

PROTOCOL FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF CONFIRMED AND SUSPECTED CASES OF COVID-19 IN UNIVERSITY CLASSROOMS

1. The present protocol for the management of confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19 in university classrooms - proposed by the CRUI and modified to transpose the opinion expressed by the Scientific Technical Committee supporting the Head of the Department of Civil Protection for the COVID-19 emergency in the meeting of August 28, 2020, transmitted by the Minister of Health with note of September 3. (prot. n. 63) - integrates the guidelines for carrying out teaching and curricular activities in universities, applicable as also compatible to a.f.a.m. institutions, in annex 18 of the D.P.C.M. 7 August 2020, published in the Official Gazette n. 198 of 8 August 2020.

These guidelines - which in turn originate from the CRUI document "Modalities of resumption of teaching activities AA 2020/21 in Universities" transmitted by the Minister of University and Research with note prot. 0002833 of 30/07/2020 and from the attached recommendations of the aforementioned Technical Scientific Committee - describe, in fact, all the measures and behaviors that are to be adopted for the "primary prevention" of the SARS-CoV-2 infection, i.e. to reduce exposure to the virus.

This protocol, instead, specifies a series of activities (management of confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19 in university classrooms) that is part of the so-called "secondary prevention" of outbreaks of COVID-19, through the identification of confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 and the timely management of related close or random contacts.
2. The procedure described in this protocol requires close collaboration between the University Safety Offices and the Competent Health Authority, represented by the Public Health and Hygiene Services in the Prevention Departments of the Local Health Authorities, in order to promptly and effectively prepare the appropriate prevention measures.

In this respect, a contact/reference person must be appointed in each University (University Representative for COVID-19 issues) who will act as an intermediary towards the Department of Prevention. The University Representative for COVID-19 issues is normally selected among the staff of the University Security Offices and he/she is possibly assisted by the COVID-19 Working Group/Task Force, if established; he/she represents the link between the University and the Competent Health Authority both for prevention and control protocols in the university and for the management procedures of suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases. The University Representative for COVID-19 and the University Delegate for Disability also implement all the necessary actions for the support of, and communication to students with disabilities, if necessary by setting up specific procedures.
3. An important prerequisite for the management of confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19 is that the Universities set up their own systems that allow to collect information about the names of the students enrolled in each course or in each round of the course, if they attend (the list must contain reference to the classroom and the day of the course).

The said lists must be prepared and kept for at least 14 days from the date of each lecture and must be available to the Prevention Department that may require them for any contact tracing activities. These systems may be computerized booking systems used by the students and/or a physical recording of the attendance (e.g., barcode reading, roll call in the classroom by the teacher, ...) and/or a list of students enrolled in the course or round of the course. In fact, it is important to point out that according to the guidelines teaching in phase 3 is provided in blended mode, with the teacher in the classroom and the students partly in the classroom and partly connected from home. This requires the subdivision of the students' class into groups, in order to schedule the appropriate shifts. Such organization of the teaching offer requires that the list of students admitted to physically attend be known in advance.
4. If the Competent Health Authority informs the University that on a given day there is a confirmed case of COVID-19, be it referred to either a student or a teacher present in the classroom or to the technical-administrative staff in charge of teaching-supporting activities, the University cooperates with the

Competent Health Authority (Prevention Department), via the Security Offices, for the adoption of the necessary measures. In particular, always in connection with the Prevention Department, they provide for the closing, the disinfection and sanitization of the classroom according to the procedures provided by the protocols in force; they support the contact tracing activity by transmitting to the Competent Health Authority a list of the teachers, technical-administrative staff members and students who were enrolled in the course and/or shift or present together with the confirmed case person in the period between the two days before the onset of symptoms or the swab and the beginning date of the isolation period. Moreover, the Security Offices send to these students, teachers and technical-administrative staff, in accordance with the Prevention Department, a notice recommending home isolation as a precautionary measure as well as passive surveillance of symptoms and inviting them to strictly follow the provisions of the Competent Health Authority. In fact, it is up to the Competent Health Authority to carry out the epidemiological investigation and the identification of any measure to be implemented (e.g. quarantine, isolation, active surveillance, etc.). The resumption of in-presence teaching activities is subject to the outcome of the epidemiological investigation and to the recommendations of the Prevention Department.

In any case and subject to further communications and provisions by the Competent Health Authority, it is advisable that students, teachers and technical-administrative staff members who support the teaching activity resume their in-attendance activities only after a period of fifteen days, also considering that the teaching activity can continue online and is therefore not suspended. The same procedure is also enforced for curricular activities (profit exams, degree exams, ...).

5. If a suspicious case (i.e. a person with body temperature above 37.5°C or showing symptoms compatible with Covid-19) is identified in the classroom and/or during curricular activities (examinations, degrees, ...), the said person must be immediately equipped with a surgical mask (if he/she does not already have one) and properly isolated from other people (in a dedicated room or in an isolation area); only the people strictly necessary for his/her assistance are allowed near the patient and they will have to wear surgical masks and try to keep the 1-meter safety distance if possible. It is necessary to ensure that he/she can return to his/her home as soon as possible, urging him/her to contact his/her general practitioner or in his/her absence the USCA or the Prevention Department for the necessary clinical evaluation and possible prescription of the diagnostic test. Extraordinary sanitization of the isolation area and of the area where the person showing symptoms has stayed must be provided for.

In such cases we do not recommend that in-presence teaching activity be suspended; the suspension will obviously be arranged in case suspect case is confirmed. The confirmed case will trigger the procedure described in point 4 above.

6. In order to facilitate tracking and identification of close and random contacts if the cases mentioned in points 4 and 5 occur we strongly encourage students, teachers and technical-administrative staff members of the University to download the IMMUNI app and to keep it active while they are in the University's premises.