



New England Conservatory COVID-19 Control Plan Addenda

The health, wellness, and safety of the New England Conservatory community, together with our neighbors, colleagues, and friends in Greater Boston and beyond, is our first and foremost institutional priority. Through the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, NEC has put in place a robust process for the response, planning, and mitigation of COVID-19, with the goal of limiting the spread of infection, supporting those that become ill, and fostering a healthy teaching, learning, and working environment for all.

Over the last several weeks, teams across the conservatory have worked to develop and refine plans for a fall semester centered on academic and artistic excellence while offering an unprecedented level of flexibility and agency for students and faculty. Our plan is founded on several core principles: protecting the health, wellness, and safety of our community; ensuring an exceptional educational experience for all students; and creating a robust musical and artistic experience.

Central to this planning process, NEC has consulted with public health agencies (e.g. Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Boston Public Health Commission), governmental partners, public health experts, and partner organizations that will support our reopening (e.g. Broad Institute). Our plans for the fall prioritize flexibility and adaptability, allowing us to adjust our operations in response to prevailing public health conditions in an ever-evolving environment.

Equally importantly, we have implemented a series of measures to meet and exceed state and local guidelines with respect to ensuring compliance with physical distancing, detection and response; hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection; operational safety; and communication and compliance with and among our community.

NEC is pursuing a hybrid operational model for the fall semester, offering students two distinct choices for their NEC experience: a hybrid learning model with online and in-person teaching and learning opportunities, or an entirely online experience.

To ensure clarity, transparency, and accountability, NEC has established a series of communications resources for our community, including email announcements, a series of live and recorded town-hall sessions, and two websites dedicated to our COVID response and operational planning. Our websites, available at necmusic.edu/welcome-back-nec and necmusic.edu/resource-center, contain our most up-to-date plans, and are updated in real-time as those plans develop and evolve.

Massachusetts COVID Control Plan Addenda

The following sections represent responses to questions specified on the Massachusetts Higher Education COVID control plan template established by the Commonwealth. This is not a comprehensive list of initiatives or requirements. Additional information can be found on the NEC website.

1. Social Distancing additional procedures:
 - a. NEC has established a range of physical distancing requirements for our community based on activity, with a 6-foot distancing requirement serving as baseline, and with some activities requiring more significant physical separation between individuals.
 - b. NEC has also conducted a comprehensive assessment of each space within our campus, with the goal of reconciling space utilization with social distancing requirements identified above.
 - c. Taken together, the above efforts have allowed us to reimagine space assignments across the campus, ensuring that physical distancing guidelines are adhered to across all spaces and uses.
 - d. Physical distancing requirements are articulated in signage, training materials, and floor markings throughout the campus.
 - e. Physical distancing is articulated as a requirement and community standard expected of all students, faculty, and staff.
 - f. To maximize safe distancing, some building entrances may be modified with entry- or exit-only traffic flow. Accessible entrances and exits can be used normally, as necessary.
 - g. Rooms previously open to ad-hoc use instead require advance reservations using an online scheduling system. This supports physical distancing, air exchange, and enhanced sanitization schedules.
2. Hygiene protocols
 - a. In addition to those specified in the Higher Education COVID Control Plan, the Conservatory has established a number of protocols to ensure a healthy environment for our community.

- b. The Conservatory has installed dozens of sanitizing stations at key locations across the campus, in all buildings, and on all floors.
- c. Transparent barriers made of glass or plexiglass are being installed or made available at key interaction points as an added safety measure.
- d. We have developed enhanced cleaning and sanitization procedures based upon CDC, EPA, and local public health guidance. This includes frequent cleaning of spaces and surfaces using of cleaning agents effective against COVID and the use of electrostatic fogging, among other measures.
- e. Air dryers in restrooms have been replaced with paper towel dispensers.
- f. Ultraviolet light air purification systems that have been demonstrated to remove viruses and bacteria are being installed in classrooms and key locations on campus.
- g. Enhanced air filtration, such as HEPA or MERV 15 filters, have been deployed in air handling systems when compatible.
- h. We have procured UV-C disinfection units that will be used in appropriate facilities (e.g. Student Health Center).
- i. All classrooms, practice facilities, and performance halls have a scheduled down-time period between uses, to facilitate air exchange.
- j. Rooms previously open to ad-hoc student use instead require advance reservations using an online scheduling system. This supports physical distancing, air exchange, and enhanced sanitization schedules.

