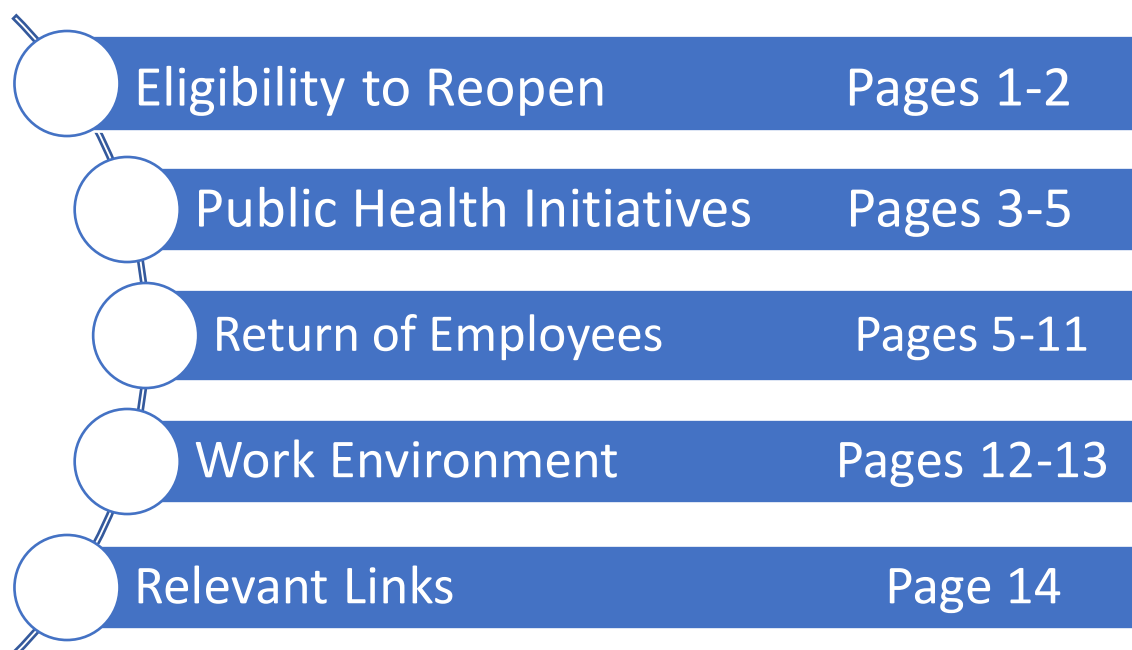# MANAGER'S GUIDE TO RETURNING TO WORK DURING COVID PANDEMIC

