



**HOWARD COLLEGE**  
— MAKING DREAMS REAL —

## **HOWARD COLLEGE – COVID-19 RESPONSE**

### ***OPEN HOWARD COLLEGE***

Beginning in early 2020, the college began monitoring and sharing information concerning COVID-19 with the college community. During Spring Break, the college activated its COVID-19 Response Team as concerns heightened about the spread of the virus across the country. Decisions were made to protect the health and safety of all as we delayed the break for another week and quickly transitioned to an online instructional format with a few exceptions. As the situation evolved and emergency status was enacted at the national, state and local levels, Howard College has been following Presidential, Governor and local authority Orders and guidance which have allowed for the college to operate during this time of emergency in an altered operations status. Multiple decisions have been made as we worked through the spring semester and planned for the summer and fall semesters. To guide our journey, Howard College developed the **Open Howard College Strategic Plan** <https://howardcollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/PDF/Consumer/COVID/Open%20Howard%20College%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf> and will continue to use and update its resources as we move forward. We have advanced through three phases of reopening as we planned for Phase IV which began on August 9. Our plan is devised so that we can adapt as the situation changes. This document is the condensed version. Please read it carefully. All individuals in the college community must do their part to make this work effectively. We will continue making decisions based on the guidance of authorities to do what is best for the health and safety of all. Thus, definitions and protocols will change accordingly. Significant penetration of COVID-19 in the area will be monitored and can result in tighter restrictions with the reverse action in areas of low penetration as allowed by state guidelines.

We are ready for ***Making Dreams Real!*** **ARE YOU READY? TIME TO FLY!!!**

### **DEFINITIONS**

#### **1. Definitions**

*Campus* – all land and buildings owned, provided for or leased by Howard College as lessee.

*Work center* – a building or portion of a building

*Single-person offices* – offices where an individual can work alone

*Employee* – any person employed by or volunteering for Howard College, be it full time, part-time, or adjunct

*Student* – any current or prospective student with or without appointments for advising, testing, tutoring, etc.



*Contract labor* – non-Howard College employees who may be working on various projects on campus

*Lessee* – any organization renting space from the college

*Public* – members of the public who are members of select organizations approved to be on campus, members of the Harold Davis Fitness Center, children and families associated with Howard Cottage, bookstore and dining services customers, attendees of events scheduled in campus buildings

*Visitors* – pre-arranged visits for recruiting or business purposes

*Individual* – employee, current/prospective student, contractor, lessee, public member or visitor

*Central check-in point* – screening stations in each campus building that will include a stationary thermal/sanitation location

*Known close contact* – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/public-health-recommendations.html>

*Social/Physical distancing* – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>

*Quarantining* – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

*Isolation* – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>

## INDIVIDUAL HEALTH

### 2. Individual Health Protocols/Foundation of *Open Howard College*

a. **Self-screen before coming to campus or leaving on-campus residence** for any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19 in a way that is not normal for you/symptoms of COVID-19 may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus:

- i. Cough
- ii. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- iii. Chills
- iv. Repeated shaking with chills
- v. Muscle/body aches or pain
- vi. Fatigue
- vii. Headache
- viii. Sore throat
- ix. Loss of taste or smell
- x. Diarrhea
- xi. Nausea or vomiting
- xii. Congestion or runny nose
- xiii. Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit based on thermometer reading taken prior to coming to campus or leaving on-campus residence

b. **If employees, students, contractors, lessees, public members, or visitors have any of the above symptoms, do NOT come to campus.** In each campus community there are numbers to call to speak with professionals about concerns you might have relative to COVID-19 symptoms.

- Scenic Mountain Medical Group COVID-19 Hotline (432-267-5531/432-582-8030 after hours)
- Midland Memorial Call “68NURSE” (855-686-8773)



DO NOT go to an Urgent Care Center or the hospital ER for treatment or testing (this statement is on the website)

- 844-6-SHANNON (844-674-2666)

This number is available from 9 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Individuals with questions regarding screening or testing for COVID-19 can call and get connected to a clinical provider who can answer questions and direct them to next steps. This line can also answer questions about other services at Shannon during this time.

