

USAFA Reopening Guide

During COVID-19 Pandemic

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Prepared by



Overview

This is a guide for the USAF Academy (USAFA) installation to open up in phases as conditions improve during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The ultimate goal of reopening is not necessarily to open in a “business as usual” status, but to remain “business as required” and gradually return to a new normal as mission needs dictate. The new normal will still consist of zoning the workforce, physical distancing, face coverings, hand hygiene measures, and workers staying home when sick. These measures and others like it, taken during this “New Normal” may last for more than one year. But getting to that new normal should be done in a gradual, step-wise manner to reduce the risk of resurgence in COVID-19 cases.

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Current Situation

Conditions at USAFA have improved substantially to consider the reopening of the installation. COVID-19 rates are going down in Colorado and especially in El Paso County. Colorado's "Stay at Home" order expired 26 April 2020 and was replaced with "Safer at Home." The White House "Opening Up America Again" guidelines were released and this guide is congruent with White House guidance, Colorado, and other Air Force bases in the Colorado Springs community. USAFA COVID-19 rates are practically at zero.

Leadership assessed that the gating criteria of the White House guidance are met and Regional hospitals are not in crisis standard care. Most active duty members are low-risk population with diverse risk profiles for civilians and contractors supporting the mission. Disease containment procedures at USAFA have had a positive effect on disease rates on the installation. Those measures include zoning work places, teleworking, physical distancing, Official Business Only (OBO) status, stay-at-home if sick rules, cloth face mask rules, and emphasis on hand hygiene. In addition, sufficient quarantine and isolation facilities exist and our medical professionals have increased testing and contact-tracing capabilities as well as secured a reliable supply chain of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Therefore a phased reopening is practical and will preserve operational effectiveness.

Purpose of the Guide

The purpose of this guide is to help you as a leader reopen your shops in a gradual, orderly manner during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. It is geared as a guide for Mission Element leaders, Commanders, and A-staff directors, but can be used by their staffs to plan the reopening of the various shops in the organization. It will not be until about summer of 2021 or more when we can stop most if not all risk mitigation measures (e.g., 6 feet distancing, cloth face cover). So this will be the New Normal for us for quite some time.

Steps to Reopen the Shops in My Organization

Follow the checklist at Table 1 on the next page to get started.

Table 1: Checklist for Reopening

Check Box	Step	Action
		Before Entering any Phase
	1	Make a list of all the shops in your units
	2	Assign priority levels to them. Here is a sample priority list: 1.) Shops that directly support the incoming cadets 2.) Mission Essential shops (e.g., SFS, Fire, Commissary) 3.) Large “bay” areas like hangars and golf course that, although may not be high priority, are low risk and thus can be opened sooner 4.) All other worksites.
	3	Stratify: Reorder these shops from highest priority to lowest priority
	4	Assign staff member to COVID-19 Workplace Evaluator role: Consider assigning someone in your unit to the role of Workplace Evaluator. Their job would be to visit each shop and help assess the shop’s risk and help that shop’s supervisor come up with any additional risk mitigation ideas such as: 1.) Develop new seating layout 2.) Designing one-way foot traffic flow 3.) Making sure the shops have ordered hand-sanitizer and making recommendations for their strategic placement 4.) Recommending what common areas can be closed off 5.) Those common areas that cannot be closed, making sure there is a sanitizing plan to clean it twice a day. 6.) Use this CDC resource for more ideas: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fspecific-groups%2Fguidance-business-response.html
	5.	Develop a sanitation plan for your shop: Clean AND disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails, and doorknobs. Dirty surfaces can be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection. To disinfect, use products that meet EPA’s criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the cause of COVID-19, and are appropriate for the surface. See the full list of EPA approved cleaning products here: https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2 Use these websites as additional resources for your workplace sanitation plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html • Colorado State: https://covid19.colorado.gov/cleaning-guidance

		Entering a new Phase
	6	Study the Phase: The installation commander will announce the reopening Phase to base leadership. Once he does this, familiarize yourself with the actions that are usually taken in this new Phase by reading the pertinent section in this guide.
	7	Develop a schedule: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start planning out the opening of your shops giving preference to your higher priority shops. • A good rule of thumb is to return no more than 15% of your staff within a two week period. • Leave non-mission essential shops to Phase II-b, unless they are very low risk (e.g., outdoor areas with few staff)
	8	Consider your customers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just as you should not be bringing all your staff back at once, you may not want to bring all your customers back at once. Consider reopening a shop only to active duty customers at first, then dependents, then retirees • Establish rules for your customers such as where to stand in line, spacing between customers in line, maximum occupancy in the waiting room, using credit card only, and whether you will serve anyone not wearing a mask • Consider taping off some seats in waiting areas so that no one is sitting within six feet of each other.
	9	Remember the Standard Prevention Measures, and make sure they are an integral part of the workplace during reopening: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six feet physical distancing • Wear cloth face covering whenever the 6 feet distance cannot be ensured • Wash hands frequently • Don't touch your face with unwashed hands • Cover coughs and sneezes • Stay home if sick • See this webpage for more info: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html
	10	Implement the Sanitation Plan developed above.
	11	Identify your high-risk workers and consider keeping them home, having them telework, or, as a last resort, reassign them to a duty that involves less interaction with people. To find out what the high-risk categories are, go here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html

