

COVID-19 FAQs for Services, Supplies and Shipping

What is the continuity plan for Procurement?

Procurement Services continues to operate as normal and will be returning to our campus offices beginning on August 30, 2021. Contact Procurement as you normally would via phone or email.

What steps can be taken to ensure needed supplies are received?

Contingency planning is an important first step. Order crucial supplies now via EHS's [COVID-19 PPE & Supply Request Form](#) (also available via the Marketplace tile). The bulk of PPE, sanitizer, and related suppliers are no longer in short supply in the market and can be ordered directly from suppliers via the Marketplace.

Will shipping materials to and from campus be affected?

There are no known constraints on domestic shipments. However, suppliers have noted increased shipping costs and lead times globally. It is important to consider shipping costs and lead times when making your purchasing decisions. We recommend planning accordingly.

For the most recent information from UPS and FedEx regarding shipping delays, and additional surcharges and fees, please refer to the latest alerts on the FedEx website, [here](#), and the UPS website, [here](#). Links to both of these sites are available on the eShipGlobal main page.

Will critical gas supplies, such as Liquid Nitrogen and Helium, continue?

Procurement maintains regular communications with Airgas regarding deliveries of liquid nitrogen and helium. At this time, there are no current or planned disruptions of supply for these two materials. If there are other materials which are critical, please contact Procurement.

To mitigate the spread of the virus, Airgas drivers are complying with basic social distancing practices and using hand sanitizer. Some Airgas customers, including hospitals with known COVID-19 patients, must sanitize their cylinders before they are picked up. At this time, Airgas will continue to deliver and pickup from Princeton University locations without sanitizing empty cylinders so long as there are no confirmed COVID-19 cases in that building. Should there be a confirmed case in a building which requires delivery and pickup of cylinders, Airgas will need to be notified, and sanitizing procedures would be required. Bulk is not affected.

For helium, there is no planned change to our current allocation which is a result of global events and market conditions unrelated to the coronavirus. Procurement is working with Airgas to understand the supply risks and evaluating information on the impact of the coronavirus to the demand of natural gas, from which helium is a production by-product.

Should there be any updates, Procurement will communicate this information.

Are there precautions which need to be taken with regard to incoming shipments?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance indicates that incoming shipments pose minimal risks and thus no special equipment or procedures are needed.

Will suppliers' personnel be allowed on campus?

Suppliers and contractors are identified as approved visitors so long as they comply with all requirements of the [EHS Visitor Policy](#) available on the EHS website.

Can suppliers be on campus to perform needed services or deliver goods?

EHS guidance defines what is required for contractors and vendors. Contractors and vendors, including consultants, are considered approved visitors so long as they comply with all EHS [requirements](#). Key points of EHS guidance is as follows:

1. The University Vaccine policy does not currently address vaccine requirements for contractors, vendors and consultants.
2. All contractors, vendors, and consultants are required to wear face coverings when working inside of campus buildings.
3. Face coverings are required for everyone, vaccinated or not, on TigerTransit and McCosh Health in accordance with state and federal laws.
4. Contractors must notify the University representative and ehs@princeton.edu within 24 hours if an employee, worker, visitor, third party, or any other individual for whom the Contractor/Vendor is responsible and who was at the work site tests positive for COVID-19.

What is required for compliance with policy for temporary staff hired from agencies?

Temporary staff are those hired to perform University functions under the guidance of and reporting to University employees. Temporary staff are not considered contractors or suppliers with regard to Covid-19 requirements. The [University Vaccination Policy](#) requires independent contract employees, which include temporary staff, to comply with the mandate to enter vaccine records into VacStatus and complete a COVID-19 vaccination. In addition, these individuals will be required to participate in the University's testing program.

Procurement Services has contacted preferred and contract temporary staff agencies to notify them that only vaccinated individuals may be deployed at the University. These individuals will be required to update their information to VacStatus and participate in the testing program. This will require a NetID.

Managers of temporary staff should contact Tara Zarillo, associate director for administrative planning in the Office of the Executive Vice President, via email at tlreilly@Princeton.EDU, to request an EMPLID, NetID, and to register the temporary individual in the testing program. Please be prepared with the full name, address, date of birth, cell phone, and email address of each individual.

What is required if a temporary staff member tests positive in the asymptomatic testing program?

Similar to a University employee who tests positive, the temporary staff member will need to self-isolate and will participate in contact tracing. It will be at the discretion of the temporary individual's supervisor as to whether they can work remotely during the self-isolation period. If the supervisor does not approve remote work, the temporary worker would not be paid by the University for that time.

Because of the coronavirus situation, how do I order supplies to have them sent to an offsite location?

