

OVERVIEW: This checklist is intended to aid work unit planning to return to work. This checklist works through the following phases of the Penn State Return to Work process to minimize potential disruptions and to promote the safety of personnel returning to work. Please [contact EHS](#) with any questions.

- [Planning – Assess of Work Activities that must be Conducted On-Campus](#)
- [Prepare – Evaluate In-Person Activities and Prepare Strategies to Promote Worker Safety](#)
- [“ORANGE” Phase – Initial Set-up and Re-configuration of Work Areas \(if required\)](#)
- [“YELLOW” Phase – Approved Personnel Return to Work](#)

INSTRUCTIONS: Work units returning to work on campus must:

- Use this Return to Work Planning Guide and Checklist as a resource to prepare to return to work.
- Review and complete the University’s [Return to Workplace](#) authorization process.
- Submit Pandemic-related Supply orders with General Stores via [Penn State eBuy](#).

PLANNING

Familiarize yourself with the following COVID-19 return to work protocol to promote a safe work environment for your returning staff as well as staff that are continuing to telecommute to promote physical distancing.

ITEM	Complete	N/A	Notes
Review and become familiar with the following COVID-19 return to work procedures and resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penn State Coronavirus website • EHS COVID-19 Website for safety procedures and listing of available services • Employee Guidelines for Working on Campus • COVID-19 Supervisor Instructions for assessing and reporting suspected COVID-19 cases • Cloth Mask guidance for universal masking • Cleaning Guidelines 			
Prepare a list of Return to Work Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What must be done onsite / in-person? • What can be done via telecommute? • Are there retail or services provided to the public? 			
Return to “RED” Phase Preparedness			
Anticipate that you may need to quickly ramp down operations if local conditions change. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review past efforts to ramp down operations at start of working remotely • Consider delaying harder to ramp down operations for first few weeks to assess potential for COVID-19 resurgence. 			

RETURN TO WORKPLACE PLANNING GUIDE AND CHECKLIST

ITEM	Complete	N/A	Notes
Identify the following for the Work Activities that must be conducted onsite.			
Places / Space Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where do these activities occur? • Is this a single location or does the work require multiple locations and work stations? 			
People: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is required to complete these in-person work activities? • What is the minimum number of people required to support in-person operations at any one time? 			
Equipment and Operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the critical in-person operations? • What equipment is required? Are these single user or shared? • What critical supplies are needed to support these operations? • Are there vendors and supply chain issues that need to be re-activated? 			
Return to Work Registration Authorization Process			
Official University Return to Work Authorization: This tool is a planning guide to help work units prepare for return to work operations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once plans are ready, review and complete the University's Return to Workplace authorization process to obtain approval from University leadership. 			
Space Re-Occupancy Registration: Contact your Facility Coordinator to complete the online Space Re-Occupancy form once approved by the Unit Executive (e.g., Dean, Vice President, Vice Chancellor) as outlined in the Return to Workplace authorization process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most buildings have been closed with limited or no custodial services as well as maintained in an energy set back mode. • Facility ramp-up period may take up to 2-weeks for full re-activation. Workforce cannot return until facility is officially re-opened by OPP or Campus Maintenance. 			

RETURN TO WORKPLACE PLANNING GUIDE AND CHECKLIST

PREPARE

Evaluate the intended in-person activities and prepare strategies to promote worker safety.

ITEM	Complete	N/A	Notes
People Considerations			
Staffing Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify staff need to help set-up work space prior to larger workforce return Identify workforce with in-person operational expectations but confirm activities acceptable to continue to telecommute. Staff can split time between in-person and telecommuting. Identify staff who can continue to primarily telecommute. 			
Physical Distancing Principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain 6 feet of physical distancing. How many people should work in an area per shift to maintain 6 feet physical distancing? Determine need to stagger work shifts / breaks. 			
Avoid Working Alone: Consider the following criteria for working alone when assessing staffing levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What work can safely be conducted alone? What work supports having a virtual buddy? What must be postponed due to a high risk of injury or other incidents? 			
Places / Space Considerations			
Offices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telecommuting should be continued for anyone not requiring direct access to in-person work activities. Identify strategy to reconfigure shared offices or stagger work shifts to align with physical distancing. 			
Meeting Rooms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings should be done virtually whenever possible. If in-person meetings are mandatory to directly support in-person work activities, limit meetings to less than 10 people. Identify strategy to reconfigure rooms to align with physical distancing principles. 			
Common Areas / Break Rooms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify strategy to reconfigure break rooms to align with physical distancing principles Encourage staff to find alternative areas for breaks and prevent people from gathering in common areas as much as possible 			

