

Dalla Lana School of Public Health Process to Review Requests for Exception to In Person Practicum Placement Sanctions

DLSPH students who have a paid in-person practicum placement suspended by the University may request exception to participate in an in-person practicum placement, in writing, with the information below.

Only paid practicums will be considered in this pilot, due to the fact that in addition to an essential educational experience, they also provide needed financial support to students. The request for exception will be reviewed by the Associate Dean, Academic Affairs, Dionne Gesink and Associate Professor of Occupational and Environmental Health, Paul Bozek, who is also a Professional Engineer, Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH), and Registered Occupational Hygienist (ROH). Together, they will review the application and interview the student before a final decision is made. Paul Bozek will be the primary lead to assess items 11 and 12 below since he will be able to ascertain requirements based on his education/qualification. In the event of a split decision, a third faculty member, Associate Professor and Co-Scientific Director & Senior Scientist with the Institute for Work & Health, Peter Smith, will be consulted.

If approved, the student will be required to provide a weekly or biweekly (as appropriate) safety update to their Program Director to ensure the continued safety of the student until in-person practicum placement suspensions are lifted by the University.

Request to participate in an in-person practicum placement:

Please submit a document that includes the following information to the Associate Dean, Academic Affairs: dionne.gesink@utoronto.ca. Please ask your potential preceptor / placement site lead to provide written confirmation that your response to questions **6 – 12** is accurate.

- 1) Student name, student number, and academic program.
- 2) Practicum placement organization and supervisor.
- 3) Several pre-existing health conditions (including related medications) may put a person at additional risk of acquiring or complicating SARS-CoV-2 infection. Attached as Appendix “A” is a list of such, based on publicly available health guidance (current as of April 20, 2020). Please indicate if you are at additional risk for SARS-CoV-2 infection. No diagnosis is required but further confidential follow up may be required, for example, medical clearance from a health care provider.
- 4) Confirmation that the practicum is paid (e.g. a letter or contract from the practicum host).
- 5) Please provide proof that you have completed Occupational Health and Safety Awareness training from MLTSD or equivalent (Ref <https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/training/workers.php>)
- 6) Evidence of WSIB coverage. A clearance certificate may be requested for smaller organizations and non-profits.
- 7) Is the placement workplace an “Essential” service or business under provincial definitions?
- 8) Briefly describe the placement duties/functions/location(s).
- 9) What percent time will be in-person and where (e.g. at the employer’s workplace)?
- 10) Why is in-person participation in this placement necessary?
- 11) Please provide the following documentation (or link to online documentation) from the employer:
 - a) Identify Occupational Health and Safety Lead personnel (name and contact information);
 - b) Occupational Health and Safety Policy (written).
 - c) Policy or procedures (written) to address COVID-19 specifically.

- i) Prohibiting those with symptoms from coming into the workplace until 10 days after symptom-free.
 - ii) Prohibiting those who live with COVID-19 positive persons from coming into the workplace until 14 days after the positive person is symptom-free.
 - iii) Workplace sanitizing/cleaning (varies, depending on workplace).
 - iv) Personal hygiene (hand sanitizer/handwashing) in the workplace.
 - v) Screening at workplace entrance (varies, depending on type of workplace).
 - vi) Physical distancing in the workplace.
 - vii) Workplace specific personal protective equipment (PPE) policy/program for COVID-19 (varies, depending on type of employer).
- 12) Will appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) be available to you at the worksite and is training available on donning and doffing?
- 13) Under what condition(s) will you know it is appropriate to stop attending in person and step away from the workplace?
- a) What will you do if you get sick (e.g. experience COVID-19 symptoms)?
 - b) Do you know when and to whom you're supposed to report symptoms/illness?
 - c) Have you familiarized yourself with the WSIB COVID-19 adjudicative document:
<https://www.wsib.ca/sites/default/files/2020-03/adjudicativeapproachnovelcoronavirus.pdf>.
See also <https://www.wsib.ca/en/covid-19-faqs-about-wsib-claims>
- 14) Are you comfortable participating in this placement?
- 15) If approved, do you agree to provide weekly or biweekly safety updates to your Program Director?

Appendix “A” – Medical Conditions and/or related Medications Understood* to Lead to Acquiring or complicating SARS-CoV-2 infection (current as of April 20, 2020)

* Please note that given the novel nature of COVID-19, medical guidance is rapidly evolving; and the list below should not be considered exhaustive. Individuals are advised to consult [public health guidance](#) and with their health care provider if they are concerned about the impact of any additional conditions or medications on susceptibility to COVID-19.

The conditions / medications we are aware of include:

- i) Prednisone >5mg/day
- ii) Insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus or uncontrolled non-insulin dependent *diabetes* mellitus (Fasting Blood Sugar > 12)
- iii) Uncontrolled hypertension >180/110 (see in particular ACE Inhibitor and ARB (Angiotensin Receptor Blocker).
- iv) Prescription biologics
- v) Chemotherapy treatment, Radiation treatment
- vi) Severe Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- vii) Severe asthma
- viii) Liver/kidney/heart failure
- ix) Haematological condition

Important Links:

Government of Canada: People who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/people-high-risk-for-severe-illness-covid-19.html>

CDC: Groups at Higher Risk for Severe Illness:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/groups-at-higher-risk.html>