Before entering Phase I and before advancing in subsequent phases, the White House Opening Up America Again criteria must be met. Those criteria are:

1. **Symptoms**
 - a. Downward trajectory of influenza-like illnesses (ILI) reported in a 14-day period
 - b. Downward trajectory of COVID-like syndromic cases reported in a 14-day period
2. **Cases**
 - a. Downward trajectory of documented cases in a 14-day period
 - b. Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests in a 14-day period
3. **Hospitals**
 - a. Treat all patients without crisis care
 - b. Robust testing program in place for at-risk healthcare workers

If these basic criteria are not met, the Installation Commander will either pause forward progression in the phases or the installation will return to a prior phase.

Phases of Reopening

The installation commander will announce the official reopening phase to installation leadership. Only then should the base units start implementing their unit's reopening plan based on the parameters provided below. Before advancing in phases, the installation commander will coordinate with each of the military installations in the Colorado Springs region. You should expect that the progression through the phases will have a few back-and-forths due to the possibility of a small outbreak occurring on base. This is to be expected. But by slowly opening services over a period of months, the risk can be mitigated.

You may be a little confused why the White House criteria must be met at each Phase, including entering Phase I. It would seem that Phase I would be the most restrictive Phase, but actually it's not. There is a more restrictive state, a "Phase 0" if you will, that is not defined by the White House criteria, but was demonstrated by regions such as Wuhan City, New York City, and Italy who all had a very restrictive "lock-down", "shelter-in-place", or "quarantine at home" phase that USAFA has not needed to enter. USAFA started off at Phase I without needing to implement higher levels of risk mitigation measures. In fact, during our Phase I, the BX, commissary, CDC, barber shops, and a few cadet morale services remained open. To advance in phase, however, we still have to meet the basic White House criteria mentioned above.

In addition to the White House criteria, an additional set of criteria should be considered by the installation commander before advancing in phases:

1. No healthcare worker infections (but the source should be considered)
2. Reliable PPE supply chain
3. Wide-spread testing for COVID-19 for all patients with COVID-19-like symptoms, and not just for high-risk patients or healthcare workers
4. Enhanced active monitoring/contact-tracing
5. Have enough quarantine and isolation (Q&I) for the portion of our base population that get COVID-19, and their contacts

Phase I Containment

When in Phase I, we should:

1. Close schools, gyms, movie theaters, bars
2. Cadets should not return to USAFA. If all four classes are at USAFA, consider sending all four back home. Alternatively, consider sending some of the classes home. For example, if the Senior class is at the installation, consider keeping them here and sending the underclassmen home if the risk to the seniors can be mitigated (as with Class of 2020)
3. Shutting dining areas but encouraging restaurants to provide takeout and delivery services if possible
4. Keep CDC/youth center open to only mission essential (ME) personnel that come to work on USAFA
5. Close the installation to tourists, but can keep the Santa Fe trail open as long as physical distancing can be maintained
6. Cancel/postpone meetings and mass gatherings
7. Limit non-essential gatherings. If gatherings are required, limit it to less than 10 people with physical distancing measures preserved
8. Telework where possible
9. Limit unnecessary domestic or international travel
10. Wear cloth face coverings when physical distancing cannot be maintained outside the home (or while in public areas)
11. Maintain at least an HPCON-C status
12. Maintain an official business only (OBO) status
13. Those who are sick will stay home and follow published return to work guidance
14. Vulnerable or high-risk individuals should shelter-in-place

Table 2. Phase I Re-openings

	Base Access	Work Centers	CDC	Base Services	MDG	Fitness Center	BX/Cmsry FSS Food	Cadet Area	Academic Facilities	Athletic Facilities
Mission Essential	Minimize time at work and on base	- Zoning - Min manning - Max Telework		No services	No routine care/Cadet Medicine open/FHC open/Peds open/Dental emergency only	No unit PT or intramurals/ Close fitness center/ Softball Fields and Basketball Courts closed	Take out only for all food vendors	Only stay shortest time possible to accomplish essential work	Only stay shortest time possible to accomplish essential work	Only stay shortest time possible to accomplish essential work
Non-mission Essential	Only has access to MTF, PO, BX, Commissary	Telework								
Vulnerable Personnel	Vulnerable personnel will maintain extreme physical distancing and telework during Phase 1 (60+ of age or w/pre-existing conditions)									
Activities (resume)	No group activities					Santa Fe Trail remains open to public/All other trails on base open to MEs and residents		Stop all non-mission essential activities/keep groups to less than 10	Stop all non-mission essential activities/keep groups to less than 10	Stop all non-mission essential activities/keep groups to less than 10

