
Chapter: Public Safety, Health, and Emergency Management

Modification No. 001

Subject: **Public Health & Environmental Safety**

- I. Montgomery College is committed to promoting public health and environmental safety at College-owned and operated locations and in the communities that it serves.
- II. The College views compliance with all applicable laws and regulations as a condition of employment, enrollment, and presence at any College location. Violation of such requirements may be considered grounds for disciplinary action, including termination of employment, academic suspension, and removal from College property.
- III. The Office of Public Safety, Health and Emergency Management has primary responsibility for developing, implementing, and maintaining public health and environmental safety compliance programs; auditing college operations to ensure health and safety compliance across the college; advising and communicating with the college community on matters related to public health and environmental safety; and meeting internal and external reporting requirements.
- IV. It is the policy of the College to encourage individuals to report any public health and environmental safety concerns immediately so that prompt corrective and preventative action can be taken.
- V. The Board of Trustees authorizes the president to establish any procedures necessary to implement this policy.

Effective Date: October 13, 2025.

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I. Scope and Applicability

All College employees, students, contractors, and visitors are required to comply with applicable safety, health, and environmental laws and regulations while on College property and when participating in in College-sponsored events, whether on or off College property.

II. Responsibilities

A. While specific areas of responsibility fall to designated offices and positions within the College, all members of the College community, including students, faculty, staff, contractors, and visitors, are responsible for maintaining a healthy and safe learning and working environment. This includes but is not limited to the following:

1. Observing and following public health and environment safety regulations, policies, rules, and procedures.
2. Participating in mandatory public health and environmental safety training, as applicable.
3. Giving consideration to and taking personal responsibility for the safety of self and others at all times while conducting College business on or offsite.
4. Promptly reporting all safety, public health, or environmental hazards, near misses, incidents, and injuries, as well as any concerns regarding risks to public health and environmental safety, to the Office of Public Safety, Health and Emergency Management Safety (PSHEM) via the concern form on the Public Health and Environmental Safety (PHES) webpage or via email to the appropriate area:
publichealth@montgomerycollege.edu or
environmentalsafety@montgomerycollege.edu. Such reporting is in addition to any other reporting requirements mandated by applicable laws, regulations, and College policies and procedures.

B. Public Health and Environmental Safety (PHES) is responsible for the following:

1. Developing, implementing and maintaining compliance programs regulated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), Maryland Occupational Safety & Health (MOSH), and compliance with local ordinances such as those promulgated by the City of Rockville, City of Takoma Park, Montgomery County and their agencies.

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2. Providing coordinated, College-wide expertise across departments and offices in specialized areas such as public health, hazardous materials management, personal protective equipment certification, and occupational safety.
 3. Maintaining certifications in asbestos management, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste, Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Transportation, and other relevant licenses and accreditations.
 4. Chemical inventory reporting to the Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security.
 5. Overseeing chemical, infectious, and radioactive waste disposal and related contracts, including maintaining asbestos inventory records.
 6. Coordinating, conducting, and documenting required and requested inspections.
 7. Developing and delivering timely and ongoing training as needed to support the public health and environmental safety of the College community.
 8. Monitoring county, state, and federal public health and safety emergencies, developing the College's response to such emergencies, and coordinating with relevant public health officials.
 9. Communicating timely updates regarding any threats to the public health and environmental safety of the College community, including but not limited to those related to public health emergencies. While these communications may come through various channels, the PHES website shall serve as the primary source of information and standard operating procedures/manuals related to a public health emergency.
- C. The Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management (HRSTM) is responsible for working with individual employees to evaluate the need for workplace accommodation requests. Employees wishing to request an accommodation should contact an Employee Accommodation & Leave Specialist in HRSTM at adaaccommodations@montgomerycollege.edu
- D. The Environmental, Health and Occupational Safety Steering Committee, and any appropriate subcommittees deemed necessary, reinforce environmental health and safety as an institutional priority, create a culture of safety, work to eliminate workplace hazards and environmental concerns to maintain a safe college community, and supports PHES in ensuring compliance.

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- E. Each College division is responsible for monitoring relevant laws, regulations, and industry standards applicable to their areas of responsibility, and providing training, resources, and personal protective equipment for employees to understand and protect themselves from hazards in the workplace. Responsibility for compliance follows administrative channels unless specifically noted otherwise.
- F. Campus Deans are responsible for coordinating with PHES to ensure health and safety of students, faculty, staff, contractors, and visitors to their assigned locations. These responsibilities will include:
 - 1. Serve as the primary point of coordination for the implementation of public health and safety directives at their assigned location, ensuring operational execution across academic and administrative units.
 - 2. Promptly communicate any public health or safety concerns raised by their constituents to the PHES to ensure timely awareness and response.
 - 3. Coordinate with the Office of Facilities and Public Safety and their location to execute any temporary closure or restriction of access necessitated by public health or environmental safety concerns, as directed by PHES or College leadership.
 - 4. Serve as the initial point of review for event proposals at their location to identify potential public health or environmental safety concerns, and coordinate with PHES and other relevant offices as needed.
 - 5. Support compliance at their location with PHES regulations by facilitating collaboration between PHES and academic and administrative units to ensure integration of public health and environmental safety requirements into operations.
- G. All staff, including but not limited to laboratory and facilities managers, are responsible for partnering with PHES to ensure the public health and environmental safety of the students and staff in their unit.

III. Public Health and Environmental Safety Programs

The College's Public Health and Environmental Safety policy is implemented in part through a series of programs, standard operating procedures, and guidelines developed and maintained by PHES in response to regulatory requirements and/or College decisions. These are mandatory.