Updated August 3, 2020

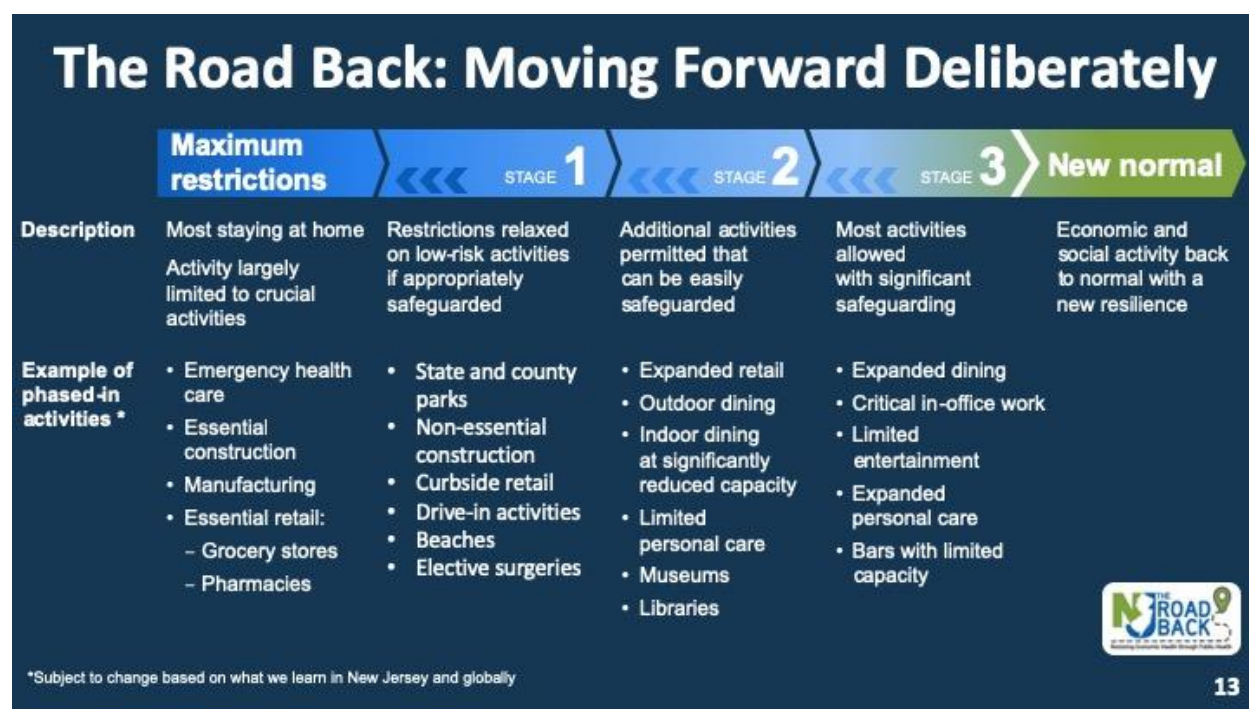# 5 Step Process to Return to Work

The attached guide will address our current action plan and provide assistance and direction for the important decisions necessary for the 2020-2021 academic year. These guidelines will continue to evolve as circumstances change and more information becomes available. We will be accomplishing this through multiple stages in accordance with the Governor's orders and with the guidance and direction of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control. We can never guarantee safety but we can manage risk and provide the tools and processes that will contribute to the safety of our employees, students, visitors and patients.

We know and understand that COVID-19 will continue to evolve. Our policies and plans will continue to be updated as appropriate and as important information changes. Although we are currently focusing on physical and emotional safety, we also need to concurrently review business operations, programmatic changes, state appropriations and enrollment numbers so we can adequately respond to the impact on financial decisions and workforce levels. We have continued to freeze new hires with the goal to manage workforce changes through attrition. However, we need to also be aware that future reassignments, furloughs or layoffs may be necessary based on extreme circumstances.

ELIGIBILITY TO REOPEN

Rowan will continue to work with leaders across higher education, the Centers for Disease Control, public health officials and the State of New Jersey to determine the best time and the best way to resume operations. Leaders of the Emergency Operations team are engaged with organizations including the American College of Health Administration, CUPA, the Centers for Disease Control and various governmental and professional organizations.

Rowan will follow the directives of Governor Murphy and the Office of State Higher Education as indicated below.

The Road Back: Moving Forward Deliberately

	Maximum restrictions	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	New normal
Description	Most staying at home. Activity largely limited to crucial activities	Restrictions relaxed on low-risk activities if appropriately safeguarded	Additional activities permitted that can be easily safeguarded	Most activities allowed with significant safeguarding	Economic and social activity back to normal with a new resilience

Example of phased-in activities *	• Emergency health care
	• Essential construction
	• Manufacturing
	• Essential retail:
	  – Grocery stores
	  – Pharmacies
		• State and county parks
		• Non-essential construction
		• Curbside retail
		• Drive-in activities
		• Beaches
		• Elective surgeries
			• Expanded retail
			• Outdoor dining
			• Indoor dining at significantly reduced capacity
			• Limited personal care
			• Museums
			• Libraries
				• Expanded dining
				• Critical in-office work
				• Limited entertainment
				• Expanded personal care
				• Bars with limited capacity	

*Subject to change based on what we learn in New Jersey and globally

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(NOTE: Clinical Research Labs have been granted return to work in Stage 2)

We are closely monitoring incidents at Rowan and will continue to provide disease analysis and contact tracing. Under the direction of the Wellness Center, plans will be in place for additional testing as necessary. Employees will be required to complete a daily health screening (M-F) to assist Rowan to manage COVID risk. (See Page 3 for further detail) The Wellness Center has developed the appropriate policies and procedures to manage testing, data analysis, isolation and any change in levels of operation.

