

Regulations

in connection with the current coronavirus (COVID-19) infection situation regarding the continuation of operations at OVGU taking into account the current SARS-CoV-2 Control Ordinance of the State of Saxony-Anhalt

(Last updated: 30.04.2021)

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1. Basic Principles

The preamble of the currently applicable Control Ordinance of the state of Saxony-Anhalt states that at the present time people are expected to exercise greater self-monitoring and self-discipline. This conduct is based on understanding and voluntary participation by all involved and cannot be achieved by regulation alone. In this sense, the university administration is appealing to all employees to adapt their behavior to the particular circumstances and to go about their everyday working lives in a measured way with the necessary sensitivity.

2. Instructions in Case of Infection with Covid-19 or the Authorities Impose a Period of Quarantine

In the event of an infection with Covid-19, the same regulations apply as for any other illness. For employees, salaries will continue to be paid for 6 weeks, after which the sick pay allowance will be paid until the end of the period set out in the relevant pay scale. For public servants, § 70 of the state Civil Service Act (LBG LSA) applies.

If protective measures, such as quarantine pursuant to § 30 IfSG (Infectious Diseases Protection Act) or a prohibition from working pursuant to § 31 IfSG are imposed for public servants or employees, those affected shall be deemed to have been granted a leave of absence from work with a valid reason. If you have no symptoms and/or have returned a negative test result, home working may be agreed subject to fulfillment of the requirements. In this case, there is no loss of earnings, which otherwise in the case of employees could be claimed as compensation through the university. For this reason, it is necessary to notify the university if it is possible to continue working from home. The quarantine order must be presented to the Department of Human Resources.

3. Compliance with Hygiene Regulations

The hygiene regulations that were announced at the start of the pandemic continue to apply. These include:

- maintaining a minimum distance to others of 1.50 meters
- frequent hand-washing
- regular ventilation of closed spaces
- coughing and sneezing etiquette
- dispensing with shaking hands and hugging
- where necessary wearing masks that cover the mouth and nose that are suitable for everyday use
- If it is necessary for several people to use a room at the same time, then by order of the Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, each person must have 10 square meters of space; this means that a maximum of four people only may work in a 40 square meter room (this applies in particular from tier 3).

Employees who display non-specific general symptoms or respiratory problems and/or who have had contact with a confirmed Covid-19 case in the past 14 days should contact their general medical practitioner, the medical on-call service (tel. 116117) or the relevant public health department to determine the next steps. The medical decision shall be the decisive factor with regard to continuing to work. The relevant department at work must be notified via this email address: corona@ovgu.de or by other means (Department of Human Resources +49 (0)391 675 8690).

4. Support from the Occupational Physician Service and Occupational Health and Safety & Environmental Protection Department (K43)

The university physician and occupational health and safety specialists (K43) will advise the Office of the President and also managers with regard to the implementation of the SARS-CoV-2 occupational health and safety standards and will provide support in training employees. OVGU offers its employees additional voluntary occupational health care. Furthermore, the university physician also facilitates individual consultations regarding work-related health risks. Pre-existing conditions and fears can also be discussed here.

The Occupational Health and Safety & Environmental Protection Department (K43) will, in case of need, provide hand sanitizer to enable participation in face-to-face classes. In this connection, your attention is drawn to the corresponding safety data sheets (SDS) and operating instructions drawn up by K43 for the use, storage and transport of disinfectants.

The Occupational Health and Safety and Environmental Protection Department will, where needed, also make available single-use gloves and masks to facilitate participation in face-to-face classes.

Surface disinfectants will be supplied by the Facilities Services Department (K51) Disinfection of the lecture halls/seminar rooms, in which face-to-face classes/examinations take place is organized by our cleaning services provider. Department K51 must be made aware in good time by the Examination Offices of any forthcoming exam dates. If rooms are allocated to third parties, they are responsible for ensuring that the hygiene plan, which includes surface disinfection, is carried out.

5. Regulations for Teaching and Laboratory Operations

Information on regulations concerning studies and teaching can be found on the following web pages: <https://www.ovgu.de/corona.html>. These are updated regularly.

6. University library

There are no changes to the opening and service hours of the university library (UL). Further information is available on the UL web pages under the following link: <https://ub.ovgu.de/home/Aktuelles/Wichtige+Informationen+in+Bezug+auf+die+COVID+19+Pandemie+und+die+Ma%C3%9Fnahmen+der+Universit%C3%A4tsbibliothek-p-1750.html>.

7. University Computer Center (PC Pool)

Due to their spatial characteristics, the PC pools cannot yet be reopened. The UCC can still be contacted in the campus service center.

