



University of Nevada, Reno

January 20, 2021

Jacob LaFrance  
District Manager Northern Nevada  
Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
4600 Kietzke Lane, Building F-153  
Reno, NV 89502

**SUBJECT:** Investigation of Employee Illness and Hospitalization

Dear Mr. LaFrance,

The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) Facilities Services Department and the Environmental Health and Safety Department have completed the investigation of the employee illness and hospitalization due to possible exposure to SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) at the William Pennington Student Achievement Center (PSAC). This investigation was requested by the OSHA inquiry letter (UPA No. 1719439) dated January 13, 2021. The results of the investigation are summarized below.

#### Background

The affected employee, [REDACTED], worked in the UNR Facilities Services Department from 09/14/20 to 11/07/20. During that time, [REDACTED] responsibilities included disinfecting rooms and common areas. [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] commutes to and from work alone in [REDACTED] personal vehicle. [REDACTED] stated that [REDACTED] has been adhering to community COVID-19 precautions, including showering when [REDACTED] returns home after work.

#### Training

[REDACTED] completed training on all areas of responsibility pertinent to [REDACTED] assigned duties, to include: General COVID-19 Training for University Personnel, COVID-19 work procedures and use of disinfectants and equipment, use of personal protective equipment, Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure, Hazard Communication and Chemical Safety, and other workplace safety topics. [REDACTED] training records are enclosed (Enclosure #1).

#### Timeline of Alleged Occupational COVID-19 Exposure and Illness

On 11/3/20, [REDACTED] was assigned to disinfect the reception area in PSAC room 405. A picture of this area is enclosed (Enclosure #2). This assignment was in response to a work order requesting that the room be disinfecting due to an individual who reportedly had tested positive for COVID-19 having been in the room. The alleged COVID-19 positive individual was last in PSAC 405 on 10/28/20, which was six days prior to [REDACTED] disinfecting the area. [REDACTED] also disinfecting other areas in the PSAC at the request of a building occupant. These additional areas were not reported to have been occupied by COVID-19 positive individuals. [REDACTED] indicated that [REDACTED] wore a face cover and disposable gloves when disinfecting PSAC 405 and other areas in the building.

On 11/05/20, [REDACTED] reported to work as assigned, but at 12:30 p.m., [REDACTED] notified [REDACTED] supervisor that [REDACTED] had a "minor sore throat." Although [REDACTED] suggested [REDACTED] symptoms were due to a cold and insisted

#### **Environmental Health & Safety**

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that [REDACTED] could continue working, in keeping with UNR COVID-19 procedures, the supervisor instructed [REDACTED] to go home on sick leave. [REDACTED] stayed home on sick leave through 11/07/20, which was [REDACTED] last day at the University before retirement. [REDACTED] notified [REDACTED] supervisor on 11/09/20, that [REDACTED] had tested positive for COVID-19, and that [REDACTED] thought that [REDACTED] became infected while disinfecting the PSAC room 405 reception area on 11/03/20.

#### Reporting of COVID-19 Illness

[REDACTED] submitted a Workers' Compensation C-1 Form, "Notice of Injury of Occupational Illness", on 01/07/21. Additionally, [REDACTED] submitted a "Reporting Form for Confirmed Cases of COVID-19", as required by University Covid-19 reporting procedures. On the Reporting Form [REDACTED] indicated that [REDACTED] felt that contracted COVID-19 when disinfecting the PSAC because [REDACTED] had previously disinfected common areas in campus building for many weeks without becoming infected. [REDACTED] indicated that [REDACTED] did not have contact with anyone who was COVID-19 positive, and that [REDACTED] did not have prolonged contact within 6-feet of anyone without wearing PPE. [REDACTED] was not aware of any coworkers who had been diagnosed with COVID-19. [REDACTED] stated that [REDACTED] took breaks in a room that was generally empty, but that on occasion there were coworkers in the break room. [REDACTED] stated that [REDACTED] wore a face cover and rubber gloves when disinfecting areas in the PSAC.

#### Summary

After review of the circumstances of [REDACTED] work assignment in the PSAC and [REDACTED] written report, it was determined that the evidence does not support [REDACTED] claim that [REDACTED] contracted COVID-19 at work.

