

# 10 Advisory regarding COVID-19 for All Functionaries

Amidst COVID-19 pandemic, the NTA has drawn up a comprehensive plan for implementation based on relevant Instructions, Guidelines and Orders. This has implications for all functionaries and has been added as a separate chapter. NTA is aware of the challenges and with your support and collaboration will address them in a timely manner.

## 10. Advisory regarding COVID-19 for all Functionaries associated with smooth conduct of NEET(UG)-2020

### 10.1.1 Background

Conducting Exams in a hassle-free manner is a serious responsibility. NTA has developed a system and processes over a period of time to successfully conduct large scale exams with utmost diligence. There are several norms that need to be adhered to assure the Centre and institutions conducting the exam processes are resilient to various possible disruptions. Hence the need for standard operating procedures (SOP). The SOP acts as a document to set the standard and the operating norms agreed between NTA and the centres conducting the exam.

With the latest pandemic threat, every process needs to be redefined to ensure strict compliance to all the required norms are put in place. This is to additionally assure the safety of both the candidates and all functionaries involved in the conduct of the examination.

We at NTA, pro-actively worked with health experts and defined the norms for ensuring that the exams can go on with adequate precautions. All the exam processes, procedures have been reviewed and necessary modifications have been incorporated to ensure exams are conducted safely.

### 10.1.2 The objective of this Advisory is to ensure the following

- Safe and secure environment for all stakeholders involved in the examination process using touch-free processes wherever needed
- Maintaining social distancing measures
- Follow the guidelines and procedures recommended by the Govt
- Integrate measures with existing processes/ procedures / controls
- Be on the same page with respect to the actions to be taken by all stakeholders/functionaries towards safe conduct of exams

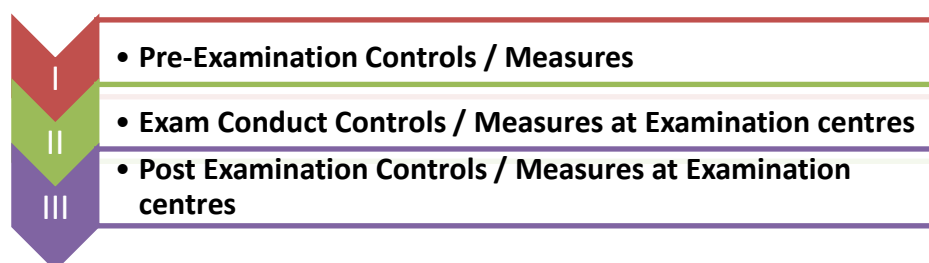
### 10.1.3 Scope

Advisory covers the procedures required for NTA to safely organize and conduct NEET (UG)-2020 at its Examination Centres right from the entry of candidates upto their exit

## 10.2

### Procedure

NTA has carried out detailed deliberations to formulate guidelines for the various controls / measures that are required to be implemented on the day of the exam at each Examination Centres. These are categorized into three stages of the exam day activity namely:



#### 10.2.1 Pre-Examination Controls / Measures

- **Allocation of candidate at examination centres**
  - Candidates need to maintain a space as per the social distancing norms.
  - Seating Plan will allow candidates to sit at a safe distance from each other as per social distancing norms.
- **Changes in Candidates Admit card**

The following changes have been made in the Admit Card:

  - Specific instructions to maintain social distancing and other instructions related to COVID-19
  - Staggered Time Slot for the candidates reporting at the examination centres – to be printed as “Slot (*time*)” such as 11.00 A.M. -11.30 A.M.
  - List of items permitted in exam rooms
  - A hyperlink to location of the centre so that Candidate may verify the location of the centre in advance by clicking on the link (when candidate clicks the Centre details).
  - In case of PwD candidate availing a scribe, both the candidate and scribe must wear the masks
- **Training of staff on Social Distancing norms**
  - After City Coordinator’s briefing on 12.09.2020, the Centre Superintendent will be conducting training for Invigilators and all staff on duty using materials shared by NTA and instruction received during briefing meeting. Focus should be on
    - Social Distancing norms
    - Guidelines for conduct of NEET- UG - 2020
    - Standard Operating Procedures for implementing safety precautions and for maintaining required standard of hygiene
    - Please note that Examination Functionaries will be able to perform their duty only if they have attended orientation. They may register themselves on the link shared by NTA for online orientation.