3. General operations

- a. NEC has substantially modified its operations to ensure the health and safety of our community.
- b. We have established a choice learning model of instruction, which offers all students and faculty the opportunity to pursue their education entirely remotely if they choose to do so. The institution has offered a significant adjustment to tuition and fees for students electing this option.
- c. All academic classes are being offered as online-only.
- d. NEC will not reopen its residence hall for the fall semester.
- e. NEC will not reopen its dining services operations for the fall semester.
- f. NEC will not house students in alternate accommodations for the fall semester.
- g. NEC has offered students an option of either an in-person hybrid educational model, or an entirely online experience for the fall semester. Students are asked to inform us of their plans shortly, and as such, our data continues to evolve.
- h. All NEC staff who are able to complete their duties successfully from home will be asked to do so.

- i. External audiences and rental uses will not be permitted on our campus.
 - j. External visitors will not be permitted on our campus, except for essential business.
4. Cleaning and disinfecting
- a. We have developed enhanced cleaning and sanitization procedures based upon CDC, EPA, and local public health guidance. This includes frequent cleaning of spaces and surfaces using of cleaning agents effective against COVID and the use of electrostatic fogging, among other measures.
 - b. Ultraviolet light air purification systems that have been demonstrated to remove viruses and bacteria are being installed in classrooms and key locations on campus.
 - c. The Conservatory has installed dozens of sanitizing stations at key locations across the campus, in all buildings, and on all floors.
 - d. Sanitizing supplies (e.g. sanitizing wipes) will be available throughout the campus for student, faculty, and staff use.
 - e. We have procured UV-C disinfection units that will be used in appropriate facilities (e.g. Student Health Center).
 - f. Rooms previously open to ad-hoc student use instead require advance reservations using an online scheduling system. This supports physical distancing, air exchange, and enhanced sanitization schedules.
5. Communication and support
- a. NEC has developed central web resources for our community, accessible through the NEC website at necmusic.edu/resource-center and necmusic.edu/welcome-back-nec.
 - b. These resources include announcements, training materials, information about our COVID control plan and operational plans, and expectations of our community.
 - c. We will operate our Health and Counseling Center through the fall, and have established a telehealth and telecounseling platform to support students who are in Greater Boston and beyond. On-site health care services are available to students requiring care that is not appropriate for a telehealth evaluation.
 - d. Our Health and Counseling Center has been, and will continue to work closely with colleagues at the Boston Public Health Commission and Massachusetts Department of Public Health to support contact tracing efforts, implement new and evolving guidance, and to inform further development of our operational plans.
6. Detection and response

- a. NEC has established a partnership with the Broad Institute to develop an internally-administered testing program in concert with guidelines established by the public health community.
- b. NEC has established an on-campus testing center, with features to ensure a healthy environment (e.g. use of outdoor space when possible, unidirectional traffic flow, enhanced air exchange and filtration, isolated space for symptomatic individuals).
- c. As of the time of this writing, for members of our community (students, faculty, and staff) coming to campus, NEC expects to require weekly COVID testing. This frequency is intended to be responsive to prevailing public health conditions, and can be readily adjusted.
- d. Test results are anticipated to be completed and shared within 24 hours of the test sample's arrival at the Broad Institute.
- e. NEC will deploy daily symptom screening requirements via the CoVerified app. This daily screening procedure will be enforced via building access restrictions – those who do not complete the screening process will be denied entry.
- f. We will also use the CoVerified app to provide test results to students, faculty, and staff, and in the event one is to test positive, to collect initial contact details in support of contact tracing efforts in collaboration with Mass DPH and the Boston Public Health Commission.
- g. Our Health and Counseling Center staff, which will be expanded and augmented to support the testing program, will also support students who are unwell. Students requiring acute levels of care will be referred to an appropriate medical center. Faculty and staff who are ill or who test positive will be referred to an appropriate provider or medical center.

Massachusetts Quarantine Requirements

The Conservatory has informed all of its students, faculty, and staff of the Commonwealth's travel restrictions and quarantine requirements, and expects members of our community to adhere to these regulations. As we will not be operating our residence hall for the fall semester, we will largely be supporting off-campus students in their adherence to quarantine regulations. Perhaps most importantly, our model for teaching and learning ensures that all students can participate in all institutional activity entirely online. For students who reside in the Greater Boston area and who plan to utilize our in-person, hybrid learning option, quarantine can be observed while pursuing teaching and learning in an online environment.