Employees, not onsite essential during Phase 1, began returning to campus in a phased approach beginning the week of July 27th. Employees will be returned in accordance with state guidance and operational need. Employees who can work remotely will continue to do so. Scheduling will be completed in a manner that provides continuity of service for our students and patients while following safety protocols such

as physical distancing and medical accommodation.

PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVES

The health and safety of our Rowan community is our top priority. Everyday life on Rowan University's campuses is dynamic, interactive, collaborative, and social. This culture drives the transformative experience that we witness every day in the lives of our students. The way we conduct our interactions, routines, practices must change in order to reduce the risk of transmission during this pandemic period. This document is the culmination of many hours of research, planning, exploring and listening. Understand that your thoughtful comments and concerns helped form this guidance, which also is infused with the best public health practices available to us today. Some recommendations will change and should change as we continue to study COVID-19 and its impacts on society.

What has guided us is the understanding that we must protect the most vulnerable among us. Individuals over the age of 65 or anyone with chronic medical conditions, including heart or lung disease, diabetes, compromised immune systems, severe obesity, and chronic kidney or liver disease. While we cannot mandate these individuals to remain off campus, we must create an opportunity for them to work or learn while minimizing their risk of exposure.

MONITORING

1. **Self-Reported Symptom Assessment**
   - All students and employees will be required to respond daily to the survey. The Daily Screening Survey will provide necessary information to manage risk and provide a safe environment. This will not only serve as the first layer of screening, but will remind each of us daily that it is imperative we do not participate in face-to-face activity when symptomatic. Employees must complete the questionnaire daily even if not scheduled to be on campus. The Daily Screening Survey will provide Rowan the ability to medically manage employees with symptoms and to proactively track areas of concern. The Daily Screening Survey will also provide documentation of onsite occupancy.

2. **Attendance**
   - Individuals responsible for groups of employees or students at events, such as classroom lectures, meetings, and gatherings must document attendance. This can be done thru digital tracking via Proflink, submitted via Banner, or kept in a log or spreadsheet so that contact investigation, if necessary, can be supported. Managers are required to also maintain a visitors log and to secure a completed Daily Symptom Check from all outside visitors.

3. **Sick Notification**
   - All employees must report symptoms when calling out sick. While fever remains the most common symptom of COVID-19, fevers are certainly not exclusive to the disease. As the fall turns to winter, seasonal diseases like the flu emerge. It will be critical for symptomatic individuals to avoid all face-to-face interactions and public gatherings regardless of physical distancing practices. When an employee calls off, they should be asked a series of questions related to the call-off (specific to COVID only) such as "Do you have a fever? ", "Do you have a sore throat? "(etc.). Managers should only ask if the employee is exhibiting the specific COVID symptoms and should not ask any other medical questions. This will provide for appropriate return to work protocol to be put in place.

4. **Return to Work Following Illness**
   - Employees who are clinically diagnosed with COVID-19 or who receive a positive test result for COVID-19 must remain isolated based on the recommendations from their healthcare provider, public health official or until three full symptom-free days have passed, whichever is longer.
   - Employees who report symptoms, without a known exposure to COVID-19, must be 24 hours symptom free before returning to work.
   - All employees must communicate their cleared status through the designated process and receive guidance <u>prior</u> to returning. Employees who have received a positive COVID test, even if asymptomatic, must contact the campus-specific clinical representative for a return to work authorization.

TESTING, INVESTIGATION AND ISOLATION

1. **Testing**
   - Probably the most controversial component of planning for return to in-person operations is the application of testing protocols. Universal, frequent testing for all is not practical, not based in science, and not feasible in terms of available resources. Rowan will utilize two different testing strategies.
     i. Symptomatic Testing: Symptomatic employees will be recommended for testing. This will be accomplished through the individual's provider. In partnership with Rowan Medicine, employees also can be screened for COVID-19. Symptomatic employees will be seen the same day via a telehealth visit and ordered a script for testing. Students will be able to be screened for active infection. Test collection will take place in an open-air environment wherever possible.
     ii. Asymptomatic Sentinel Testing: Students will be selected at random for sentinel screening. Targeted testing for asymptomatic employees that cannot physical distance is being considered. Employees in areas such as Athletics, Research or Childcare (as examples) may require more rigorous testing including onsite temperature checks and antibody tests since other protocols are limited.

