Circular No. 34/2020
Additional information on “safe operations”

Dear Sir or Madam,

In Circular No. 33/2020 we announced last week the transitioning of University operations from “minimal operations” to “safe operations”. As of Monday May 11, 2020, new legal regulations apply. This is why today we would like to provide you with updated and additional information on the following aspects of “safe operations”:

1. New legal framework
2. General hygiene and safety measures
   2.1. Provision of protective equipment
   2.2. Procedure in case of a suspected corona infection
3. Examinations with physical attendance
4. Creating hygiene and protection concepts
5. Safe office operations mode
6. Business trips

### 1. New legal framework

The legal framework the Rectorate adheres to with regard to creating a safe environment for all members of our University, with protecting our health being the top priority, consists of the following:

- Ordinance on the protection against new coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 infections (Coronaschutzverordnung)
- Teaching and practical courses as well as examinations at institutions of higher education in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia (Allgemeinverfügung des Ministeriums für Arbeit, Gesundheit und Soziales)
- Ordinance on overcoming coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 epidemic related challenges posed on university operations (Corona-Epidemie-Hochschulverordnung).

The Coronaschutzverordnung as well as the Allgemeinverfügung des Ministeriums für Arbeit, Gesundheit und Soziales were updated effective May 11, 2020. As a result, the legal framework for institutions of higher education has slightly changed, while the principle of digital teaching in the summer semester remains in place. In line with the Corona-Epidemie-Hochschulverordnung (dated April 15, 2020), the Rectorate made a
decision on May 7, 2020 on the handling of examinations and courses up to April 1, 2021.

The latest documents are available at www.uni-bonn.de/corona. Please note the resulting more specific information on “safe operations” phase:

2. General hygiene and safety measures

As already outlined in Circular No. 33/2020, wearing of **mouth and nose covers becomes mandatory** in all University of Bonn buildings as of May 18, 2020 (Monday).

Reminder: Requirements for labs must be defined on a case-by-case basis; suitable mouth and nose protection must be jointly agreed upon with Occupational Safety and must be documented in a hygiene concept.

2.1 Provision of protective equipment

**Mouth and nose covers:** Institutes and facilities are to inform the Occupational and Environmental Safety Unit via arbeitsschutz@uni-bonn.de as to how many employees require mouth and nose covers. Occupational Safety will provide you with the total amount required (3 mouth and nose covers per employee) via Section 4.1. Institutes are responsible for organizing the internal distribution themselves. Upon reasonable justification, additional deliveries are possible.

**Disinfectant and designated disinfectant areas:** Janitors of Section 4.1 will position tables reserved for disinfectant at the entrance of each building and will also arrange for sufficient disinfectant. Institutes may request additional units from Occupational Safety via arbeitsschutz@uni-bonn.de.

**Protective acrylic glass shields:** Institutes may order simple protective shields made of acrylic glass via the provider Lyreco. Where necessary, you may use WBS element 10A-20441-00-10000000 when ordering. For custom-made shields, please contact Occupational Safety via arbeitsschutz@uni-bonn.de.

2.2 Procedure in case of a suspected corona infection

Persons experiencing common cold symptoms or fever must, as a general rule, not be present on University premises. Persons who start to experience these symptoms during work on University premises must leave these immediately. The procedure is the same as calling in sick.

Persons with the aforementioned symptoms shall contact a doctor’s surgery (via phone) in order to get tested (if applicable).

Where a person is tested positive but occupational safety regulations (maintaining at least 1.5 meters of distance, hand hygiene, protective acrylic glass shields (where applicable) and mouth and nose covers where a minimum distance of 1.5 meters was not maintained) were adhered to beforehand, no further steps with regards to the definition of a contact person are required as long as the contact persons do not show any symptoms.

