 January 2021. The individual risk assessment will be adjusted accordingly and forwarded to the managers and the persons concerned.

If it is not possible to perform work from home office, the persons are to be released from work until 15 January 2021 upon request.

All staff who, after being assessed by the university medical service, have been classified to the 'risk group' and for whom special protective measures are necessary, are strongly advised to comply with these measures (here home office). Nevertheless, the decision to follow these protective measures lies with staff. If, at their own request, they use workplaces in university rooms during the current general incidence of infection, the manager must be informed of this and an individual risk assessment will be carried out. The individual risk assessment for the workplace is carried out together with the supervisors, AGUS, and the university medical service, with the involvement of the employee concerned.

Persons of the potentially vulnerable group who have not yet been classified as belonging to a risk group by the university medical service have the right to a consultation (also by telephone) with the company medical service to clarify their status.

Staff with chronically sick relatives in need of care

Staff looking after relatives in need of care for underlying illnesses in their home environments can have the care of the chronically sick relative certified by a (general) medical practice. They can also continue to work entirely in home office.

The certificate must be forwarded to the Personnel and Organization Department with prior notification of the responsible superior (scan/photocopy is sufficient). The type of prior illness of the relative should not be indicated for reasons of data protection.

Staff who share a home with members of risk groups

Staff who share a home with person(s) who **may have a (possible) special need for protection** can also continue to work fully in home office if they provide a medical certificate confirming the status of this person or persons.

The certificate must be forwarded to the Personnel and Organization Department with prior notification of the responsible superior (scan/photocopy is sufficient). The type of prior illness of the relative should not be indicated for reasons of data protection. Pregnancies lead automatically to an increased need for protection in the above-mentioned sense.

Staff and students with severe disabilities

Staff and students with a severe disability (without relevant underlying illnesses) can, in principle, also work on university premises. If there are any uncertainties, medical advice should be sought. The representation of severely disabled persons should be involved.

Pregnant staff/public officials/students

In view of the current circumstances, pregnant women cannot be employed on the campus grounds for occupational health reasons. Expectant mothers are still entitled to perform their work exclusively in home office. In exceptional cases and at the request of expectant mothers, an individual risk assessment with the involvement of superiors, the AGUS staff unit, and the university medical officer can be used to determine whether it is also possible to work on university premises. If it is established that there is no unjustifiable risk in accordance with the Maternity Protection Act at the individual workplace and with the agreement of the Detmold district government, it is possible to work in the university buildings. Pregnant women are required to contact the AGUS staff unit before starting work in the university buildings.

Pregnant students are also prohibited from working on campus for occupational health reasons. In exceptional cases, an individual risk assessment can be drawn up in coordination with AGUS, the university medical service, and the responsible authorities (Detmold district government) and an exceptional permission to attend **relevant onsite events** can be granted (if no unacceptable hazard exists). Pregnant students are required to contact the AGUS staff unit.

4. Official travel and further training

Whether official travel is necessary should be reviewed critically before undertaking it, particularly given the current level of infections. Official travel should only be made to the extent necessary, and—where possible—technical alternatives such as telephone or video conferences should be used instead. Attendance of **external** training courses should be treated in the same way. Business trips to

regions (including those within Germany) with high infection rates at the time of travel commencement must be limited to what is absolutely necessary to fulfil the work task.

Official travel is possible to **countries** or regions for which no travel warning has been issued by the Federal Foreign Office at the start of the trip and that have not been classified as risk areas. (Classification as a risk area is carried out by the Federal Ministry of Health, the Federal Foreign Office, and the Federal Ministry of the Interior and is published by the Robert Koch Institute [RKI].)

All generally issued official travel approvals are again valid with the above-mentioned restriction.

If official travel or training courses are attended in person, the appropriate protective measures must be taken—for example, if possible, travel by private car rather than by public transport, maintain sufficient distance from other persons at the external workplace, and so forth.

Internal university continuing education courses should, in principle, be conducted digitally (Zoom). Onsite further training is currently prohibited.

