

Managing Through COVID-19: Returning to Campus

Manager Guide



UNIVERSITY
HUMAN RESOURCES



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Introduction

In April, Governor Larry Hogan unveiled his plan for a safe, effective, and gradual approach to reopening public life and the economy of Maryland. The state is now entering the second phase of Hogan's three-phase plan, outlined in his ["Maryland Strong Roadmap for Recovery."](#)

Since the state and USM have agreed to begin planning for reopening, the university leadership team has begun making plans for a safe and gradual process for the resumption of on-campus operations. There will not be a single date for the full reopening of the physical campus; the campus plan will be guided by public health expertise.

This guide has been developed to assist the community's return to campus.

Our knowledge and understanding of the virus that causes COVID-19 continues to evolve, and our plans and procedures will be updated as more information becomes available.

Approval Process for Returning Employees to On-Campus Work

Important Note: Department heads/chairpersons who want to request that an individual or unit return to on-campus work MUST REVIEW the information below and FOLLOW the guidance provided in this document. No member of the University community may return to work on campus until they have received the appropriate approval(s).

Units that have a business need to return employees to work on campus must follow the steps below in order to protect the health and safety of their employees, provide employees adequate time to prepare for a return to working on campus, and allow for an orderly transition.

The success of return to work plans is heavily dependent upon how comfortable employees feel with returning to the work environment. Their comfort level will be impacted by the effectiveness of the communication employees receive concerning changes to the physical work environment, including when such changes are occurring, why they are happening, and the employee's role in making the changes successful.

Department heads/chairpersons should follow the steps outlined below PRIOR to scheduling employees to return to campus.



Step 1. Assessment and Planning

- First, get permission from your Dean or Vice President to return employees to campus.
- Assess what work needs to be performed on campus and what work can continue to be done remotely. Continue to keep as many activities as possible in a remote setting. Employees can split time between on-campus and remote work.
- Determine what functions are most important to resume rather than focusing on the specific people. Consider not only operational needs, but also the preferences of employees. Some employees may want to come back to campus, while others may have circumstances (e.g., child care, medical issues) that make returning to campus difficult in the time frame the department wishes, and others may simply not be emotionally ready to return. Be flexible regarding who performs tasks that need to be done on campus, so that the needs of individual employees and the most important needs of the unit can both be met whenever possible.

Step 2. Ramp-Down Planning

- Develop a ramp-down plan. In the event that conditions change and the governor reinstates stay-at-home orders, be prepared to quickly ramp down operations and return to full teleworking for all employees.
- Consider delaying for a few weeks a return to on-campus work for any operation that is more difficult to ramp down.

Step 3. Communication

- Effective communication is critical to ensuring that employees understand important items and that they feel comfortable with the safety practices and procedures that have been put in place.
- Share with all employees in your unit the plan for resuming operations on campus. Use the [Employee Notification from Department Head](#) template for sharing this general information. Even if some employees in your unit will continue to telework, sharing this general information with all employees in the unit is important for transparency.
- As work schedules and other aspects of the unit's plans are implemented, supervisors should use the [Employee Notification from Supervisor](#) template to provide each employee with advance notice of when they should return to work on campus. These employee-specific notifications should provide the date they are to return to campus, their individual work schedules, information about any work area modifications that affect them, and any other unit-specific information the employee should know in order to resume working on campus.



Symptom Monitoring Requirement

Employees planning to work on campus will be required to check for symptoms of COVID-19 every morning before reporting to work. (This requirement applies only on days when an employee will work on campus.) Most employees will have access to an [online system](#) that will allow them to report any concerning symptoms and will alert you if they will not be reporting to campus on a specific day. The employee should also contact you directly if they will not be reporting to campus.

Some employees may not have access to the technology needed to complete this requirement. For those employees, a paper attestation process will be used that will require your involvement. Supervisors will be provided with a paper form where they will record the employee's name and the date, indicating that the employee completed symptom monitoring at home and verbally confirmed that they have no concerning symptoms.

If an employee indicates that they have not completed the symptom monitoring requirement at home, the supervisor must refer the employee to where they can take their own temperature using a thermometer provided by the university. The supervisor will also provide the employee with a laminated form listing symptoms of COVID-19 and have the employee report any concerning symptoms.

If the employee has no concerning symptoms, the supervisor will complete the attestation form using only the employee's name, the date and the supervisor's signature. **No medical information will be captured on the attestation form.** If the employee reports concerning symptoms they must be referred to either their healthcare provider, or if they do not have a personal healthcare provider, the University Health Center nurse line at **(301) 405-HEAL [4325]**.

