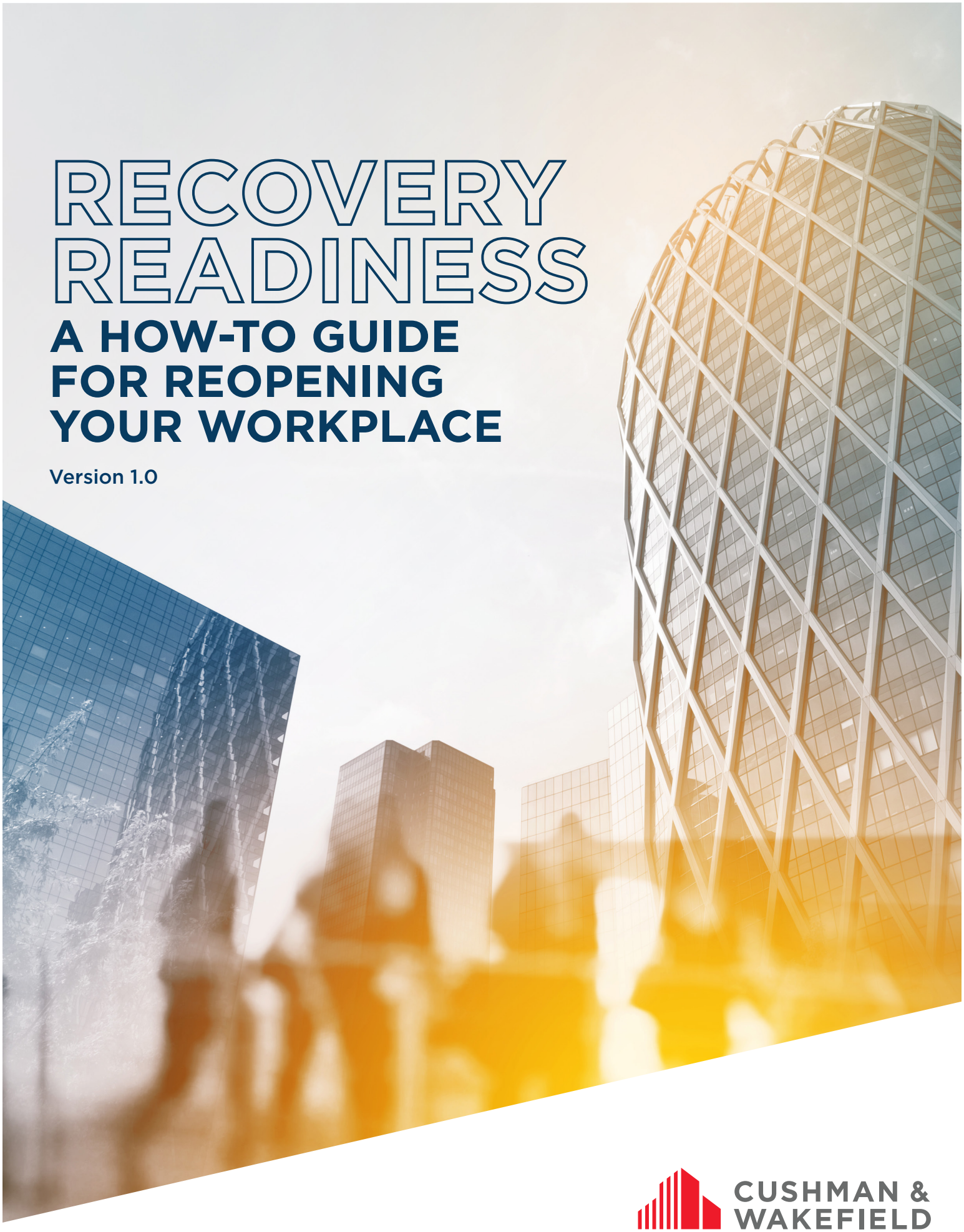
RECOVERY READINESS

A HOW-TO GUIDE FOR REOPENING YOUR WORKPLACE

Version 1.0



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RETURNING TO THE PHYSICAL WORKPLACE

Over the next several weeks and months, as areas stabilize from the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home restrictions are lifted, organizations will begin to bring workers back into the physical workplace. It's already begun in some parts of the world. In fact, as of April 2020, we have helped move our own employees, and those of our clients, back into more than 800 million square feet of properties globally.

The migration of a furloughed and Work From Home (WFH) workforce back to places of business will look different for every organization. The mix of returning employees will vary, and in some cases, a segment of the workforce may continue to work remotely. One thing is clear, however—the management of the process is without precedent.

Many of our clients have sought out our guidance and expertise as they navigate this process. Over the following pages, we prepared a How-to Guide for reopening the workplace that addresses many of their most pressing questions. How can real estate owners most effectively prepare their assets for the return of building occupants? And how can employers ensure they are prepared to receive their workforce—and that their employees are prepared for the return—so that the transition is safe, efficient, effective, and aligned to the needs of the organization and the needs of its people?

The Guide outlines some of the best thinking and practices that our more than 53,000 professionals have compiled across the globe and also includes insights from key partners. The recommended practices and protocols already have been implemented at locations across the globe with tremendous success.

Six Readiness Essentials

In this next phase of recovery, a handful of primary focus areas will be applicable to nearly every real estate owner and occupier across the globe. From big organizations to small ones, from those with one location to those with hundreds—each in their own way will be focused on the following Workplace Readiness Essentials:

1. **Prepare the Building:** cleaning plans, pre-return inspections, HVAC & Mechanicals checks
2. **Prepare the Workforce:** mitigating anxiety, policies for deciding who returns, employee communications
3. **Control Access:** protocols for safety and health checks, building reception, shipping and receiving, elevators, visitor policies
4. **Create a Social Distancing Plan:** decreasing density, schedule management, office traffic patterns
5. **Reduce Touch Points and Increase Cleaning:** open doors, clean desk policy, food plan, cleaning common areas
6. **Communicate for Confidence:** recognize the fear in returning, communicate transparently, listen and survey regularly

Faced with common challenges, owners and occupiers have a unique opportunity to come together in the true spirit of collaboration. We are already seeing it play out, and we believe there is no better path to successfully manage the complexity of the road that lies ahead.

