

Hokkaido University Business Continuity Plan During Coronavirus Outbreak: Response Plan at Alert Level 2

Hokkaido University (hereinafter referred to as "HU") moves from Alert Level 3 to Alert Level 2 prescribed in the Hokkaido University Business Continuity Plan During Coronavirus Outbreak (hereinafter "BCP") effective on October 1, 2021.

The below describes a set of basic precautionary actions against COVID-19 infection and spread and the measures in the BCP's Response Plan, both of which apply to all HU community members.

HU will continually review the basic precautionary action and Response Plan in compliance with the requests from the Government of Japan and the Hokkaido Government, and in response to the local pandemic situation.

1. Basic precautionary action

- Make sure you practice physical [social] distancing, mask wearing, cough etiquette and hand hygiene including thorough hand washing.
- Avoid high-risk settings with 3Cs (Closed spaces, Crowded places and Close-contact settings), and ensure adequate ventilation inside buildings even when the outside temperature is low.
- Only dine with members of the same household.
- Avoid dining establishments that do not strictly adhere to preventive measures.
- Keep an eye on your general health and any signs of cold. If you have a symptom such as high temperature, do not go to work or classes.
- Carefully weigh the necessity of travel to the areas where the pandemic is growing.
- Do not go out for non-essential reasons. Avoid traveling to/from other prefectures unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Avoid traveling to/from prefectures in which a state of emergency is declared at all costs unless it were an emergency.
- For overseas travel and restriction on entry into Japan, refer to the "Overseas Travel and Restriction on Entry into Japan for Prevention of the Spread of COVID-19 (May 27, 2021)" (in Japanese) on the HU website (https://www.hokudai.ac.jp/covid-19/pdf/20210527_01.pdf).
- Follow advisories to limit travel and activities when requested by the Government of Japan or the Hokkaido Government.
- We encourage the use of COVID-19 Contact App (COCOA), a smartphone app available in Japanese, Chinese and English. The more the app is used, the more effective it will be in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

2. Alert Levels and measures in the Response Plan

1) Research activities

- Research activities are not restricted when precautionary measures are in place.
- Plan ahead to minimize the time spent in lab, etc. for research and experiments.
- In field research or other research conducted outside of the University, the preventive measures in “1. Basic precautionary action” shall be implemented.

- Refer to the *Guidance for Conducting Research Safely during COVID-19 Pandemic*

(<https://www.global.hokudai.ac.jp/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Guidance-for-Conducting-Research-Safely-during-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf>) based on the action plan provided in the *Guidelines to Maintain Research Activities While Observing COVID-19 Preventive Measures* (in Japanese) released by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

(https://www.mext.go.jp/content/20201007_mxt_kouhou01_mext_00028_01.pdf)

2) Classes (lectures/seminars/experiments/practical training)

- Review preventive measures for each course. Courses deemed by head of school/graduate school that adequate preventive measures are implemented to avoid 3Cs in its classrooms, etc. are offered in-person, and other courses remain on online platforms.

When immediate switch from online to in-person is not feasible, courses will transition to in-person as soon as it becomes possible.

In addition, alternative options will be provided to students who miss classes due to unavoidable circumstances.

Note: The above guidelines shall be adjusted as appropriate by schools/graduate schools in accordance with their educational objectives and goals.

- Admissions selections will be carried out as announced in the application guidelines with stringent measures against COVID-19. Its procedures, however, are subject to change due to the pandemic situation. HU will officially and immediately announce any changes to admission policies or selection processes should the necessity arise.

3) Student extracurricular activities

- Indoor or outdoor group training is permitted for a student group upon submission and approval of an activity plan written in accordance with the *Policy on COVID-19 Safety Measures for Student Extracurricular Activities and the Use of Facilities* formulated by HU.

- The use of indoor facilities is permitted when the maximum group size allowed for each facility is maintained.

- Sporting events including tournaments are permitted at the request of a Faculty Advisor when deemed appropriate, such as when safety standards are met by ensuring preventive measures at the event or limiting the number of participants to minimum. Practice games or traveling outside of the city of Sapporo or Hokkaido (excluding tournaments or performance) are permitted to the minimum extent necessary at the request of a Faculty Advisor when safety standards equivalent to the above are satisfied. However, geographical restrictions may be imposed by the request of the Prefectural Governor(s).

- Training camps are prohibited for the time being.

- All activities in a student group are suspended when there is a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 among the members of the group. All extracurricular activities of all student groups may become suspended when a COVID-19 cluster of 5 or more cases among students are confirmed within the University community or deemed necessary by HU.
- No student social gatherings involving food or drink are permitted regardless of whether before, during or after their intended activities. All activities in a student group are suspended when there is a breach of the policy.

4) Remote/on-site work

- Since the circumstances vary between institutions, faculty members are instructed to work from home up to the level they can maintain the quality of education and research activities under the restrictions provided in the Alert Level 2 of the BCP's Response Plan. Meanwhile, one third of all other staff members are expected to work from home at a time to reduce in-person contact. It is allowed to raise the percentage of remote workers as long as it does not hinder the University operations. It is also permitted to have fewer remote workers for important, time-sensitive matters during this period with enforced preventive measures*. *Please refer to the *Remote Work for Faculty and Staff for Prevention of COVID-19 and Operational Continuity (April 17, 2020; HU/Confid./222)* (in Japanese).
- Staggered working hours remain in operation to reduce infection risk on public transport during peak hours.
- We may potentially experience a temporary decrease in the workforce due to the spread of COVID-19 among our faculty and staff members. List up and prioritize duties and responsibilities, plan ahead to ensure uninterrupted operations in situations where faculty and staff members must stay home and to minimize the potential external damage in cases where all operations must be ceased.

5) Meetings (including training/briefing/guidance)

- In principle, all meetings are conducted online via videoconferences or written deliberation using email.
- If absolutely necessary to hold a meeting in person, implement thorough preventive actions as below to reduce the risk of infection with COVID-19.
- Minimize the number of participants.
- Stream the meeting live for those who are unable to attend in person.
- Allow plenty of room between participants in a spacious meeting venue.
- Ensure regular ventilation.
- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers at the venue.

6) Campus visits by non-University community members

- Entry to the University campuses is permitted by adhering to all preventive measures.

7) Other important reminders

i) University libraries are open with adequate preventive measures.

ii) Academic/social events

- In principle, all events are held online using digital tools such as videoconferencing.
- If absolutely necessary to hold an on-site in-person event, take preventive measures including a seating plan to prevent 3Cs, physical [social] distancing between participants, regular room ventilation, hand

washing and sanitization, mask wearing and maintaining a list of attendees. Limit capacity to half of the maximum occupancy of the venue (also comply with the occupancy limit the Hokkaido Government stipulates).

Note: Same restrictions apply when non-HU persons use a HU facility for events.

- Large-scale nationwide events must be canceled or postponed unless adequate risk management measures are put in place.

- Actively use a contact tracing notification app called "Hokkaido Corona Tsuuchi System (Hokkaido Coronavirus Notification System)" endorsed by the Hokkaido Government if many and unspecified persons come to a planned event or use a HU facility.

iii) Medical check-ups (excluding exams for radioisotope users), optional check-ups and re-examinations scheduled to be held at HU's Health Care Center are postponed until the BCP's Alert Level is reduced to Level 1 (dates TBD).

iv) Medical services at the Health Care Center

- For internal medicine, mental health assistance and counseling, services are suspended for those who have symptoms of common cold.