

Physical Barrier Guidelines

Physical barriers offer the ability to separate individuals that may need to be in close proximity to others on account of the nature of the interactions. The Safer Campus Task Force is prioritizing the installation of physical barriers where there is an increased potential for close contact with others.

Risk Mitigation Strategies

Proper use of general hygiene practices, the use of face coverings, and physical distancing are the first lines of defense against COVID-19. Departments should use administrative controls, such as changes to work practices, policies or procedures, to keep individuals separated. When possible:

- Encourage virtual (phone, email or online) interactions instead of in-person interactions.
- Limit the number of individuals allowed to enter the reception or office area at any one time.
- Limit the presence of non-essential visitors.
- Eliminate or reduce the use of commonly shared objects (printer, copier, fax machine)
- Develop self-service or remote alternatives where feasible.
- Use verbal announcements, signage, and visual cues to promote physical distancing.
- Remove/rearrange furniture to allow for increased physical distance between individuals and workspaces.

Limitations of Physical Barriers

- Barriers do not provide a zero-risk solution. They do not address all possible modes of transmission, such as aerosol transmission, or fully protect anyone from exposure to COVID-19.
- Barriers do not replace the need to maintain 6 feet of separation between individuals when possible.
- Barriers do not replace the need to follow other public health requirements such as practicing general hygiene habits (e.g., washing hands, not touching your face, staying home if you are ill), the use of face coverings and personal protective equipment, or other requirements and recommendations from CDC, ACHA, Florida Department of Health, and Stetson University.
- There may be constraints in the physical/structural environment that prevent installation of appropriately sized barriers.
- Barriers may not be feasible or appropriate in all workspaces or for all work activities.
- If not designed or installed properly for the specific work environment, barriers may obstruct or interfere with the ventilation system airflow, and fire and life safety protection systems (e.g., fire alarm notification devices, fire sprinklers, fire pull stations).

Please refrain from making any temporary or permanent modifications to your workspace that may physically alter or damage University-owned property or furniture. All requests for changes to University property due to COVID-19 must be approved by PPE Subgroup of the Safer Campus Task Force to determine if it is a logically and factually sound request and meets University standards. Upon approval, Facilities Management will assess the feasibility and costs of the proposed physical alteration. If the alteration is possible to do at a reasonable cost to the University, then a work order should be submitted through the SchoolDude system.

All University purchasing procedures must be followed when acquiring supplies for temporary or permanent modifications.

The University will not approve any temporary or permanent modifications that are in violation of ADA Accessibility Guidelines, Fire/Life Safety or applicable Building Code requirements.

Types of physical barriers under consideration within these guidelines are as follows:

- Plexiglass barriers
- Room dividers (portable)
- Stanchions and stanchion belts

Plexiglass Barrier

The installation of plexiglass is primarily recommended for food service environments, high traffic reception areas, retail areas, and in locations where exchange of materials regularly occurs. Plexiglass has been used as a tool to provide a physical barrier between individuals and to help capture respiratory droplets when individuals are in close contact. Plexiglass barriers are intended to reduce risk during short term interactions.

Plexiglass Prioritization. Due to increased requests for plexiglass barriers, it is important to prioritize the areas of installation to ensure higher risk areas receive barriers first. Prioritization considerations should include workplace type, risk level, visitor frequency, office density, egress density, and successful implementation of alternative controls.

When considering the prioritization of plexiglass barrier installation, it is important to determine the risk level, frequency, and volume of contact with the public and coworkers, and where adequate controls are not able to be implemented at the installation location.

| Prioritization Level | Area Description |
|-------------------------|--|
| Higher | Areas of high frequency and high volume of contact with members of the general public and lack other controls. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cashiers lanes and desks • Circulation desks • Food serving counters • Higher volume reception, information, and administrative stations • Retail locations • Screening areas • Ticket sales and scanning locations |
| Medium | Areas of frequent contact with members of the general public or coworkers, and lack of other controls. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower volume reception, information, and administrative stations • Open work areas with close proximity workstations |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Lower | <p>Areas that do not require contact with people and/or areas with minimal occupational contact with members of the general public or coworkers.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas with other installed engineering controls that are as effective or more effective than plexiglass barriers • Double occupancy offices where physical distancing can be achieved • Single occupancy offices |
|--------------|--|

Room Dividers (portable)

The installation of portable room dividers (*walls on wheels*) is primarily recommended to reduce the transmission of germs and viruses from spreading when deployed as physical barriers to convert large open office areas into smaller group meeting spaces.

Barriers Performance Standards and Installation Considerations. Plexiglass and room dividers installed in Stetson University-owned buildings should meet certain standards to ensure proper performance for the intended application. Prior to installation, the following should be referenced to verify the plexiglass or divider type will meet the requirements of the installation purpose and location.

- Barrier construction material must be compatible with the cleaning and disinfectant products used to clean the barrier and surrounding area.
- Location specific requirements and considerations
 - Building and fire safety considerations:
 - Ensure 18 inches below ceiling to prevent interference with fire sprinkler spray patterns
 - If full height barriers are needed, Public Safety and Facilities will need to assess and determine if new fire safety devices will be required. Installation of new fire sprinkler or fire alarm devices may be necessary.
 - Barriers must not interfere with existing corridors, aisles or other similar open pathways intended for exiting. Barriers that interfere with existing egress routes are considered a fire hazard and not allowed.

Stanchions and Stanchion Belts

The installation of stanchions, stanchion belts, or other similar physical barriers is primarily recommended for crowd control and to route the flow of foot traffic.

Physical Barrier Installation Request Process

To request barrier installation, complete and submit the **Physical Barrier Installation Request Form** to PPEsubgroup@stetson.edu. Department head signature is required. Please ensure all fields are comprehensively completed to assist with the evaluation, prioritizing and streamlining of installation.

The PPE Subgroup will evaluate the physical barrier requests and provide approval or denial via email.

If the request is approved by the PPE Subgroup, requestors will be instructed to submit a work order request to Facilities Management through the SchoolDude system. A copy of the approved request form must be attached to the work order.