Three Final Things to Note

First, the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as the respective health organizations and government bodies within each country, are the primary sources for guidance on COVID-19 and other health-related issues.

Second, while the practices and recommendations in this guide at times reference office environments, they are largely applicable to other types of workforce environments and properties.

Finally, the intention of this resource is to establish the foundation of ideas and recommendations upon which we can build—in collaboration with clients and partners—an increasingly useful guide. We're certain the coming weeks and months will teach us new things, and we look forward to sharing more ideas and updates to help you move forward through unfamiliar territory.

In the meantime, we look forward to connecting with you to learn more about how we can help.

PREPARING FOR DAY ONE

I. Working Together to Reopen the Workplace

Relationships between building owners and tenants have never been more important. Everyone is facing uncertainty, and the cooperation between building owners and occupiers today will benefit both parties in the short and long term.

Cushman & Wakefield professionals work with investor and occupier clients around the world. In places like China, where the return to the physical workplace has already happened in various instances, we have observed earnest efforts by all parties to successfully partner together as they work through the unique challenges the pandemic has created.

Below we provide guidance for both landlords and occupiers on how they can work together to achieve best results during this phase of the recovery.

Financial Stress

Business viability of tenants is key to stable occupancy of properties and long-term rental income. As a result, we have seen many owners work with tenants to help provide some relief, where possible.

- Keep lines of dialogue open, and approach discussions with the intent of working on solutions that can benefit both parties in the long term
- Consult legal and risk advisors
- Partner to ensure compliance with owner requirements and policies
- Think creatively. Landlords in China are offering tenants additional help such as business registration services, tax advice, assistance in applications for business subsidies, and service support for bank loans. While these ideas may not be feasible everywhere, they demonstrate the kind of creative thinking of the real estate industry to strengthen the relationship and partnership between real estate owners and occupiers

Safety and Wellbeing

The health and safety of the people who use the building should be treated as a shared responsibility.

- All parties—owners, building managers, occupiers—should ascertain individual responsibilities and capabilities, and then work toward collectively improving the physical environment for the benefit of all building users
- Include plans and policies that address issuance of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), implementation of new social distancing measures, and other actions taken to provide for the health and safety of building employees and visitors —e.g., signage to maintain safe distances, capacity monitoring of elevators, sneeze guards at reception areas, etc., if any

Shared Communications

Creating a sense of safety and security for employees is a key component of a successful return to work. This goal should be jointly owned by landlords, building managers and the occupants, and all should share some responsibility with communications. We are seeing owners and occupiers working together to understand any new policies that will impact the way people arrive at, move through, work in, and utilize the spaces and amenities in and around the building. Consider the following:

- Discuss the level of workforce communication that will be needed before employees return to work on Day One and beyond
- Agree and outline the responsibilities each party will take in communicating safety measures and protocols that have been implemented to date—and that will continue to govern the day-to-day use of the building—to create a sense of security and safety for all building users
- Discuss communication protocols and plans should risk increase suddenly

II. Preparing the Building

Before occupants return to a building that has been vacated for a significant period of time, building owners, managers and operators should complete a variety of pre-return checks, tasks, and assessments to ensure a healthy and safe environment. We recommend referencing any existing building risk assessments or registers which can provide a better understanding of what building systems are critical to assess prior to reoccupation.

Not all of the items below will be applicable for every building. Rather, owners, operators and building managers must use their specific knowledge of their buildings to prepare for the workforce to return.

WORKER SAFETY

- Anyone preparing a building after a period of reduced inactivity due to COVID-19 should be provided with:
  - Appropriate PPE (such as masks, gloves, eye protection and coveralls)
  - Training in fitting, wearing and using PPE as well as safe removal, sanitizing and disposal
  - Requirements for hand washing and social distancing
- PPE can also protect workers against exposure to dust, allergens and other contaminates that may have been introduced during the inactive period
- After use, workers should dispose of PPE designed for single use
  - After removing PPE, staff should wash their hands immediately, adhering to WHO recommendations
  - Some face masks may be designed for single use only and should be disposed of safely after use
- Follow all applicable safety practices, referring to existing regulatory requirements, policies, procedures and risk assessments
- Consider any changes that may be necessary as a result of COVID-19 mitigation within the building

CLEANING, DISINFECTING AND SUPPLIES

- Review site inventory of cleaning chemicals, materials, and consumables to ensure inventory levels are aligned with forecasted building occupancy
- Ensure a safety data sheet is available for all chemicals and requirements for safe use are followed
- Ensure cleaning equipment and tools are in working condition
- Cleaning staff should review and complete refresher training on general cleaning and site-specific protocols
- Cleaners must be trained on proper disinfecting guidelines
- Determine areas that require thorough cleaning due to heavy usage such as event centers, gyms/locker rooms, conference rooms and restrooms
- Prior to initiating cleaning tasks, ensure all staff practice hand hygiene, washing hands thoroughly prior to putting PPE on, and follow Health, Safety, Security & Environment (HSSE) requirements with PPE
- Treat all surfaces using disinfectants from government approved or authorized lists ensuring all chemical dwell times are adhered to
- After use, workers should properly dispose of or sanitize PPE in accordance with WHO or local regulatory requirements.

BUILDING CORE INFRASTRUCTURE INSPECTION

Since buildings may have been shut down with little warning and preparation, a best practice is to thoroughly inspect for any damage or issues caused by the vacancy. The physical condition and operation of equipment and services supporting the building also should be assessed.

