

COVID-19 Guidance for Supervisors

Supervisor Expectations for Phased Increase of Operations

Introduction

Phased Increase of Operations; Prioritizing Health and Safety

With health and safety as our top priority, Iowa State University is planning to resume full operations on campus this fall, consistent with the Board of Regents [April 30 announcement](#). ISU will work toward that goal this summer with a phased increase of operations at normal work locations.

Local Decisions

ISU recognizes that departments and units comprise employees (**faculty, staff, students - both graduate and undergraduate, and post docs**) who perform diverse work in diverse workspaces. Accordingly, safely returning employees to their normal work location is a decision best made at the department or unit level with guidance as appropriate from their division. Administrative officers will identify supervisors (or designees) to develop plans for their workspaces that keep employee health and safety at the forefront.

Mitigating Risk

We understand that COVID-19 is still spreading in our community and across the state. While it is not expected that all risk can be eliminated, this phased approach will allow for carefully increasing, evaluating, and adapting operations as necessary in the best interest of our community. Our knowledge and understanding of COVID-19 continues to evolve, and our policies and plans will be updated as appropriate as more guidance and information becomes available.

Phase 1 – Planning for a Safe Workspace

For phase one, supervisors (or designees) and a limited number of their staff will return to their normal work locations, on or after June 1, to develop workspace plans to support safely returning employees to their normal work locations. Supervisors must consider the following:

Employee Health and Safety

- **Health monitoring:** Communicate with employees about [self-monitoring for symptoms](#) before reporting to work. Do not create additional health monitoring criteria (e.g., mandatory onsite temperature checks) or other health or personal protective equipment (PPE) expectations for employees outside of what has been communicated with them directly and/or on the ISU COVID-19 website without first consulting with the ISU Incident Commander, Erin Baldwin, for approval.
- **Sick Employees:** Communicate with employees the importance of [staying home](#) if they are sick or are experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#). If an employee is sick or showing symptoms at work, consult with Occupational Medicine (515-294-2056) upon sending the employee home.
- **Clean Workspaces:** Facilities Planning and Management will continue regular cleaning, but all employees should take responsibility to keep their workspace clean. Communicate expectations and directions for keeping commonly used surfaces and spaces clean (e.g., copiers, printers, desks, tables). CDC has [additional guidance](#).
- **Personal Hygiene:** [Remind employees](#) of proper hygiene practices.
- **Face Coverings:** Beginning June 1, employees who are able are expected to wear cloth face coverings or face shield when in the presence of others where other mitigation strategies are not available or are difficult to maintain (e.g., social/physical distancing) [consistent with CDC guidance](#). The university is working to provide cloth face coverings to those who need them.

- **High-risk:** Supervisors should direct employees to work with Andrea Little, alittle@iastate.edu, with University Human Resources who self-identify as meeting the criteria for being at [high-risk](#) for severe illness from COVID-19 or if the employee is living with or supporting someone who is high-risk.

Returning Employees

- When returning employees to their normal work location, a minimum of two weeks must be offered before requiring them to be in the office.
 - Employees may waive the two-week notice and request supervisor approval to return earlier.
 - Employees may need additional time to return to working on campus, given constraints with childcare or other COVID-19 related impacts. Supervisors are encouraged to be flexible.
- Consider allowing employees to continue working remotely to the extent their job duties allow.
- Supervisors must keep information in Workday up to date about a worker's primary location (i.e., Working Remotely, Both On-Campus and Remote, On-Campus). For more information: [Telework Job Aid](#).
- Communicate early, often, and proactively with employees to ensure that all individuals understand current guidance and upcoming changes and maintain a sense of connection to the team. Consider virtual communication methods (e.g., Webex, Zoom, Skype, Teams) instead of in-person, to maintain social/physical distancing standards.

Assessing Workspace

- Supervisors should realistically assess what workspaces must be used for returning employees while adhering to social/physical distancing standards provided.
 - This may include reducing workers per workspace to allow for increased physical distance between employees.
- Determine what, if any, common spaces should be made available (e.g., break rooms, conference rooms) for returning employees while adhering to social/physical distancing standards. Facilities Planning and Management will provide supplemental guidance for common areas.
- Determine what physical barriers, visual cues, and/or signage are needed to support increased distance between individuals. The Workforce Protection Working Group, led by Environmental Health and Safety, will provide supplemental guidance.
- Determine schedules and staffing levels to safely support necessary in-person work or services and adhere to social/physical distancing.
 - Consider expanding hours, rotating schedules, requiring appointments, and/or offering dual locations for services.
- For workspaces shared across departments or units, supervisors should work together to determine a schedule for use of the space and shared cleaning responsibilities. Consult with a building supervisor to coordinate usage for common areas by multiple work units.

Facilities

University departments and units should request the appropriate building supervisors to contact Facilities Planning and Management at 294-5100 prior to reopening to have appropriate maintenance completed, such as ventilation systems restored to normal operation and flushing of pipes.

- Most buildings will remain locked and accessible by keycard. Where appropriate, contact [Building Security Services](#) at 294-4211 to establish new building access hours.

Additional Guidance and Supervisor Support

- Supervisors should regularly review and maintain current knowledge of the guidance provided by Iowa State and posted or linked on the ISU [COVID-19 website](#).
- Escalate issues that cannot be resolved quickly to your supervisor for additional support.

Development and Approval of Workspace Plan

- Supervisors must develop their [workspace plans](#) for approval by their unit or department head in advance of notifying employees. For questions about developing plans, contact COVID-19@iastate.edu
- Employees may be consulted when developing the plans.

NOTE: When supervisors are taking any action relating to COVID-19, they should be mindful of employment laws such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Under Title VII, employers are not allowed to treat employees differently based on race or national origin, among other protected categories. As the CDC indicates, there is a stigma surrounding the COVID-19 and individuals of Asian descent. When adopting policies or practices, employers should be careful not to include or enforce any decisions that intentionally target or have a disparate impact on employees based on their race or national origin.

Future Phases

Information on the timeline for subsequent phases for increasing operations is forthcoming. These phases will require expanded planning to reach necessary capacity for the start of fall semester while continuing to follow health and safety protocols.

When Guidance or Operations Change

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, the university may require additional planning or a change in operations in order to comply with new guidance and information. Units may need to return to minimum staffing levels on short notice. Supervisors should continue to monitor and consider contingency planning to best prepare their workforce for these possibilities.

Resources

[COVID-19 webpage](#)

[COVID-19 UHR webpage](#)

[Guide for Returning to the Workplace](#)

[Supervisor Workspace Plan](#)