8. Provision of Continuing Education Courses

Continuing education courses for employees are offered regularly in online format. This applies to courses by both internal and external providers. Courses that require attendance in person in order to achieve their learning objectives will be postponed until the Control Ordinance is lifted, unless it is absolutely necessary that they be held. This may be the case for training that is required by law, or courses that convey knowledge that is absolutely essential (e.g. legal regulations). In this case, the courses must be held in dedicated rooms in compliance with individual hygiene plans.

Coaching sessions and mediation will be carried out according to need. In general, it can be assumed that coaching sessions will be carried out online. Face-to-face coaching must be justified and carried out in compliance with hygiene rules.

Mediation may be deferred or continued in digital form if the participants consider it to be useful.

9. Employment Law-Related Guidance on Presence in the Workplace and Working from Home

Basic principles: The organization of in-person/face-to-face activities or, preferably, remote working shall comply with the tiered plan set out by OVGU.

From tier 1, office employees or staff whose activities are not location-dependent may work from home provided that the work processes, data protection regulations and technical equipment permit this. From tier 2, for all academic and non-academic staff, remote working shall be facilitated if it is possible to put in place the technical and content-related contingencies. This will limit contacts in corridors and common rooms.

- To this end, where possible, technical capacities over and above the usual workplace facilities should be put in place.
- To facilitate remote working, if necessary, workflows should be reorganized.
- If presence in the workplace is necessary, functional groups should be formed that have no contact with one another, in order to secure the ability of departments to carry out their work. To this end, alternating service (presence and remote working or staggered start and finish times) may be arranged. Individual workstations must be set up.
- All meetings and business-related consultations must take place digitally to avoid people meeting for longer periods of time.

These rules will also apply if tiers 3 or 4 are implemented. Tier 5 describes the emergency situation when the university must be closed.

With the passing of the Fourth Law for the Protection of the Population in the Event of an Epidemic Situation of National Significance on April 22, 2021, the Infection Protection Act was amended. In the case of office work or comparable activities, the employer must offer employees the opportunity to carry out these activities in their homes if there are no compelling operational reasons to the contrary. The employees must accept this offer if there are no reasons to the contrary on their part. This regulation applies as long as the city of Magdeburg (place of work) exceeds the threshold value of 100 for three consecutive days of the number of new infections with the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 per 100,000 inhabitants within seven days (seven-day incidence) published by the Robert Koch Institute.

Conditions for working from home

Working from home may only be authorized if the activity is suitable for doing so. It is only possible if the activity is office work or not location-dependent. This means that:

- all or a significant part of the work involved can be completed remotely,
- the line managers (Deans, heads of organizational units etc.) must draw up a work plan for the employees concerned, to the extent that they are not undertaking independent scientific/academic work,
- it must be possible to reach the individual by email and telephone,
- the individual shall be obliged to check their emails and the website several times a day. A call diversion must be set up, or contact information left on the answer machine message,
- personal presence is not required (for example there is no regular customer contact),
- data protection is adhered to.

Conditions for working in the occupational workplace

If employees work in an individual office, the hygiene rules outside of the office must be followed carefully. Masks are required to be worn in the corridors and common areas. Direct contact over longer periods of time is to be avoided; for short periods of contact, the hygiene rules must be followed.

For employees who work in shared offices, workshops or laboratories, the following applies:

- the minimum distance of 1.50 m must be maintained. If necessary, markings must be put in place to help ensure compliance,
- for the avoidance of direct contact, where necessary separators (plexiglass screens) must be installed or furniture moved,
- if this cannot be guaranteed, a mask covering the mouth and nose must be worn, especially if the office is open to the public,
- if minimum distances cannot be adhered to or separators are not available, third parties shall be obliged to wear a mask covering the mouth and nose.
- It is recommended that the number of people with which employees are in sustained contact in connection with their work be kept as consistent as possible.

The [Service agreement on the regulation of working hours in the framework of the 40 hour week and flexible working hours as well as regulations on flexibilization in the context of part-time employment relationships at Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg \(excl. MED\)](#) apply analogously.

The essential features of the [Service agreement on remote working](#) apply. It is not necessary to implement a supplementary agreement to the employment contracts of individuals if home working is agreed in order to comply with hygiene regulations. In such cases, it is still sufficient for a notice to be sent to the Human Resources department in which the employees, apart from scientific personnel, are mentioned by name. Their immediate supervisors are responsible for issuing and checking work assignments.

10. Leave of Absence to Care for Children or Other Relatives in Need of Care

If daycare centers, schools or individual classes or groups are closed as a result of Covid or if an individual decision by the public health department is enacted regarding an instruction to isolate, employees and public servants are entitled to claim a leave of absence of up to 34 working days, or for single parents up to 67 working days, whilst continuing to receive their salary. This also applies to foster parents.