- Mechanical Systems
- Water Systems
  - Chilled/condenser water: open/closed loops
  - Water features
- Conveyances
- Potable water: flush faucets
- Fire Life Safety Systems
- Ensure open site drains are inspected and traps are primed

Equipment Startup

AIR COOLED SYSTEMS	BUILT UP FAN SYSTEMS	COOLING TOWERS	AIR COOLED CHILLERS	WATER COOLED CHILLERS
• Clean all outdoor condenser coils • Clean all indoor evaporator coils with a cleaner and disinfectant • Check the refrigerant level • Inspect the drain pans and condensate drains for obstructions • Check outdoor fan motors and indoor blower assemblies • Lubricate moving parts • Check belts for cracking and proper tension • Inspect all electrical controls, wiring connections and fuses. • Inspect and clean or replace all filters • Vacuum and disinfect all return air grills • Run a general system test to check for unusual noises, odors and measure indoor/outdoor temperatures and system pressures as needed	• Clean outside air dampers and check for proper operation • Clean evaporator coils with a cleaner and disinfectant • Inspect the drain pans and condensate drains for obstructions • Check fan motors and blower assemblies • Lubricate moving parts • Check belts for cracking and proper tension • Inspect all electrical controls, wiring connections and fuses • Inspect and clean or replace all filters • Vacuum and disinfect all return air grills • Run a general system test to check for unusual noises, odors and measure indoor/outdoor temperatures and system pressures as needed	• Inspect fan blades for cracks and clean • Remove and clean strainer in sump • Check gear reducer lubricant and refill with factory-recommended oil • Clean gear reducer sight glass and check shaft thrust and play • Power wash tower hot deck and cold deck • Power wash tower fill and use scale remover as needed • Check bottom of hot and cold decks for corrosion and rust • Check the condition of the fan motor through temperature or vibration analysis and compare to baseline values • Perform meg-ohm test motor windings • Change oil in gear box if needed • Inspect vibrations safety switch	• Clean condenser coils and check for leaks and corrosion • Check controls and safety circuits for proper operation • Condenser fans should be cleaned, bearings need to be checked for wear and lubricated, belts and couplings need to be checked and tightness checked and adjusted • The electrical disconnect and contactor needs to be inspected for tightness and no pitting • Compressor oil should be tested for acid • Check oil filter and change if needed • Check piping and compressor for any signs of leaks and test refrigerant pressures • Run a general system test to check for unusual noises, odors and measure supply/return temperatures and system pressures as needed	• Check quality of condenser and chilled water chemical levels • Check condition of condenser water tubes and clean if needed • Check refrigerant levels • Check refrigerant purge unit • Check oil heater • Check oil levels • Inspect motors and starters • Run a general system test to check for unusual noises, odors and measure supply/return temperatures on both condenser and chilled water and system pressures as needed

- Building systems should be started methodically to prevent load shed from a simultaneous start
- Depending on length of time equipment has been inactive, systems should be allowed to run for a period of time with careful observation to ensure valves, switches, etc. are operating correctly
- Specific system actions may be required to restart systems after prolonged shutdown. Sites may determine necessity for each of these items based on length of shutdown and condition as inspected. Consider testing CO levels around systems that may circulate air throughout buildings

BUILDING SYSTEMS: HVAC AND MECHANICAL

Building employees responsible for assessing the physical structure and building systems should refer to all Authority Having Jurisdiction.

- Air filters should be replaced after flushing the building. Refer to manufacturers' recommendations and guidance for filter selection. Use the highest efficiency rated filter recommended/allowed by the manufacturer (MERV rating) and reference any WHO guidelines
- When replacing air filters (including HEPA filters):
  - Use proper safety procedures and PPE
  - Avoid hitting, dropping, or shaking the filter
  - Do not use compressed air to clean a filter, which could allow materials in the filter to become airborne
  - Properly dispose of used filters and PPE/gloves in a sealed plastic bag
  - Clean hands when the task is finished
  - Minimize exposure to building interior areas when removing old filters from the site.
    - Recommended approach: transport to a waste collection area without entering the building
    - Alternative approach: if it's impossible to dispose of the filter without transporting through the building, choose routes that minimize exposure to normally occupied areas, including freight elevators and minimally used support space
- Review building water management plans for domestic and process water systems
- Work with water treatment service provider to insure chemical levels are within defined ranges for cooling towers, closed water systems, water features, etc.
- Building engineers should verify the operation of mechanical systems and restore all sequences, set-points and schedules modified during the rollback of operations
- Flush Building:
  - Flush building with fresh air based on the design of the makeup/outside air system and if possible to leading sustainability standards such as LEED, BREEAM, and WELL for a minimum of 24 hours and ideally for 48 to 72 hours
  - For specific Air Change plan, the rate can be calculated: $n = 60\ q / V$ where
    - n = air changes per hour (1/h)
    - q = fresh air (make up air) flow through the room (CFM)
    - V = volume of the room (Cubic Feet)

After the building is flushed, building engineers should

- Change the air filters (if available) as an added precaution. Follow manufacturer recommendations for filter reconditions
- Increase fresh air intake

III. Preparing the Workforce & the Organization

As organizations scramble to plan for the best way to bring large numbers of employees back to the workplace, everyone is looking for answers to make the transition as smooth and successful as possible.

MITIGATING WORKFORCE ANXIETY

While workplace design, policies and safety protocols are critical pieces of the puzzle, they do not touch on perhaps the most important aspect of return to work—the readiness of the workforce physically, emotionally and psychologically.

Developing a plan to mitigate employee fears and concerns should be a top priority. People are worried about their personal health and the health of those they care about. They have anxieties about their jobs, the future of their organizations and even the future of their industries.

To help employees through what will be a turbulent, stressful and unpredictable return to work, organizations should focus on the personal experiences of their employees from a work and life perspective. It's critical to understand how the pandemic has impacted their personal connection to the culture of the organization. It's also important to understand if employees feel their organizations are caring for them, as well as understand how to improve and advance that care during the return to the physical workplace.

Cushman & Wakefield has taken this approach with our own workforce, getting direct feedback through our workplace diagnostic tool, Experience per SF™. And we are taking direct and practical action to ensure that leading up to, during, and after the return to work we are successful in helping our people not just move forward but thrive.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Ensuring employees understand what the workplace will be like upon return is critical. Some employees may expect nothing to change, while others will assume everything will be different. Preparing employees and reminding them that these changes are designed to help keep them safe will ease anxiety.

