



(Photo by Polina Tief)

New Items

Update on Workplace Violence Risk Assessment

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) requires **the University to assess the risks of workplace violence** that may arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work or the conditions of work. The University is required to reassess the risks of workplace violence as often as is necessary to ensure its Governing Council Policy with Respect to Workplace Violence and related Workplace Violence Program continue to protect workers from workplace violence. If the risk assessment is in writing, it must also be provided to the JHSCs.

OHS completed an assessment of all job categories/titles and developed a General University Workplace Violence Assessment for all positions across the University in University owned/operated workplaces, which it reviews annually. This assessment is intended to be at a high level, describing potential risks, and measures and procedures to mitigate those risks, that are broadly applicable. Divisions should continue assessing and implementing local measures where applicable. Employees are encouraged to discuss any specific workplace considerations with their supervisors. JHSCs are encouraged to review the assessment. If you have any questions or comments please contact EHS JHSC. For more information, please also refer to the UofT Workplace Violence Program.

Public Transit Safety Tips

The Community Safety Office has created a list of tips to help students, faculty and staff use transit systems more safely.

COVID-19 Updates

The University of Toronto continues to monitor Toronto, Peel, and provincial public health guidance and will adjust response as needed and update you on any changes.

IN THIS NEWSLETTER

NEW ITEMS

Update on Workplace Violence Risk Assessment

Public Transit Safety Tips

COVID-19 Updates

Emergency Management at the St. George Campus

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Concerns

Ventilation

Ventilation Information Request (by building)

REMINDERS

COVID-19 Resources

RSV, Influenza, and COVID Recommended Signage

COVID-19 F&S Strategies

University of Toronto's General Workplace Guidelines

Legionella and Ventilation Testing

UofT EHS Website

EHS JHSC SharePoint

Safety Training

Type 3 Asbestos Abatement Work

F&S Service Alerts

F&S: What to do when you are too hot or too cold

Interested in joining a JHSC?

Masking: The [University's mask requirements](#) have been lifted as of July 1, 2022. However, the use of a [medical mask](#) in high-density indoor spaces when physical distancing is not possible is strongly encouraged. The University is a mask-friendly environment, and we ask everyone to respect each other's decisions, comfort levels, and health needs. Medical masks are available for pickup on all three campuses to community members with an active UTORID as supplies allow. For a list of locations, please see [Information about Masks](#).

Vaccination: To help keep U of T healthy from seasonal respiratory viruses, community members seeking [COVID-19 and/or flu vaccinations](#) can book appointments or find walk-in hours at local clinics across the Greater Toronto Area. The University continues to encourage all members of its community to get a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine as soon [as they become eligible](#).

Isolation Requirements: Individuals are required to isolate until no fever and symptoms improving for 24 hours (48 hours for gastro-intestinal symptoms), regardless of testing results or no testing. We continue to ask members of our community to remain at home if they are ill.

Self-Screening: Daily health screening prior to coming to campus is no longer required. Individuals can monitor their health using the [Provincial health screening tool](#).

Emergency Management at the St. George Campus

[Campus Safety](#) and the Office of Safety and High Risk are meeting with divisions starting in early 2023 to develop and roll-out a staff-facing Emergency Response Handbook that addresses a range of situations. This information can be found on the [Responding and Reporting to Incidents](#) webpage.

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Concerns

If you have any concerns about indoor air quality (IAQ), please report the concern to your supervisor. Similar to other health and safety concerns, supervisors have responsibilities for health and safety in the workplace and workers are responsible for reporting hazards to their supervisor. EHS (ehs.office@utoronto.ca) is also available to provide support and conduct an assessment to identify workplace hazards and provide recommendations to address concerns. JHSC members who are approached by workers about IAQ concerns should also encourage workers to report their concerns to their supervisor and EHS.

Ventilation

The University implemented a sector-leading ventilation strategy that includes improvements to existing ventilation systems that service all parts of buildings, including classrooms, labs, offices, meeting rooms, and hallways. Further to this, air-change assessments have met a high-ventilation target in all classrooms that are in use. These exceptional ventilation standards will continue. See [U of T's HVAC strategy website](#) for more information.

Ventilation Information Request (by building)

As mentioned in previous communications, the University has developed and implemented a [Tri-campus HVAC Strategy](#) as part of an overall ventilation approach for both instructional and non-instructional spaces and buildings. As part of the [Strategy](#), where applicable, measures have been taken to increase ventilation (e.g. performing air flushing two hours before occupancy every morning and upgrade filtration) and upgrading ventilation.