RETURN TO WORKPLACE PLANNING GUIDE AND CHECKLIST

ITEM	Complete	N/A	Notes
<p>Shops and Other Work Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify strategy to reconfigure work areas to align with physical distancing principles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Maintain minimum 6 feet of physical distancing (b) Avoid using both sides of shared benches (e.g., minimize face-to-face) • A combination of space reconfiguration and/or staggering work shifts may be required to maintain physical distancing. 			
<p>Retail and other Services for the Public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups that provide retail or other services to public have additional requirements mandated by the PA Department of Health • Identify strategy to address requirements outlined by the PA Department of Health 			
Equipment and Operational Considerations			
<p>Pandemic Supplies: Determine quantities of pandemic supplies needed by staff and prepare order with Penn State General Stores via eBuy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloth Masks: 2 per person • Disinfectants: Work units need to provide disinfectants for shared work spaces/areas • Hand sanitizer: Provide hand sanitizer if work activities are not located in areas with access to restrooms for regular hand washing. 			
<p>Work Unit Disinfection Plan: OPP or campus maintenance is cleaning public and common areas. Develop cleaning protocol and schedule to disinfect high touch surfaces and shared equipment. Guidance available on EHS website.</p>			
<p>Supply Chain: Prepare for supply chain disruptions and limited availability of materials. Suppliers may still be under stay-at-home orders or manufacturing may not have ramped up to meet critical order supplies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm loading dock operations are available before ordering materials 			
<p>Equipment: Discourage sharing of tools and equipment as much as possible. Stagger shifts if possible for high use shared equipment. Establish disinfection protocols between uses</p>			
<p>Vehicles: Require only one person per vehicle as much as possible</p>			

RETURN TO WORKPLACE PLANNING GUIDE AND CHECKLIST

“ORANGE” PHASE: INITIAL SET-UP AND RECONFIGURATION OF SPACES (IF REQUIRED)

The “ORANGE” phase is used as a buffer period to prepare the work spaces before the larger workforce should return to the campus.

ITEM	Complete	N/A	Notes
People			
Staffing Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm only Approved Personnel are supporting set-up of the work space 			
COVID-19 Pandemic Supplies: Obtain and distribute supplies for workers returning to campus. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloth Masks: 2 per person • Disinfectants: Work units need to provide disinfectants for shared workspaces/areas • Hand sanitizer: Provide hand sanitizer if work activities are not located in areas with access to restrooms for regular hand washing. 			
Workspace Planning and Reconfiguration			
De-Clutter and Discard Unwanted Material where possible to facilitate the ease of cleaning and disinfection of the work space by staff.			
Offices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement previously identified strategy to reconfigure shared offices or stagger work shifts to align with physical distancing principles 			
Shops and Other Work areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement previous identified strategy to reconfigure work areas to align with physical distancing principles • Avoid using both sides of shared benches (e.g., minimize face-to-face) • Re-locate work stations and shared equipment as appropriate 			
Meeting Rooms / Common Areas / Break Rooms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement previously identified strategy to reconfigure break rooms to align with physical distancing principles • Remove excess chairs and reconfigure seating as appropriate 			

RETURN TO WORKPLACE PLANNING GUIDE AND CHECKLIST

“YELLOW” PHASE: APPROVED PERSONNEL RETURN TO WORK

Once the “ORANGE” phase work activities from the Work Unit have been completed AND the building services have been restored by the Office of Physical Plant, Approved Personnel may return to work.

ITEM	Complete	N/A	Notes
People			
Staffing Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm only Approved Personnel are returning to work at this time. 			
Pandemic-related Supplies: Obtain and distribute preliminary stocks to workers returning to campus. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloth Masks: 2 per person • Disinfectants: Work units need to provide disinfectants for shared work spaces/areas • Hand sanitizer: Provide hand sanitizer if work activities are not located in areas with access to restrooms for regular hand washing. 			
Supervisor Training – Hold virtual meetings with supervisors coming on duty with focus on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandating physical distancing protocols. • Enforcing the use of cloth masks as per university protocol. • Cleaning common areas that are shared. 			
Employee Training - Hold virtual meetings with returning employees to review the Work Unit’s COVID-19 plan implementation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Employee Guidelines for Working on Campus and Cloth Mask guidance for universal masking. 			
Cloth Mask and PPE: Distribute and review the cloth mask expectations with staff as well as other PPE requirements as part of normal work operations.			
Physical Distancing: Review the workforce plan to maintain physical distancing with staff. Staggered work shifts and break periods. Review space re-configuring plans and expectations for offices, work areas, break rooms and meeting areas.			
Avoid Working Alone: Review the working alone criteria and expectations with staff.			
Work Unit Disinfection Plan: Review the cleaning protocol and schedule to disinfect high touch surfaces and shared equipment with staff.			