

Planning Guidance – Space Planning

A GUIDE TO ENABLE WHOLE-OF-NAIT PLANNING RELATED TO SPACE PLANNING OPERATIONS IN A COVID-19 ENVIRONMENT

Guidance Source: CRT
Approved by: Claire Mechan, Director, CLAIREM@nait.ca, 780.699.5206
Last Update: January 22, 2021



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PURPOSE

This document establishes baseline planning guidance for a whole-of-NAIT approach in identifying requirements to facilitate on-campus activities while ensuring, coordination and maximization of NAIT's space utilization following the Alberta Government's current COVID guidelines and restrictions.

Coordination of space utilization is necessary due to the sharing of common campus areas (hallways, lounges, washrooms, etc.), classrooms and laboratories by numerous programs and departments. Maximization is required to ensure that decisions are made in alignment with NAIT priorities given limited facility resources. This document provides the NAIT community with utilization guidelines for room occupancy and scheduling practices so the needs of our stakeholders (students, staff, industry, etc.) can be met. This includes room/building capacities, physical distancing requirements as well as control and mitigation measures.

KEY REFERENCES

The following references were consulted when developing this planning guidance. They are hyperlinked for quick reference by users of this guide.

1. NAIT Executive – [Turning the Dial](#)
2. NAIT CRT – [COVID-19 General Safety Direction](#)
3. Government of Alberta – [Guidance for Post-Secondary Institutions](#)
4. Government of Alberta – [Guidance for Restaurants, Cafes, Pubs and Bars](#)
5. Government of Alberta – [Guidance for Retail business](#)
6. Government of Alberta – [Workplace Guidance for Business Areas](#)
7. Government of Alberta – [Guidance for Libraries](#)
8. Government of Alberta – [Guidance for Indoor Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation](#)
9. Government of Alberta – [Guidance for Swimming Pools and Whirlpools](#)

PRIORITIES IMPACTED

The following priorities are impacted by this guidance:

1. Safeguarding the health and safety of NAIT staff, students, tenants, and on-campus stakeholders.
2. Enabling the relaunch of polytechnic education, Industry Solutions, and support areas.

3. Coordinating whole-of-NAIT activities in support of vision, principles, and objectives outlined by NAIT Executive Committee.

PLANNING GUIDANCE

The following guidance must be factored in to plans generated by business units related to NAIT's relaunch. It serves to establish a common baseline and shared understanding from which all units must work. This guidance is applicable to all NAIT owned and occupied facilities.

For space planning, our primary reference document is Ref 3 ([Guidance for Post-Secondary Institutions](#)).

NOTE: NAIT will always comply with Public Health Orders, restrictions, and guidance implemented by the Government of Alberta. Such orders and guidance will take precedence over REF 3.

As Alberta Health restrictions allow, the following is a list of key assumptions:

- Staff will continue to work from home, unless it is essential that they come to campus.
- Programs will plan for a minimal footprint on campus for the duration of the pandemic.
- NAIT has established room capacity to not exceed 50 people as a general guideline.
- Room capacity shall not exceed limits within the appropriate Government of Alberta guidance (links above found under Key References).
- Physical distance of 2 meters always where possible is required.
- Everyone coming to campus is required to wear a mask or face covering for all indoor spaces.
- Most lecture-based learning will be delivered online.
- Experiential learning in physical shops and labs will proceed at reduced capacity where necessary and as health restrictions allow.
- Labs and shops may be scheduled outside of normal hours (0700-1800h) to enable physical distancing in labs, shops, and hallways.
- Service areas will continue to deliver services virtually.
- Meetings and events will be virtual. This includes those people who happen to be on campus.

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR ALL SPACES

The COVID-19 General Safety Direction provides the expectations for Departments / Programs / Business Units in the preparation of the plans to ensure continued safe return to operations on-campus. This direction applies to NAIT staff and students who could be potentially exposed to the COVID-19 virus while conducting operations – either working or learning on campus.

- Engineering controls. These control a hazard at the source. Depending on the workplace and processes, examples might include physical barriers such as Plexiglas.
- Administrative controls. These change the way people work. Examples include worker training, hand hygiene, physical distancing, circulation flow plans, staggered start times, alternate work arrangements, and regular workplace cleaning policies.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE). These limit the hazard at the worker. PPE examples can include gloves, eye protection, masks, face shields or respirators. In some circumstances, PPE may be required.

It is recognized that some may be cost prohibitive or impractical for some settings. The goal is to have a reference list to enable decision-making within NAIT's business units.

PARAMETERS FOR SPECIFIC SPACES

Requests for use of space that does not fall into the following categories requires consultation with Health & Safety Services complete with a rationale for the need. These special spaces could include, but are not limited to; oversized rooms, hangar, arena, etc. where capacities may exceed 50 persons while still complying with public health orders.

