



INSTITUTIONAL POLICY: D4031

Safety, Health and Wellness

Category: Facilities, Health and Safety
Subject: Safety, Health and Wellness
Effective Date: May 15, 2025
Updated: November 7, 2025

1. Authority

COCA 5.3 (preaccred)

2. Background / Purpose:

The purpose of the NCOM Safety, Health, and Wellness Policy is to promote the health, safety, and well-being of all students, faculty, and staff. This policy identifies the authority and responsibility for the proper management of the college's health and safety program in accordance with applicable policies and regulatory requirements. This policy is valid for all NCOM students during their pre-clinical and clinical years.

3. Policy

3.1 The college will fully comply with federal and state laws and regulations and other applicable requirements relating to environmental health and safety. These laws, regulations, and requirements, as well as institutional policy, guide the development of institutional policies that will facilitate compliance. NCOM will consult with external agencies and regulatory bodies as appropriate.

3.1.1 Compliance with policies, procedures, guidelines, and applicable laws and regulations is the shared responsibility of all faculty, staff, and students.

3.1.2 Compliance Responsibility

All supervisors and employees will be responsible for assuring compliance with the applicable health and safety policies and procedures of NCOM. Responsibility for compliance will follow the administrative channels outlined below.

3.2 NCOM Operations

3.2.1 The Director of Operations will be responsible for:

- Identifying potentially hazardous conditions through regular inspections of the college facilities, including, but not limited to, laboratories, buildings, research facilities, classrooms, offices, and campus grounds.
- Developing safety procedures and guidelines to promote a safe work environment and to maintain compliance.
- Monitoring compliance with all applicable rules and procedures, guidelines, regulations, and laws on the campus.
- Assuring guidelines that promote good environmental stewardship.
- Providing timely and effective training of new employees.
- Decommissioning areas of the building when needed to ensure proper inactivation (i.e., disposal of biohazards and proper disposition/disposal of chemicals, radioisotopes, etc.) or areas of structural concern.
- Providing timely incident response.
- Assisting and advising departments to promote a safe work environment.
- Conducting audits and inspections.

3.2.2 The Director of Research will be responsible for:

- Safety of the laboratories and their environments

3.2.3 Department Chairs and other supervisors will be responsible for:

- Complying with policies, promoting and maintaining a culture of safety within the department/unit.
- Safety and environmental inspections pertinent to their department/division.
- Ensuring employees are aware of the health and safety policies.
- Monitoring and ensuring departmental compliance with applicable rules, procedures, guidelines, regulations, and laws.
- Identifying individuals who, by nature of their job function, are at risk of potential exposure to biological, chemical, physical, and radiological hazards.
- Monitoring and ensuring compliance with applicable programs and their related rules, regulations, policies, and procedures regarding safety and environment.

3.2.4 Employees, students, and visitors will be responsible for compliance with applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and guidelines as well as approved NCOM procedures.

3.2.5 Maintenance of Campus Facility

NCOM will ensure the facilities and landscaping will be maintained in a manner that minimizes hazardous conditions. NCOM will ensure its buildings, grounds and equipment are in compliance with all federal, state and local regulations as well as to ensure the safety of NCOM students, faculty, and staff.

3.3 Continuous Assessment

NCOM will develop a continuous assessment program to review how facilities are utilized in order to meet NCOM's mission and objectives. The purpose of the assessment will be to ensure

due diligence is always applied to safeguard the quality and stewardship of NCOM facilities to ensure safety of students, faculty, and staff..

3.4 Facilities Needs Assessment

NCOM will conduct an annual needs assessment of its facilities that will ask faculty, staff, and students to assess how the facilities are meeting their educational and operational needs. Results from the assessment will be used to make improvements or additions to NCOM's facility and grounds.