Phase II New Normal

When in Phase II, we should:

1. Reopen schools and businesses, but continue to review and implement physical distancing measures with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, USAF, DoD, and local health officials
2. Gyms can open if they adhere to strict physical distancing and sanitation protocols
3. Bars may operate with diminished standing-room occupancy, where applicable and appropriate
4. Large venues (e.g., sit-down dining, movie theaters, sporting venues, churches) can operate under moderate physical distancing protocols
5. Expand CDC/youth center/CDC annex enrollment to non-mission essential personnel. Consider starting only with childcare and no other programs
6. Continue to inform the base populace to limit non-essential gatherings. If gatherings are required, limit it to less than **10 people** ensuring physical distancing is preserved
7. The return of cadets is not recommended in this phase because physical distancing is impossible to ensure with 4,400 cadets present. However, if determined to be mission essential, it is preferable that the cadets be returned in stages (i.e., freshmen and seniors first, followed, at a later time, by sophomores and juniors, followed by Prep School students). Freshmen can have an I-day and BCT if physical distancing measures can be implemented into these events. Conduct distance-learning where possible, even if the cadets are already here at USAFA. For all returning cadets:
 - a. Use a 2-week (14-day) quarantine for all returning cadets
 - b. Test all cadets for COVID-19 to see if they have active disease or are potential carriers
 - c. No sick call. All appointments will be via telemedicine
 - d. Ensure sufficient and adequate Q&I facilities for the returning cadets and prep school students

8. Continue to encourage telework whenever possible and feasible with business operations, but can start to return more critical, community-interface workers back to the office while maintaining adequate physical distancing
9. Maintain some physical distancing measures and limitations on gatherings to prevent resurgence of infections
10. High-risk individuals (>60 years of age, or underlying health conditions, or immunocompromised) should limit time in the community where able. But if going into the public is necessary:
 - a. Practice physical distancing
 - b. Minimize exposure to social settings where distancing may not be practical, unless precautionary measures are observed
11. More frequently sanitize shared areas (e.g., office lounge, waiting rooms), but preferably close off any common areas that are not needed
12. Continue to wear cloth face coverings when physical distancing cannot be maintained
13. Those who are sick will stay home and follow published return to work guidance.
14. Go to HPCON B status
15. Lift OBO status, move to allow all DoD ID card holders, but keep base closed to tourists and visitors

In addition, there are two sub-phases to Phase II. They are HPCON dependent. Use the tables to guide you with opening your shops.

Phase II-a: Installation will be at HPCON C. Avoid opening non-mission essential shops in this subphase.

Table 3. Phase II-a Re-openings

	Base Access	Work Ctrs	CDC	Base Services	MDG	Fitness Center	BX/Cmsry FSS Food	Cadet Area	Academic Facilities	Athletic Facilities
Mission Essential				Outdoor Rec Golf Bowling Equestrian Ctr Fishing Mountain Biking	Limited services as follows: ortho, PT, Derm, ENT, Opto/laser eye/ophth, GI/Gen Surgery, Neur, Women's health	No unit PT or intramurals AD only to USAFA Limited capacity	Take out only for all food vendors			
Non-mission Essential	OBO lifted, but only access to certain services	Limited return	Limited availability					As Determined by the Commandant	As Determined by the Dean	As Determined by the AD & ED
Vulnerable Prsnl	Vulnerable personnel continue extreme physical distancing and telework during Phase 2A (60+ of age or w/pre-existing conditions)									
Activities (resume)								Start phasing in the more important activities, but keep groups to < than 10		

Phase II-b: Installation will be at HPCON B. Non-mission essential shops can be reopened during this subphase with the exception of opening the base to visitors/tourist. Prevention measures must still be incorporated into their daily operations.

