

NBER Cambridge Office COVID-19 Prevention Plan December 2022

The NBER office at 1050 Massachusetts Avenue in Cambridge is open for administrative staff, term employees, post-doctoral fellows, users of the Boston Research Data Center (BRDC), NBER research assistants, NBER affiliates with assigned offices, and visiting research scholars. Any NBER affiliate who does not have an assigned office, and who wishes to work at the NBER, should contact Lisa Ursino (ursino@nber.org). Other short-term visitors may access the office, subject to the completion of a self-screening health questionnaire.

This memo outlines a number of pandemic-related workplace procedures, in line with CDC, state, and City of Cambridge guidelines, that the NBER has adopted. These procedures will be updated in light of changing federal, state and local guidelines.

Vaccination

Employees and others working in NBER office space must be fully vaccinated and [up-to-date](#) with a CDC-approved vaccine, or have an approved medical or religious exemption. Please contact Diane Birnbaum with questions or to request an exemption.

Face Coverings

The NBER follows CDC recommendations for prevention steps based on the [County COVID-19 Community Level](#). Middlesex County's community level is currently "low," and the CDC does not recommend requiring masks in this case. Anyone working at the NBER's office may choose to mask at any time, but masking is currently voluntary.

Illness

Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 or experiences any of the symptoms of the virus **should not come to the office**. Please review the list of COVID-19 symptoms available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

The CDC recommends mask-wearing for anyone with COVID-19 symptoms, a current positive test, or a recent exposure to someone with COVID-19. NBER is holding to a higher standard: under these circumstances, **please do not come to the office**. The CDC recommends that anyone who has been exposed to COVID-19 but is asymptomatic wait at least five full days after exposure before testing. An earlier test may yield an inaccurate result.

Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 should alert Diane Birnbaum at hr@nber.org.

The NBER has developed an Isolation, Contact Tracing, and Communication plan that applies in the event that anyone who has been at the NBER tests positive. Under that plan, NBER will promptly notify any close contacts of the affected individual within the NBER community. Diane will ask the infected person to provide her with a list of those individuals at NBER with whom they have had close contact. A close contact is someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting no more than 2 days before that person experienced symptoms, or, for asymptomatic individuals, 2 days before the collection date of their test-positive specimen.

Visitors

Visitors to 1050 must enter through the reception area on the 3rd floor and must acknowledge via a self-screening health questionnaire that they are not experiencing possible symptoms of COVID-19 on the day of the visit and have not had a recent positive test result or exposure to a COVID-19-positive individual. Potential visitors who have tested positive or who have been recently exposed to COVID-19 may not enter the NBER's office. The receptionist will collect the completed health questionnaire.

Additional Resources

The Cambridge Public Health Department's guidelines on steps to take in the event of a positive COVID-19 test or a COVID-19 may be found here:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/covid19/News/2021/12/cphdadoptscdcrecommendations>

The State of Massachusetts' updated COVID-19 isolation and quarantine guidance may be found here:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-isolation-and-quarantine-guidance-for-the-general-public>

The U.S. Department of Labor's, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) webpage may be found here:

OSHA – COVID-19 Webpage <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus>

Guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) may be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>