- c. Consistent with applicable law and privacy policies, **students and employees must report if they have symptoms of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19/lab confirmed within the last 14 days**, in accordance with health information sharing regulations for COVID-19 and other applicable federal and state privacy and confidentiality laws, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/hipaa-covid19/index.html>

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

**Please contact by phone or email** your supervisor, student services lead (Big Spring, Dean of Students/Christi Mikeska; Lamesa, Campus Director/Monica Castro; San Angelo, Student Services Director/Mike Hemmeter; or SWCD, Campus Director of Student Services/Shannon Creswell) or specific campus contact if a contractor, lessee, public member or visitor. The supervisor, student services lead or campus contact will then inform Rhonda Kernick, Chief HR Officer (c-432.264.8846) and/or Fabian Serrano, Chief Operations/Safety and Security Officer (c-432.213.3787) by phone or email. These individuals will confer with the campus leaders and then the president for final actions.

- d. **Individuals with new or worsening signs or symptoms listed above are assumed to have COVID-19 and may NOT return to campus until:**

- i. At least 24 hours have passed *since recovery* (resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications);
- ii. The individual has improvement in symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and
- iii. At least 10 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*. For patients with severe illness, duration of isolation for up to 20 days after symptom onset may be warranted.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-guidance-management-patients.html>

or

- the individual must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis;

or

- the individual receives two separate confirmations at least 24 hours apart that they are free of COVID-19 via acute infection tests at an approved COVID-19 testing location found at <https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>.

- e. **Do NOT come to campus or leave campus housing if you have known close contact with a person with COVID-19/lab confirmed within the last 14 days.**

Recent CDC guidelines have changed relative to quarantining under certain conditions. Based on current local health authority guidance, the quarantine period can be adjusted. At this time, individuals with known close contact to a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 will not be allowed to return to campus until the end of the 14 day self-quarantine period from the last date of exposure (with an exception that can be granted for healthcare workers and critical infrastructure workers). Individuals must



obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return or the health department notice. Individuals in the San Angelo/Tom Green County area can access health department release information at the following link.

<https://www.cosatx.us/departments-services/health-services/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-release-from-quarantine-isolation-form> If you live in another county and do not have a release from a medical professional or health department notice, please contact your campus contact listed in c. above for further instructions.

- f. **Do NOT come to campus or leave campus housing if you have tested positive for COVID-**An individual diagnosed with COVID-19 with symptoms may return to campus after isolation when the three-step criteria are met in section d. above. For persons who never develop symptoms, isolation and other precautions can be discontinued after 10-days after the date of the first positive RT-PCR test for SARS-CoV-2 RNA. The individual must obtain a medical professional's note clearing the individual for return or the health department notice. Individuals in the San Angelo area can access health department release information at the following link.
- <https://www.cosatx.us/departments-services/health-services/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-release-from-quarantine-isolation-form> If you live in another county, you should receive a release from your medical professional or the health department.

## CAMPUS HEALTH

### 3. Campus Health Protocols

- a. **Face coverings over the face and mouth are required. Because social/physical distancing cannot be totally achieved due to changing dynamics in classrooms, campus meetings and other public spaces, masks are required. Due to unexpected encounters, individuals should wear masks in restrooms, break rooms, elevators, hallways and on stairwells. Clear face shields may be used by faculty for lecture purposes and employees/students for accommodation purposes. If social/physical distancing cannot be achieved, a mask should also be worn. When working alone in an office or isolated space, behind a plexiglass barrier when distanced or outside when distanced, face coverings will not be required. The college will follow the Governor's Order concerning face coverings** <https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/press/EO-GA-29-use-of-face-coverings-during-COVID-19-IMAGE-07-02-2020.pdf>. Non-medical grade face coverings have been and will be provided by Howard College for all employees or students. Eye goggles will also be required in certain lab situations. The first pair will be provided.
- b. **After conducting the individual self-screening before coming to campus, individuals will be expected to secondary screen by checking in at the stationary thermal/sanitation stations located in multiple campus buildings.**
- c. **Screening checks** will be implemented at the beginning of the workday by the supervisor or designee for children enrolled in **Howard Cottage** as well as their families.
- d. In the case of **Health Professions and Cosmetology programs**, screening and face covering protocols will follow clinical and state guidelines for both students and clients. Face coverings will be provided by the college in these locations.
- e. **Any individual showing signs of possible COVID-19 infection will be sent home or asked to leave campus to seek appropriate medical care.** A contractor or lessee with an affected employee will be asked to follow the same protocol in the section above that will be followed for college employees and students.



