Campus Design & Facilities
Authority: A&O Policy 2.28
CDF.001: Procedures for Mold Prevention and Response
Effective: March 31, 2026

PURPOSE

The purpose of these Procedures for Mold Prevention and Response is to establish guidelines for identifying and addressing water-damaged building materials, correcting moisture issues, and preventing and remediating indoor mold hazards in University-owned and Clerc Center facilities on campus. These guidelines are intended to reduce potential exposure risks to building occupants and ensure worker safety during mold remediation and cleanup activities.

Mold Prevention

Molds are fungi that decomposes organic materials and releases microscopic airborne spores, which are commonly present in both outdoor and indoor environments. The presence of visible mold indoors generally indicates the presence of excessive moisture. Moisture issues are commonly caused by water leaks from the roof or windows, high humidity, leaks in plumbing fixtures, flooding, or condensation in areas with poor ventilation or insulation.

Mold prevention begins with moisture control. Mold growth can be prevented or minimized through proactive inspection and maintenance, prompt correction of water intrusions, and thorough drying of water-impacted materials.

All University students, employees, and campus residents share the responsibility to prevent mold by taking the following actions:

- Closing windows when the air conditioning is on to prevent humidity and condensation build up
- Maintaining thermostats at or above 72ºF. A higher thermostat setting and slightly warmer air temperature results in drier indoor air
- Report through ServiceNow if the HVAC/ Fan Coil Unit (FCU) is not working (facilities HVAC)
- Furniture kept at least two feet (24 inches) from the sides of the unit and three feet (36 inches from the front of the HVAC or air conditioning unit to allow proper air circulation
- Regularly check and wipe off any visible condensation that may appear on the AC unit
- Always use the exhaust fan when showering and keeping the bathroom door opened after showering to allow space to dry.
- Report through ServiceNow (facilities HVAC) if the exhaust fan is not working
- Properly hang any wet clothes and towels to dry

What to Know About Do-It-Yourself Kits for Mold

At-home mold test kits may seem convenient; however, these kits do not provide information that can reliably distinguish between normal background spore presence and a moisture-related mold condition.

Most kits use a petri dish containing agar, a nutrient medium that promotes microbial growth. Because mold spores are commonly present in indoor air, spores that settle onto the agar surface will typically grow.

The growth conditions created by these kits can produce results that appear concerning but do not provide meaningful information about building conditions, occupant exposure, or the need for corrective action. A positive result therefore indicates only that mold spores are present in the environment, which is expected in virtually all indoor spaces. But it does not demonstrate a moisture problem, hidden mold growth, or a condition requiring remediation. An effective evaluation for any issues requires knowledge of building systems, ventilation patterns, and moisture pathways that are not identifiable through such at-home mold test kits.

If mold is suspected in a campus space, the appropriate step is to submit a work request. A trained Facilities staff member will conduct a visual inspection of the area and assess for moisture intrusion, water damage, or other contributing conditions.

Procedures

These procedures do not include:

- Processes for receiving medical accommodations due to mold sensitivities. Student inquiries should be directed to Disabilities Services Center at dsc@gallaudet.edu and employees should contact Human Resources at hr@gallaudet.edu.
- Environmental sampling. In most cases, sampling is not necessary when a visual inspection has identified mold growth. Environmental sampling may be conducted at the discretion of Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S), when required by regulations, or upon advice of legal counsel.

The following procedures outline the proper sequence of events when suspected mold growth is observed in any facilities owned and operated by the University.

Reporting Mold Concerns

Water damage, water intrusion, moisture concerns, or musty odors should be reported through ServiceNow. Reports should include a description of the issue, day and time, the location, and photos of the areas of concern.

Facilities staff will make reasonable efforts to respond within three business days.

Environmental Assessment

Facilities staff will report to the identified location for an onsite visual inspection. Facilities staff will conduct an environmental assessment, collect photographic evidence, and report findings to EH&S. EH&S may recommend further investigation and coordinate additional inspections as needed. A moisture meter or infrared camera may be used to identify sources of moisture or

active water leaks. If water damage is present, Facilities staff should locate and correct the source of water intrusion in the affected area.

