Utah Conservation Corps COVID-19 Protocol

The purpose of the UCC COVID-19 Protocol is to keep UCC AmeriCorps members, staff, partners, and the public safe and healthy.

This UCC COVID-19 Protocol is in addition to the guidance issued by the Center for Disease Control (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html) and Utah State University (https://www.usu.edu/covid-19/). This protocol is specifically designed for UCC field crew operations. The UCC COVID-19 Protocol is a minimum level of protection for UCC field crews. Additional restrictions may be enforced at the discretion of UCC staff to provide a safe and healthy work environment for everyone. This document will be updated and/or revised as associated data for COVID-19 changes.

UCC takes the current COVID-19 health emergency very seriously. Compliance with UCC’s COVID-19 Protocol is mandatory. Failure to comply will result in termination of term of service.

Acknowledgements: UCC would like to gratefully acknowledge Northwest Youth Corps, Montana Conservation Corps, Conservation Legacy, Pacific Northwest Trails Association, and the Intergovernmental Internship Cooperative for sharing protocols and collaborating on best practices in a COVID-19 environment.

NOTE: UCC field operations have been deemed as essential by the Vice President of Student Services at Utah State University. This designation may be revoked at any time.
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Decision Making Rubric for UCC Field Operations

The decision making rubric will be reviewed and operations determined within 2 weeks of scheduled field season start date.

- Responsible party – UCC COVID-19 Task Force. Using the best predictive information available at the time under consideration; is it likely that restrictive civil orders will have been lifted at the national, and state level. If “yes” continue to next evaluative criteria. If “no”, consider the appropriate duration to suspend the start date.

- Responsible party – UCC COVID-19 Task Force. Do we have the ability to implement our COVID-19 procedures and protocols within the time frame and locations under consideration? If “yes” continue to next evaluative criteria. If “no” consider the appropriate duration to suspend the start date.

- Responsible party – UCC Projects and Partnership Coordinator. Do we have sufficient number of trained staff to operate and support our crews? If “yes” continue to next evaluative criteria. If “no” consider the appropriate duration to suspend the start date, and/or reduce the number of crews to a level commensurate to our staffing.

- Responsible party – UCC AmeriCorps Coordinator. Do we have at least 50% qualified applicants at the time of consideration to be confident in fielding full crews at the proposed start date? If “yes” continue to next evaluative criteria. If “no” consider the appropriate duration to suspend the start date, and/or adjust program parameters to an acceptable level.

- Responsible party – UCC Projects and Partnership Coordinator. Do we have enough vehicles, equipment and supplies to operate the program or can we obtain (logistically and financially) by the time the program begins? If “yes” continue to next evaluative criteria. If “no” consider the appropriate duration to suspend the start date, and/or adjust program parameters to an acceptable level.

- Responsible party – UCC Director with approval from USU Vice President for Student Affairs & Risk Management. Does operating a crew, given the current socio-political climate and the climate that is likely to be present in 2 weeks, align with UCC and Utah State University’s values. If “yes” proceed to plan for this program. If “no” consider the appropriate duration to suspend the start date.

I. Definitions

For the purposes of this document and the UCC, the following definitions apply:

Family unit:
- The members that you are sheltering in place with during the training period at the start of your term of service.

Social distancing:
- Maintain at least six feet between all individuals outside your family unit.
- Wear a mask when in public, or when in contact with anyone outside of your family unit.

Shelter in place:
- Stay in your place of residence, UCC provided campsite, or project site.
• You are advised to only leave your place of residence or the project site for work, necessary food shopping, and recreation. All CDC, state, local, and UCC field office regulations must be adhered to when leaving the shelter in place location for work, food shopping and recreation.

• Local regulations may vary based on field office location. The UCC Regional Coordinator for each field office location is responsible for communicating local regulations to members as they relate to travel, food shopping and recreation.

• Crews will adhere to a pre-approved travel plan if one has been implemented by UCC staff.

• If you have roommates:
  o practice social distancing (six-foot minimum)
  o good hygiene (frequent hand washing, hand sanitizer and sanitize all shared surfaces and objects).

