

General COVID-19 infection prevention recommendations should be followed by building occupants regardless of the HVAC functionality. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Social distancing by remaining 6 feet or further away from other persons.
- Wearing a face covering while on campus or interacting with others.
- Following CDC recommendations for handwashing, which includes use of soap and water and washing for 20 seconds.
- Washing hands after touching commonly touched surfaces such as door knobs, light switches, shared equipment, etc.
- Not touching your face without first washing your hands.
- Building occupancy should be reduced to meet safe distancing requirements. Ventilation systems will continue to operate as designed.

Maintaining building systems, including HVAC systems, supports safe occupancy on an ongoing basis by ensuring proper ventilation in all occupied spaces.

UCR is utilizing California Department of Public Health (CDPH) COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Institutions of Higher Education, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) to inform HVAC-related measures on campus.

I am concerned about COVID-19 and the air quality in my work area. How do I know my work area has adequate ventilation?

UCR buildings are typically supplied with a percentage of outside air, either via natural ventilation or mechanical fans, dependent on each building and system. Those systems are maintained to provide ventilation and thermal comfort as designed through the following activities:

- Filtration Maintenance: Building filtration systems are well maintained and have the appropriate level of filters for each building's mechanical design.
- HVAC systems are set to maintain appropriate indoor temperatures as much as system designs allow, which minimizes thermal stresses on the body. These systems are optimized to bring in the maximum amount of fresh air feasible while still maintaining recommended indoor temperature ranges. In most cases, laboratory ventilation systems operate continuously with 100% outside air supply that is not recirculated in the building and is exhausted directly to the outside. These systems are already designed to exhaust indoor contaminants effectively.
- In most cases, exhaust fans in restrooms operate continuously when buildings are occupied. For restroom exhaust fans to work best, it is recommended to avoid opening operable windows in restrooms and keep restroom doors closed (or mostly closed for single restrooms not in use). When possible, keeping conference room doors open can help promote good ventilation.
- Spaces with more limited or no mechanical ventilation will have operable windows left open.
- A process for reporting critical building HVAC issues on the UCR campus continues to remain the same and in place through the UCR Facilities Client Engagement & Coordination Team. For critical HVAC issues, such as non-operational thermostats or building pressure issues, submit a work order at <https://facilities.ucr.edu/requests>. For general inquiries, email us at facilities@ucr.edu or call (951) 827-4214 during normal business hours (Mon-Fri 8am -5pm).

How many air changes per hour are in my room?

- Air changes per hour (ACH) is defined as the volume of ventilation air that is supplied and removed from the room every hour. The ventilation air can be through natural or mechanical ventilation systems and helps to remove contaminants from a room.
- The number of air changes per hour in each room in a building can vary throughout campus.
- In general, laboratories are typically supplied with 6-12 air changes per hour, and office areas are typically supplied with 4-8 air changes per hour in accordance with the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) standards.
- The campus is implementing reduced public health occupancy limits for spaces. This will allow for more outside air available per occupant.

What is being done to building HVAC in regards to COVID-19?

- During our normal preventative maintenance, Facilities Services continues to check HVAC systems to ensure that buildings are ready for reoccupation, including but not limited to the following:
 - Fan systems are functional and operating.
 - Central HVAC fan filters are within acceptable operating ranges and replaced as necessary.
 - Fan filter racks are inspected for major gaps or damage.
 - Occupied/Unoccupied Timeframe: To help with airflow, Facilities Services is ensuring the length of time airflow will circulate throughout each building, starting air handler systems 2 hours prior to normal building occupancy hours and turning off an hour after building occupancy hours.
 - Air filter efficiency ratings are selected in accordance with ASHRAE standards based on mechanical capabilities of the system, to provide required fresh air without loss of pressure. MERV 13 or better filters are used whenever possible.

Can I turn on a portable air-conditioning unit or fan when it gets too hot? Can I use or purchase a portable air cleaner or air filter for my area?

- Due to air balancing and electrical capacity, we do not allow portable air conditioners, fans or heaters in mechanically ventilated spaces

Can the building's outdoor air ventilation rate be increased?

- Outside air rates are set by the building mechanical design and these rates cannot be increased without adversely affecting air conditioning control. Keep in mind that reduced public health occupancy limits for spaces will allow for more outside air available per occupant without making changes to mechanical systems.

Can my building's supply airflow or exhaust airflow be increased or rebalanced?

- Indoor air exchange rates are set by the building mechanical design and these rates cannot be increased without adversely affecting air conditioning control.

What ventilation is provided in stairwells?

- While some stairwells may have operable windows, stairwells are not provided with mechanical ventilation.