Antibody testing is not recommended as a strategy to guide return to work/school decisions. However, we are reviewing emerging guidance and if recommendations change we will bring antibody collection resources to campus to support testing of students and staff.

2. **Contact Investigation**
   - Through a collaboration with the Gloucester County Health Department, the Wellness Center has trained contact investigators, across all our campuses, to conduct assessments and make public health recommendations for students and employees.
   - It is critical that students and employees participate in any investigation so we can rapidly isolate ill individuals and quarantine close contacts.
   - To report a positive COVID-19 case, call the Wellness Center at 856-256-4333.

3. **Isolation**
   - On campus, students will reside in campus housing in accordance with state regulations. We will have students who test positive for COVID-19 so we have identified space to isolate students should they not be able to return home during quarantine or self-isolation. The coordination of isolation will be initiated by the contact investigation and will be supported by RLUH, the Dean of Students Office, the Wellness Center and Gourmet Dining.
   - Employees will be required to isolate in their homes and follow return-to-work protocols.
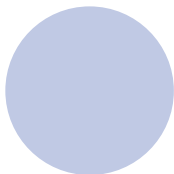
RETURN OF EMPLOYEES

Rowan will need to build and maintain the necessary staffing to resume the primary responsibilities needed for the present level of operation. It is of utmost importance that the faculty and staff are protected, trained and prepared to return.

It is imperative that supervisors provide a voice to faculty and staff to understand the impact on individual employees as well as the departmental unit while engaging the departmental community in a dialogue to design the right structure.

We are currently in Phase 2 and we are beginning the staged return to campus for critical departments with an enhanced need to access equipment and records on campus. First departments have included the Bursar's Office, Financial Aid, Facilities, Residence Life (partial) Environmental Services and Research. Staging

departments as well as staggering employees will provide for the installation, testing and evaluation of environmental and public health protocols more effectively.

Phase 3   Return of additional staff under restrictive guidelines detailed below. This Phase will include additional staff necessary to support the increase in onsite programmatic offerings.

Phase 4   Return of faculty and students under guidelines to be developed and adapted as public health initiatives dictate.

Rowan will continue to move between Phases, including a return to Phase 1 if necessary, as we respond to public health and government directives.

Step 1   How do I make the staffing decisions?

Throughout this academic year, managers will continue to make staffing decisions based on operational need with safety and accommodations in mind. Returning employees to the workplace during and after the COVID-19 pandemic won't be as simple as announcing a reopening or return-to-the-workplace date and carrying on business as usual. Not only will many workplaces be altered initially, some changes may be long term, even beyond the imagined "finish line" of a widely available vaccine or treatment.

Departments with the immediate need to access files or computer systems to prepare for the fall semester will be prioritized. Managers have been provided guidance and protocols during the planning phase. Facilities has created signage and barriers to assist with physical distancing.

Your departmental schedules should be prepared and submitted to Human Resources at hr@rowan.edu. The schedules will be available to Facilities and IRT so they can manage needs. The schedule also provides HR with the ability to manage accommodations requests and appeals or concerns of employees related to scheduling and working conditions.

Positions have been frozen and non-work study students and part-time employees may not be available. Federal Work Study will continue but Institutional Work Study has been reduced significantly and will require advanced approval through the Critical Exception Process. The Critical Exception Process provides the information necessary for a fair and adequate review of hiring decisions. Employees, including non-work study student employees, MUST be approved prior to hiring. Critical Exception requests are reviewed weekly by an FTE committee.

How will you complete the work that needs to be done? How will you change what you do and how you do it to accommodate the reduction in staffing level? Which skills and competencies do you need? Is there training that can be provided to your existing staff to help prepare them with the necessary skills?

How do I identify the workforce needed to manage departmental operations? The work environment will be different (details provided in the next section), so decisions will need to be made with the environmental considerations in mind. How will you complete the work with less to no in-person contact with visitors or other colleagues?

