

# Okanagan College COVID-19 Communications Plan

## COVID-19 developments August 2020

Communication with a variety of audiences – employees, students, and visitors to campus – is and will be a critical component of Okanagan College’s operational response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Communications have been and will be tailored to specific audiences and provided in a variety of forms and through various channels, as per institutional practice since onset of the pandemic in March. Other audiences - including the [Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training](#) and the College’s Board of Governors – will be kept apprised of significant developments on a regular as-required basis.

Communications respect and reflect direction from the College’s COVID-19 Steering Committee, Occupational Health and Safety department, as well as directions from agencies such as [WorkSafeBC](#), the [Provincial Health Officer](#) and [Interior Health](#).

### **GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS (Student, employee, public)**

**COVID-19 Web Page** - Appropriate digital collateral materials are and will be housed prominently in a variety of areas of the [Okanagan College website](#) and [intranet](#), especially the [okanagan.bc.ca/covid page](#), which has become a repository for information that is recognized by students and employees. Those include Okanagan College’s:

- [Safety Plan](#)
- [Exposure Control Plan](#)
- Self-reporting acknowledgement form\*
- [Campus re-occupancy guides](#)
- Policy statements\*
- Notice of important developments, announcements, programs
- Links to additional resources

*(\* indicates under development)*

A feature allowing individuals to subscribe to that page so that they can be notified quickly when additions or changes are made has so far attracted more than 1,100 subscribers. Since March, the COVID page has been visited more than 48,000 times.

An alert bar on the [okanagan.bc.ca homepage](#) indicates when the COVID page has been updated. The [COVID-19 page](#) also features links to important external developments and announcements, such as the public presentation of the province’s [Go-Forward Guide](#) for the post-secondary sector.

**SIGNAGE** - A comprehensive array of on-campus signage provides visitors, students and employees with guidance on proper protocols, navigation, use of facilities, importance of personal sanitation.

**SOCIAL MEDIA** – With more than 20,000 followers on [LinkedIn](#), 10,700 followers on [Facebook](#), 5,600 followers on [Instagram](#), and 3,300-plus followers on [Twitter](#), the College’s social media channels provide a strong base for focused, quick communication with a wide proportion of the institution’s audiences. These channels will be used judiciously to share important information and news regarding the College’s response to COVID-19 and impact on operations.

**E-MAIL** - Public Affairs will promote a monitored email address that can receive and respond to requests for information regarding the institution's COVID-19 response and operations.

### **STUDENT COMMUNICATIONS**

**MOODLE FOR STUDENTS** - There are also materials contained within the [Moodle](#) course management platform for students registered for courses, including a course that outlines the processes and practices that Okanagan College is employing to reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission, and which also outlines expectations of students, and directs them to complete the Self-Reporting Acknowledgement Form.

**DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS** - Communication with students around proper return-to-College protocols, expectations and requirements have been and will be issued by appropriate departments, reinforced by materials developed by Occupational Health and Safety, and supported by Regional Deans' offices. Students will be briefed on first day of return to physical instruction about expectations, appropriate behaviours, etc. They will also be apprised of general College protocols and policies, when appropriate, through email messages sent via the Registrar's office.

### **EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS**

**DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH EMPLOYEES** - Direct email to all employees will be used in a judicious fashion to alert them to important developments they should be aware of. These may be tailored to campus-specific groups of employees when required and will draw upon consultation with employee group leaders, members of Leadership Team and the COVID-19 Steering Committee.

**MYOKANAGAN FOR EMPLOYEES** - A section of the College's intranet – [myOkanagan](#) – has been established to house resources that are both publicly viewable (via the COVID-19 web page) and other resources viewable only by employees.

Training materials will also be presented via the institution's intranet.

**INSIDE OKANAGAN COLLEGE, COLLEGE MATTERS** - Employees will be further informed of important developments via the institution's two primary electronic newsletters: [Inside Okanagan College](#) and [College Matters](#). An FAQ housed on the College's COVID website provides relevant information to students, employees and prospective visitors regarding everything from online learning to international students and travel, to available financial support. Other elements of the site include links and information on resources to promote mental health and where to turn for help.

### **REGULAR REVIEW AND UPDATE**

Frequent consultation with Leadership Team members, employee group leaders and student association leaders provide insight into communication needs and gaps. All COVID-19 related communications activities are reviewed regularly, and will be refined as necessary.