So-called “screening of close contacts” or instructions to isolate or quarantine are issued, where necessary, by the health authority. However, supervisors must be in the position to provide contact details of potential contact persons as well as information on time of entering and exiting the workplace of the person in question.
3. Examinations with physical attendance

Currently arrangements are made for examinations which cannot be held online for plausible reasons; instead, it shall be possible to hold these on University premises. First and foremost, this applies to **resitting of exams from the past winter semester**. In general, however, digital examinations will be the norm for the summer semester 2020. For examinations of the summer semester which, following plausible justification, cannot be held online, further possibilities for examinations requiring physical attendance will be explored once the winter semester resits have been completed. Shortly, the Rectorate will distribute applicable regulations on infection prevention and occupational safety; a handout for students on the correct behavior during examinations is being produced.

4. Creating hygiene and protection concepts

Hygiene and protection concepts must be submitted for the following exceptions listed in Circular No. 33/2020:

- Borrowing from libraries
- Research and imperative teaching in labs
- Examinations which cannot be held digitally and
- Small meetings with specific requirements such as job interviews.

These concepts must be compiled by the persons responsible. They must include details on implementing the specific measures on hygiene and infection protection which were decided upon by the Rectorate on May 6, 2020 and are available under [www.uni-bonn.de/corona](http://www.uni-bonn.de/corona).

Please include answers to the following questions in your hygiene and protective concept:

- Why is it not possible to hold this course/activity online?
- Why is it not possible to postpone the course?
- Which groups of people are affected?
- Which specific hygiene measures are taken for the purpose of prevention?
- Do you ensure documenting (contact tracing in case of infection)?
- When is the course/activity scheduled to take place?
- Who is the responsible coordinator?

**Risk assessment** with regards to infection protection, the briefing of relevant employees and, where applicable, students form important elements of the hygiene and protection concept. The Occupational and Environmental Safety Unit is able to provide examples for best practices.

Instead of creating numerous individual protection concepts also for smaller units, the Rectorate strongly recommends to **combine requirements and use big spaces**, in which concepts are more easily implemented and adhered to, **interdisciplinarily**. The Dean’s offices are asked to coordinate the creation of hygiene and protection concepts in their faculties accordingly. Please submit the hygiene and protection concepts to the Occupational and Environmental Safety Unit ([arbeitsschutz@uni-bonn.de](mailto:arbeitsschutz@uni-bonn.de)) via the Dean’s offices or, respectively, the managing directors of central units. The Occupational and Environmental Safety Unit will then liaise with the Rectorate on the approval. Please prepare **lab hygiene and protection concepts** for practical courses and research.
separately. For further information on how to best proceed, please contact the Occupational and Environmental Safety Unit.

5. Safe office operations mode

To facilitate the abovementioned exceptions, working from the office is required to a certain extent. Based on a general risk assessment carried out by the Occupational and Environmental Safety Unit, a handout for creating hygiene and protection concepts for working safely in offices has been compiled. This document is available online. Please bear in mind that, until further notice, working from home nevertheless takes priority over physical presence on University premises.

6. Business trips

Effect immediately, business trips within Germany are permissible again. However, with public welfare in mind, these trips are restricted to work duties which cannot be fulfilled via digital channels. The goal of the business trip should always be carefully weighed against the related health risks.

As the general travel warning issued by the German government remains in place, business trips to destinations outside of Germany are not permissible for the time being.

Based on the exceptions defined for safe operations mode, the Rectorate will check the easing of further restrictive measures step-by-step, under restriction of the development of the infection rate and, respectively, the legal framework.

Early transitioning to “safe operations” mode is possible for the areas listed as exceptions as long as hygiene and protection concepts reviewed by Occupational and Environmental Safety and the medical officers (Betriebsärztlicher Dienst) and approved by the Rectorate can already be implemented prior to June 1, 2020. With this in mind, e.g. the ULB was able to already resume borrowing in safe operations mode on May 11, 2020.

Sincerely,

signed Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Michael Hoch  
Rector

signed Holger Gottschalk  
Provost