1. There were six days between when the alleged COVID-19 positive individual was last in PSAC 405 and when [REDACTED] disinfected the area. Information from the CDC suggests that SARS-CoV-2 can survive on certain types of surfaces, such as plastic and stainless steel, for 2-3 days. The six-day time period makes it unlikely that viable virus would have been present when [REDACTED] disinfected PSAC 405.
2. [REDACTED] had been trained on proper procedures for performing cleaning and disinfection, including use proper personal protective equipment.
3. [REDACTED] wore a face cover and disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting inside the PSAC.
4. There were no reports of other COVID-19 positive individuals in [REDACTED] work group, or of COVID-19 positive individuals who worked in the PSAC, other than the one alleged individual.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact either me at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Best Regards,

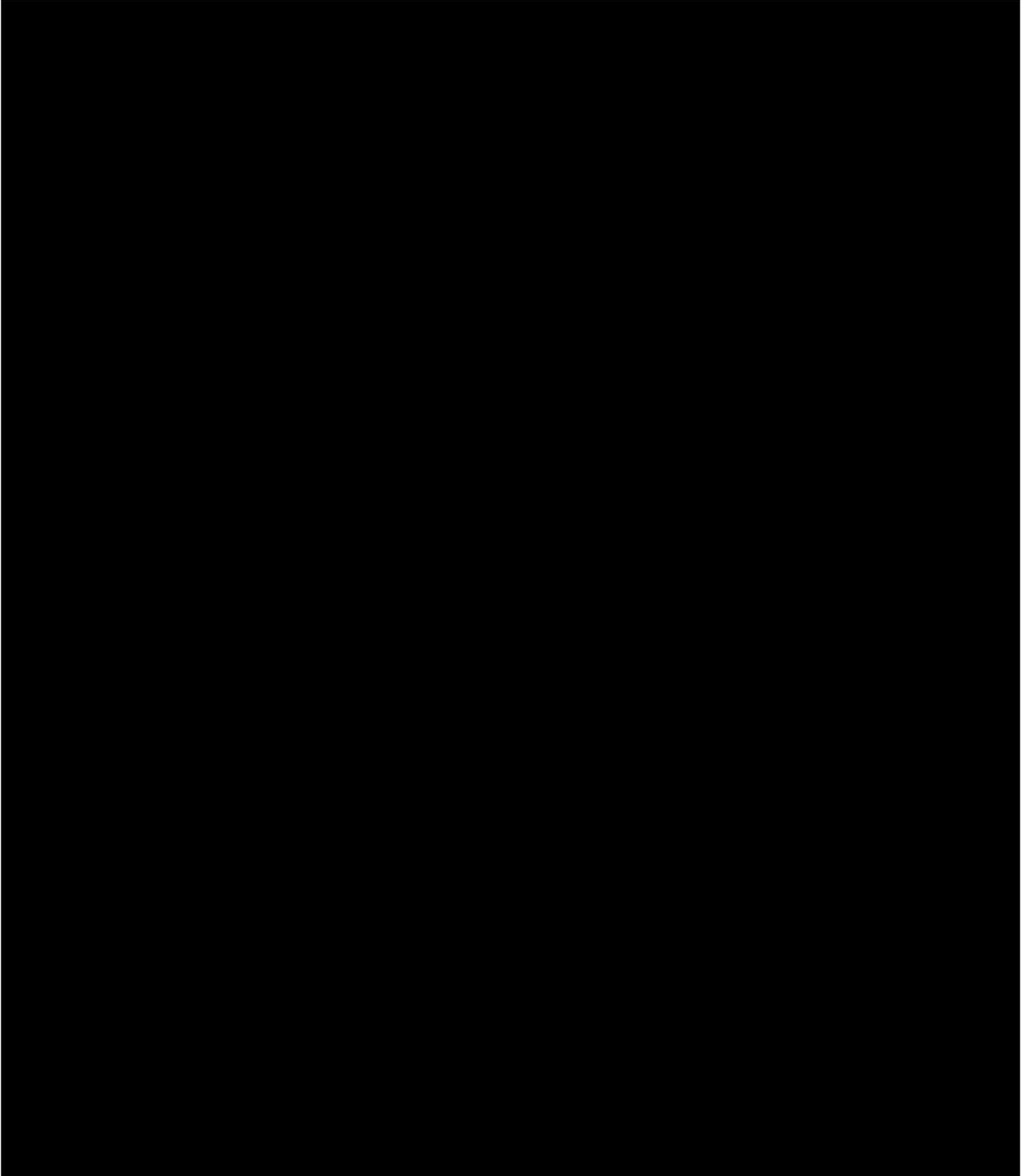


Stephanie Woolf, Director  
Environmental Health and Safety

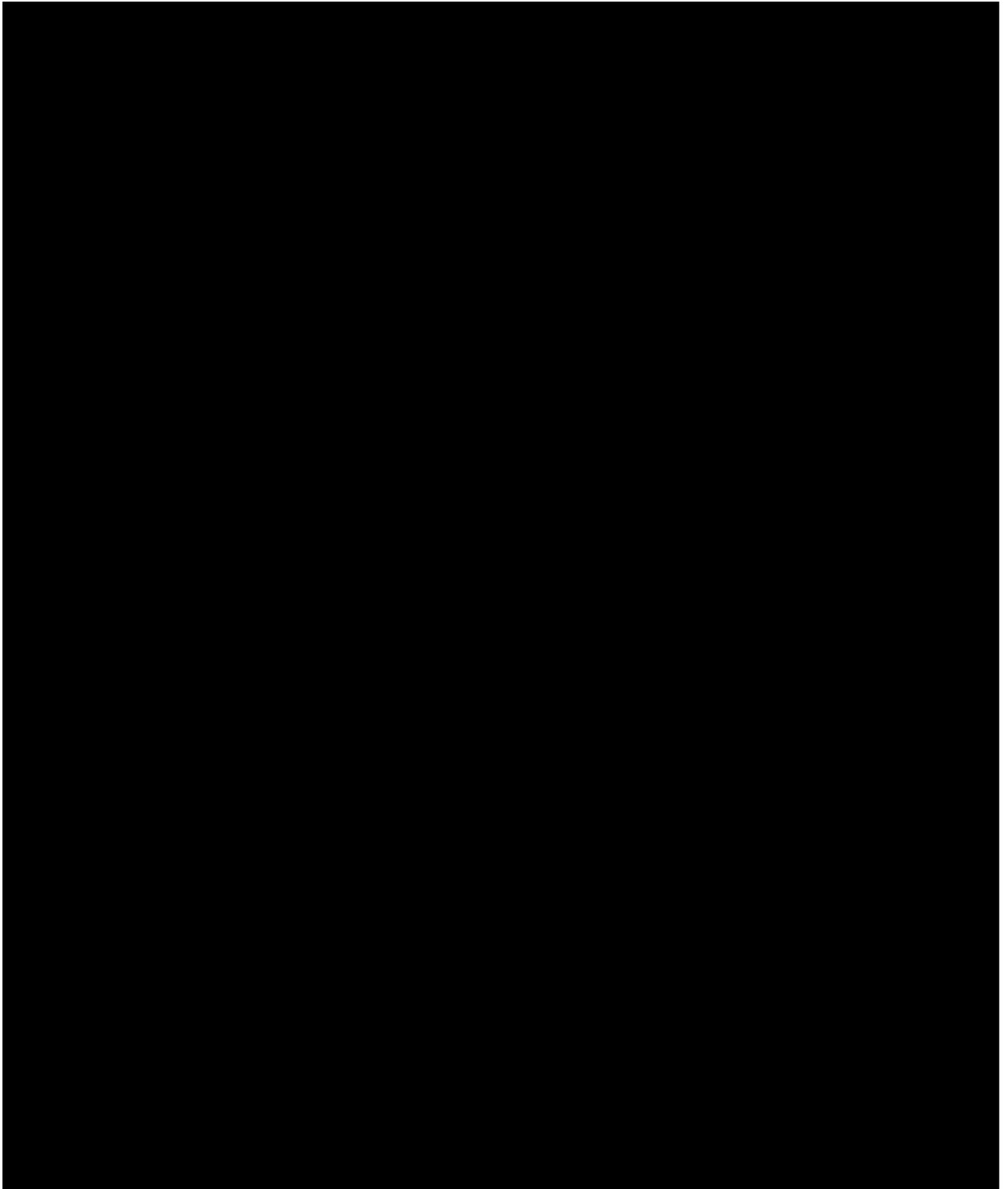
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**Enclosure 1**  
**Training Records and Certificates for [REDACTED]**