5. Persons returning from (holiday) travel to risk areas outside of Germany

The following regulations and measures have been agreed for persons returning from risk areas outside of Germany (as specified by the RKI) and areas for which there are coronavirus-related travel warnings—as long as the incidence rate per 100,000 inhabitants over seven days was higher in the holiday location than in Bielefeld:

For the safety of all persons present in the university buildings, they may not enter the campus for a period of 14 days and they have to comply with legal regulations over remaining in quarantine in their homes.

During this time, they work in home office. If it is not possible to work at home, the supervisor must first check whether the employee concerned can be temporarily assigned another suitable task.

Due to the incubation period, infections in the last few days of a holiday or during a return journey will only be detected after 5–7 days. Therefore, persons may only re-enter the university premises if a second coronavirus test is carried out independently approximately 5–7 days after returning and this is also negative. Staff who have spent time in risk areas are hereby given binding instructions to inform their superiors accordingly so that the aforementioned precautionary measures can be taken.

Persons returning to Bielefeld after spending several days in areas in which the incidence rate per 100,000 inhabitants over seven days was higher than in Bielefeld must discuss this with their supervisor and make an appropriate arrangement regarding the place of work. Home office should be made possible readily in these constellations in order to protect colleagues onsite.

6. Official meetings and events with internal and/or external persons

Official events (by invitation and in event format) and onsite meetings are **prohibited until 15 January 2021** and must be held in digital form or by telephone.

Essential contacts between staff in order to carry out their jobs are permitted, subject to compliance with the hygiene rules (Chapter IV) and a significant reduction in the number of persons present. Any additional official onsite meetings are to be avoided

7. Access to buildings

Buildings are open to staff and students who are covered by the regulations on university operations during the coronavirus pandemic described here, including the permitted teaching and examination activities. Access is also permitted for persons who need to be present at the university for operational reasons, who are present for agreed reasons (e.g. by university-related invitation), or are library users.

The entrances to the main university building (main entrance C01, South UMV and West P0) and Building X (side entrance at the security control centre) are open. The university buildings may be entered only through these officially open entrances. Opened emergency exits and side exits must be kept closed.

If additional areas have to be accessible for events, these are defined as exceptions via the hygiene protection concepts. The university will remain closed to the general public.

III. Measures for organizing workplaces within the university during the coronavirus pandemic

1. Use of work rooms and social rooms

A sufficient distance of at least 1.5 metres to colleagues must be maintained. This distance must be maintained even for shorter personal contacts. Staff are requested to continue not to gather in groups. If the distance of 1.5 metres in the office cannot be maintained, a mouth-and-nose covering must be worn.

The basic rule is that **offices** with an area of up to about 20 square metres (the size of a typical office) **should be used by only one person**. Individual cases can deviate from this as long as the distance of 1.5 metres between persons is retained (also in corridors and the like), **sufficient ventilation** is planned, and the further hygiene measures are maintained.

This regulation for exceptions in office use must be agreed in advance with the AGUS staff unit. AGUS will provide advice and determine whether the safety measures and hygiene rules can be maintained.

Furthermore, colleagues' offices may be entered only upon request and with an appropriate mouth-and-nose covering.

For **laboratory work** (laboratory workstations with technical ventilation, fume hoods, weighing chambers, large equipment, etc.), the general and customary laboratory hygiene regulations must be observed. A distance of 1.5 meters from colleagues must also be maintained here. Laboratory workstations must be set up accordingly (e.g., no shared use of laboratory benches).

Compliance with the distancing rules must be ensured in the **break rooms and areas**, tea kitchens, and cooking facilities as well as in **other social rooms** by changing the arrangement of or minimizing seating in the respective areas. If necessary, break times should be staggered. Before entering and using these rooms, users must practice hand hygiene.

