

Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School 2020-21 Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Cooperative Education

How are Co-op programs affected by COVID?

Per the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Cooperative Education at this time, is limited to seniors only.

Cooperative education must abide by the DESE reopening guidance and follow the Manual for Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Cooperative Education. These employers must provide COVID-19 safety procedures for their workplace. At a minimum, these procedures should follow current OSHA guidelines on [Returning to Work](#) and OSHA's guidance for [specific industries](#).

In implementing the above guidelines, programs will:

- Complete routine safety checks prior to students beginning programs. Routine safety checks, including the COVID-19 compliance checklist, must be completed prior to students beginning these programs. In addition there needs to be COVID-19 specific checklist (mask requirements, equipment disinfecting protocols, handwashing/disinfecting stations on site, etc.) to existing safety checks.
- Train students in COVID-19 safety and operational procedures. Students must be trained in these protocols prior to entering the workplace for their programs.

High school students in health career programs (Community Health, Dental Assisting & Biotechnology) may participate in cooperative education placements in medical facilities with the following safeguards:

- Sites follow guidelines issued by the Department of Public Health,
- Students do not care for patients with a known or suspected COVID-19 diagnosis,
- Students do not work on COVID-19 care floors in a facility, and
- If a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in the facility, placement for students should be discontinued.

Early education and care programs should follow both the DESE reopening guidance and the [Massachusetts Child and Youth Serving Programs Reopen Approach](#). High school students in early childhood education and care programs may participate in cooperative education placements with the following safeguards:

- Sites follow [guidelines issues by the Department of Early Education and Care](#).
- The high school student's school district must be in the designated green/unshaded zone.
- The childcare placement must be in the designated green/unshaded zone.

***Any employer that is not in compliance with these guidelines will not be able to hire a student on Co-op.**

What happens if a student comes in contact with someone at the workplace who tests positive?

If a student comes in contact with a person who tests positive for COVID-19, we ask that the student quarantines for two weeks and switches to fully remote learning for that time period.

How does a student get a Co-op job?

As jobs become available they will be posted in that specific shop. Students are asked to send their resume to the Co-op office by a certain date. Students will need to interview with the companies for the position. After interviews, companies decide who they feel will be a good fit and offer the position to that particular student. Students are also welcome to seek a position on their own.

When are students eligible to participate in Co-op?

At this time only senior students who have 1,000 hours logged in their current shop may be potentially eligible for Co-op and have received CREDIT in all academic courses and his/her technical area for Term 4 during school year 2019-2020. Students need to be recommended by

their shop instructors and have met the competency requirements for their shop. If a student received NO CREDIT in one academic course, he/she will need to wait until mid-term progress reports to show academic progress. If students received NO CREDIT in two or more courses or in shop, they will need to wait until Term 2. Starting in Term 2, students must receive a grade of “C” or better in his/her shop area with no grade lower than a “D” in all academic courses prior to and during Co-op.

Can a student be fully remote learning and go on Co-op?

Yes, as long as the student meets all eligibility requirements.

What days are students available to go on Co-op?

Technical days are noted on the school calendar as follows; **SENIOR TECHNICAL DAYS ARE MARKED AS A1-A6 ON THE SCHOOL CALENDAR. JUNIOR TECHNICAL DAYS ARE MARKED B1-B6 ON THE SCHOOL CALENDAR.**) If an employer cannot give the required number of hours for each technical week, this will not fulfill the requirements of the Cooperative Educational Program. Hourly week requirements are as follows; weeks that a student is in shop for 5 days, they are required to work a minimum of 30 hours, weeks that a student is in shop for 3 days are required to work a minimum of 18 hours and weeks that students are in shop for only one day are required to work a minimum of 6 hours on that day. If there is no work on the job site on a particular technical week, the student **MUST** notify his/her shop instructor and the Co-op Coordinator and report to his/her technical program at Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School. Students can not work in lieu of academic days.

How are students graded while on Co-op?

Students will be graded by their employer using an electronic time card in a Google Form provided by the Co-op Coordinator. Prior to a student going on Co-op, students will learn how to access their time cards to see their weekly grade. Technical teachers require shop work

during the term, such as assignments regarding Senior Projects. All shop work must be completed and submitted to shop instructors as required.

What should a student do if they have a question regarding their weekly grade on his/her time card?

He/she should speak with his/her supervisor or human resource department. If a student is not sure how to approach the supervisor or human resource department, the Co-op Coordinator can coach the student on what to do.

What if my child has an injury that prevents them from doing certain tasks at Co-op?

If a child is injured or has an underlying medical issue, we encourage you to provide the Co-op Work Placement, Supervisor or Human Resource Department, school nurse and Co-op Coordinator with a doctor's note that stipulates any work restrictions for the Co-op work placement.

Are students who are enrolled in the Cooperative Education Program eligible to collect unemployment insurance benefits?

No, the relevant statute is M.G.L.c 151 A Section 6(k). The statute indicates that the definition of employment for the purpose of unemployment insurance benefits does not include "service performed by an individual who is enrolled in a nonprofit or public educational institution which normally maintains a regular faculty and curriculum and normally has a regularly organized body of students in attendance at the place where its educational activities are carried on as a student in a full time program, taken for credit at such institution, which combines academic instruction with work experience, if such service is an integral part of such program, and such institution has so certified to the employer, except that this subsection shall not apply to service performed in a program established for on behalf or an employer or group of employer."

What happens if the state is shut down due to the pandemic again? Can a student continue at their Co-op?

In any event the Co-op Program is cancelled due to COVID-19, the Co-op work permit is null and void. Only students who are 18 years of age or older would be eligible to continue working because they no longer require a work permit to stay employed.

How can students meet with the Co-op Coordinator?

Students can email Mrs. Carrelas, at kcarrelas@bptech.org to set up an appointment. Meetings can be held via Google Meet or in person in the Career Center.

What if I have other questions regarding Co-op?

If you have any questions please contact the Cooperative Education Coordinator, Kerrie Carrelas at 508-823-5151 x130 or via email at kcarrelas@bptech.org