The upgraded filters, which meet public health and other experts' recommendations, are rated MERV-13, up from MERV-8 previously. Same as before the pandemic, the University continues to maintain our ventilation systems on a regular basis. If additional information on ventilation is required, please contact your JHSC with the request. Please note that such requests may require **weeks** to complete depending on the size and complexity of the ventilation system. In the interim, locations can be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Reminders

COVID-19 Resources

[UTogether](#) is a one-stop hub of information on how the University is responding to the pandemic. For all the latest information please check the [UTogether](#), and [Safe Environment](#) websites. The University of Toronto continually updates our [frequently asked questions](#) related to COVID-19 and our community

RSV, Influenza, and COVID Recommended Signage

- Centrally installed air purifiers in classrooms are regularly checked. Please see: [COVID-19 Air Purifier Filters in Classrooms](#).
- Updated [COVID-19 Precaution/Symptoms Poster](#) on our COVID-19 Posters & Resources Page.
- New optional [Respiratory Virus Season](#) Poster

COVID-19 F&S Strategies

The University of Toronto is committed first and foremost to the health and safety of our entire community. To achieve this, the University has developed F&S COVID-19 Strategies: [Caretaking Tri-Campus Strategy](#) and [COVID-19 heating, ventilation and air conditioning \(HVAC\) strategy](#).

University of Toronto's General Workplace Guidelines

The University's [COVID-19 General Workplace Guidelines](#) (GWG) was sent out to JHSC co-chairs on July 10, 2020. Ongoing updates are made to this document to align with provincial and public health guidelines. While drafting, reviewing and approval of institutional guidelines is an employer responsibility, we encourage the JHSCs to read the document and welcome you to engage with management through your usual channels on any queries or recommendations you may have with respect to the application of the Guideline to worksites within your JHSC's jurisdiction.

You may access the most updated version of the GWG on the EHS [COVID-19 Information](#) webpage. Please also review [Returning to Campus - The Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture](#) for more information regarding returning to campus. We encourage JHSC members to review and submit any questions or considerations to [EHS JHSC](#).

Legionella and Ventilation Testing

We encourage interested JHSCs to regularly check the [Water Testing Schedule](#) for the most up-to-date information on legionella testing in their building and to contact [EHS JHSC](#) if a JHSC worker member is interested in attending the beginning of legionella and/or ventilation testing. The Potable Water Maintenance Program was updated in September 2022. You can find it on our website [here](#). For more information regarding legionella, you can visit our [Legionella FAQs](#) page.

With regards to the query about JHSC consultation and provision of reports for ventilation measurements, the type of measurements collected in the air audit report do not provide a direct measurement of COVID-19 transmissibility risk but are measurements that the University collects as part of regular building maintenance to verify that the relevant equipment is operating as expected. We understand that during the pandemic, staff, faculty and students may want more information about building maintenance related data and we are therefore sharing this information as requested and we invite JHSCs who wish to attend, when these measurements are taken, to contact [EHS JHSC](#) for building level schedules.

University of Toronto, Environmental Health & Safety website contains a lot of good information and resources:

- [Monthly JHSC Newsletter](#)
- [Health & Safety \(H&S\) Board](#) required posting and links for download. Please inform EHS when a board is installed/relocated as EHS conducts annual updates and audits. For a list of H&S Board locations [click here](#).
- [Health & Safety Policy](#) and Policy with Respect to [Workplace Harassment](#) and [Workplace Violence](#) which JHSCs are encouraged to regularly review
- [JHSC coverage per building](#). Please note, updates are regularly made as units move, occupy new space, etc.
- AED Locations are now listed on the [U of T Map](#). For more information regarding AEDs, First Aid and First Aid Training, please check out our [First Aid Training Page](#).
- [Mpox\(Monkeypox\) Information](#)
- [CUPE3902 Reimbursement Forms](#) for JHSC-related activities. Once approved by the manager co-chair of your JHSC, please forward a copy to ehs.jhsc@utoronto.ca and HSO@cupe3902.org.

EHS JHSC SharePoint

JHSC members can view/download minutes, inspections, etc. via [SharePoint](#) and will receive an email when minutes/inspections are uploaded. Please [click here](#) for a tutorial on how to use the new EHS JHSC SharePoint. **JHSCs are reminded to regularly send relevant documents to [EHS JHSC](#) for upload.**

Safety Training

The University offers numerous training courses for its employees, specific to their workplace context (Administration/Facilities & Lab Environments) and regularly updates the training courses on an ongoing basis. We encourage the JHSCs to review our training offerings relevant to their specific work and welcome the JHSCs to provide us with any feedback regarding training content. If you have any questions regarding relevant training required for your specific work, please speak with your supervisor. If you have any questions regarding EHS-offered training courses and related University-developed training content, please contact [EHS JHSC](#).

Type 3 Asbestos Abatement Work

Type 3 asbestos abatement air sampling results are available on the Asbestos Data website. For more information, please see [Type 3 Asbestos Abatement Information](#).

F&S Service Alerts

To receive Facilities & Services (F&S) alerts for building related-services (e.g. service outages, shutdowns, Type 2 and 3 asbestos work), please subscribe to [F&S Alerts](#).

F&S: What to do when you are too hot or too cold

F&S has posted an article detailing what to do when you are too hot or too cold in your workspace. You can find the article [here](#).

Interested in joining a Joint Health and Safety Committee?

Please contact [your JHSC](#) for any vacancies. As a reminder, in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act, worker members are appointed by their respective union. For more information, please see [JHSC FAQs](#) or contact [EHS JHSC](#).