

## ADAPTING DURING A TIME OF RAPID CHANGE

COVID-19 is rapidly changing the way we work and impacting organizations in ways never imagined. As we respond to the immediate impact and start planning for the return of workers, what are the strategies that we can put in place to protect workers and customers? This experience will also affect work culture in lasting ways. It is projected that up to 25% of people who can will want to continue working from home when things transition to the “new normal.” Some will be nervous about being in large groups of people. Others will express a desire to work remotely part time.

This list shares ideas from a variety of leading industry resources and client experience. The knowledge around COVID-19 is rapidly evolving. With any of these possible strategies, be sure to follow current CDC guidelines and consult professionals on latest best practices, especially related to physical distancing, infection control, and mechanical air quality measures.

## IMMEDIATE STRATEGIES

### Circulation/Access and Workplace Zoning

- Consider policies regarding any outside people, supplies, or materials coming into the facility:
  - Limit access to one entry for visitors/customers. Consider providing a separate entry for staff only.
  - Create entry screening points. Ask health and travel questions and/or conduct temperature checks.
  - Have materials and deliveries dropped off in a location or dock that limits face-to-face interaction and allows for disinfection prior to packages entering the workspace.
  - Provide meeting space near entry to limit travel within the building.
  - Pre-register/schedule visitors to reduce potential congestion at security check-ins.
- Have employees sign in and out, including times, for contact tracing in case of an outbreak or health issue.
- Minimize casual staff collisions by limiting movement of a group to a floor or zone.
  - Make sure each group has access to support spaces such as printers, restrooms, break spaces, and conference rooms.
  - Designate entrances for each building zone.

### Infection Prevention

- Allow wearing of masks.
- Sanitize work surfaces and high-touch areas often.
- Replace filters and sanitize water coolers, coffee makers, and ice makers.
- Provide sanitizer or wipes and trash bins where people may touch items such as door handles, elevator buttons, handrails, and equipment.
- Consider periodic deep cleaning by a professional cleaning company.
- Prepare an emergency cleaning plan should there be an outbreak within your company.
- To mitigate stress among staff, communicate all health and safety precautions being taken and be transparent about any concerns or outbreaks that emerge.
- Institute “clean desk” protocols to remove personal items and put files/equipment away at end of shift so areas can be properly cleaned.
- If a building has been vacant or partially shut down:
  - Check auto-flush batteries in toilets (or conduct regular flushing).
  - Run faucets/showers to prevent dried-out traps.
  - Be mindful of seasonal transitions: adjust heating/cooling systems for changing humidity and temperatures.



# Strategies for Getting Back to the Workplace

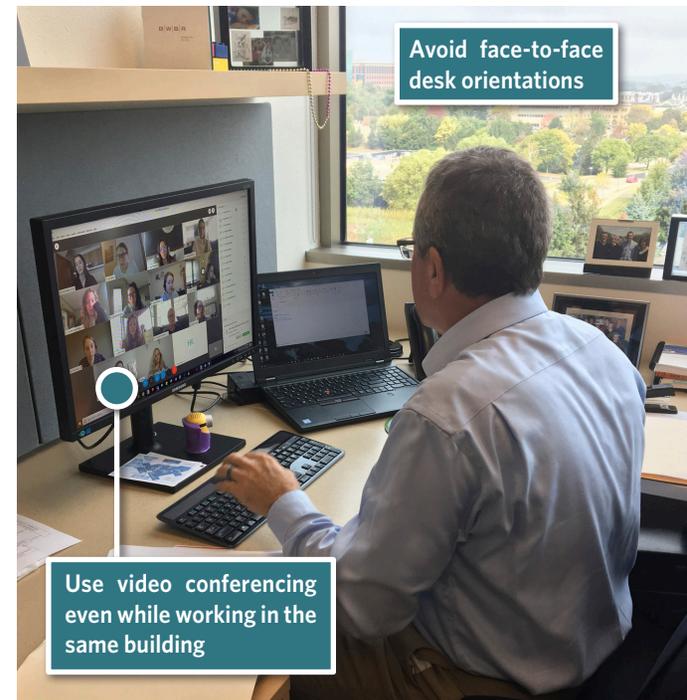
## Physical Distancing

- Phase staff returning to the workplace, prioritizing jobs that benefit most from being in the facility.
- Use video conferencing even between staff working in the same building.
- Stagger work start times to reduce congestion.
- Stagger break times with cleaning between groups.
- Limit lunch/snacks to non-refrigerated items that can be stored at an individual's desk or locker.