With the University fully back to campus, it should not be necessary to do this. If it is necessary, creating a new Ship-To address via the request form in the Princeton Service Portal will allow the new location to be created.

What should be done if a supplier advises us that there will be supply shortages or their operations will be shut down?

In many cases, alternate suppliers may be able to supply the goods and services needed. If this is the case, contact another University supplier. The list of contract suppliers is accessible via this webpage, here, or contact Procurement at purchase@princeton.edu for information about suppliers who provide that good or service.

If a shortage or operation shutdown is critical to your operation, please advise Procurement by sending the details to purchase@princeton.edu and someone will be in touch to begin the process of mitigating the situation.

What expectations does Princeton have of its suppliers with regard to Business Contingency Planning?

While adverse events are unpredictable, best practice requires a thoughtful, complete, and tested set of plans which allow suppliers to operate through those situations with minimal disruption. When contingency plans are being executed, these should be transparent to the supply of goods and services to the University, however that is not always the case.

As above, should there be issues in the supply chain which will cause a downstream effect impacting the University, we're encouraging suppliers to provide early, clear, and regular communications to mitigate any disruption.

Will supplier payments be delayed?

Payment processing will continue and payments are being disbursed without delay. As always, the payment date is determined by your existing payment terms, and is calculated from the date an invoice is received by Procurement Services. As specified on all University purchase orders, all invoices should be sent electronically to invoices@princeton.edu for processing.

A supplier wants me to sign a quote or waiver before they will begin work; should I sign?

Even before the coronavirus situation, we discourage the signing of supplier forms as these typically provide terms favorable to the supplier and not to Princeton. If you need assistance, please contact Procurement at purchase@princeton.edu and someone from our team will contact you to help guide the process, negotiate with the supplier, and partner with the Office of General Counsel to find a solution.

We recognize that some purchases may be urgently needed and may require the University to accept unfavorable contract terms. We ask that you contact us as soon as possible so that we can minimize these situations.

What do I do if I've engaged with a supplier for a service or event, and now with the coronavirus limitations, we need to cancel the service or event?

The first thing that should be done is to have a conversation with the supplier to attempt to resolve the situation and work out a solution which both parties can accept. In most cases, Princeton is not the only customer who is dealing with this situation. In many cases, a resolution offered by the supplier may be acceptable. If advance payments were already made, the supplier may be reluctant to refund the money. Consider asking the supplier to credit that money towards a future event instead. A written contract addendum might be needed. We ask that if there is any contract, waiver, or other form provided by the supplier that you send these to purchase@princeton.edu for review by our contracts manager prior to signing.

It should also be noted that the University contract language has effective language which helps us to mitigate these types of issues. We strongly encourage departments to use University contracts when engaging with suppliers. For questions, please contact Procurement.

Can you provide some talking points to guide conversations with suppliers regarding cancellations?

We've had success negotiating with venues and suppliers in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. If you have a contract for an event or service and you did not use a University model agreement, suppliers may be less flexible and may require new terms. The talking points, below, can be used when discussing the situation with the supplier. Ideally, the person who signed the agreement or booked the venue should be the first to call.

1. There is a pandemic as declared by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020.
2. Help us work together to deal with this service/event cancellation.
3. Find common ground with the supplier, though they may be struggling they don't want to lose business long term
 - a. We like your company because...
 - b. We want to use your services in the future because...
 - c. Remind them if we have used their services in the past and are repeat customers.
4. Events:
 - a. Would you allow us to rebook within one year of our originally scheduled arrival date without penalty?
 - b. If we need to change that rebooking (not cancel, but change), could we do so without penalty if we do it up to 90 days before the newly scheduled arrival date?
 - c. We are different from a corporation because we work off of an academic calendar, and that is why we are asking for a full year from our originally scheduled arrival date.
5. Services:
 - a. Would you allow us to reschedule the services for a date in the future?
 - b. We would like to apply the down payment to a future event.

What should I do if our department no longer needs items which have been ordered?

In the event that a purchase order needs to be cancelled, please first contact the supplier immediately. There may be situations where a purchase order cannot be cancelled or restocking fees apply. If the purchase order may be cancelled, obtain written confirmation from the supplier and then request the cancellation of the order through finance@princeton.edu. For assistance with difficult cancellations, please contact Procurement at purchase@princeton.edu.

If a supplier has a question about working with Princeton during this time, where do they get the latest information?

The University maintains a website which is updated frequently and as early as circumstances permit:
<https://www.princeton.edu/content/covid-19-coronavirus-information>

Under the Visitor FAQs there is a link to FAQs for suppliers, and available here, on the F&T website.