Ventilation in the rooms used is particularly important due to possible virus-contaminated aerosols. **For this reason, rooms must be regularly ventilated by their users.** Ventilation reduces the number of fine droplets containing pathogens that may be present in the air. The minimum standard for ventilation is as follows: length of time between ventilations: **40 minutes** at the most in offices; **20**

minutes in meeting rooms. Duration of intensive ventilation (doors and windows open simultaneously): in summer: 10 minutes, in spring/autumn: 5 minutes, in winter (outside temperature < 6°C): 3 minutes. In addition, increased ventilation can further reduce the concentration of possible virus-laden aerosols present in the air. It is particularly recommended to enhance ventilation by increasing the above-mentioned frequencies and extending the ventilation times.

Offices must be ventilated regularly when work starts and finishes. Meeting rooms must also be ventilated before being used.

In public areas, the minimum distance of 1.5 m must also be maintained. In areas where the above measures of work organization are not possible, alternative protective measures must be taken. To develop alternative protective measures, please contact the AGUS staff unit directly (arbeitssicherheit@uni-bielefeld.de). If partition walls (hygienic protective walls) are used, these must be cleaned from both sides with a standard cleaning agent every working day.

2. Shared work equipment

Tools and work equipment (also e.g. IT devices, telephone receivers, table tops) are to be used only individually wherever possible. Where this is not possible, regular cleaning (commercial household cleaner) is to be performed by the user, especially before handing over to other persons.

3. Sufficient protective distance/Obligatory mouth-and-nose covering

Irrespective of compliance with the minimum distance, there is a general obligation to wear a mouth-and-nose covering in all university buildings (exceptions: in offices and other staff workplaces when the minimum distance is observed; for persons exempted by medical certificate; for sports activities, laboratory work, and music lessons; at individual workstations). Teachers are exempt from this obligation while teaching, provided they keep the minimum distance, but they must ensure that they maintain this. Until further notice, a mouth-and-nose covering must be worn in all student workplaces (library, university hall, gallery and bridges, seminar rooms). This also applies to courses with more than 25 persons held outdoors.

The obligation also applies to areas in which a separate hygiene protection concept has identified the need to wear a mouth-and-nose covering.

If mouth-and-nose coverings are not worn in accordance with these instructions, this constitutes a violation of §3 of the Coronavirus Protection Ordinance of 30 November as well as a violation of the University's service instructions and thus a violation of the obligations under the employment contract or service regulations.

If, for medical reasons, a staff member is unable to wear a mouth-and-nose covering, or is only able to wear it for a very short period of time and has a medical certificate to this effect, the supervisor must adapt working conditions in such a way that other staff are adequately protected. For example, it should be checked whether the staff member can wear a face visor instead and whether contact with colleagues can be excluded. If necessary, the staff member should work permanently in home office with a 'mask certificate' if adequate protection cannot be achieved onsite.

If, for medical reasons, staff cannot wear a mouth-and-nose covering or face visor when interacting directly with another person in their official work, a filtering half-mask (FFP2 /FFP3) must be worn. The AGUS staff unit should be consulted on this.

As a general rule, the safety distance of 1.5 metres should be maintained even when using a mouth- 13

and-nose covering.

4. Hygiene, mouth-and-nose coverings, PPE

Personal protective equipment and mouth-and-nose coverings are exclusively for individual use! The (reusable) mouth-and-nose covering must be taken home after work (and not left in the open at the workplace). This does not apply to special areas such as genetic engineering facilities. Liquid soap, towel dispensers, and disinfectants are available for cleaning hands.

5. Instruction and review of the measures

Heads of department are required by the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the SARS-CoV-2 ASR to instruct their employees regularly and to document this. Staff must also be instructed when in home office. The contents of instruction particularly include the regulations in the organizational decree (coronavirus) transmission risks and possibilities, protective measures, measures for groups of persons in need of special protection (e.g. high risk, risk groups), as well as the correct wearing and removal of mouth-and-nose coverings. Instruction should be provided in digital form as far as possible.

A sample instruction with the above-mentioned contents is available at <https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/einrichtungen/agus/>

The effectiveness of the measures in the work areas or the consequences of the measures for protecting the health of staff, the occurrence of for example hygiene errors, must be monitored by superiors and adjusted as necessary.

Contact

e-mail: coronavirus@uni-bielefeld.de

Bielefeld University

The Chancellor