



Instructions for Employees of Universität Hamburg in the Wake of the Current Coronavirus Crisis

Last updated 14 March 2020

The current state of the coronavirus infection requires new measures. Accordingly, the Ministry of Science, Research and Equalities wrote on 11 March 2020 that “the conditions for the application of the valid pandemic plans in your office have been met.” On this basis, I herewith issue the following instructions:

1. Handling work-related travel, private travel, stays abroad, and field trips

1.1. Blanket prohibition on work-related travel

Until further notice, there is a blanket prohibition on work-related travel for all University employees with regard to both domestic and international travel. Nor may employees realize advanced training or continuing education plans.

1.2. Field trips

Field trips are prohibited, starting immediately. This prohibition is expected to be in place until at least 20 April 2020. This applies to domestic and international field trips.

1.3. Returning from a high-risk area

Employees or students returning from work-related travel or stays abroad in high-risk areas are instructed **not** to return to the University or any of its campuses for 14 days following their return.

As a rule, these people may not return to their place of work for 14 days following their return from a high-risk area. Contact your supervisor and work from home. If you are unable to work from home and cannot be assigned alternative tasks within your area, your supervisor will either assign other duties or release you from your duties for the 14-day period. These precautionary measures also apply if you are returning from a private stay abroad.

1.4. Guests and international delegations

Visits from guests or international delegations, including from non-high-risk areas, must be cancelled until further notice.

2. Infected individuals or suspected cases

2.1. Symptoms of a possible coronavirus infection

People with symptoms that suggest a possible infection with the coronavirus must contact their local health authority without delay, notify their supervisor, stay home,



and follow the instructions of their local health authority. To minimize the risk of infection, do not go to a doctor's office.

Contact with someone infected with the coronavirus

People who have had contact with someone who has tested positive for the coronavirus must notify their local health authority and their supervisor without delay. They must stay home and follow instructions of their local health authority. To minimize the risk of infection, do not go to a doctor's office.

2.2. Supervisors' duty of care

Supervisors who recognize symptoms of a flu-like infection among their employees must instruct these people to stay at home. Supervisors are called upon to meticulously uphold their duty of care to their employees.

2.3. High-risk groups

People who belong to a high-risk group due to their age (older than 65) are hereby instructed to work from home. If it is not possible to work from home, you can be released from your duties if necessary. Where necessary, separate instructions will be given.

Upon request, severely disabled employees must also be released from duties by their supervisors.

People who belong to a high-risk group due to an underlying medical condition (e.g., respiratory condition) as attested to by a doctor must be allowed to work from home upon presenting a doctor's note.

In all cases, employees must arrange the details with their supervisor (see instructions for working from home below).

3. Minimizing physical contact

3.1. Closing all publicly accessible areas

Effective immediately, all areas open to the public and students, including the rooms of departmental student representative committee and student cafés, will remain closed. This includes libraries, the Botanical Garden and green houses, the Campus Center, CeNak, scientific collections, the Sportpark and other University Sports buildings and facilities, academic offices, the University Museum, the University Language Center, the Center for Continuing Education, the help desk, and the PC pools run by the Regional Computing Center.

3.2. Advising

Effective immediately, advising services, including office hours, will be provided via telephone or email only.

3.3. Working from home as a special measure

Starting on 16 March 2020, the extensive use of home offices will be introduced as a special measure. Supervisors will prioritize duties and instruct their employees to work



at home if they have the technical abilities to do so. If they do not have the technical abilities to do so, they can clarify with their supervisors whether the technical conditions can be established or whether other duties can be completed at home. Please check to see what options you have for using your own technology at home. On the coronavirus FAQ page you can find detailed instructions. www.uni-hamburg.de/en/corona-faq

The arrangements for working from home as a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of the coronavirus must be agreed directly between you and your supervisor (in writing—via email). Any questions that arise must also be clarified between these parties. At a minimum, employees working from home must ensure their availability during valid core working hours.

Management are prohibited from taking vacation until further notice; in case of illness, binding back-up regulations must be implemented.

3.4. **Childcare measures in the wake of school and childcare facility closures**

Employees who must stay at home to take care of children who cannot attend their childcare facility or school or whose childcare facilities or school is closed should look into working from home in agreement (via email) with their supervisors. If this is not possible, using up overtime hours is another option to review. In this case, the possibility of going beyond the standard flexitime regulations should be taken up (that is, beyond the minus range).

If neither working from home nor using up overtime hours is possible, employees must be released from duties while continuing to receive their pay. This measure may be taken for a maximum of 10 working days. To be released from duties, employees must send an informal application to their supervisor and HR.

The informal request for a release from duties must include proof of closure of the school or childcare facility providing the situation is not general knowledge.

4. **Events, sessions, selection procedures**

4.1. **Events and activities outside regular teaching duties**

All activities at Universität Hamburg through 20 April 2020 that do not constitute exam situations must be canceled. Effective immediately, this also applies to all activities with fewer than 100 participants. These activities can be offered in alternative formats only—for example, as telephone or video conferences, online sessions, etc.

4.2. **Taking attendance**

Where possible, resolutions must be handled by circulating attendance lists. For



indispensable sessions (to prevent damages to Universität Hamburg or imminent danger) that cannot be postponed or take place virtually, attendance sheets must be used effective immediately (last name, first name, institution, email address). This is to ensure that people who have potentially come into contact with the coronavirus can be identified rapidly afterward.

4.3. Selection procedure interviews

Until further notice, do not schedule new selection procedure interviews. Review scheduled interviews to determine to what extent participants can interview via video. If, in exceptional cases, this is not possible, on-site interviews must adhere to all recommended protective measures (including avoiding hand contact, following coughing and sneezing etiquette, maintaining social distance, and properly airing rooms).

5. Summer Semester 2020, exams, internships

5.1. Start of Summer Semester 2020

Summer Semester 2020 has now been postponed and is set to begin on 20 April 2020. This affects all courses, including on-line courses, as well as orientation units. Thus, the semester will also be shorter. This may not adversely affect students. Teaching staff hired by Universität Hamburg have a right to the payment of their wages for the cancellation period.

5.2. Exams for the current Winter Semester 2019/2020

Update from 14 March 2020: There will be no examinations at Universität Hamburg before 20 April 2020.

5.3. Lab internships

Lab internships will be postponed; individual faculties will provide more detailed information about affected courses. Clinical and nursing care internships in medicine programs will take place.

6. Hygiene measures

6.1. Personal hygiene measures

To protect against infection, observe general coughing and sneezing etiquette and maintain your personal hygiene—especially with regard to regular (and correct) hand washing. Keep your distance from people with flu-like symptoms (approx. 1–2 meters).

6.2. Physical contact

Wherever possible, avoid physical contact during encounters with other employees and customers. Avoid rituals such as shaking hands until further notice—signs to this effect will be displayed throughout the University.

6.3. Protective measures

Disinfectant dispensers will be set up in all highly frequented reception areas on all campuses.



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The RKI does not consider it necessary nor has it ordered the use of any additional personal protective equipment, such as face masks or gloves.

Face masks (in accordance with valid pandemic plans) may be used if measures in line with level II of the pandemic plan go into effect.

Hamburg, 13 March 2020

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Dieter Lenzen