3.5 Campus Access and Safety

All NCOM students, faculty, and staff are responsible for campus safety. The campus will be available for student access during announced times. The NCOM campus will be open to the public during normal hours of operation (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday)

3.5.1 All faculty, staff, and students will be required to badge into the building to gain access. Students will receive an NCOM student photo identification badge at matriculation, which will be used for identification and access privileges. The identification badges will need to be worn/displayed in plain sight by students, faculty, and staff at all times when on campus and on clinical rotations. The badge will be used to access the campus building during approved hours. Students, faculty, and staff will be required to badge entry into the buildings individually.

3.5.2 Students, faculty, and staff who have lost or forgotten their badge will be asked to go to security to obtain a temporary access badge. Lost or stolen badges will need to be reported to security immediately to ensure deactivation for security reasons.

3.5.3 NCOM will have an extensive security camera system within the facility. The cameras will monitor the activity in and around all areas of the campus, both internally and externally. The CCTV will provide real-time closed-circuit streaming to NCOM security.

3.5.4 Campus safety will be on duty during public hours and on evenings and weekends while the building is open to students and is available for general security and security issues. Campus Security will be available to escort students to their parked cars after dark if a student feels the need for additional security.

3.6 Inclement Weather

NCOM will notify students, faculty and staff of delays and cancellations of classes due to emergency weather, and other emergency situations through various means. Notifications will be through a mass notification system, which will utilize mass texts, email, and social media. These messages will be the only official sources used to report NCOM closings. NCOM may inform local TV and radio stations regarding campus closures. When NCOM announces the closure of the campus, students will not have access to the building.

3.6.1 Class rescheduling due to closure or delays will be announced via email. Students will need to check their email to ensure all email notifications from NCOM can be received.

3.7 Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Evacuation Procedures

NCOM has developed an emergency preparedness, response, and evacuation [plan](#) to ensure the protection of life and safety for its students, faculty, and staff.

3.7.1 For events that can be anticipated, such as hurricanes to any other emergency crisis, a meeting will be scheduled as far in advance as possible, and will include the Dean/CAO and relevant parties to discuss the projected event and the plan to ensure the safety of all.

3.7.2 NCOM will review and update the plan and coordinate tests of emergency response and evacuation procedures at least annually. These tests may be announced or unannounced and will evaluate the campus' response. Test will include drills, exercises and follow-through activities to view the test. Documentation for the tests will be maintained and will include a description of the exercise, date, time and whether it was announced or unannounced.

3.7.3 Tests of the emergency notification system will also be performed. The testing frequency will vary depending on what mode of communication needs to be tested. All tests of components of the emergency notification system will be identified as test messages.

3.7.4 Pertinent follow up information will be disseminated to all students, faculty, and staff as soon as it is available.

3.8 Mass Notification

NCOM will use mass notification system to inform students and employees. This system will broadcast alerts to all registered individuals. These alerts will appear on personal devices, on electronic displays in the NCOM building, and on the website.

3.9 Fire Safety

As part of NCOM's fire safety procedures, students, faculty, and staff will be provided building evacuation maps. These will be provided to all new employees upon hire and to students at orientation. These will also be provided on an annual basis. These maps will include the features of the building, including exits and stairways, and outline the evacuation route to be followed depending on where they are in the building.

3.9.1 Fire alarms can be sounded for many different reasons, including an actual fire, an intentional activation, an accident during cleaning, smoke or steam of any type, or a defective detector.

3.9.2 NCOM will also conduct periodic fire drills to ensure that all building occupants understand the emergency exit process. It is important to evacuate the building during a fire alarm, regardless of the cause. No one may re-enter the building after an alarm is sounded until the "all clear" has been sounded by the Director of Facilities or by appointed emergency personnel.

3.9.3 In the event the fire alarm sounds, students shall proceed immediately to the nearest exit or stairwell leading to an exit to egress the building. Students, faculty, and staff should become familiar with the site-specific fire plans. Building occupants shall proceed at a walking (not running) pace and use caution to avoid injury to other persons when

exiting. Building occupants should proceed to the designated outdoor safe zones and refrain from leaving until individuals are properly accounted as safely exiting the building.