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A complete list of programs, standard operating procedures, and guidelines can be found on the PHES webpage and those relate to, but are not limited to:

- A. Asbestos abatement
- B. Chemical/hazardous waste management and removal
- C. Job/activity hazard assessment
- D. Indoor air quality
- E. Personal protective equipment
- F. Occupational safety
- G. Safety training
- H. Emergency medical response
- I. Bloodborne pathogens
- J. Heat illness prevention and management

IV. Communicable Disease

- A. Communicable diseases are diseases which are capable of being transmitted between individuals in various ways. College employees may not discriminate against any student or employee who has or is suspected of having a communicable disease.
- B. Where there is no risk to the health and safety of self or others, the College supports measures to permit continued employment, class attendance, and use of college services and facilities.
- C. In line with the policy that public health and environmental safety is everyone's responsibility:
 - 1. Individuals feeling unwell should avoid participating in in-person College activities.
 - 2. Employees feeling unwell should take the necessary time-off in accordance with 35003: Leave Program.
 - 3. Vaccination against communicable disease is encouraged for all students and employees when available and appropriate for the individual.
- D. Students and employees involved in specific programs and/or courses may have additional health requirements, including vaccination and/or testing requirements. For example, Health Sciences programs at the College often require clinical site placements as an essential part of the curriculum. Vaccination and testing requirements for participation at clinical sites are determined by the sites themselves, and adherence to these requirements is mandatory for enrollment and continued participation in these programs.

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- E. The College reserves the right to implement additional procedures and requirements in response to a public health emergency; for example, implementing mask requirements for in-person activities.
 - F. The College reserves the right to impose stricter standards than those recommended by the reporting health department, such as prohibiting attendance or requiring vaccination, if it determines that such measures are necessary to protect the health and safety of its employees and students.
 - G. Communicable disease includes a wide variety of diseases, including some which may become public health emergencies. The most up-to-date guidance and requirements for communicable disease prevention can be found on the PHES webpage.
- V. Smoking and Tobacco Use
- A. Montgomery College recognizes its leadership role in promoting and maintaining a tobacco and smoke-free environment. Therefore, in compliance with all applicable county regulations and in conjunction with its efforts to educate students, faculty, staff and the community about the importance of public health and environmental safety, Montgomery College is a tobacco and smoke-free institution.
 - B. Smoking, vaping, the use of e-cigarettes, and all other forms of tobacco use are prohibited:
 - 1. In or on all College-owned property and within leased College office and classroom space;
 - 2. In all indoor and outdoor facilities, including athletic fields, amphitheaters, entrance steps and ramps, restrooms, pedestrian walkways, entryways, portable buildings, terraces, in privately owned vehicles when on College property, in parking lots/garages, and at bus stops on College property;
 - 3. In College-owned or leased vehicles; and,
 - 4. At meetings or conferences sponsored by Montgomery College.
 - C. Smoking and tobacco products will not be sold in College facilities.
 - D. All students, faculty, staff, and visitors are required to follow these guidelines and failure to do so will result in progressive disciplinary action in accordance with Section VII below.
- VI. Drug and Alcohol Use

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- A. The College is committed to the education of students, employees, and community members regarding substance abuse prevention, detection, and treatment services; to the continuation of a collegewide substance abuse prevention program and other ongoing efforts which foster such education; and to the maintenance of a drug-free environment throughout the College.
 - B. Policy 31005: Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention details the procedures by which the College maintains a drug and alcohol abuse free environment in support of a safe and healthy College community and in compliance with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act.
 - C. The Office of Public Safety, Health and Emergency Management (PSHEM) is responsible for developing guidelines regarding the training of appropriate College personnel on the administration of overdose-reversing medication in emergency situations. PSHEM is also responsible for promulgating appropriate operational guidelines on the acquisition, storage, and distribution of overdose-reversing medication and providing reports, as directed, on each incident that required the use of an overdose-reversing medication.
- VII. Reporting Requirements
- A. It is the policy of the College to encourage individuals to report any public health and environmental safety concerns so that prompt corrective action can be taken by the College. It is solely the responsibility of the Office of Public Safety, Health and Emergency Management to investigate these concerns.
 - B. No individual who in good faith reports a concern or suspected concern about public health and environmental safety shall thereby suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment and/or academic or educational consequence. Any retaliation by a member of the College community against an individual who has made a report in good faith under this policy is subject to disciplinary action in accordance with College policies and/or the student code of conduct, up to and including dismissal from the College.
 - C. This policy does not protect an individual who files a report or provides information that the individual knows to be false or provides information with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity.
 - D. Concerns regarding public health and environmental safety will be kept confidential except to the extent that limited disclosure may be necessary for the purpose of conducting a full and fair investigation, providing opportunity for response, taking remedial action, and responding to a government inquiry or legal action.
- VIII. Enforcement

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- A. Employees that fail to comply with these procedures and any guidelines maintained by PHES are subject to appropriate disciplinary actions in accordance with the applicable College policies and procedures for disciplinary action and discharge, including but not limited to Policy 34002: Disciplinary Action and Suspension, and Policy 34003: Discharge of Administrative, Associate, and Support Staff, or, for bargaining unit members, any applicable procedures in the collective bargaining agreement.
- B. Contractors that fail to comply with these procedures and any guidelines maintained by PHES are subject to cancellation of their contract in accordance with their its terms and conditions.
- C. Students that fail to comply with these procedures and any guidelines maintained by PHES are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with procedures set forth in Policy 42001: Student Code of Conduct.
- D. Visitors that fail to comply with these procedures and any guidelines maintained by PHES will be informed of the policies and those that refuse to comply may be asked to leave the College premises.

Administrative Approval: October 3, 2025.