Shops, Labs, and Computer Labs:

1. Each workbench or workspace may only have one student unless doing so would introduce a hazard (e.g. a two-person lift is required).
2. There must be adequate space allocated for student movement to access other supplies and equipment in the room.
3. The capacity of a shared space may dictate maximum capacity of overall space (i.e. if students are required to access smaller adjoining workrooms).
4. The maximum room capacity may be dictated by the requirement to share equipment.
5. Engineering controls may be used to maximize capacity such as bench configuration, rearrangement of the room, or inserting physical barriers.
6. Program area is responsible for identifying and marking a circulation path through the Lab / Shop / Computer Lab area that supports physical distancing.
7. Clinical labs must also consider the additional capacity of clients (public).
8. Administrative controls such as staggering labs or reduced lab time are also options.
9. Programs are responsible for determining safety requirements are met. Safety audits will confirm requirements have been met.
10. The Scheduling Office will coordinate room bookings.
11. Programs are responsible for installation of safety signage in coordination with FMD.

Retail

1. Retail areas will follow the Government of Alberta [Guidance for Retail business](#) (REF 5).
 - a. Consider restricting and directing customer flow into and within the business (i.e. one point of entry).
 - b. Consider limiting the number of patrons allowed in the business at any given time.
2. Retail and Ancillary Services (RAS) is responsible for installation of safety signage in coordination with FMD.

Office Areas

1. When staff are approved to work on campus and must access their office area, the business unit will establish an occupancy plan with the following guidelines:
 - a. The business area is responsible for identifying and marking a circulation path through the office area that supports physical distancing.
 - b. The business area is also responsible for installation of safety signage in coordination with Facilities Management and Development (FMD).

Hallways / Corridors/Elevators/Stairwells

1. FMD will determine common area circulation flows and install appropriate signage and floor stickers.

Entrances/Exits

1. FMD will determine which entrances/exits will remain open.

2. FMD will determine circulation flow through building access points and install appropriate signage and floor stickers.

Washrooms:

1. FMD will determine washroom capacity, including available sinks and urinals, and install appropriate signage and floor stickers.

Food Services

1. Food Service areas will follow the Government of Alberta [Guidance for Restaurants, cafes, pubs and bars](#). (REF 4)
 - a. Consider restricting and directing customer flow into and within the business (i.e. one point of entry).
 - b. Areas that require queuing lines must consider line-up capacity and placement (i.e. Starbucks, Meat Shop).
2. Consider limiting the number of patrons allowed in the business at any given time.
3. The business owner is responsible for installation of safety signage in coordination with FMD.

Service Counters

1. Where in-person service is approved:
 - a. The service area must have a circulation flow plan in place for entrance and exit of the service area.
2. The service area is responsible for installation of safety signage in coordination with FMD.

Student Lockers

1. One AT NAIT is responsible for lockers . The number of lockers available is reduced, and there are additional terms with shorter lengths.

Computer Commons

1. Computer Commons owner is responsible for identifying and marking a circulation path through the space that supports physical distancing.
2. Computer Commons owner is responsible for installation of safety signage in coordination with FMD.

Testing and Assessment Centres:

1. Testing centres must identify and mark a circulation flow plan for entrance and exit of the centre.
2. Testing centres are responsible for installation of safety signage in coordination with FMD.

Student Lounges / Public Seating Areas

1. Limited student lounge and public seating areas will be available for individual use, group study is not permitted.
2. If open, FMD will determine circulation flow through the lounge and seating areas, where appropriate, and install appropriate signage and floor stickers as required.

Parks and Outside Spaces

1. Physical distancing of 2 metres also applies to outdoor spaces.
2. Outside gatherings must follow limits within the appropriate Government of Alberta guidance (links above under Key References).
3. Exterior spaces are not disinfected. Users should disinfect tables, benches, etc. prior to and after use.

Classroom Space / Meeting Rooms

1. Planning assumptions and general guidelines above apply if use is granted under special circumstances.

Libraries

1. When NAIT's Library Services are opened, Libraries will follow the Government of Alberta [Guidance for Libraries](#) (REF 7).
 - a. Consider restricting and directing customer flow into and within the library (i.e. one point of entry).
 - b. Consider removing or spreading out seating.
 - c. Consider limiting the number of patrons allowed in the library at any given time.
2. Polytechnic Education and Student Success (PESS) is responsible for installation of safety signage in coordination with FMD.

Recreation Centre

1. When NAIT's Recreation Centre is opened, the Recreation Centre will follow the Government of Alberta [Guidance for Indoor Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation](#) (REF 8) and [Guidance for Swimming Pools and Whirlpools](#) (REF 9).
 - a. Consider restricting and directing customer flow into and within the Recreation Centre (i.e. one point of entry).
 - b. Consider removing or spreading out seating.
 - c. Consider limiting the number of patrons allowed in the Recreation Centre at any given time.
2. Recreation Centre is responsible for installation of safety signage in coordination with FMD.

KEY CONTACTS

Where planning draws on this guidance, the following individuals/areas can be consulted for further details and recommendations:

1. Coordinated Response Team – COVID@nait.ca
2. Space Planning Individuals
 - a. FMD Maintenance and Operations, Mike Schoettler, Senior Manager Maintenance and Operations, mschoettler@nait.ca, 780.940.9349.
 - b. FMD Space Planning, Jacqueline McLeod, Director Campus Planning, jamcleod@nait.ca, 780.940.7811.
 - c. Scheduling, Jonathan Nituch, Director Student Progression and Registrar, jonathann@nait.ca
3. Other Areas
 - a. Health and Safety Services
 - b. Marketing and Communications
 - c. Procurement