



UMSpaceSafe



News & Announcements

Updates to UMSpaceSafe Announced

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As part of our research community's shared commitment to each other and the public we are all actively engaged in the use and improvement of the [UMSpaceSafe](#) application. Several great suggestions and questions have come forward about ways to improve UMSpaceSafe. The Office of the Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School (OVPRDGS) would like to take this opportunity to provide some important info and updates about UMSpaceSafe.

The goal of UMSpaceSafe is to reduce initial response time to any reported COVID-19 case from days to hours. For this reason, the OVPRDGS requests that all UMaine and UMM researchers/scholars (faculty, staff and students) use UMSpaceSafe while undertaking research and scholarly projects conducted through the [phased research continuity plan](#). The speed and completeness of the University's response to a case of COVID-19 in our community is the biggest determinant in slowing or stopping an outbreak. Although most of you are likely keeping local records or calendars of space use, these records may not be quickly accessible when a case is reported. Time matters! The conscientious use of UMSpaceSafe will help ensure that contact tracing will be quick and more comprehensive. This app will not be necessary once phase 4 is achieved (resumption of normal research operations).

Summary of recent changes to UMSpaceSafe further outlined in this announcement:

- Only need to log co-use of space (planned or unplanned), not time spent alone
- Time to occupy a room or off-campus site without checking-in extended to maximum of 15 minutes
- Rolling purge of space use records
- Ability to edit check-ins and check-outs of spaces
- Ability to define "suites" or space clusters for check-ins and check-outs
- Signage to post in and around research and scholarly spaces
- Option to document non-UMS personnel or non-researchers as guests

A major change for the use of this app is that it is now primarily encouraged for tracking where people will be sharing research and scholarly spaces (e.g. co-use of rooms or field sites) for more than 15 minutes (planned or unplanned), consistent with Maine CDC contact tracing guidelines. You do not need to check into the app for periods where you will be working alone in a research space. Although the app primarily targets typical research locations like labs and field sites, we do encourage you to use it more widely, including for one-on-one meetings between research team members (e.g., faculty and students).

For planned cases of research space co-use, it may be easiest to check into the space when you arrive. If you do not check-in when you arrive and someone joins you in the space you should each check-in to UMSpaceSafe. However, if it is easiest for you to remember to use the web app whenever you enter a research space, you are still welcome to do so.

Please know that essentially all research groups affiliated with UM and UMM are assuming responsibility for gathering, maintaining and rapidly reporting information about research space use. The use of UMSpaceSafe simply provides a simple and uniform method for easy data collection and rapid response, therefore its use is highly recommended.

Your privacy and data security are of the highest importance. The information collected by UMSpaceSafe will ONLY be used for safety purposes, specifically to slow or stop a COVID-19 outbreak. The data you provide can be accessed by a limited set of response team personnel to provide data to the Maine CDC, and lab and building managers. The UMSpaceSafe app is hosted on secure UMaine servers. In addition, we are implementing a process to purge records on a rolling 30-day schedule.

Frequent questions about UMSpaceSafe and recent updates:

How do I let others know when/where to use UMSpaceSafe? A printable poster is available for you to place at the entrance/exit to campus research and scholarship spaces. This poster includes a place for you to provide info on the building and room ID that space users should enter when using the web app. This poster is also available to print from the app's supporting website.

Do I need to use UMSpaceSafe every time I enter a research/scholarship space? The more you use the app the more effective we will be in meeting our safety goals, but there is some flexibility to this. You do not need to use the web app when working alone in a research space and we have now extended the time you can enter a potentially occupied space without checking in to 15 minutes. This matches the Maine CDC guidelines around what constitutes a COVID-19 contact, and assumes you are wearing a mask and able to maintain safe spacing should more than one person be present. Another new flexibility is the ability to define a group of rooms or other spaces frequently used together as a "research suite," and for staff to check in and out of that suite rather than each room separately. To do so, we ask that you put up signage specifying that suite with a name (e.g., BSL3 Suite) that will be consistently used by everyone when checking into that area.

Do I need to use the app when meeting with students or colleagues on research or scholarly work? We ask you to use some careful judgement on this and lean towards the side of caution. If you are wearing masks and meeting with a student or colleague outdoors or in a large room while properly distanced, you should not have to check in to that space. However, if the meeting involves a bigger group of individuals, the space is closer to occupancy limits, you are doing activities where individuals might incidentally forget to space appropriately or handle shared surfaces, so, using UMSpaceSafe is requested. Please know that UMSpaceSafe does not supersede any other COVID space policies, including mask wearing or room occupancy limits.

What recent changes have been made to UMSpaceSafe? We have implemented a couple of new priority features to make the web app easier to use and more effective for its safety goals.

1. **Edit Check-ins and Check-outs:** You can now easily edit your check-in and check-out times. We all make mistakes and these should be easier to fix now.
2. **Non-UMaine Personnel or non-researchers:** You can now enter the name and contact info of non-UM personnel (e.g. equipment technicians) or non-researchers (e.g. facilities personnel) into the form. Please know that university policy still requires you to have permission for non-UMaine affiliated guests coming to campus.
3. **Records purge:** We have implemented a process to purge your space use records on a regular 30-day schedule.

How do I get help with UMSpaceSafe or offer suggestions? More info about UMSpaceSafe is available on the supporting [website](#), including a FAQ, tutorial, and dedicated help and comments form.

For technical issues or problems, please contact Andy Kay, the technical manager of UMSpaceSafe via email at andrew.kay@maine.edu. For requests regarding special permissions around app use, or policies, please contact Tammy Crosby, at research@maine.edu. If you are having issues with your maine.edu account, please contact help@maine.edu.

The safety of UMaine students, staff and faculty is our primary concern. The UMSpaceSafe app is designed to contribute to an agile and streamlined response to a COVID-19 outbreak. Your consistent participation is not just valued; it is essential to our combined safety.

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