• Social distance by maintaining at least six feet between all individuals outside your family unit.

• Wear a mask when in public.

Quarantine:

• Absolute minimum contact with others.

• Do not leave your residence.

• Have others bring you supplies and drop them off outside your place of residence.

• UCC’s minimum quarantine period is 14 days.

Isolation:

• If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, said individual will be isolated.

• Individual will have no in-person contact with anyone.

• Individual must have their own room and bathroom facilities. If needed, UCC staff will release funds to support member in isolation.

II. Conditions for New Members to Serve

a. Shelter in Place/Quarantine and Training Period

• All members must participate in shelter in place/quarantine and training period at the beginning of their term of service with UCC. The shelter in place/quarantine and training period will be facilitated and monitored by UCC staff.
  o Each field office will have its own shelter in place/quarantine and training location and schedule.
  o The UCC Regional Coordinator for each field office will email members with detailed information regarding the shelter in place/quarantine and training period.
  o Members are expected to wear a mask at all times (except when eating or drinking) during the shelter in place/quarantine and training period.

b. Health and Travel Form

• Members must accurately and honestly complete a Health and Travel Form. The form will include:
  o A statement of all travel and locations for the four weeks prior to the member’s start date
  o History of any symptoms of COVID-19
  o Contact with any person who has tested positive or has exhibited symptoms of COVID-19

• The Health and Travel Form will be reviewed by UCC staff and a USU Student Wellness representative. The intent of that review is twofold: (1) rule out any individual who may be more vulnerable to ill effects of COVID-19, since exposure to the virus during a program cannot be eliminated, and (2) to rule out any individual whose potential exposure to COVID-19 may be at a
higher level due to their health history, recent travel/activities and/or other risk factors.

- UCC reserves the right not to admit people who pose a communicable disease risk to others.
- UCC will direct potentially ill people not to come to UCC if they exhibit COVID-19 symptoms. While delayed inclusion is likely not an option, participation in UCC field seasons with a later start date may be possible.

c. Assumption of Risk and Protocol Agreement Form

- All new members must submit an Assumption of Risk and Protocol Agreement Form prior to the member’s start date.
  - New members will be informed of the potential risks associated with participating in UCC programs, and informed about UCC’s COVID-19 protocol and the commitments necessary for participants to make (including engaging in self isolation outside of the programs dates, if necessary).

III. Conditions for all UCC Members to Serve

- All actively serving UCC members must submit an Assumption of Risk and Protocol Agreement Form.
- 450 and 300 hour members must commit to being with their crews throughout their entire term of service. No time off will be given.
- 1700 and 900 hour members may be granted very limited time off by the UCC Regional Coordinator that will be contingent on project schedules, travel restrictions, and shelter in place policies that are in place at the time.
- Crews may be required to shelter in place or be quarantined at their project site during scheduled days off. The UCC Regional Coordinator for each field office location is responsible for determining shelter in place or quarantine status of members at their specific field office location. This status will vary based on field office location, project type, CDC, state, and local regulations.
- During service, crews will not interact with other crews, project partners or the public outside of official duties as defined by UCC staff.
- All members will maintain social distancing of six feet at all times (with the exception of the family unit).
- Members will report their temperature and any other signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 on a daily basis. Signs and symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should be reported to UCC staff immediately.
- Members unwilling or unable to commit to the protocols or demonstrating uncooperative attitudes toward protocols and hygiene will not be allowed to join and/or remain in programs.

IV. Project Operations

UCC Staff and Site Supervisors will at a minimum use CDC guidelines to determine if UCC members are clear to travel and serve. Members are required to adhere to all of the following guidance.

a. Travel: Ensuring Crew Member and Public Safety

Travel on Project Time

- When traveling in the UCC vehicle (or any USU vehicle) with two or more people, all vehicle occupants must wear a mask.
- Crews will follow travel routes designated by UCC Staff.
- If a stop is required during travel, members must don a mask, ensure proper social distancing,
avoid touching surfaces and faces, and wash their hands frequently. Crew members cannot linger at gas stations and cannot stop at restaurants unless a drive-thru option is available. Crews must gain permission for stops not included in preapproved travel plans. True emergencies will be managed on a case by case basis.

