FHNW Covid-19 protection concept for restricted on-premises operation

Applicable from 18 January 2021

Due to the Covid-19 epidemic, the “special situation” as defined by the Epidemics Act of 28 September 2012 (EpG) has been in force in Switzerland since 19 June 2020. Based on the EpG, the Federal Council amended the Covid-19 Ordinance on 13 January 2021 and determined new measures to curb the pandemic.

This FHNW protection concept is based on the aforementioned requirement. The measures defined in the protection concept are intended to prevent the spread of the coronavirus (Covid-19), interrupt transmission chains and protect persons present on FHNW premises from infection. The protection concept is based on the sharing of responsibilities: the institutional responsibility of the FHNW and the individual, personal responsibility of all persons present on the FHNW campuses or performing mandated activities.

This document contains binding requirements, formulated by the President, regarding protective measures for the campuses and the schools/services. When applying the protection concept, the needs of schools with more than one campus must be taken adequately into account.

- The directors of the schools and the VP Services are responsible for implementing the organisational protective measures described below at a school/services level (II).
- The campus managers are responsible for implementing the spatial protection measures (see below) at the campuses (III).

I. Organisational principles at a FHNW level

1. Instruction to work from home

Teleworking is mandatory as of 18 January 2021. The President of the Board of Directors, the Vice-Presidents, the Directors or the campus managers, as the case may be, shall decide on what activities require an in-person on-campus presence. The exceptional authorisations granted for activities requiring an in-person presence shall be documented.

2. Cessation of in-person teaching

Degree and continuing education programmes at the FHNW are to be held virtually / at a distance. Exceptional authorisations for teaching activities and necessary experimental research, for which an in-person presence is deemed absolutely essential, are a matter for the Director. The exceptional authorisations granted and the contact details of the persons involved shall be documented.

Course work / assignments performed outside the FHNW are subject to the regulations of the institutions where they take place.

3. Restricted access to FHNW premises

From 18 January 2021, access to the premises of the FHNW is permitted only with an exceptional authorisation issued by the President of the Board of Directors, the Vice-Presidents, the Directors or the campus managers, as the case may be. The Schools shall document the exceptional authorisations granted and the contact details of the persons involved.

The following persons are prohibited from entering the premises of the FHNW:

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1 The FHNW is keeping the situation under close watch and will adapt its protection concept accordingly.
- Persons with symptoms which could be caused by the Covid-19 coronavirus or who have tested positive for it (see the Federal Office of Public Health's (FOPH) instructions regarding isolation).
- Persons living in the same household as, or having had close contact with, a person who is a confirmed Covid-19 carrier (see the FOPH’s instructions regarding quarantine).

4. Protective measures

Access to the premises of the FHNW which has been exceptionally authorised is possible only if the following protective measures are observed:

- Hygiene measures
- Social distancing of 1.5 metres
- Wearing face coverings as a general rule

An exception to the obligation to wear a face covering is permitted only for persons who are alone in closed rooms or if the Director has granted an exception where there are grounds for doing so (especially for music making, medical reasons, etc.).

5. Business and study trips

Business and study trips should be avoided on principle. Exceptions to this are a matter for the President, vice-presidents or school directors.

6. Social events

Events involving physical gatherings should be suspended.

7. Libraries

In-person library services are suspended. Lending of media is possible on a limited basis (see FHNW website).

8. Sports/recreation

FHNW sports/recreation activities that take place on the premises are suspended.

9. Campus restaurants/canteens

The regulations for canteens and staff restaurants apply to the FHNW campus restaurants and canteens.

10. Information

'Inside FHNW' provides information on the applicable rules of conduct in German and English.
11. Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for implementing the protection concept lies with the President. The directors and campus managers are responsible for its implementation at the schools and campuses respectively.

To ensure the coordinated implementation of any requirements of the sponsoring cantons, the contact person for the cantonal authorities is the head of the crisis management team / Secretary General of the FHNW. The directors and the VP services keep the head of the crisis management team informed about situations relating to Covid-19.

Those responsible for the schools and services are responsible for identifying critical processes and organising them in such a way that they are continuously available.

II. Organisational protective measures at a school/services level

In order to implement the organisational principles at an FHNW level, the schools/services may implement further organisational measures to protect staff, students and participants in continuing education.

III. Spatial protection measures at the campuses

The campus managers have implemented the following spatial protection measures:

1. General measures

   Hand hygiene
   • Ensuring the availability of soap and disposable hand-drying material
   • Provision of hand sanitizer stations according to room type

   Social distancing
   There is an increased risk of infection if the distance of 1.5 metres cannot be maintained for more than 15 minutes. The following measures are intended to facilitate the required distancing:
   • Information via posters
   • Signage, floor markings, barriers to control the flow of people
   • Seating arrangements
   • Measures on a per-room type basis
   • Organisational measures at a school/services level

   Cleaning
   • Periodic cleaning of door handles, handrails, lift buttons, WC facilities
   • Measures on a per-room type basis

   Ventilation
   Where possible, rooms should be ventilated regularly.
2. Additional measures on a per-room type basis

Type 1: open zones, access areas, transfer areas, libraries, car parking facilities, break areas, WCs
- Information/signage (FOPH posters)
- Provision of hand sanitizer stations in access areas (entrances, library, ...)
- Shutting off areas at increased risk of violation of the distancing rule
- Organisational measures at a school/services level

Type 2: lecture halls, teaching rooms, seminar rooms, meeting rooms
- Definition and labelling of maximum number of attendees per room
- Rooms with fixed seating: designation/labelling of seats that can be used
- Limiting number of available chairs
- Cleaning of table surfaces several times a day when used by different groups of people

Type 3: laboratories, workshops, special rooms (incl. for music)
- Definition and labelling of maximum number of attendees per room
- Periodic cleaning of surfaces touched by several people

Type 4: workplaces, offices (including break facilities)
- Definition of number of persons per room
- If necessary, appropriate rearrangement of the existing furniture
- Organisational measures at a school/services level

Type 5: canteens, cafeterias
- Action taken by operators
- Organisational measures at a school/services level

Specific measures for special zones with direct customer contact in the defined room types (reception areas, etc.), must be provided for in consultation with the schools.

Issued by the President on 14 January 2021
Applicable from 18 January 2021
(replaces the protection concept of 28 October 2020 which applied from 2 November 2020)