Recommended practices for consideration include:

- **Re-engagement of employees:** Responses to working remotely during turbulent times are varied and unique. Understanding employees' attitudes and perspectives inform the creation of strategies that enable their success. Use XSF@home to diagnose the employee's work from home experience (see next page).
- **Early communication:** As plans are forming, keep the workforce informed as soon as appropriate. We have provided more detailed suggestions on communications on the following page.
- **Virtual work support:** Team norms must evolve to be inclusive of those in and outside of the office as a new normal. All employees now need to be adept at utilizing virtual collaboration tools. Likewise, managers must perfect the art of leading distributed teams.
- **Proactive virtual training:** Whether spaces are modified, or new protocols established, employees will need to learn new patterns of behavior. Developing an understanding of the new normal for the workplace may be addressed through virtual training. Organizations should not underestimate the value of creating training content for topics that typically are communicated through email or static messaging alone.
- **Reinforced training post Day One:** Provide ongoing methods of additional training to

EXPERIENCE SQUARE FOOT™

XSF@home

A diagnostic tool to assess the employee's work from home experience delivers:

INDIVIDUAL BENEFITS

- **DASHBOARDS** that allow you to view your survey data results
- **COMPARISONS** across your different regions
- **EVIDENCE** about what is working well and not so well for employees
- **BENCHMARKS** insight into other survey participants

AGGREGATE BENEFITS

- **STATISTICAL FINDINGS** revealing the key drivers of employee experience
- **GUIDANCE** on how to prepare for the return to the office and how to support employees logistically and psychologically
- **PERSPECTIVE** on the future of safe office design and the creation of workplaces that are meaningful destinations that generate engaging experiences for employees
- **INVITATIONS** to webinars sharing best practice ideas from our network of the world's leading companies

reinforce messaging and changes in the work environment. Repetition will help employees acknowledge and retain important messages and information. Consider signage that communicates key messages in high traffic areas such as main entrances, restroom facilities and so forth.

- **Connection to a vision:** As changes in protocol and policies are unveiled, find ways to connect those messages back to the corporate vision. Understanding the "why" is a great way to reinforce the "what."

COMMUNICATIONS

A well thought-out and orchestrated change management communications strategy for the organization will help underpin a successful return. It should address the details of the transition and anticipate employee questions, anxieties and concerns.

Recommended Communication Practices

- Communicate frequently to make employees aware of the changes designed to keep everyone safe and healthy
- Provide details of the changes
- Encourage employees to participate and comply with new work practices
- Conduct demonstrations and training to introduce new skills to staff
- Reward successful performance in relation to these practices
- Identify target audiences by segment and key messages
- Consider using a wide range of communication channels and materials—email, employee portals, text messages, video, virtual live events, posters/digital displays (after workplace return) and others

Consider communications focused on:

- Why groups and/or individual employees were chosen to return to work
- How the organization and/or the building owner is following government guidelines and reiterate those guidelines for reopening workspaces
- The measures undertaken in both the building and workspace to ensure health

and safety of returning employees (cleaning, changes to spaces, amenities, provisions etc.). This should be a shared responsibility and commitment between owners, building managers and tenants
- Instructions on how to prepare for arrival
- Suggestions for commute alternatives
- Overview of what to expect when returning employees arrive
  - New entrance protocols for employees and visitors
  - What will be available or supplied, especially food and beverages
  - What will not be provided, e.g., utensils, glassware, cups, etc.
  - Instructions on bringing equipment (laptops, chairs, etc.) back into the workplace and sanitization requirements
  - Changes to the work environment including room availability, relocation of desks, etc.
  - Modifications to internal and external meeting protocols, hosting of client events, and visitor access
- New policies. A range of policy considerations are provided below

NEW POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Policies will be important in setting the expectation for employees. Many organizations have allowed flexibility into some of their policies, especially those related to time off, remote working and flexible work schedules. Upon setting the new organizational framework coming back into the workplace, organizations should consider what policies need to change or be reinstated.

From the employee's perspective, if policies have been adjusted for an extended period of time—for example, work from home—this may be viewed as the new norm. Organizations should revisit relevant policies and determine the right approach during the transition back to the physical workplace. Communicating the importance of company policies, including any recent updates, and how they map back to the organization's vision will be critical in establishing a climate of employee awareness and compliance.

Policies for consideration might include the following:
- Return to work policies
  - For non-essential roles, determine what WFH policy should be followed
  - Protocols around a phased re-introduction of workers based on essential roles to re-open facility
  - Determine if and how to screen employees before they return
- Guest and visitor policies.
  - Limiting access to certain categories of site visitors such as vendors, contractors, and brokerage tour groups
  - Restricting the general public's access to the worksite
  - Restricting access to only certain workplace areas
- Policies around temporary help in the event a subset of the full-time workforce becomes unavailable, including policies and practices around accepting and training temporary workers
- Employee travel policies
- When employees should return to work
  - Considerations around at-risk groups
  - Exceptions and processes for parents/caregivers when schools are closed or other caregivers are unavailable
- Policies related to WFH environments
  - May include ergonomic instructions, stipends, purchase program for WFH tools and equipment

- Employee work safety policy and guidelines for the prevention of virus transfer. Categories for consideration include
  - Health screening and reporting
  - Clearly defined actions, roles and responsibilities for communications in response to a potential COVID-19 case, designated confinement areas, FAQs
  - Communication and escalation protocols outlining the management and decision-making processes of all stakeholders involved in response to a potential COVID-19 emergency, including:
    - » Protocols with health and other emergency services
    - » Protocols with local, regional, and national institutions

Many organizations have practices for employees to report an illness to Human Resources departments confidentially and in accordance with applicable laws. The COVID-19 pandemic has tested the effectiveness of those practices in many cases. Re-evaluating the requirements and methods for reporting in these situations may need to be addressed. Additionally, if an organization instituted temporary protocols for reporting, they may need to communicate the reinstatement of earlier practices or protocols upon return to work.