3.10 Firearms and Weapons

NCOM property is considered private property; therefore, students, faculty, staff, and visitors are prohibited from carrying, maintaining, or storing a firearm or weapon on campus, at any NCOM clinical sites, in surrounding parking lots, and in space owned or leased by NCOM. Any visitor or other third party attending an event or visiting an academic or administrative office is prohibited from carrying, maintaining, or storing a firearm or weapon in any college facility, even if the owner has a valid permit. This prohibition also applies to all events on campus where people congregate in any public or outdoor areas. Students, faculty, and staff who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension, dismissal, or termination.

3.11 Tobacco, Nicotine and Vape-Free Campus

NCOM is committed to creating and maintaining a healthy and sustainable environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. As such, NCOM prohibits the use of all tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, and nicotine or non-nicotine vape products (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, vape pens, hookahs, blunts, pipes, snuff, and any other tobacco or vape related product) on campus.

3.11.1 The sale of tobacco products, electronic nicotine delivery systems, and nicotine or non-nicotine vape products are prohibited on campus.

3.12 Alcohol and Drug-Free Campus

The consumption of alcohol is not permitted in the NCOM building. Use of any drugs other than those prescribed to the individual in the NCOM building is also not permitted. Students, faculty, and staff who appear intoxicated or under the influence of illegal drugs at NCOM may be required to submit to testing. When such testing occurs, this will be done through the Associate Dean for Student Services (if a student) or through Human Resources (if an employee).

3.13 Protection from Discrimination, Harassment, and Violence

All faculty, staff and students have the right to protection from discrimination, harassment, and violence. Specific and separate policies to support each of these protections are present in the employee and student handbooks, as well as online.

3.14 Environmental and Occupational Exposure and Universal Precautions

NCOM will provide students with education on methods to prevent exposure to communicable diseases, including the following:

- Standard precautions in handling bloody/body fluids with gowns, gloves, and eye protection.
- Using engineering controls by placing sharps in containers and using red bags for infectious waste.

- Using workplace controls consistent with the clinical training site's policies and procedures.
- Hepatitis B vaccines.
- Completing all lab procedures in an appropriate manner so as not to splatter or spill body fluids.
- Not eating or drinking in environments where exposure is present.
- Not handling contact lenses in a contaminated environment.
- Appropriate hand washing.
- Occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens may occur as an accident (needle sticks, bites, ocular exposure, chapped skin, etc.). When this exposure occurs, it should be reported immediately to the supervisor present so appropriate measures can be instituted.

Students, as future physicians, should consider the safety of the patient first and foremost and act accordingly. Students should be aware that the occupation of a physician, as well as a student in training, exposes the student to many infectious diseases. Practicing universal precautions is the student's method of preventing infectious disease, and NCOM is not liable for any infectious disease contracted during patient care.

3.15 Pregnancy, Allergies, and Student Participation in Special Environments

Some of the education at NCOM will take place in special environments, such as research labs and clinical facilities that may contain hazardous physical and chemical environments. Working and studying in these special environments may require the student to make an informed decision concerning participation in the laboratory events.

3.15.1 Students who are pregnant, sensitive to certain chemicals, have allergies, or are immunocompromised should discuss this with the Associate Dean for Student Services as soon as possible. The Associate Dean for Student Services will work with appropriate parties to ensure reasonable accommodations may be provided as needed.

3.16 Body Fluid and Needle Sticks

Incidents involving needle sticks and exposure to body fluids or potential blood-borne pathogens require immediate action to protect faculty, staff, and student health and safety. If a faculty, staff, or student sustains a needle stick or is exposed to infectious materials, they should immediately wash the affected area with soap and water. If the exposure involves the eyes or mucous membranes, they should be immediately flushed with copious amounts of water. Following irrigation of the affected area, the exposure should be immediately reported to the supervisor, appropriate faculty, or clinical supervisor.

3.16.1 The supervisor should complete an incident report, and the supervisor will provide additional guidance to the faculty, staff, or student. All faculty, staff, and students involved in occupational exposure must seek medical attention to ensure that appropriate medical care relating to the exposure is provided. This medical follow-up is time-sensitive and must occur within 2 hours if the exposure involves a known HIV-positive source or within 4-6 hours for all other exposures. A medical evaluation after an exposure must occur in a professional setting and involves the establishment of a formal doctor-patient relationship and generation of a medical record that can

be utilized by the student and their physician in any subsequent or follow up care that is required. This is protected health information and should not be submitted or reported to NCOM.