1. Questions to ask:
    a. Which employees need to return first? These should only include those who are critical to operations and cannot effectively complete their work from home.
    b. Who needs to be onsite to complete their job? Can the work be redesigned to reduce or eliminate the need to be onsite? Be creative and innovative in how work can be accomplished.
    c. Can you justify why an employee needs to be onsite and not remote? We will receive challenges from employees and unions. We need to have the appropriate documentation but we also need to schedule in a way that will serve the needs of our students and patients.
    d. When do remote workers need to come onsite for meetings or other reasons?
    e. Verify that scheduling is consistent and equitable. Consult with HR to verify that no protected categories are disparately impacted, that vulnerable populations have been considered and that collective bargaining agreements have been followed.
    f. Verify that the plan is consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act. Does your schedule compensate correctly for exempt/non-exempt status, breaks and overtime? Are you including any possible compensation for time spent waiting to enter the building, providing medical information or donning and doffing protective equipment?

2. Evaluate the current telework process. What has worked? Which processes can be completed remotely? Can employees be supervised by a remote leader? Will the employee require access to equipment and data that is only available onsite or can access be provided remotely?

3. Assess privacy and cybersecurity concerns for those working remotely or hybrid. Work with IRT for any additions or changes needed.

4. Establish what the expectations will be for those who are working remotely. This may be different than it has been during this initial period.

5. How will new hires (primarily faculty appointments) be onboarded remotely? How will meetings and trainings occur remotely?

6. Consider alternate assignments. Depending on operations, some employees may not have duties to perform on a full-time basis. Reassignment will be expected for those impacted employees. HR can assist you with reassignment. (See #7)

a. Extending hours and days so employees can be in the office at different times. Scheduling employees on Saturdays or Sundays or on different shifts will permit more employees to be onsite.

b. Alternating onsite and remote work (i.e. Week 1 onsite MWF, Week 2 TH)

7. How do I need to reassign work or reassign people to complete the necessary work? During this pandemic, collective bargaining agreements provide for reassignment provided the employee is appropriately trained and the change is temporary, which in this case may be in the 12-24-month period. HR can assist with identifying reassignments or providing training.

8. Review and update employee job descriptions based on any change to the assignment. If a job description does not exist, generate a temporary job description that reflects the new requirements for the position. Work with HR for any questions. When completed, submit to HR for review and approval.

9. How will you manage staffing waves if and when employees or their families become exposed or are suspected to be exposed? Will you cross-train? Will you create procedural manuals?

10. Research and the School of Osteopathic Medicine will have specialized needs and requirements. Links to this information are provided at the end of this document.

Step 2　　Managing employees who are afraid to return or refuse to return to the workplace.

As part of the effort to address the on-going pandemic situation and to establish a return to campus work environment, Rowan has established a set of protocols ensuring reasonable measures will be in place for a safe working environment for all of its employees. Although it is understandable to be apprehensive, Rowan will implement processes to fairly and consistently review requests for accommodation using governmental directives and CDC guidelines. Some of these accommodating measures may be University-wide, and others may vary by department, depending on specific departmental realities and requirements.

These measures may include (but are not limited to) things such as staggered shifts, mandated use of protective equipment, temperature scans, physical distancing, and room occupancy limitations. These specific accommodating measures that will be applicable to each department and each employee will be announced to employees by their management teams as return-to-campus plans are finalized.

In instances where an employee feels that the applicable University or departmental accommodating measures may not reasonably and adequately address the employee's particular set of health-related circumstances, the employee may request from the University further accommodations or modifications.

These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis to see if any further reasonable accommodations/modifications can be provided to address the employee's circumstances beyond the accommodating measures already adopted by the University and/or department or otherwise not addressed by other relevant University policies or governmental laws/programs. The goal of considering employee requests for accommodations/modifications is to approach the issue from as many viable reasonable alternatives and methods as possible.

1. Employees requesting not to return to campus, due to medical reasons, should be directed to the Office of Employee Equity. Other concerns may be managed by the department and referred to HR for assistance.

2. The employee seeking further accommodations/modifications will need to submit an accommodation form and will be required to provide necessary documentation, including medical or familial documentation. Employees also will be required to list and prioritize as many reasonable options as possible. Doing so will assist the University in developing the most pertinent and reasonable response to the employee's further accommodations/modifications request.