- **Inventory management**

Each Examination Centre needs to have the following additional Inventory

- **Gloves & Masks** for all staff on examination duty
  - **Gloves & Masks** for candidates in case they do not come with their own, as a requirement for admission into Examination Centres
  - **Hand Sanitizer** at entry and inside the Examination Centres as needed.
  - **Spray bottles, Sponges/cloth** for disinfecting items such as desk/table, door handles, etc.
  - **Disinfectant liquid with 1% sodium hypochlorite** for spraying in the Examination Centres
  - **Disinfectant backpack spray machines for spraying floors, walls,** etc
  - Additional cleaning material for washrooms to ensure increased hygiene
  - Liquid handwash/soap in washrooms for washing hands
  - **Thermo guns** for Temperature check of candidates and all staff on duty
  - **Additional notice boards**
  - Individual water bottles for staff on duty and for candidates, in case any candidate misses to bring (arrangement for approx. 20% of number of candidates allocated)
  - **Rope to make Rope lines and material to make Floor Marks (circle with paint to manage queues outside the entrance gate)**
  - **Sanitizing the examination centres and equipping examination functionaries**
- **Start of day**
    - Spray entire examination centres floors and walls, doors, gates, with disinfectant backpack spray machines
    - Fresh mask and gloves to be used by exam functionary after staff verification is done
    - Replenish all sanitizer bottles at entry gate, rooms, Registration desks, server room, staff/observer room, etc.
    - Replenish all liquid handwash bottles in restrooms and entry gate whenever required
    - Candidate Seating Area to be thoroughly sanitized (desk and the chair)
    - Clean and disinfect all the washrooms
    - Disinfect all door handles, staircase railing, lift buttons, etc.
    - Disinfect wheelchairs if present at the examination centres
    - Clean all the trash bins
  - **At end of the day**
    - Used gloves and masks should be disposed only in a pedal push covered bin at the Examination Centre and outside the examination room/hall
    - Safely dispose off all used masks and gloves discarded at the examination centres or outside the examination centre in trash bin bags at suitable place and as per standard guidelines issued by health authority

- **Staff verification and self-declaration**

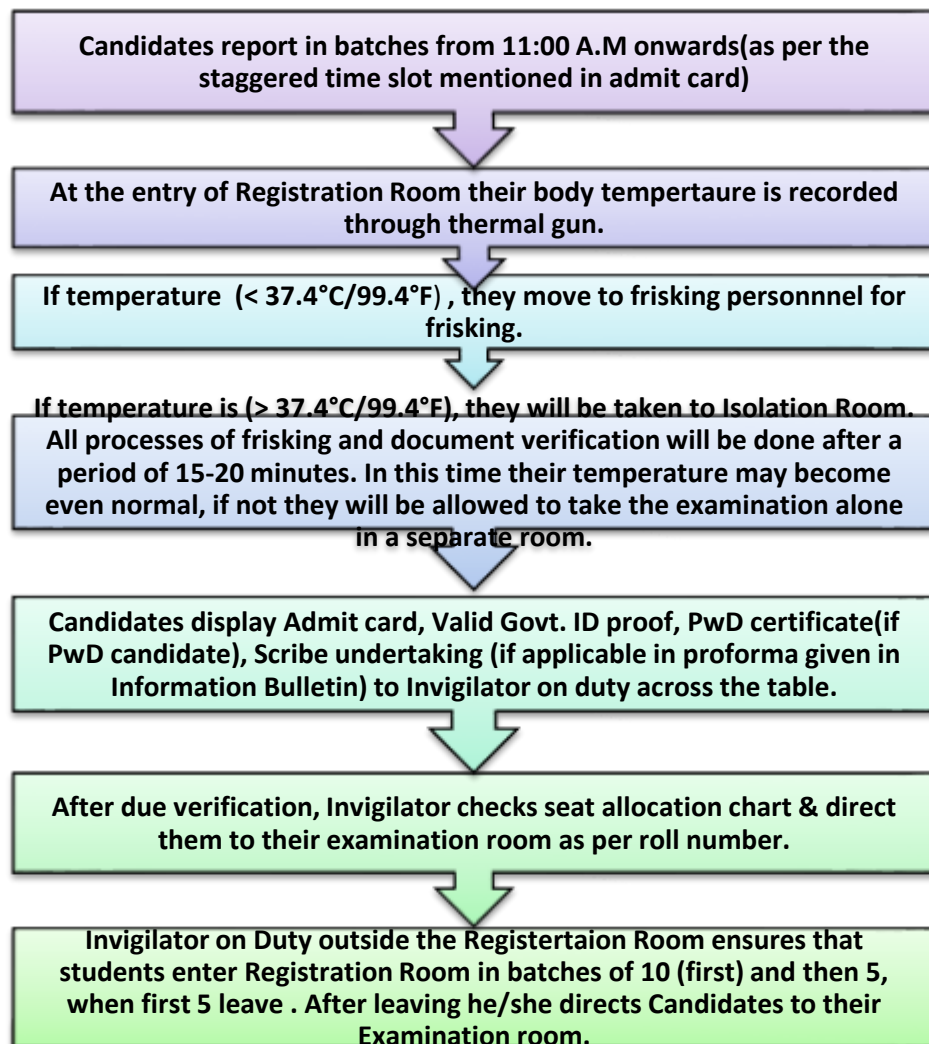
This step needs to be done as soon they report at the Centre :

- Exam functionary must submit self-declaration in the test admin dashboard
- Thermo gun temperature check must be done at staff entrance point
- If any Examination functionary fails to meet the self-declaration criteria, or thermo gun check, he/she will be asked to leave the examination centres immediately
- Exam functionary needs to wear the mask and gloves at all time

- **Crowd management outside the examination centres**

- Advisory notice boards to caution the candidates about Social Distancing precautions will be positioned at suitable locations within and near the examination centres
- Queue manager / ropes to be placed in a way so as to funnel candidates within the roped area for candidate to stand in the separate line of (upto 20 girl, upto 20 boys) at any point of time.
- Loud hailer to be used to call candidates as per their time slots

- **Managing Candidate after Entry into centre**



- **Entry of Candidates as per Time Slot given in Admit Card**

- To avoid crowd at the examination centre entrance due to candidates reaching together, they will be given staggered time slots for reporting. The staggering of time slots will be done to ensure uniform distribution of candidates across rooms during entry at the examination centres.
- A prior communication on this process of staggered entry will be shared with the candidates through admit card and through SMS.
- Security guards at gate should wear masks and gloves as they become the first point of contact for all candidates.