## De-Densification

- Stagger and occupy every other desk/workstation to maintain minimum distance.
- Consider converting small conference rooms to single occupancy workspace.
- Encourage stair use in lieu of elevators.
- Analyze elevator strategies to limit number of people in cabs and waiting in elevator lobbies. Dedicate elevators to certain floors.
- Eliminate use of microwave or space them with 6' waiting zones. Wipe down after each use.

- As more people come back to the workplace, maintain 6' distance between desks/workstations.
- Dedicate larger conference rooms to specific groups or teams of 10 maximum (depends on room size); remove seating to maintain 6' distance between people.
- Reduce or eliminate face-to-face desk orientations.
- Use clip-on divider screens at sit-to-stand desks to extend barrier height when standing.
- Consider 6' wide workstation aisles and clearances around support areas.
- Add plexiglass to reception desks and transaction areas.
- Relocate or remove furniture for increased distance in lobbies, public areas, break rooms, conference rooms.
- Eliminate shared lockers or separate lockers into smaller groups; limit access to a small group at a time and sanitize lockers between users.
- Conduct a floor plan review to identify physical distancing, workplace zoning, circulation, and access opportunities and challenges.
- Designate one-way circulation for aisles, using visual cues such as signs or tape on the floor.



## LONG-TERM CONSIDERATIONS

These measures typically require greater time and financial investment. The value of such measures will depend on the unique work culture, safety tolerances, resources, and perceived value for each organization.

### Design for Changing Work Cultures

- Incorporate space strategies as part of business continuity planning.
- Design meeting space/work space to facilitate more virtual meetings.
- Address staff's need for more "personal spaces."
  - Consider strategies to increase square footage per person or reduce amount of people in office at a time.
  - Rethink shared/unassigned seating.
  - Limit amount of time in office (eg. groups assigned to "in-office shifts" on certain days of the week).
- Divide a larger workplace into smaller 'studios' and/or create smaller satellite offices:
  - Smaller satellite offices can be close to where employees live, limiting their travel radius.
  - This could be a permanent change or developed as a contingency plan in case of another pandemic or emergency event.

### Building Access and Control

- Provide cloud-based access control.
- Use thermal cameras in lobbies for temperature control and monitoring.
- Designate a quarantine area near lobby to isolate people who are ill.
- Use occupancy tracking sensors to prevent large gatherings.

### Ongoing Health and Wellbeing

- Build a culture around holistic health.
- Employ smart building technologies and dynamic HVAC air filtration to improve air quality and comfort.

- Provide green walls or biophilia to improve air quality and increase employee comfort.
- Revisit policies around sick time, child/family care, and work from home (eg. empower and encourage people to stay at home/work from home if not feeling well).

### Infection Prevention

- Review cleaning protocols of ongoing space sharing strategies for flexible work programs, desk sharing, etc.
- Use touch-free products and tech:
  - App-based control of conference room technology, amenities (coffee makers, water dispensers), unlocking or opening doors, air and temperature controls.
  - Motion sensors for lights, sit-stand desks, power-operated doors, faucets, bottle fillers, restrooms (sinks, toilets, soap and paper towel dispensers).
  - Hands-free trash/recycling receptacles, door foot pulls such as StepNPull or design doors to swing out (especially for high-use areas such as restrooms), touch-free elevator controls.
- UV technology:
  - Sterilize equipment and incoming supplies/packages (space requirements/health concerns).
  - UV cleaning toilets.
  - UV lighting during off-hours to clean entire space.
- Use copper and antimicrobial materials as available.
- Consider splash zones at sinks.
- Consider having a barista in lieu of self-service coffee.
- Replace existing fabric or plush furniture with easy-to-clean products (vinyl, plastic, faux leather, and other non-porous surfaces).