3. Please note that the submission of such a request for further accommodation/modification does not guarantee that any further reasonable accommodation/modifications can be found or granted. Accommodation requests are considered under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and may vary based on whether an employee is considered to be an onsite essential employee. An ADA accommodation requires that the employee be able complete the essential requirements of the position with the requested accommodation.

4. If an employee's request cannot be accommodated, HR will meet with the employee to discuss other options, including:
   a. Reassignment to another position or another department where remote work can be accommodated.
   b. Voluntary furlough options.
   c. Families First Coronavirus Response Act leaves, FMLA, NJ leaves or personal leave.

5. Rowan Medicine Department of Psychiatry will provide assistance to employees who are fearful and would benefit from discussing their fears and concerns with a mental health professional. The employee will be provided the full privacy and HIPPA protection afforded to all patients. If more than one phone session is necessary, the employee will be assisted to find additional resources. This benefit is limited by available resources. Employees also may access the benefits available through the New Jersey Employee Assistance Service.

Step 3   Departmental Communications

As we complete the planning stage, consider departmental communication. Acknowledge the uncertainty, but motivate the team to move forward. Employees will need to feel secure that there is transparency in communications. Rowan will continue to communicate a unified message and the communication will be readily available. As a leader, your message will be specific to your department. It is also important for you as a manager and for your employees to realize that communication cannot eliminate uncertainty. We will communicate whenever possible but we are constantly shifting to our current environment so the best that we can communicate is what we know at the time.

1. Be prepared with communication to describe the return to work, the schedule and what safety measures and requirements will be in place.

2. Recruit unofficial leaders and employee champions to help share the message.

3. Communicate the message in multiple formats so everyone, both remote and onsite, has access to the message. Check in by phone, text, and email.

4. Communication is a two-way function. Prepare avenues and opportunities for feedback and for ways for your employees to feel heard. Consider a sub-committee of stakeholders to assist with the necessary planning and implementation.

5. Implement and enforce non-retaliation policies. Employees have a right to raise concerns about the safety of their workplace, report unhealthy conditions or question the conditions of their employment.

Step 4   Policies and Training

Human Resources, in concert with our healthcare partners and others, have revised policies and developed training to ensure that employees understand process, procedures and expectations.

1. Policies and/or Procedures have been created or revised as follows:
   a. Sick Leave and Call-Off Procedures, Attendance and Return to Work
   b. COVID-19 Workplace Expectations
   c. Accommodation Policies
   d. Telecommuting
   e. Reassignment Policies (Pending)
   f. Return-to-Work Complaint Process
   g. Leaves
   h. Ethical and Professional Requirements for a Safe Environment
   i. Personal Travel Policy

2. Training will be required and/or available as follows:
   a. Return-to-Work training will be required for all employees to provide an understanding of the new workplace. Employees must complete this training prior to return to onsite work.
   b. Change Management Training.

Step 5   Next Steps

Consider assigning one or more COVID Response Coordinators for your department. As we implement the return to campus for employees and students, we will need to communicate frequently regarding health protocols, supplies such as masks and cleaning supplies, possible exposures, visitor requirements, etc. Coordinated communication and response will assist efficiency. These coordinators can be included on COVID-specific communications and will provide necessary response redundancy.

The following forms are attached can be found on the HR website.

1. Staff Assignment Report
2. Job Description

Please complete the job description for each employee (or employee title) if there is any new workflow. If a job description already exists, you may utilize that document and make any updates on the document.

Complete the Staff Assignment Report indicating whether the employee will be onsite or remote and what the employee's schedule will be if onsite. If you believe the employee may need reassignment due to change in workflow, please indicate and Human Resources will contact you. Managers should not engage in discussions related to medical concerns or accommodations. Please refer them to Human Resources. HR will engage with you related to any possible accommodation.

We realize that this assignment report will continue to change and evolve as operations change and expand. HR is here to assist and will provide a dedicated email and phone number to answer your questions.
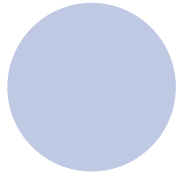
WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

A critical component of returning employees to work is an assessment of the work site and the implementation of processes and procedures, physical distancing, protective equipment, engineering controls, enhanced cleaning protocols and building access control.