- Crews will not stop in counties that are under lockdown unless specifically instructed to do so by UCC staff, in writing. Written permission will be stored in the vehicle’s binder. Crews must gain permission for stops not included in preapproved travel plans. True emergencies will be managed on a case by case basis.

- Every truck cab will be equipped with hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes. Members must sanitize their hands every time they enter the cab.

- Crews will wipe down UCC vehicle with disinfectant wipes during daily morning vehicle check. If surfaces are visibly dirty, clean soiled surfaces with a detergent or soap and water before you disinfect them. CDC Cleaning and Disinfection for Vehicles: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/disinfecting-transport-vehicles.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/disinfecting-transport-vehicles.html)

- Increase ventilation by opening windows or adjusting air conditioning, keep windows open when possible. Keep windows open when not using the vehicles when possible to maintain maximum ventilation.

- Sit staggered and as far apart as possible in the vehicle when driving.

**When fueling a vehicle:**
- Use a disinfectant to clean the fueling nozzles and keypads before you fuel the vehicle.
- If you wear disposable gloves while fueling, remove and dispose of the gloves before you re-enter the vehicle.
- Disinfect the fuel card after use.
- Wash your hands or sanitize hands immediately after you fill the vehicle with gas.

**Travel off Project Time**

*Members are strongly encouraged to consider practicing UCC protocols during travel (adapted for personal travel). Specifically:*

- If a stop is required during travel, traveler should don a mask, ensure proper social distancing, avoid touching surfaces and faces, and wash their hands frequently. Travelers should not linger at gas stations and should not stop at restaurants unless a drive-thru option is available.

- Personal vehicle should be equipped with hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes. Traveler should sanitize their hands every time they enter the cab.

- Members should fuel their vehicle in accordance with the “fueling a vehicle” guidance above.
Members should also review USU’s "Travel During COVID-19" page before traveling.

Members may be required to quarantine for 14 days upon return from travel. Members may also receive a COVID-19 test upon return from travel. Members may return to service with a negative result.

b. Interactions with Project Partners and UCC Staff

- Crew members will limit interactions with project partners to receiving instructions and feedback while maintaining social distancing and donning a mask prior to interaction to wear for duration of interaction.

- UCC staff will coordinate projects to the level of crew self-sufficiency and may be on the ground in lieu of agency partner to help crews safely and successfully execute project work. UCC staff and members will maintain social distancing and don masks prior to interaction to wear for duration of interaction.

- Crew members and UCC staff will wear a mask when indoors and when not alone in a room or enclosed space. This includes UCC offices and other storage facilities. See USU’s “Face Coverings and Masks”.

- Crew members will not share vehicles or living arrangements (campsites, tents) with project partners or UCC staff.

c. Camp Cleanliness

- Crews must maintain hand washing stations (equipped with soap and hand sanitizer) in the camp kitchen, restroom facilities, and at the worksite.

- All individuals must sanitize kitchen surfaces before and after meal preparation.

- There will be no more than one person per tent. If large wall tents are used as kitchens, sides will be kept drawn up for air circulation and UV exposure as often as possible.

- Food will be prepared and dished up by one or two people each day and others will avoid the kitchen area. Members will wash hands and put on face coverings prior to meal prep. Whenever possible, meal prep will occur in open air.

d. Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19

Members should be isolated, removed from the field and strongly encouraged to get tested if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Persistent cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever, defined as: person feels warm to the touch, gives a history of feeling feverish, or has an actual measured temperature of 100.4°F [38°C] or higher
- Chills
- Unexplained muscle pain or body aches
• Sore throat
• New loss of taste or smell
• Congestion or runny nose
• Nausea or vomiting
• Diarrhea

Members testing positive for COVID-19 will be isolated.

e. Discontinuing Isolation

AmeriCorps members may discontinue isolation when the following health status is achieved (in accordance with CDC guidelines for isolation):