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, they must notify the University Health Center at healthconcerns@umd.edu.

If the employee indicates that they have not completed the symptom monitoring requirement at home and they refuse to do so at work, the employee must be sent home immediately and required to complete symptom monitoring before they return to campus.

Feeling Sick After Returning To Campus

If your staff member develops symptoms associated with COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, or flu-like symptoms) while at work, please instruct them to do the following:

1. Go home immediately or visit the University Health Center;
2. Communicate with you via phone or computer.



The CDC has a [Self-Checker](#) guide to help with making decisions and seeking appropriate medical care once the employee is at home. If your employee receives a positive result for a COVID-19 test, they should notify you and the [University Health Center](#) at (301) 314-8184 right away. Actions will be taken on a case-by-case basis and may include the following:

- Consultation with Leave Management and Environmental Safety, Sustainability and Risk;
- Isolation recommendations for the impacted work location(s);
- Cleaning and disinfecting procedures by custodial services and other service providers.

These procedures are essential to protect co-workers and others, to ensure consistency in response, and to aid the university in its state and federal reporting requirements. Before returning to campus, an employee who has tested positive for COVID-19 must provide a note completed by their healthcare provider giving them clearance to return to the workplace.

Face Masks/Cloth Face Coverings

It is critical that you, as a manager, ensure that your employees are well aware of the following:

Face coverings or masks are required to be worn in buildings and outdoors when in the presence of others. Face coverings are not required when alone in a closed room, such as an office or lab. UMD will provide up to two cloth face coverings to anyone who wants them. Employees may also purchase their own face coverings if they prefer. Self-purchased masks with slogans and/or symbols must be appropriate for a professional environment.



Appropriate use of face masks or coverings is critical in minimizing risk to others. It is possible for someone to spread COVID-19 without knowing they have the virus; masks reduce that risk. The mask or cloth face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing or hand washing.

Non-compliance

Our hope is that employees recognize their responsibility in keeping themselves and others safe by following all of the safety practices outlined in the Employee Guide. In the event that an employee refuses to comply, the following steps should be taken:

First Non-Compliance

Managers should approach the first instance of non-compliance as an opportunity to re-educate the employee on the safety practices. When an employee fails to follow one or more safety practices, first have a conversation with the employee about the importance of doing their part in keeping



themselves and others safe. You can request that the employee review the **Terps Protecting Terps** LinkedIn Learning course. The employee may simply need a reminder of the practices.

Also, during this conversation, you should explore why the employee is not wearing a face covering or mask as there may be a legitimate medical reason for this. If the employee indicates that there is an ADA-related reason, please reach out to UHR's Leave Management team (umdleave@umd.edu) for guidance.

In most cases, the employee will comply; however, if they do not, send the employee home and instruct them that they may use their accrued leave for the remainder of the day. Follow up with an email to the employee stating:

Dear (Employee Name):

Protecting the health and safety of university employees during the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak is essential to stop the spread of the virus. A single employee can easily spread the virus to many of their coworkers without realizing they are infected. Therefore, it is important that we all do our part in keeping our campus safe. On your next scheduled day to work on campus, you will be expected to comply with the health and safety protocols established by the CDC and the university. These protocols include:

- ***Wearing a face covering while on campus***
- ***Wearing any job-specific personal protective equipment***
- ***Washing your hands for at least 20 seconds frequently (If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.)***
- ***Staying at least 6 feet apart from others***
- ***Staying home and resting if you are sick***

I am confident that going forward you will be able to abide by these safety protocols. The University takes the safety of the community very seriously. It is important for you to know that continued non-compliance may be considered insubordination and may lead to disciplinary action. It is my hope that this will not become necessary.

Please contact me if you have any questions about the content of this letter.

Second Non-Compliance

Continued non-compliance may be considered insubordination which may require disciplinary action. Consult with the Office of Staff Relations or Office of Faculty Affairs to discuss the next steps.



Leave

The latest UHR guidance about employee leave options can be found at the [UHR COVID-19 FAQs](#). Please also check [Communications & News](#) periodically for the latest guidance regarding leave and how employees should code their timesheets.

Employees who cannot work or telework as scheduled, due to specified reasons related to COVID-19, may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) and/or Expanded Paid Family and Medical Leave (EFML). These provisions apply only to employees who are scheduled to work or telework. If an employee is not scheduled to work or telework due to a reduction of hours, closure of a campus unit, etc., then the employee is not eligible for EPSL or expanded EFML. For up-to-date information about both leave categories, please visit [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#).

Managers should follow the guidance below in connection with COVID-19 related leave issues.

