



Boston University School of Public Health Career Services and Job Search FAQ's RELATED TO COVID-19 (Updated Spring 2021)

1. Is the Career and Practicum Office open?

Yes, we are open but operating remotely. We are still conducting our regular services through phone calls, video chat and email. Per President Brown's message, the University is open and business functions will continue.

2. How do I set up an appointment?

As usual, appointments can be made through our office email at sphcareeroffice@bu.edu.

3. Will I get an appointment soon?

We do not anticipate a delay in setting up an appointment at this time. We will make every effort to accommodate your request. These appointments will be by phone call, video chat or email. Additionally, please log into our "[Advisor-On-Call](#)" for time-sensitive needs.

4. Are you hosting any in person events?

No, all of our events are virtual. All event information can be found in Handshake.

5. How do I get a resume and cover letter critiqued?

We will still be offering resume and cover letter critiques. Please email your materials as Word documents to our office inbox at sphcareeroffice@bu.edu.

6. How do I set up a mock interview?

For interview preparation, BU has a license for "**Big Interview**" <https://bu.biginterview.com/>. This software simulates many different types of interviews and allows you to tape your session and send it to a career counselor.

Mock interviews are also available by phone or video chat. Please contact the office inbox at sphcareeroffice@bu.edu.

7. Can I drop into the Career and Practicum office?

No. Our office in Talbot is closed for in-person appointments.

8. How long will this remote situation last?

The situation is fluid. We will be following the University's guidelines.

9. What if I need help with medical school or fellowship applications?

Please email Maria McCarthy at mamcc@bu.edu.

10. Is Career PREP still mandatory?

Yes, Career PREP is still a requirement for the MPH program and is following the LfA guidelines as with other SPH courses.

11. What if I have issues with Handshake?

Please contact Justine de Marrais at justined@bu.edu for assistance.

12. How will the Career and Practicum office communicate with us?

The office's formal communications include our weekly newsletter, website and individual emails. Please follow Handshake for current job, internship and practicum opportunities.

13. How do I get a Career question answered?

Please email the office inbox at sphcareerooffice@bu.edu. For practicum related questions, contact sphpract@bu.edu.

14. Will you be doing any career workshops?

Career workshops will be done remotely. Check Handshake for details.

15. How do I network with employers and alums?

While opportunities for in-person networking is limited, we are finding that virtual networking is happening easily, especially via Zoom!

16. What is the Career & Practicum Office hearing about hiring from employers? Should we be worried?

While we saw a decline in job and internship postings through spring and summer 2020, we have seen the job market for public health candidates begin to bounce back in fall 2020. Many opportunities are supporting population health needs as they relate to COVID-19, such as project management, research, communications, and data collection/analysis roles. That being said, these are uncertain times and we still anticipate some changes and delays. We are closely monitoring the job and internship market via national town halls, following industry news and job boards, and surveying our employers and alumni.

17. Should I still be applying to positions, or should I hold off? Are there other strategies I should be using during this uncertain time?

These are uncharted waters, and while one organization may have put their hiring on hold, another organization may be actively seeking positions and hoping to hire quickly. If you see a "live" posting, apply for it. If you are able to tap a networking contact, such as an alumna, to inquire about a posting, you should send them a message. Regarding networking, please be

patient. People are working and living in uncertain times. In these messages, it's always good to acknowledge that they may be experiencing changes to their work and home life routines, and that you understand if it is better to connect at a later date. For example, sharing that you hope they are doing well, and are staying healthy and safe during these unprecedented times. If you don't hear back, it may mean that the person is unable to help at this time.

A key strategy may also be to mention that you are available to start a position in the spring (or other time frame), and give 2 or 3 examples of where you could be of value. For example, you may want to TAILOR some of these general ideas below to what you anticipate your target organization would likely need:

- Researching evidence-based emergency response strategies and policies
- Drafting new policies for employees, clients, patients, or other stakeholder groups
- Developing communication plans and/or materials targeting employees, clients, patients, or other stakeholder groups
- Developing tracking systems to capture important data needed for reporting and/or analysis
- Creating new processes and tools that may help to increase access to services, information, etc.
- Supporting the development of contingency plans related to supply chain disruption
- Analyzing "what-if" scenarios as organizations plan for the short and long term

Note: Most conversations -- and interviews -- will take place via phone or video chat. This is both BEFORE AND AFTER you land a practicum or job while we're in the "COVID-19 environment". See tips here for job searching and working remotely:

- <https://www.atriumstaff.com/5-tips-for-job-searching-during-coronavirus/>
- <https://lambdaschool.com/the-commons/how-to-navigate-your-job-search-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>
- <https://www.vault.com/blogs/workplace-issues/how-to-master-working-remotely>

18. Is it okay to ask for an informational interview at this time?

As with networking in general, please be patient. People are working and living in uncertain times. In these messages, it's always good to acknowledge that they may be experiencing changes to their work and home life routines, and that you understand if it may be better to connect at a later date. For example, sharing that you hope they are doing well, and are staying healthy and safe during these unprecedented times. If you don't hear back, it may mean that the person is unable to help at this time.

19. I interviewed for a job, but have not heard back, what should I do?

This question is common, even during "normal" times. Some sectors and organizations move more slowly than others. And, unfortunately, many organizations do not have the resources to follow up with every candidate who interviewed for their opening. If you have a personal or professional networking contact there, it can be helpful to ask them for an update. Some Human

Resources departments are open to receiving a follow-up call or email. While you may try that route, do not take it personally if you don't receive a response. Please don't hesitate to reach out to the Career & Practicum Office to discuss.

20. I applied to a few jobs, but have not heard back, what should I do?

This question is common, even during "normal" times. Some sectors and organizations move more slowly than others. And, unfortunately, many organizations do not have the resources to follow up with every candidate who applies to their open positions. If you have a personal or professional networking contact there, it can be helpful to ask them for an update. Some Human Resources departments are open to receiving a follow-up call or email. While you may try that route, do not take it personally if you don't receive a response. Please don't hesitate to reach out to the Career & Practicum Office to discuss.

21. I received a job offer, but due to COVID-19 it has been placed on hold -- now what do I do?

The situation may vary from organization to organization as they internally begin to deal with the pandemic. In situations like this it is best to contact the Career & Practicum Office to discuss your situation.

22. I am an international student and am worried about my job search since I do need visa sponsorship. Are there any specific strategies I can use during this time to better my chances of landing a job?

Yes, we recommend [additional job different strategies](#) during this challenging time.

23. My anxiety level is high? Who should I contact?

It is normal to feel a bit of anxiety during your job or practicum search during normal times. It is also normal to feel more anxious with a lot of uncertainty. The Career and Practicum office is here to answer questions regarding anxiety over job and practicum search, interviewing, salary negotiation. For additional behavioral health support, please contact the BU Behavioral Services at 617-353-3569.