• At least 1 day (24 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and, at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
• Isolation or quarantine may be ended early if two negative tests results in a row are received, from tests done at least 24 hours apart.
• Members who are isolated must report their whether their temperature is above or below 100.4 degrees to UCC staff on a daily basis. UCC staff will track occurrences of temperature above 100.4 degrees and will be responsible for notifying the member regarding discontinuation of isolation.
• Members are strongly encouraged to obtain another test at the completion of their isolation period.

f. Discontinuing Quarantine

AmeriCorps members may discontinue quarantine after 14 days (see CDC guidance for starting and ending quarantine).

g. COVID-19 Monitoring and Considerations While on Hitch

• Members will monitor their temperature, and any other signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 on a daily basis. UCC staff must be notified immediately if fever and/or other symptoms consistent with COVID-19 present while on hitch. See Section h. COVID-19 Field Response and Evacuation Protocols.
• Any member showing symptoms of COVID-19 will wear a mask at all times, unless member is isolated in a tent or respiratory function is impaired by wearing the mask. The member should be isolated from the rest of the crew.
• Members showing symptoms of COVID-19 should be evacuated from front and backcountry projects and are strongly encouraged to be tested. If tested member is negative, the crew may resume normal service upon approval from UCC staff.
• Leaders and members should spread calm and allow the group to express their emotions. If further mental health support is needed, efforts can be made to seek local and or teletherapy options which may exist. Member Assistance Program: 1-800-451-1834 or www.mylifeexpert.com
• If available, have the crew member use their health insurance or Intermountain Healthcare’s telemedicine line or online chat feature (https://intermountainhealthcare.org/) to complete an assessment over the phone or online.
• A satellite communication device with texting technology will be assigned to every backcountry crew to allow communication with UCC staff when outside of service.
Upon return to service, have the crew member use their health insurance or Intermountain Healthcare’s tele-medicine line or online chat feature (https://intermountainhealthcare.org/) to complete an assessment over the phone or online.

- All backcountry crews will be required to evacuate if one member presents fever and/or other symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while on hitch.
- **All non-COVID-19 injuries** must be promptly reported to UCC staff so as to direct injured individual(s) to appropriate level and location of care.

### h. COVID-19 Field Response and Evacuation Protocols

If signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 arise, the crew leader or field boss (chain of command is determined by the UCC Regional Coordinator at each field office) must immediately notify UCC staff. In most circumstances, UCC staff will ask the field boss or crew leader to maintain consistent contact. Standard practices (refer to Field Manual, Feb. 2020, UCC Accidents and Emergencies section) for dealing with illness, evacuations, or fatalities in the field will be maintained, in addition to UCC’s COVID-19 related protocols.

When **signs or symptoms consistent with COVID-19** arise, the following steps will be taken:

1. The patient suspected of having signs and symptoms of COVID-19 warrants immediate evacuation if they have:
   a. trouble breathing
   b. persistent pain or pressure in the chest
   c. new confusion
   d. inability to wake or stay awake
   e. bluish lips or face

2. Any member showing symptoms of COVID-19 will wear a disposable surgical mask at all times, unless member is isolated in a tent or respiratory function is impaired by wearing the mask. The member should be isolated from the rest of the crew.

3. Using a cell phone or satellite communication device, the field boss or crew leader must immediately notify UCC staff listed in the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) regarding the situation and specific signs and/or symptoms.

4. UCC staff, field boss, or crew leader should refer to the pre-established ERP when planning an evacuation or seeking definitive medical care.
   a. If needed, the UCC staff may assist in execution of the evacuation or seeking of definitive care.
   b. If needed, UCC staff may make changes to crew transportation on a case by case basis.

5. The following rules should be followed during and after transport to definitive care or field office location:
   a. Be calm, model calm.
b. The number of people exposed to the symptomatic individual during transport shall be limited to as few people as possible. At no time will crew members be without a vehicle at the project site. Any transportation of the symptomatic patient requires that appropriate disposable surgical mask and gloves are worn, and resources are available to sanitize the vehicle (COVID-19 Evacuation Kits).

c. Follow all directions provided by UCC staff. These directions may include (but are not limited to) recommendations about direct care of the affected member, keeping the crew isolated, and a plan of action for the next few days.

d. In the event that a third-party will be aiding in the transport, follow the specific directions given from UCC staff. UCC will assist with or coordinate plan for evacuation. In the event that a medical evacuation is required, air medical support will make the decision whether to extract the patient via air or not. In fire season, air resources are typically scarce.

e. Crew will regularly monitor and document patient’s vital signs and symptoms using a COVID-19 specific SOAP (subjective, objective, assessment, and plan) note.

