

RETURN TO CAMPUS – BUILDING VENTILATION

Since early in the pandemic, Penn has successfully implemented a multi-faceted program to minimize the potential for COVID-19 transmission within our facilities. The optimization of building ventilation systems is one of the components of this program. Penn Facilities & Real Estate Services (FRES) referenced the [American Society of Heating Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers \(ASHRAE\)](#) and public health organizations including the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) and [Philadelphia Department of Health](#) ventilation guidance.

FRES maintains a FAQ page for COVID-19 facility-related concerns:

<https://www.facilities.upenn.edu/about/news/coronavirus-covid-19-information>

The most recent, and most important component of Penn's COVID-19 infection control program is the vaccination requirement for the Penn community. This is a fundamental change since it will greatly reduce the potentially infectious and vulnerable populations within a building. This places less reliance on ventilation since there is less potential for the accumulation of airborne infectious material that must be captured.

The requirement to wear a facemask indoors in public and shared spaces, and for those not vaccinated, participation with Penn Open Pass symptom screening and Penn Cares routine COVID-19 testing will remain in effect.

Contact your Building Administrator If there are ventilation concerns related to a particular facility. Your building administrator will coordinate with the FRES Area Manager to learn more specific information about the ventilation system.

Information about Air Filtration Units – In a well-ventilated building, where most of the population is vaccinated, there is little added benefit gained from the installation of air filtration units. Penn's COVID-19 infection control measures with respect to optimized building ventilation systems, masking protocol, Penn Open Pass screening, and Penn Cares testing will remain in place to protect vulnerable populations.

There may be locations where air filtration units may provide some benefit. Contact EHRS to assist with evaluation of these cases. See EHRS Document "[Use of Portable Air Filtration Devices in Penn Schools/Centers Specific to COVID-19 Management](#)" for additional information.