Facilities staff will provide an update with next steps within five business days of the environmental assessment, absent extenuating circumstances.

All assessments shall be documented through work order records and maintained in accordance with the University's records retention schedule.

Cleaning Methods

Mold-contaminated material can be cleaned by scrubbing mold off hard surfaces with a detergent and water solution. The gentlest scrubbing method that effectively removes mold should be used to minimize air contamination. After cleaning, the surface must be dried completely. A surface is considered completely dried when moisture-detecting equipment (such as a moisture meter or thermal camera) indicates minimal moisture levels.

- Non-porous materials (e.g., metal, glass, hard plastics, any material that repels water) can be cleaned; however, once cleaned, it must be fully dried before it can be reused.

- Semi-porous materials (e.g., wood and concrete) can be cleaned if the integrity of the material is not compromised.

- Porous materials (e.g., ceiling tiles, insulation, drywall or gypsum board) should be removed and discarded.

Once the surface mold and dirt have been removed with detergent and dried, a disinfectant selected in accordance with manufacturer instructions and applicable safety standards (such as a diluted bleach solution where appropriate) should be applied. A contact time of 10 minutes is recommended to allow for proper disinfection.

Mold-contaminated surfaces must not be painted or caulked over. These surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned, disinfected, and dried before any product application.

Mold Remediation

Facilities have the overall responsibility for coordinating the removal and restoration of mold damaged materials in University-owned and Clerc Center campus facilities. When requested, EH&S will provide recommendations and assist with the coordination of mold remediation and development of remediation work plans. In some circumstances, the use of DC licensed mold assessors and mold remediators may be required. Remediation efforts will be carried out in compliance with all applicable regulatory laws and regulations and generally accepted best practices.

Before any remediation activities can begin, consideration must be given to the potential presence of other environmental hazards, such as lead or electrical. For purposes of these procedures, size determination applies to contiguous areas of visible mold growth.

- Small Area of Microbial Growth (less than 10 square feet)
  - Facilities staff will trace and eliminate the source of unwanted moisture or water intrusion.
  - When the area of microbial growth is less than 10 square feet, remediation and cleaning efforts can be performed in-house by trained Facilities staff or Custodial staff.
  - Mold-impacted areas will be cleaned or removed.
  - Areas will be left dried and visibly free from contamination and debris.

- Large Area of Microbial Growth (greater than 10 square feet)
  - Facilities staff will trace and eliminate the source of unwanted moisture or water intrusion.
  - District of Columbia-licensed mold assessors and remediators will be engaged when required by law or when remediation scope exceeds internal capabilities.
  - Upon completion of mold remediation, the mold assessor will conduct a post-remediation assessment to verify that all remediation work has been completed and that all visible mold has been removed.
  - A written clearance report shall be provided to EH&S.

Facilities staff will inform building occupants once all mold remediation activities have been completed. Occupants may re-enter the remediated area after clearance verification and confirmation that visible mold has been removed.

Personal Protective Equipment

The minimum personal protective equipment required when cleaning a small area of microbial growth are N-95 mask, gloves and eye protection. Respiratory protection should be used if mold spores are at risk of being released during cleaning activities. Respiratory protection, when required, shall be used in accordance with University safety programs and applicable occupational safety standards.

Training

Facilities and EH&S will provide periodic education and awareness materials to the campus community. Facilities staff performing mold response shall receive appropriate task-specific training.

Recordkeeping

Records shall be maintained in accordance with the University's records retention schedule, but not less than five (5) years from the date of remediation or inspection. Facilities will maintain all

records of work orders reporting potential mold growth. EH&S will maintain incident report records of water damage events and mold inspections. All documentation detailing remediation work plans must be provided to EH&S after work is completed.

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES

- A&O Policy 2.28 Mold Policy (Coming Soon)
- ServiceNow

SCHEDULE OF REVIEW

These procedures shall be reviewed every three years and as needed. The next scheduled review is: March 31, 2029

HISTORY

03/31/2026 NEW