6. A UCC staff member will report the information gathered from the field boss or crew leader to UCC administrative staff (Director, Projects and Partnerships Coordinator, AmeriCorps Coordinator). UCC administrative staff, in conjunction with the UCC Regional Coordinator, will refer to the “Follow Up” section of the Field Manual, Feb. 2020, UCC Accidents and Emergencies during and after the emergency.

7. The UCC Regional Coordinator and Projects and Partnerships Coordinator will make a determination regarding the project and crew responsibilities during and following the response and evacuation.
   a. For front country projects, crew members remaining in the field (if any) will be closely monitored for symptoms. If a second member displays symptoms, all members will be removed from the field. At no time will crew members be without a vehicle at the project site.

8. Symptomatic members must self-isolate.
   a. All members evacuated with COVID-19-like symptoms are encouraged to be tested for COVID-19.
   b. If isolating in their own home is possible, they should do so.
   c. If they are not able to isolate in their own home, UCC staff will assist them in finding a location.
   d. If a crew member is evacuated from a project and isolated to a tent or a home, an assigned crew leader or UCC staff member should have at least a daily check-in with the member. More frequent check-ins are warranted if symptoms become more severe. The person conducting the check-in should maintain social distancing and comply with other guidelines as outlined by the CDC including wearing a mask and gloves. See ‘Discontinuing Quarantine or Isolation’ section above.

9. Quarantine: since the rest of the symptomatic member’s crew has potentially been exposed, they will remain physically separated from other members, staff, partners, and the public. Options include:
   a. Evacuation from the field if symptomatic member is positive.
      i. Members may evacuate to their own homes if they are able to quarantine themselves in those places.
ii. If participants are not able to quarantine themselves in their own homes, UCC staff will assist them in finding a location.

iii. Members are strongly encouraged to be tested after seven days of quarantine or if symptoms arise.

b. Members may remain in the field if the following are all true:
   i. The crew has enough resources to remain self-sufficient in the field.
   ii. The project site is safe and separate from other participants and the public.
   iii. Communications between UCC staff and members are reliable.
   iv. Access to definitive care takes less than one hour, including hike and drive time.
   v. Approval is granted by the UCC Projects and Partnerships Coordinator and UCC Regional Coordinator.

i. Medical Treatment

- If UCC members or staff are involved in an incident which requires definitive medical treatment, they will likely be treated at a facility where the likelihood of exposure to COVID-19 is more possible. In this event:
  o Members will immediately notify UCC field staff regarding the incident.
  o UCC Field staff will contact the definitive care facility on the ERP to obtain updated information regarding facility capacity and concentration of COVID-19 patients.
  o UCC field staff or leader and the patient will be the only ones to interact with medical staff within the medical facility.
  o Gloves/masks should be worn while handling paperwork.
  o The person supporting the patient should minimize their time in the facility.
  o Once discharged from medical facility, both staff and patient should wash their hands and change clothes.

- If a member needs to seek definitive medical care for non-COVID related medical treatment, the member may return to the field after receiving definitive medical care.

j. End of Term Protocol

These health protocols are to be followed regardless of the health of the crew, in an effort to mitigate any risks associated with participants unknowingly transmitting disease back into their home communities.

- Members are strongly encouraged to maintain a shelter in place status (or quarantine, if reasonable) on and off project time for the last 14 days of service with UCC. Great attention will be paid to limiting/eliminating field visits from the outside population.
V. Appendices

Appendix A

Face Mask Information

UCC crews will be provided with face masks for riding vehicles whenever possible. Members will always have a face mask on hand to use, whether it is a cloth, buff, bandana, t-shirt or a surgical mask. Any mask is better than no mask.