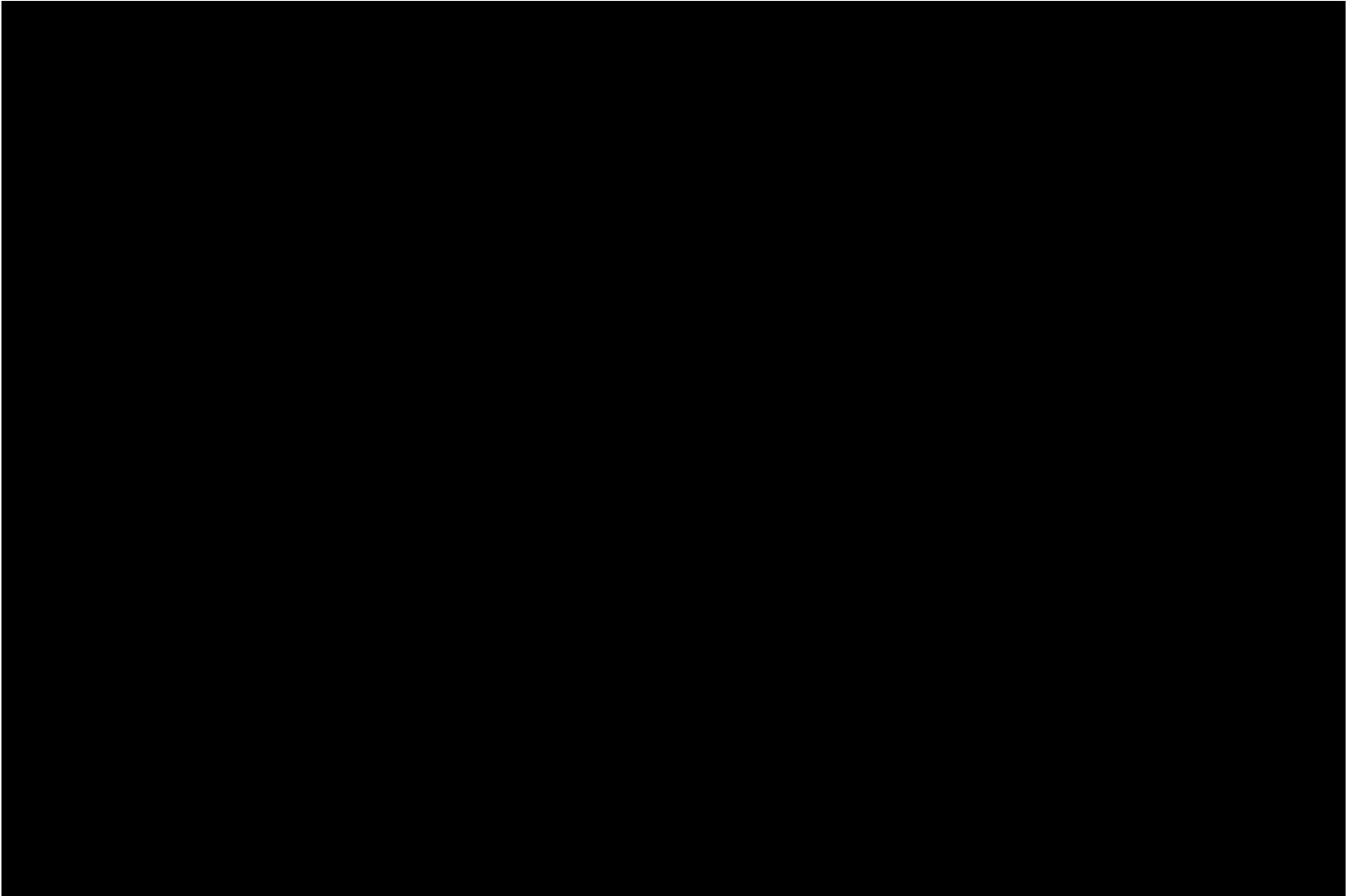
**Record of Completion of General COVID-19 Training [REDACTED]**



**Job-Specific Training Records and Certificates for [REDACTED]**



Training Certificates of Completion for [REDACTED]



## Enclosure 2

Photo of William Pennington Student Achievement Center, Room 405