WHO RETURNS TO WORK?

- Where applicable, organizations should comply with relevant regulations defining who should and should not return to the physical workplace.

WHY RETURN TO WORK?

To be productive:

- Because of fewer distractions which enables focus and creativity
- To innovate, develop new ideas, and benefit from rapid decision-making when together with others
- To streamline communication channels by replacing emails, calls, virtual meetings with in-person interactions

For the physical work and required tools:

- Because of required access to equipment, testing, data infrastructure
- For the compute power, monitors, printers or copiers, and files in a secure environment
- To physically work (e.g., in labs, command centers, manufacturing)

For the people and place:

- To access people needed for work-related tasks: leaders, teams, peers, clients, trainers
- As a social outlet: seeing people, being a part of a community with a shared purpose, diversity of thought, camaraderie
- More amenities and food choices than what is accessible from home

WHY STAY HOME?

To be productive:

- Because the team can't be all together
- It's easier to work remotely with synchronous communication flow between the entire team using the current technology tools
- Focus is easier when working from home
- To reduce the time lost due to commutes

Individual health and personal situations:

- Personal health risks exacerbated by commutes, anxiety from being at the office, or mentally not ready
- Lack of childcare or eldercare options
- Desire to reduce environmental footprint
- Need to minimize commutation costs

NEW ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To fulfill new obligations and tasks, organizations may need to redefine the roles and responsibilities of existing staff or hire for new and different skillsets. These may include:

- **COVID-19 Block Captains:** organized by company or floor for multi-tenant buildings so that each tenant is assured that all organizations in the building are respecting precautions and protocols. Block Captains would also facilitate and maintain open communication with building ownership and management
- **PPE and Training Experts:** maintain knowledge of PPE use, quantities, stock, location
- **Quarantine Marshals:** coordinate the response to a colleague exhibiting symptoms; quarantine room; notifications; call for medical support, organize transportation
- **Deliveries Clerks:** administer receipt of and sanitize all items arriving in the workplace such as packages, couriers, food, etc. (this role may be fulfilled by mailroom staff in large organizations)
- **Supplies Managers:** responsible for securing and distributing office supplies to staff on request

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Business operations considerations might include:

- **Risk:** engage with risk management team to ensure readiness to return
- **Insurance:** coordinate with insurers to identify potential risks for returning to work
- **Services:** determine which services required to support pandemic-related activities—self-performed or outsourced—existing or new—are going to be performed and estimate their duration
- **Vendors:** notify vendors of reopening and alert to any changes that may impact them; disable/enable access if needed
- **Mail:** notify postal service and couriers to restart mail service
- **Contacts and escalations:** establish a single phone number/email address to field inquiries (manage and track questions, escalations, concerns, etc.)

DATA PRIVACY AND INFORMATION SECURITY

An increasing number of cyber criminals are exploiting the COVID-19 pandemic for their own objectives These criminals are targeting individuals and businesses through COVID-19- related messaging to deliver malware and ransomware, to steal user credentials, and to exploit remote access and conferencing systems. Organizations should be particularly aware of the following risks:

Social Engineering and Phishing Risks

- Cyber criminals are using COVID-19-themed email phishing, SMS messages, malicious web sites and applications that often masquerade as trusted parties and may compromise the organization. To create the sense of trust, criminals may impersonate a sender's information in an email to make it appear to come from a trustworthy source like the WHO
- In the United Kingdom (UK), the National Cyber Security Centre has identified a significant increase in UK government branded scams relating to COVID-19.

Working at Home Risks

The shift to home working has exposed the use of potentially vulnerable services, increasing the risks to individuals and organizations. Exploitations in remote working solutions, virtual private networks solutions, and video conferencing solutions have yielded a significant increase in the targeting of these systems recently.

Mitigating these Risks

How organizations can mitigate these risks and increases in exploitations:

- **Social Engineering & Phishing:** continue to educate and communicate to employees about these new risks. Make sure employees are aware of new scams and how to report issues they identify to security teams with the use of things like the "Report Phish" button in their email.
- **Working at Home Risks:** validate that protection software is deployed to devices, up-todate and reporting issues to the security teams. Continue to be vigilant about good corporate hygiene by deploying patches and update applications.

PANDEMIC RECOVERY PLAN

Each organization should develop a recovery plan to address responses to pandemics. Consider:

- Creating an operational emergency team consisting of essential functions staff
- Establishing procedures for alert and outbreak verification to receive early warnings should virus resurge
- Establishing information flows (drafting of situation reports, briefings, back-up of information, etc.)
- Communications and dissemination of information for internal and external stakeholders

To model the business implications:

- Create contingency plans to address the impact of potential resurgence of disease in the workplace after re-opening sites
- Develop a response plan based on contingency scenarios, including a mechanism for identifying triggers that will change the level of response
- Assess the economic impact of different scenarios and funding needed to address each scenario
- Assess supply needs and explore options for purchasing additional supplies required for business operations
- Create contingency plan to address disruption in vendor-performed critical services after re-opening of sites; develop list of qualified service providers for any such critical services
- Investigate financial recovery assistance available through government programs

Further, in relation to COVID-19:

- Develop surveillance strategies aimed at collecting timely data relative to staff and operations (e.g., workforce absenteeism or recovered cases with greater immunity), especially for any identified high-risk staff coming back to work
- Identify and connect with local COVID-19 information sources such as occupational health physicians, community practitioners, and local and state institutions to stay current on local COVID-19 status and to stay abreast of early warning signs

IV. Preparing the Workplace

In preparation for the return of the workforce to the physical workplace, employers should consider a variety of pre-workforce return checks, tasks and assignments. As part of that pre-return activity, we recommend developing or updating a COVID-19-specific workplace plan that outlines strategies and tactics to combat and/or minimize the likelihood of spread of virus in workplace.

PRE-CHECKS, CLEANING, DISINFECTING AND SUPPLIES

Below we have outlined some areas to consider. The level of detail may or may not be relevant to specific workplaces.