Links to helpful information and science about wearing masks:

- Science says, masks for all: [https://www.fast.ai/2020/04/13/masks-summary/](https://www.fast.ai/2020/04/13/masks-summary/)

(The following section is from PNTA Field Safety Protocols Manual)

FACEMASKS - INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES

When used correctly and properly cared for, facemasks:

- May reduce the spread of pathogens to others by containing your own respiratory and oral droplets and aerosols
- Should be worn even if you feel well — you may be pre-symptomatic, or asymptomatic
- May prevent droplets and aerosols from coming into contact with your nasal and oral membranes
- May help prevent you from unconsciously transferring pathogens from your hands to your face, nose and mouth

To Put on and Adjust a Facemask:

- First, clean and sanitize your hands
- Cover mouth and nose, making sure there are no gaps; masks should extend under the chin
- The final step is to: sanitize your hands again

To Remove a Facemask:

1. Handle it by the straps/ ties, only
2. Using both hands, pull the mask up and away from your face
3. Do not touch the front/ exterior surface of the mask
4. Dispose of the mask into a sealed trash or laundry bag
5. Clean and sanitize your hands

Additional Use Guidelines
• Never apply a facemask to a first-aid patient who is struggling to breathe
• Never apply a facemask to a first-aid patient who is unconscious
• Do not touch the interior surface of the mask (which contacts your face) and do not allow other surfaces (even the exterior surface of the mask) to make contact with the interior surface if you intend to extend use
• Avoid touching the mask while using it; if you do, clean and sanitize your hands
• Do not wear a facemask below your nose (with your nose uncovered)
• Do not “store” a facemask below your chin between uses
• Do not attempt to wear a facemask while eating or drinking (by pulling the mask aside in between bites/sips)
• Do not remove the mask until you are prepared to clean and sanitize your hands immediately afterward
• Replace a mask if:
  o It is damaged or deformed, or otherwise no longer stays in place and seals over the nose and mouth
  o You touch or otherwise contaminate the interior surface with bodily fluids
  o It becomes damp, dirty, and/or difficult to breathe through

Appendix B
Disposable Gloves
1) To remove disposable gloves:
   a) Grasp the outside of one glove at the wrist. Do not touch your bare skin.
   b) Peel the glove away from your body, pulling it inside out.
   c) Hold the glove you just removed in your gloved hand.
   d) Peel off the second glove by putting your fingers inside the glove at the top of your wrist.
   e) Turn the second glove inside out while pulling it away from your body, leaving the first glove inside the second.
   f) Dispose of the gloves safely in a Ziploc bag. Do not reuse the gloves.
2) Clean (wash) and sanitize your hands.

Appendix C
COVID-19 Kits
COVID-kit items will be in a separate sealed bag and should only be used in case a patient needs to be assessed or treated for a suspected infection.

COVID-19 First-aid Kit
Each crew will be equipped with a supplemental COVID-19 first-aid kit for attending to suspected cases of COVID-19 infection.
   ❑ (1) 1 bottle hand sanitizer
   ❑ (2) Cloth/surgical facemasks (to be worn by patient and first-aid provider)
   ❑ (1) Clear safety glasses (or goggles) for first-aid provider
(4) Pairs nitrile gloves

SOAP Note and pen/pencil (for recording and tracking patient’s symptoms)

(1) Thermometer

(1) Extra Batteries (for thermometer and pulse oximeter)

(4) Alcohol swabs

(1) Pack of Tylenol/Acetaminophen

(1) Pulse Oximeter

**COVID-19 Evacuation Kit**

*Each UCC vehicle will be equipped with a COVID-19 Evacuation Kit. These items will be in a separate sealed bag and should only be used in case a patient with a suspected infection is being evacuated.*

(2) Large (30–50 gal) trash bags (for containing belongings of patient and first-aid provider)

(1) 1 bottle hand sanitizer

(2) Cloth/surgical facemask (to be worn by patient and driver)

(1) Clear, anti-fog goggles for driver

(4) Pairs nitrile gloves