

Hokkaido University Business Continuity Plan During Coronavirus Outbreak: Response Plan at Alert Level 2

Hokkaido University (hereinafter referred to as "HU") moves from Alert Level 1 to Alert Level 2 prescribed in the Hokkaido University Business Continuity Plan During Coronavirus Outbreak (hereinafter "BCP") on November 18, 2020.

The below describes a set of basic precautionary action against COVID-19 infection and spread, and the measures in the BCP's Response Plan, both of which apply to all HU community members.

HU will continually review the basic precautionary action and Response Plan in compliance with the requests from the central Japanese and Hokkaido governments, and in response to whether the local pandemic rises or goes into decline.

1. Basic precautionary action

- Make sure you practice physical [social] distancing, mask wearing, cough etiquette and hand hygiene including thorough hand washing.
- Avoid high-risk settings with 3Cs (Closed spaces, Crowded places and Close-contact settings), and ensure adequate ventilation inside buildings even when the outside temperature is low.
- Avoid dining in a large party with people outside your family.
- Keep an eye on your general health and any signs of cold. If you have one such as high temperature, do not go to work or classes.
- When traveling within Japan, check the latest COVID-19 updates for your destination. Take thorough measures such as reducing conversation on public transport and avoiding peak-hour travel as much as possible to safeguard yourself from infection.
- DO NOT travel abroad to the countries given Level 3 infectious disease advisories by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; or those given Level 2 (except in special circumstances).
- Follow advisories and implement calls to limit travel and activities when requested by the central Japanese and/or Hokkaido Governments.
- We encourage the use of COVID-19 Contact App (COCOA), a smartphone app available in Japanese, Chinese and English. An increase in the number of downloads is thought to help prevent infection spread in Japan.

2. Alert Levels and measures in the Response Plan

1) Research activities

Only minimum number of lab personnel (undergraduate and graduate students, researchers and research staff) are authorized to work in a lab for the shortest time possible to support ongoing experiments and

research or resume those suspended. Follow the instructions in "Guidance for Conducting Research Safely During COVID-19 Pandemic"

(<https://www.global.hokudai.ac.jp/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Guidance-for-Conducting-Research-Safely-during-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf>) which are based on "Guidelines to Maintain Research Activities While Observing COVID-19 Preventive Measures" released by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology when engaged in research activities. Otherwise continue your research remotely (at home).

2) Classes (lectures/seminars/practical training)

- Classes should be conducted online whenever possible. However, face to face delivery may be approved for the courses with adequate infection preventive measures to avoid the aforementioned 3Cs settings in classrooms. Alternative options must be provided to the students who miss classes owing to unavoidable circumstances.

Note: The above guidelines shall be adjusted as appropriate by schools/graduate schools in accordance with their respective education delivery attributes.

- As a general rule, admissions will be carried out as announced in the application guidelines provided that the admissions exam organizer of HU implements stringent measures against the spread of COVID-19. HU will officially and immediately announce any changes to admission policies and selection processes should the necessity arise.

3) Student extracurricular activities

- No extracurricular activities permitted excluding those on the Internet. All facilities for extracurricular activities are now closed.

4) Remote/on-site work

- Since the circumstances vary between institutions, faculty members are instructed to work from home up to the level they can maintain the quality of education and research activities under the restrictions provided in the Alert Level 2 of the BCP's Response Plan. Meanwhile, one third of all other staff members are expected to work from home at a time to reduce in-person contact.

- Staggered working hours remain in operation to reduce infection risk on public transport during peak hours.

- We may need to deal with a temporary decrease in the workforce when clusters occur. List up duties and responsibilities of all personnel in your section and prioritize work. Plan ahead to tackle the worst case scenario and to continue core duties/operations without staff on-site. Minimizing external effects is vital under the circumstances where all work is unavoidably suspended.

5) Meetings (including training/briefing/guidance)

i) In principle, meetings are conducted online via videoconferences or written deliberation using email.

ii) If absolutely necessary to hold a meeting in person, implement thorough preventive actions as below to reduce the risk of infection with COVID-19.

- Minimize the number of participants.

- Stream the meeting live for those who are unable to attend in person.

- Allow plenty of room between participants in a spacious meeting venue.

- Ensure regular ventilation.

- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers at the venue.

6) Other important reminders

- i) University libraries stay open with adequate infection preventive measures.

- ii) Academic/social events

- Follow the ground rule that all events must be online using the digital tools like videoconferencing or group video chat.

- If absolutely necessary to hold an on-site/in-person event, take preventive measures including a seating plan to prevent 3Cs, physical [social] distancing between participants, regular room ventilation, hand washing and sanitization, mask wearing and an event participant list. Limit capacity to half of the maximum occupancy of the venue which also complies with the occupancy load limits (in number of people) the Hokkaido Government stipulates.

Note: Same restrictions apply when non-HU staff or students use HU's facilities for events.

- Large-scale nationwide events must be canceled or postponed unless adequate risk management measures are put in place.

- Actively use a contact tracing notification app called "Hokkaido Corona Tsuuchi System (Hokkaido Coronavirus Notification System)" endorsed by the Hokkaido Government if many and unspecified persons come to a planned event or use HU's facilities.

- We have postponed the medical check-ups, optional check-ups and re-examination scheduled to be held at HU's Health Care Center until the BCP's Alert Level is reduced to Level 1 (dates TBD).