- **Be Flexible** - Require employees who are sick to stay home (or go home if already at work) to get well. Permit employees to stay home either to care for a sick family member or take care of children due to school and childcare closures. Consider temporarily adjusting the employee's schedule to allow the employee more flexibility for work and family responsibilities.
- **Follow UHR Guidance Regarding High-Risk Employees** - Employees aged 65 and older and/or who have certain underlying chronic medical conditions such as heart, liver, kidney or lung disease, diabetes, moderate to severe asthma, or compromised immune systems might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Consistent with the guidance for all employees, those in the high-risk category who can telework should continue to do so. Employees in this category who cannot telework and have not been asked to report to work on campus will continue to record COVID-19 leave on their timesheets. When non-teleworking employees in this category are scheduled to report to work and choose not to, they must use accrued annual, personal, sick, or compensatory leave to remain in paid status. The use of sick leave is permitted for the reasons provided under the university's sick leave policy and if an employee has an underlying high-risk medical condition.
- **Closure of a Child's School or Place of Care, or When a Child Care Provider Is Unavailable** - Before an employee uses leave to cover an absence due to the closure of a child's school or place of care, or when the employee's paid child care provider is unavailable, consider allowing the employee to telework if operationally feasible. If so, the employee would not use leave, but would make arrangements to telework. The usual restrictions on teleworking from home when children 12 or under are present will be waived if the employee believes they can safely telework while providing any necessary supervision and care of their children. If you determine that telework is not appropriate for the employee's



position, the employee may be eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave and/or Expanded Family and Medical Leave. Consult with UHR's Leave Management team at umdleave@umd.edu for details on this and other available leave options.

- **Determine How You Will Operate If Absenteeism Spikes** - In the event of an increase in employee absence due to illness (e.g., those who stay home because they are sick, or to care for sick family members or their children when schools or caretakers are unavailable due to COVID-19):
 - Cross-train employees to perform essential functions so the workplace can operate even if key employees are absent;
 - Implement plans to continue your essential business functions in case you experience higher-than-usual absenteeism;
 - Follow UHR leave guidance.
- **Verification of Illness** - Employees who test positive for COVID-19 must contact their supervisor and the [University Health Center](#) immediately to inform them of the diagnosis. This is essential to protect co-workers and others, to ensure consistency in response, and to aid the university in its state and federal reporting requirements. Before returning to campus, an employee who has tested positive for COVID-19 must provide a note completed by their health care provider indicating they are cleared to return to work.
- **Contact UHR's Leave Management Team** - For additional guidance regarding leave availability and options, please contact UHR's Leave Management team at umdleave@umd.edu.

Handling Employees at High Risk

High-Risk Employees



Some individuals may be concerned about returning to their assigned worksite. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified certain conditions that may put individuals at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. These include older persons (65 and older) and persons with the following serious health conditions:

- Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- Serious heart conditions, including heart failure, coronary artery disease, congenital heart disease, cardiomyopathies, and pulmonary hypertension
- Compromised immune systems
- Severe obesity (body mass index of 40 or higher)
- Diabetes
- Chronic kidney disease when undergoing dialysis



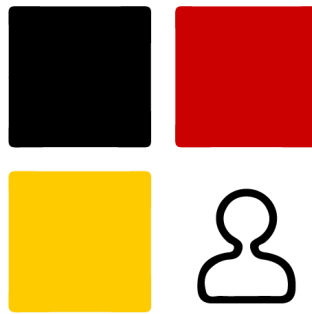
- Liver disease

When considering possible work options for high-risk employees:

- **Be Flexible** - Offer flexible options such as telework to employees. This will eliminate the need for employees to travel to or from higher transmission areas in order to get to work.
- **Offer Alternate Duties** - Consider offering [vulnerable employees](#) duties that minimize their contact with others (e.g., restocking shelves rather than working as a cashier), if the employees agree.
- **Refer to the Leave Section of This Guide** - See the guidance in the Leave section of this guide for information on leave options for employees in the CDC's high-risk category.
- **Advise Employees to Contact UHR's Leave Management Team to Discuss Eligibility for Reasonable Accommodations** - Certain high-risk employees may be eligible for reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act. UHR's Leave Management Team (umdleave@umd.edu) is available to assist in determining an employee's eligibility for reasonable accommodations.

Thank you!

Please continue to follow all appropriate safety guidelines, and we thank you for doing your part in keeping our campus healthy and safe. Together, we will reduce the spread of the virus and make sure our Terp community is fearless AND healthy.



PEOPLE - OUR PRIORITY

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