FIRE LIFE SAFETY	• Verify operation and check for any trouble indicators; system most likely was continuously operational—arrange for a FLS systems contractor to check system • Perform fire extinguisher checks required by respective laws or local codes
KITCHEN	• Clean and sanitize all surfaces within the area including high touch areas (fixtures, light switches, appliance handles and buttons) • Turn on appliances • Verify all pilot lights are lit and operational • Verify the operation of makeup and exhaust • Remove and dispose of any spoiled products • Clean and sanitize all appliances • Reset pest control normal operational frequency
RESTROOMS	• Flush toilets to fill P-Trap • Pour water in floor drains • Flow sink to fill P-Trap with water
BREAKROOMS	• Plug in and turn on appliances • Turn on supply water to appliances (coffee makers, ice makers, etc.) • Check operation of each appliance • Coordinate check of food, beverage, and other items with vending machine vendor • Provide adequate stock of hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, and other such products
CLEANING	• Introduce and maintain advanced cleaning and disinfection standards, such as routine cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch spaces and surfaces per health authority guidelines • Review and prepare plans for client/owner approval regarding changes to cleaning scope or any additional services in response to COVID-19 protection • Perform advanced cleaning and disinfection of workspace • Sanitize all workspace areas, including offices, conference rooms, breakrooms, cafeterias, restrooms, and other areas • Review client shifts to optimize janitorial service performed to meet the needs of the client and facility • Review self-cleaning technology for high touch surfaces and applications for tablets and screens • Place signage in workspace and common areas promoting worker safety through emphasizing basic infection prevention measures, including posting hand-washing signs in restrooms
SUPPLIES	• Ensure adequate stock of paper and plastic products exists (toilet paper, paper towels, etc.) • Provide tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizer and wipes containing at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectants, and disposable towels for workers to clean their work surfaces • Provide additional hand sanitizer, surface disinfectant wipes and tissue available in workspace, cafeterias, break rooms, elevator lobbies and high traffic areas and other common areas • Review self-cleaning technology for high touch surfaces and applications for tablets and screens
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)	• Obtain and store enough supply of all required PPE at the time of reopen • Mask disposal: regular waste unless directed differently by respective local health or government authorities

Buildings and occupant spaces should only be declared ready for occupancy after building owners, management teams, and tenants have coordinated and communicated on preparations. Transparency, ongoing communication and awareness will be vital to a successful transition back into the physical environment.

A state of readiness should include confirmation that

- All building inspections are complete
- Any required remediation is complete
- Any required repairs to equipment, building areas and systems have been completed
- An occupant communication plan is developed—ideally a collaboration of owners, building managers and occupants—and ready for launch, describing the measures taken to ensure the immediate and ongoing health and safety of the workforce

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Space planning solutions can be used to reduce transmission of contagious diseases among colleagues at work through social distancing. Solutions may differ depending on how many people are expected to return to work versus continuing to work from home. Understanding that dynamic will allow calculation of the total workforce expected to be accommodated in the office and assessment of the demand for workspaces.

Note: Public safety codes, building codes, applicable laws and security requirements must not be compromised to achieve social distancing.

Consider the following range of precautions and social distancing measures:

6 Feet Office Protocols (see next page)

Space use / density monitoring

- Determine a method for conducting regular counts of occupants per floor
- Add sensors to quantify utilization of spaces
- Provide real-time meters/dashboards at entries to display how many people are present, if possible

Circulation spaces

- Designate and signpost the direction of foot-traffic in main circulation paths: corridors, stairs, entries
- Consider one-way circulation routes through the workplace
- Mark increments of locally acceptable social distance on floors where queues could form

Individual seats

- Only use alternate desks (checkerboard); disable the use of alternate desks; or remove alternate desks altogether
- Add desks to spaces previously used for group activities (convert training/meeting rooms, café area and the like into desk areas)
- Increase space between desks
- Add panels between desks including height adjustable panels for sit/stand desks
- Specify seat assignments for employees to ensure minimum work distances
- Review sharing ratios if new sanitization protocols are introduced

Meeting and shared spaces

- Decommission and re-purpose large gathering spaces
- Reduce capacity of spaces—e.g., remove some chairs from large meeting rooms
- Prohibit shared use of small rooms by groups and convert to single occupant use only
- Close/forbid use of some rooms
- Calculate the maximum capacity of each room by dividing the net usable area by the square of the locally acceptable social distance (e.g., for a 6' social distance: a 200 SF room divided by 36 SF would have a recalculated maximum capacity of 5 people). Communicate this capacity via signage and room reservation tools.

6 Feet Office

As we plan for work after COVID-19, organizations will think about the new normal and how we will adjust. Social distancing—keeping a healthy distance from others—is now part of our daily language and behavior. And while the recommended distance may vary by country, the idea remains the same.

Cushman & Wakefield's 6 Feet Office aims to make the workplace safer so people can get back to work sooner. The concept consists of these elements.

6 FEET QUICK SCAN

A concise but thorough analysis of the current working environment in the field of virus safety and any other opportunities for improvement.

6 FEET RULES

A set of simple and clear workable agreements and rules of conduct that put safety first.

6 FEET ROUTING

A visually displayed and unique routing for each office, making traffic flows completely safe.

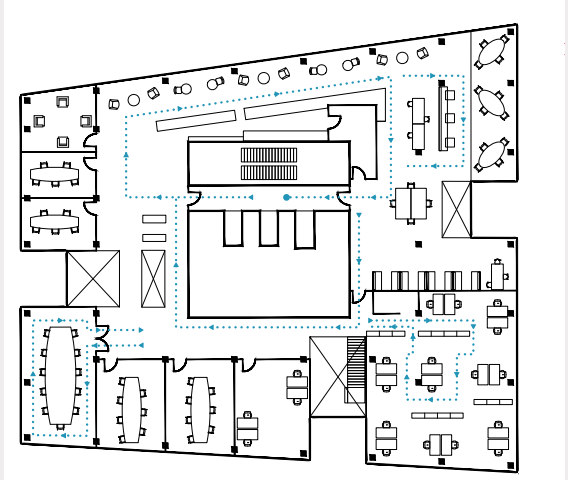
6 FEET WORKSTATION

An adapted and fully equipped workplace designed for worker safety.