- **Ushering Candidate into Separate Registration Rooms**

- Candidate will be ushered in batches of 15 girls and 15 boys in two different Registration Rooms, where thermal scanning will be carried out at the entry followed by frisking and document verification procedures inside the room.
- All processes such as frisking, verification of documents will be done inside the Registration Room.
- The candidate will display the admit card, ID proof and other documents, if any for verification to the Invigilator on duty standing across the table
- Post verification, the Invigilator will locate Candidate's seat in the seat allocation list and inform candidate about his/her room number
- At any point of time the exam functionary would not touch any document of the candidate

- **Use of Thermo Guns**

- All staff members and candidates to be checked with Thermo guns at the entry point for fever. In case, any staff person and candidate is observed to be having above normal temperature (>37.5°C/99.4°F) or displaying any symptom of COVID-19 suspect, they will be placed in separate Isolation Room.
- Local Helpline Number for COVID-19 be displayed prominently at the examination centres and used when required
- Regular announcements will be made urging candidates to maintain social distance amongst them as per the social distancing norms. Volunteers/Invigilators will also guide the candidates to maintain social distance.

- **Items permitted into the examination room/hall for Candidates**

Candidates will be permitted to carry only these items with them into the examination room/hall:

- Mask on face
- Gloves on hand

- Personal transparent water bottle
- Personal small hand sanitizer (50 ml)
- Exam related documents as instructed (Admit Card, ID card, etc)

No other item to be permitted inside the examination room/hall. The admit card will clearly state what candidates are permitted to carry and what they are not permitted to carry.

- **Candidate Frisking**

- Body pat frisking will not be done
- Frisking by metal detector held with long handle will be mandatory for all candidates
- Frisking personnel will ensure that while frisking metal detector does not come in physical contact with any candidate
- Bluetooth and Wi-Fi signal presence will be checked inside the examination rooms and examination centres
- During the conduct of examination, all the installed jammers/ CCTVs (if applicable) will be functional as per NTA guidelines.

- **Document verification**

- A table of approx. 3 ft width should be kept in Registration room/hall.
- Candidate will display the documents for Exam Functionary to view without touching the document

- **Usher Candidate to allocated seat**

Candidates will be guided to their allocated seats, ensuring that social distancing is maintained. Seating Plan will allow candidates to sit at a safe distance from each other as per social distancing norm.

## 10.2.2

### During Examination Controls / Measures

- Candidate Authentication
- Videography/CCTV live streaming will be conducted in each room
- Manual Attendance and Handwriting sample at the candidate seat
- Manual attendance with signature (while wearing gloves) will be taken. No thumb impression will be taken.
- 50% of the Invigilators will be assigned to work inside the rooms, and 50% will monitor the entry outside the gate and Registration room until the last candidate has taken their place inside the examination room/hall
- The practice of physical movement of Invigilators inside the room must be minimized to the extent possible.
- masks and gloves will be mandatory for Invigilators
- In case Invigilator is required to help a candidate to resolve any issue, they will need to sanitize their hands before and afterwards (without removing gloves).

- Washroom management
- Candidate must take permission from Invigilator before going for washroom
- Housekeeping staff manning the washrooms must insist that the candidates wash their hands before leaving the washroom.
- Drinking water management
- The practice of water dispenser will be discontinued
- Personal Water Bottles will be permitted at the table and should be brought by the candidate

### 10.2.3

#### Post Examination Controls

- **Candidate exit from examination centres**
- **On completion of exam, the candidates should be permitted to move out in an orderly manner – One candidate at a time.**
- **The gloves and masks should be disposed in a pedal push covered bin at the Examination Centre and outside the examination room/hall only**
- **Required distance will be maintained without crowding anywhere.**
- **Volunteers will be present along the exit path to ensure orderly movement of candidates.**
- **Managing refreshments for exam functionaries and observers**
  - Exam functionaries must bring their own food to the examination centres .
  - Refreshments are allowed only in designated areas and at scheduled times .
  - Refreshments are not permitted in rooms
  - Social Distancing norms must be maintained while having refreshments.
  - No disposable cutleries. Staff will be instructed to bring their own.
- **Maintain record of all exam functionaries**
  - Record of all exam functionaries will be maintained in the system for future reference and traceability
  - Invigilator records are maintained in the system through staff verification processes

*Name and number of other staff such as Housekeeping, Security Guards, etc. will be maintained in a separate digital format as provided by NTA by the Centre Superintendent. No signature will be needed.*