The conditions are as follows:

- Children affected by the closure have not yet reached the end of their 12th year or are - Children affected by the closure have not yet reached the age of 12 or are disabled or dependent on assistance.
- Closure occurs outside of regular school or facility vacations or scheduled closing times.
- The requirements for emergency care are not present.
- Proof of closure may be required, if applicable.
- No other caregiver is available.
- Overtime that can be worked off or remaining vacation from the previous year is no longer available.

In the event that the weekly working hours are divided in a way other than over five days, the entitlement increases or reduces accordingly. The leave of absence can also be granted by the hour.

There is no entitlement to time off work if the establishments would in any case be closed (holidays, closing times).

Any leaves of absence already granted since 2020 must be taken into account in the 34 or 67 days.

11. Illness of a Child and/or Acute Care of a Close Relative due to the Covid 19 Pandemic

The following notes have already been published in Administrative Manual III with a date of April 30, 2021. For the sake of completeness, they are listed again here in abbreviated form.

Extension of the payment of sickness benefits for persons insured in the statutory health insurance fund for the illness of children under 12 years of age.

In deviation from the previous statutory regulations, the entitlement to sickness benefit for the calendar year 2021 exists for each child for a maximum of 30 working days, and for single parents for a maximum of 60 working days. The entitlement exists for insured persons with more than 2 children for up to 65 working days, for single-parent insured persons for a maximum of 130 working days.

The closure of the facility does not have to be initiated by the competent authority. The closure of facilities, e.g. by the management of the facility, also constitutes grounds for the exemption.

Employees who are not entitled to the leave of absence pursuant to § 45 SGB V because they are insured in a private health insurance fund or the child is not covered by statutory health insurance are only entitled to 4 days of special leave pursuant to § 29 TV-L in addition to the 34 days.

Extension of the possibility of granting special leave for civil servants in the event of illness of children up to 12 years of age or relatives in need of care

In 2021, up to 28 days per child/maximum of 63 working days can be taken to care for sick children up to the age of 12. For single parents, up to 55 working days per child/maximum 129 working days are available. The closure of the facility does not have to be initiated by the competent authority. The closure of facilities, e.g. by the management of the facility, also constitutes grounds for the exemption.

12. Information on Business Trips

In principle, business trips should only be organized and approved if they are absolutely necessary for the performance of an individual's duties.

The current, regional rate of infection should be taken into consideration in any decision of this nature. The business interests and the duty of care must be balanced. Business trips may only be authorized if they are imperative and no travel warning is in place prior to the start of the trip. This decision is the responsibility of the approver.

Current travel warnings and guidelines must be taken into consideration at the start of the trip; if necessary, trips that have already been booked must be canceled if the risk is too great for the traveler. The costs of cancellation and non-refundable expenses must be covered from the decentralized travel cost budget or third-party accounts. This also applies to travel in the context of continuing education courses. For this very reason, when approving business trips, increased attention and sensitivity is required on the part of both the traveler and the approver.

If coronavirus tests are required when entering or exiting a country, or to avoid going into quarantine, the costs incurred can be reimbursed as incidental expenses via the travel expense accounting system. If upon return, the individual is required to quarantine, then this shall be deemed to be an authorized absence.

This shall not be the case if a business trip is undertaken despite the existence of a travel warning. The provisions as described under point 13 shall apply in this case.

From tier 4 business trips are prohibited in principle. From tier 5 there will be a total ban on business trips.

13. Private Trips Abroad or to Risk Areas

Private trips abroad or to risk areas concern the conduct outside of the work environment of employees and staff. However, it should be assumed that due to the coming into force of the SARS-CoV-2 Quarantine Ordinance, such trips take place with an awareness of the legal situation. If a trip is booked or undertaken at a time when the restrictions arising from the Quarantine Ordinance were already known, the consequences must be borne personally by the employees and staff.

This means that, for example, in the event of having to quarantine upon entry into a country or when returning, if difficulties are encountered with the return journey, or if an individual is prohibited from undertaking certain activities, then holiday or an unpaid leave of absence must be applied for if it is not possible to undertake all of that person's work duties from home. This applies for the validity period of the SARS-CoV-2 Quarantine Ordinance. Regionally there are very great differences between the regulations in force, meaning that in particular the provisions applicable in the employee's place of residence and work should be observed.

The up-to-date guidance from the RKI can be found on this page: https://www.rki.de/DE/Content/InfAZ/N/Neuartiges_Coronavirus/Risikogebiete_neu.html

Since the situation, particularly in respect of the assessment of risk areas, is extremely dynamic, often the risk cannot be estimated before the start of a trip. It is recommended that individuals come to an agreement with their supervisor(s) prior to commencing a trip about the possibility of working from home in order to minimize the consequences of being quarantined. If quarantine is imposed by the authorities, there is an entitlement to payment of remuneration pursuant to the Infection Protection Act.