- f. **Individuals should strive to maintain at least 6 feet separation** from other individuals not within the same household. If such distancing is not feasible, other measures such as **face covering, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness, and sanitation should be rigorously practiced.**
- g. **Wash or disinfect hands upon entering campus and after any interaction** with employees, students, the public, or items in the work center.
- h. **Limit the use of standard-size elevators** to four individuals at a time, each located at a different corner of the elevator, to avoid close contact. For individuals not wishing to ride an elevator, stairways may be used. As appropriate, individuals subject to the Americans with Disabilities Act may ride the elevator alone or accompanied by the individual's caregiver.
- i. **Social/physical distancing practice of six feet in lines or spaces** should be followed according to state guidelines.
- j. **Plexiglass barriers are used to maintain distance** and should be respected.
- k. **Air purifiers are placed in high-traffic areas.**

## EMPLOYEE WORK PATTERNS

### 4. Employee Work Patterns/Accommodations

- Work Patterns

<https://howardcollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/PDF/Human%20Resources/COVID-19%20Work%20Patterns.pdf>

- Leave

Employees are not required to submit leave during quarantine and isolation. Effective February 1, 2021, in the event of continuing health issues upon release from COVID isolation, employees will be required to submit leave.

- Accommodation Form

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=na7K70fgWEOqjBx0FyhOsj3yh-iPzKZOLI3ooUjQKI1UQIZDQTNyV1dYUUEXQTIWQV4SVcyMEMwOC4u>

## STUDENT SERVICES

### 5. Campus-Based Instructional, Bookstore, Residence Hall, Dining Services, Athletics and Fine Arts Protocols

<https://howardcollege.edu/spring-2021/>

## HOWARD COTTAGE

### 6. Howard Cottage/Big Spring Campus Protocols

The college is following the Open Texas checklists for Child Care Centers.

<https://open.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Child-Care-Centers.pdf>

<https://open.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Child-Care-Families.pdf>

In the event of a confirmed case or exposure to a confirmed case, the Cottage will close two to five days for sanitation and contact tracing purposes. Based on the findings relative to



contact tracing, decisions will be made relative to extended closure in consultation with local health and licensing authorities. Parents will be notified.

## HAROLD DAVIS FITNESS CENTER

### 7. Harold Davis Fitness Center/Big Spring Campus Protocols

The college is following the Open Texas checklists related to gyms.

<https://open.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Gyms-Exercise-Facilities.pdf>

<https://open.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Gym-Exercise-Facility-Patrons.pdf>

If the Fitness Center needs to be closed for sanitation purposes, members will be notified.

## PUBLIC EVENTS

### 8. Public Event Protocols

Limited public event and group meetings can begin following state and local guidelines. Interactions with the public will follow the respective protocols in the *Open Texas* strategic plan and checklists. <https://open.texas.gov/>

## NOTIFICATIONS

### 9. Notifications

- a. As appropriate, faculty, staff, students, families and the public will be notified of campus and building closures, class and event cancellations, modified class schedules and any restrictions in place to limit COVID-19 exposure.
- b. In accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations, the college will notify local health officials, faculty, staff and students immediately of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), FERPA and other applicable laws and regulations. Due to the small numbers of individuals on our campuses, the campus community is reminded of the importance of privacy and the need to handle reported cases professionally. Since there are a significant number of active cases in the communities of all campuses, it will be noted on the website that active cases exist and individuals should assume that and follow all protocols accordingly. The college has implemented a dashboard <https://howardcollege.edu/covid-dashboard/> on its website. The information will be updated every Friday afternoon. Please read the definitions for clarification. <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/pandemic-preparedness-workplace-and-americans-disabilities-act>
- c. When the college is made aware of a confirmed case, exposure to confirmed cases and potential exposure, the college will implement contact tracing on campus based on the best information it has and will inform individuals affected and sanitize appropriate locations. Thus, individuals are asked to be mindful of their contacts and places of occupancy while on campus. The college will inform those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to quarantine/stay home or in their living quarters, to consider testing or require it in some instances, self-monitor for symptoms, and follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.



**Any employee concerns should be directed to their supervisor and/or the Director of Human Resources. Any student concerns should be directed to the campus student services officer.**