3.16.2 All NCOM students are required to carry medical insurance to cover the expense of such an unlikely event and provide coverage for the laboratory testing and prophylactic medications that may be required.

3.17 Infectious Disease Prevention

Students are required to obtain and to provide the required documentation indicating that they do not have conditions that would endanger the health and well-being of patients or colleagues at the time of application and throughout enrollment. Students must also be able to demonstrate that their health and abilities will enable them to meet the *Technical Standards* of the program. As a part of these requirements, all osteopathic medical students, just as physicians in practice, are required to have a physical examination prior to matriculation and must be current with required immunizations prior to matriculation and throughout their enrollment. Specific requirements are listed in the admissions and continued enrollment policy.

3.17.1 Faculty, staff, and students may be required to receive certain annual vaccines (i.e., influenza and COVID-19) to prevent infectious disease spread on campus or in the clinical setting. When such requirements are set forth by NCOM, students who do not participate may be suspended to ensure safety of the campus-wide population.

3.17.2 Students should report any illness or restriction prohibiting participation in immunizations or inability to meet the *Technical Standards* for Admission and Continued Enrollment in advance of enrollment to ensure that students can meet the *Technical Standards*.

3.18 Student Health Insurance

NCOM students are required to have personal health insurance for the duration of their enrollment at NCOM. Students can have insurance through a variety of options including insurance through themselves, parents, spouses, or health exchanges.

3.19 Prevention Education for Faculty, Staff, and Students

NCOM informs faculty, staff, and students about campus security procedures and practices and encourages students to be responsible for their own security and the security of others on an annual basis. At the beginning of each academic year, students will be directed to review NCOM's safety and security policies and procedures. These are provided to all first-year students at orientation.

3.19.1 In addition, all new students will be required as part of their matriculation requirements to complete compliance modules relating to Safety, Health, and Wellness. These modules will be made available online

3.20 Prevention Education for Faculty and Staff

NCOM will inform all faculty and staff about campus security procedures and practices at the time of hire and annually thereafter. At the beginning of each academic year, NCOM will direct all faculty and staff to review NCOM's safety and security policies and procedures.

3.21 Student, Faculty, and Staff Mental Health and Wellness and Fatigue Mitigation

NCOM is committed to the mental health and wellness as well as the fatigue mitigation of its students, faculty, and staff. It is the policy of NCOM to direct the following activities in the pursuit of improving mental health and wellness as well as fatigue mitigation for its students, faculty, and staff:

3.21.1 For Students:

- 24/7 access to mental health Counseling.
- 24/7 access to physical health services.
- Open spaces on academic calendar during pre-clinical years
- Work hour (duty hour) limits during clinical rotations
- Wellness education integrated into the curriculum
- Scheduled vacation time each year
- Green space on campus
- Lounges, mothers' room, spiritual room, and other spaces to promote wellness
- Encouragement to use stairs while on and off campus
- Accommodations for mental and/or physical breaks in all NCOM-related activities as deemed appropriate.
- Aesthetic learning environment
- Garden on Campus
- Security on Campus
- Selected health and wellness initiatives and events
- Accommodation for service animals.

3.21.2 For Faculty and Staff:

- 24/7 access to mental health counseling
- 24/7 access to physical health services
- Generous paid time off and flexible time off, as well as other benefits
- Green space on campus
- Lounges, mothers' room, spiritual room, and other spaces to promote wellness
- Encouragement to use stairs while on and off campus
- Accommodation for mental and/or physical breaks in all NCOM-related activities as deemed appropriate.
- Aesthetic working environment
- Private lounges for faculty and staff
- Garden on Campus
- Security on Campus
- Selected health and wellness initiatives and events
- Accommodation for service animals.

Signed by:



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Dean/CAO