Table 4. Phase II-b Re-openings

	Base Access	Work Centers	CDC	Base Services	MDG	Fitness Center	Dining / Food Venders	Cadet Area	Academic Facilities	Athletic Facilities
Mission Essential				Outdoor Rec/Golf/Bowling w/phased approaches PRC Badging (Appt. only)	Additional services open	No high-density sports -Continue to expanded operations -Consider unit PT with restrictions	Single seating only or by household Deliveries to personnel in Q/I			
Non-mission Essential	North gate opens/no restrictions to valid ID car (Closed to visitors)							Open to NME, but only stay shortest time possible to accomplish essential work	Open to NME, but only stay shortest time possible to accomplish essential work	Open to NME, but only stay shortest time possible to accomplish essential work
Vulnerable Prsnl	Vulnerable personnel continue extreme physical distancing and telework during Phase 2b (60+ of age or w/pre-existing conditions)									
Activities (resume)			Use of CDC Main/Youth Center	Legal Appts MPF/CPO/NAF /Finance JPPSO/Travel Office				More activities available, but continue to limit number of activities	More activities available, but continue to limit number of activities	More activities available, but continue to limit number of activities

Phase III Continuation

We can go to this phase when safe and effective tools for mitigating the risk of COVID-19 are available.

1. Broad surveillance
2. Therapeutics that can rescue patient with significant disease or prevent serious illness in those most at risk
3. Safe and effective vaccine

When in Phase III, we should:

1. Begin COVID-19 vaccination of base population with priorities based on previously determined influenza vaccine prioritization
2. Start lifting physical distancing measures
3. Consider lifting requirement to carry/wear a cloth face covering
4. Resume unrestricted staffing of worksites
5. Large venues (e.g., sit-down dining, movie theaters, sporting venues, churches) can operate under limited physical distancing protocols
6. Gyms can remain open if they adhere to standard sanitation protocols
7. Bars may operate with increased standing room occupancy, where applicable
8. Return all cadets to USAFA. I-Day and BCT and other cadet group activities can proceed with minimal or without physical distancing restrictions
9. Consider opening the base to tourists
10. Reopen all MWR activities
11. Go to HPCON A or HPCON 0 status

Table 5. Phase III Re-openings

	Base Access	Work Centers	CDC	Base Services	Fitness Center	BX/Commissary/FS S Food Ops	Cadet Area	Academic Facs	Athletic Facs
Mission Essential									
Non-mission Essential									
Vulnerable Prsnl	Consider Strict physical distancing, mask, good hand hygiene, and teleworking (or stay at home) until effectiveness of the vaccine or treatment are well known								
Activities (resume)									

Summary

The current conditions are beneficial for the installation to reopen, transition to Phase II-a, but it should be done gradually with focus remaining on health and safety of all personnel. All members of USAFA must continue to emphasize zoning, social distancing, masks, hand hygiene, teleworking/teleconferencing, and workers staying home if sick. USAFA will continue to coordinate with Front Range installations and stay in sync with them and our host city; mindful of USAFA nuances. We will continue to coordinate with city, state, and national authorities for additional stepdown or step-up measures as required. The Public Health and medical professionals are readily available for consultation or guidance and to assist with reopening services, functions, and return to work considerations. Lastly, Mission Elements and Commanders should use this guidance to assess risk and gradually and pragmatically start to resume in-person operations as mission needs dictate.

Point of Contact

Contact Col Ramon Yambo-Arias, Public Health Emergency Officer (PHEO), at 719-333-7805 or 719-332-3009 or ramon.yamboarias.mil@mail.mil with any questions.

References

These are the resources that we referenced in developing this guide:

1. AF/SG's Air Force Return to Work Capacity Plan (draft, 22 April 2020), provided to the USAFA PHEO via email on 23 April 2020 by the AF SG3P office.
2. American Enterprise Institute (AEI): <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/national-coronavirus-response-a-road-map-to-reopening/>
3. OMB/OPM: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/M-20-23.pdf>

4. OPM.gov COVID-19 return to work FAQs: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/covid-19/opm-frequently-asked-questions-regarding-the-resumption-of-normal-workforce-operations/>
5. White House: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/#phase-one>
6. World Health Organization (WHO): [https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331773/WHO-2019-nCoV-Adjusting PH measures-2020.1-eng.pdf](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331773/WHO-2019-nCoV-Adjusting_PH_measures-2020.1-eng.pdf)

Abbreviations

• AEI	American Enterprise Institute
• BCT	Basic Cadet Training
• CDC	Child Development Center
• CMHS	Colorado Military Health System
• COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
• DoD	Department of Defense
• EOC	Emergency Operations Center
• HCW	Healthcare Worker
• HPCON	Health Protection Condition (5 lvls: 0, A, B,C, D)
• I-day	In processing Day (usually last Friday of June)
• MCC	Medical Control Center
• MTF	Military Treatment Facility
• OBO	Official Business Only
• PHEO	Public Health Emergency Officer
• Q&I	Quarantine and Isolation
• USAF	United States Air Force
• USAFA	United States Air Force Academy
• WHO	World Health Organization