Below is an assessment of the processes currently under review. This is NOT an all-inclusive list and will continue to evolve as more scientific data and operational planning occur.

1. **Physical Distancing**
   - Occupancy will be restricted in the workplace. Occupancy limits will be assigned by Facilities for areas such as classrooms and labs.
   - Employees should remain at least 6 feet apart to the fullest extent possible.
   - Signs will be posted reminding employees of physical distancing requirements.
   - Floor markings will be utilized to identify 6-feet parameters or waiting areas.
   - Handshakes and physical contact are prohibited.
   - Workstations, conference rooms, reception areas and common areas will be reconfigured to provide distancing.
   - One-way directional traffic flow will be considered where possible.
   - Restrooms will be marked and reconfigured as possible.
   - Common areas, such as kitchens, community refrigerators and other break areas will be reviewed for closure or adaptation. Employees should be encouraged to bring lunch and coffee from home.
   - Prohibit sharing of phones, headsets, desks, etc. Adaptations and cleaning protocols will be necessary if sharing is required.
   - Building access will be limited as possible. Employees should be scheduled so they are staggered when arriving.
   - Elevator use should be minimized and physical distancing should be maintained.

- Meetings should occur via video. Any in-person meetings will require the use of approved table and desk configurations.
- If weather permits, in-person meetings and other activities requiring less physical distancing should be held outside or in tent areas.

2. **Enhanced cleaning and building maintenance**
   - Offices, restrooms, high traffic areas, classrooms etc. will be equipped with soap and sanitizer.
   - Deep cleaning will occur. Staggered work schedules will assist Environmental Services to schedule more focused cleaning in areas that have been used that day.
   - HVAC filters changes increased, building controls set to increase fresh air as conditions permit.
   - Structural barriers including plexiglass or directional barriers have been installed.
   - Badge access where possible
   - Work orders and cleaning will be scheduled to minimize contact

3. **Employee Safety**
   Employee Safety will be coordinated between public health officials, Environmental Health and Safety, and Human Resources. The following requirements will be addressed:
   - Face Masks/Cloth Face Coverings: Face masks or face coverings MUST be worn by all staff working on campus when in the presence of others and in public settings where other physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., common work spaces, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Appropriate use of face masks or coverings is critical in minimizing risks to others near you. You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick. The mask or cloth face covering is not a substitute for physical distancing.
   - Employees will be required to document temperature and symptoms as dictated through daily survey and if contacted by public health or campus-specific Wellness representatives.
   - Sick employees are expected to remain home and to secure appropriate clearance prior to returning.
   - Employees will be required to track contacts, visitors and any areas visited outside of their assigned work area.
   - Employees will abide by safety rules, including building access and touch surface contact (i.e. time clocks, shared copiers, lab equipment).
   - Employees will complete assigned trainings and follow policies and procedures as required.

4. **Visitors**
   Visitors are discouraged and should be scheduled in advance to prevent physical distancing concerns. Visitor logs will be required.

RELEVANT LINKS

Accommodation
https://sites.rowan.edu/equity/_docs/covid_accommodation_form_v.4.pdf

Daily Screening
daily-screening.rowan.edu

Personal Travel Policy
https://sites.rowan.edu/hr/_docs/home_page/personal_travel_policy_revised.pdf

Staffing Schedule
https://sites.rowan.edu/hr/_docs/home_page/staff-assignment_v3.pdf

Job Description
https://sites.rowan.edu/hr/_docs/home_page/job-description-template_v2.pdf

Professional Responsibility Statement
https://sites.rowan.edu/hr/_docs/home_page/professional-responsibility-statement.pdf

Rowan School of Osteopathic Medicine Restart Policy
https://som.rowan.edu/documents/task-force-recommendations_policies1.pdf

Research
https://research.rowan.edu/officeofresearch/sponsoredprograms/re-starting-research.html

Critical Exception Request
*To access the form, Log into Self-Service Banner, then go to the **Employee** tab, and click on the **Employee Dashboard**. From the dashboard, click **Submit Electronic Forms** then go to the **Critical Exception Authorization Form** option under the Human Resources section of the page. You will then enter the information and submit for approval.*

Questions may be directed to:

Human Resources   **hr@rowan.edu**   **HR Covid Hotline 856-256-4139**