6 FEET FACILITY

A trained employee who advises on and operationally ensures an optimally functioning and safe facility environment.

Learn more at **sixfeetoffice.com**



FREQUENTLY TOUCHED SURFACES

Frequently touched surfaces are reservoirs for viral pathogens. By reducing the frequency of physical contact with items in the workplace that are also touched by others, individuals can reduce their exposure to communicable diseases. Solutions may be temporary or permanent.

Note: Public safety codes, building codes, applicable laws and security requirements must not be compromised to reduce the potential for physical contact with items in the workplace.

In addition to providing disinfectant sprays or wipes adjacent to each touchpoint, consider the following range of precautions to reduce touchpoints:

Light/power switches

- Affix signage to remind occupants to keep switches 'on' all day
- Install movement detectors to activate light switches – consider voice-activated controls
- Provide wall-mounted disinfectant dispensers

Doors and drawers

- Remove non-essential doors
- Remove door handles if viable
- Affix doors in an open position

Collaboration tools (conference phones, room reservation panels)

- Disable/decommission room reservation panels outside meeting rooms
- Remove shared conference phones and encourage the use of personal mobile phones or laptop softphones for teleconferences.
- Remove whiteboard pens and erasers and encourage individuals to bring and manage their own
- Provide whiteboard cleaning solution and disposable wipes adjacent to every board
- Remove remote control handsets and provide instructions for manual equipment use instead

Chairs

- Remove unnecessary fabric upholstered chairs
- Consider plastic wrapping fabric upholstery for ease of cleaning
- Affix notices to each chair reminding occupants to avoid or disinfect touchpoints

Shared equipment (printers, copiers)

- Reduce the quantity of printers and copiers to dissuade printing

Supplies storage

- Secure supplies storage and designate specific personnel to manage stock and distribute items

CONTAMINANT CONTROL

Note: Public safety codes, building codes, applicable laws and security requirements must not be compromised in an effort to control contaminants in the workplace.

To manage contaminants that may enter the workplace, consider the following precautions:

Storage

- Add places for individuals to store and secure their own items separately from others (i.e., individual coat hooks rather than coat closets used by the group)
- Provide impervious clothing covers (e.g., dry-cleaning bags) for individuals to cover/contain their own coats or PPE

Waste receptacles

- Provide separate waste bins for PPE

Quarantine/Isolation room

- Designate a specific enclosed room to isolate any person who experiences symptoms of an illness while at work

Deliveries

- Designate one location for any deliveries to the building/space and disinfect items centrally
- Assign delivery management and sterilization as a task to specific employees only
- For longer-term planning, consider shortwave ultraviolet light sterilizing rooms/booths

DAY ONE & BEYOND

I. Building Perimeter

While outlined in other parts of this guide, it bears repeating that a well thought out pre-Day One communications program aimed at building occupants should prepare them for what to expect when they arrive and help to alleviate anxiety. Will building access be different? Will there be increased security? Should they expect delays at the entrance? Should they expect queues? Will they see directional signage or other posted information to guide them?

Every circumstance will be unique and organizations should consider the critical information their particular audience needs to prepare for arrival.

COMMUTING, TRANSPORTATION AND VEHICLES

Promote safe and healthy ways to commute to and from the workplace.

- Suggestions for public transport might include:
  - Avoiding overcrowded public transportation
  - Wearing face masks and other PPE
  - Maintaining safe distance from other passengers
  - Using hand sanitizer when entering and exiting
  - Wiping surfaces with disinfecting wipes prior to touching them
- Other transit methods might include:
  - Ride-sharing: wear PPE
  - Solo transit modes such as bikes, scooters, cars: sanitize touchpoints especially if shared modes like public bicycles
- For employees with long commutes, consider advocating that they temporarily continue working from home
- Consider new protocols for vehicles arriving on site – both personal and commercial parking garages.
- Consider protocols for emergency vehicles and teams arriving to transport infected passengers

II. Inside the Building

BUILDING ENTRY / RECEPTION

Consider guidelines and recommendations to control building ingress and egress, and that promote ongoing safety and precautionary measures at those points. These might include:

Entrances:

- Reduce the number of entrances (but maintaining code compliance) to direct occupants to use monitored and protected routes
- Hand sanitizer at doorways both inside and outside
- Temperature screening
- Floor markings for safe distancing for any queues or waiting areas
- Sanitized floor mats

Reception:

- Training reception personnel on safe interactions with guests
- Test front-line reception personnel
- Reconfiguration of visitor registration systems to avoid guests leaning over receptionists
- Glass screens between guests and reception personnel
- Virtual concierges
- Disable/decommission/remove registration kiosks/touchscreens
- Touchless registration via personal mobile phone
- Disposable sticker security tags rather than recycled clips or lanyards
- Remove reception furniture to reduce public touchpoints
- Provide PPE to building guests

Signage:

- Install signage at multiple, relevant locations in the entry sequence
- Explain building access rules and other protocols that impact how occupants use and move throughout the building

PPE and Cleaning:

- Provide receptacles for used/discarded PPE
- Monitor and review of existing cleaning guidelines and adjust or enhance as needed for cleaning paths of travel and high touch areas
- Develop new protocols for collecting and disposing of large quantities of potentially contaminated waste (especially if single-use PPE becomes common in the workplace)

SHIPPING AND RECEIVING AREAS

Before reopening, operators and building managers should review current processes for inbound and outbound deliveries (parcels, mail, food deliveries, couriers and so forth) and develop a revised plan to align to COVID-19 safety precautions. These might include:

- Routing instructions and plans to avoid deliveries through employee or main entrance and instead route through areas that will minimize contact with the larger building population
- Separating shipping and receiving areas from the general population
- Require personnel handling mail and parcels to wear PPE to receive parcels, mail and other deliveries, and train them in the proper use and disposal of PPE
- Sanitizing the exterior of packing
- If appropriate, removing items from boxes and appropriately discarding

LOBBIES / COMMON AREAS / AMENITIES

Consider guidelines and recommendations that promote safety and guide building occupants through common and amenities areas beyond the entry. These might include:

- **Hand sanitizer in stairs, elevator lobbies and all other building common areas**
- **Signage:**
  - Wayfinding signage or floor markings to direct foot traffic and ensure safe social distancing
  - Explain new rules or protocols for common areas
- **Casual gathering spaces:**
  - Re-arrange furniture to promote social distancing
- **Food service amenities:**
  - Consider acrylic dividers between service provider and users
  - Offer pre-packaged foods only
  - Reduce self-service access to foods
  - Clearly signpost queuing areas
  - Remove or rearrange furniture to promote social distancing
- **Fitness facilities and bicycle storage units:**
  - Clearly signpost queuing areas
  - Temporarily close fitness facilities
  - Rearrange equipment to achieve social distancing
  - Reduce classroom capacities to allow for social distancing
  - Require use of face masks in fitness facilities
- **Cleaning:**
  - Monitor and review existing cleaning guidelines and adjust or enhance as needed for cleaning paths of travel and high touch areas

ELEVATORS AND ESCALATORS

Elevators represent a particularly challenging area to establish social distancing. Methods for managing the use of elevators might include the following:

- Social distancing queue management for waiting passengers
- Instructional signage displaying healthy elevator use protocols including passenger limits and safe distances in the carriage
- Elevator attendants to manage flow and discourage over-crowding of elevator carriages
- Signage inside elevator cars displaying healthy elevator use protocols – this may include floor stickers to establish distancing zones and describe where and how to stand
- Review of elevator cleaning processes, and updates to ensure on-going cleaning of high touch surfaces like elevator panels / buttons

Escalators pose fewer challenges which may be managed with signage directing passengers where to stand and not to pass.

III. Inside the Workplace

ARRIVAL EXPERIENCE

Utilize the workplace arrival area to reinforce messages, new policies and protocols, which may include:

Digital signage or posters

- Remind staff how to stay safe and keep others safe in the workplace by maintaining social distancing, following new meeting guidelines, hand washing reminders, the use of virtual collaboration tools rather than meeting rooms and so forth

Cultural reminders, such as:

- The vision and priorities of the organization at this time of change and stress
- Taking care of the employee is a high priority
- Shared responsibility for the health of all employees

Hand sanitizer to encourage hand hygiene

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Provide reminders of how to manage an emergency in the workplace with relevant details defining who to notify, where to go, how to get help, and how to respond afterwards.

WORKPLACE HYGIENE

Encourage good **personal hygiene** and infection control practices when employees are in the workplace, including:

Respiratory etiquette:

- Encourage covering coughs and sneezes
- Turn away from others when coughing or sneezing

Hand hygiene:

- Promote frequent and thorough hand washing
- Make hand sanitizers available in multiple locations adjacent to common touchpoints

Avoid touchpoints:

- Provide disposable wipes so that common touchpoints (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, desks, desktop peripherals, remote controls, and more) can be disinfected by employees before each use
- Discourage the use or borrowing of other people's phones, desks, offices or equipment

Maintaining a **clean workplace** will assist in minimizing risk to employees. This involves:

Regular housekeeping:

- In open work environments, increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting frequently-touched surfaces, equipment, and other surfaces in the workplace:
  - » Kitchen Areas
  - » Vending Machines
  - » Bathrooms
  - » Meeting Rooms
  - » Phone Rooms
- When choosing cleaning chemicals, organizations should consult products from approved lists from governing authorities, and reference disinfectant labels, data and specifications with claims against emerging viral pathogens.

For **shared/agile/flexible workplaces**, consider:

- Creating and posting guidelines for desk and equipment sharing, disinfecting and use
- Removing shared keyboards and mice and distribute personal peripherals to mobile workers
- Providing storage units (lockers) for storing personal items in the workplace

Develop new practices on **kitchen and meal preparation areas**, which may include some temporary measures such as:

- Encourage occupants to bring food and beverage items from home and manage them individually
- Minimize touchpoints by removing coffee pots and the like
- Eliminate open food items
- Provide prepackaged items in containers
- Increase frequency of cleaning appliances such as refrigerators and microwaves
- Consider installing physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards
- NOTE: these approaches will impact sustainability initiatives as additional waste is produced from individually packaged food and beverages

NEW WORKPLACE OPERATIONS

To maintain social distancing, minimize touchpoints and manage potential contamination of the workplace, consider the following practices:

Space use / density monitoring

- Conduct regular counts of occupants per floor
- Add sensors to quantify utilization of spaces
- Provide real-time meters/dashboards at entries to display how many people are present
- Implement a reservation system for desks so that employees can check attendance before arriving in the workplace
- Work from Home for non-essential employees to reduce the density of personnel

Individual desks

- Implement a strict clean-desk policy so that non-essential items are not stored on the desk, but rather enclosed in cabinets or drawers
- Supply disposable daily paper placemats for use at each desk
- If desks or work areas are shared, advise individuals to sanitize all surfaces upon arrival at that seat. Supply disinfectants in the immediate proximity (or on each desk)
- Unless stringent cleaning protocols are enforced, and if possible, avoid sharing of desks

In-person meetings

- Coach employees to critically evaluate the requirement for in-person meetings
- Limit the number of attendees at in-person meetings and limit to spaces that accommodate safe distances
- Host large team/staff meetings via video conference rather than in-person
- Eliminate in-person meetings with external guests

ONGOING SUPPORT

In addition to the recommendations outlined in "Preparing the Workforce & Organization" prior to Day One (see page 9), employees will need ongoing communication and training, especially during onboarding of new staff or orientation for visitors to the space. Consider:

- A regular cadence of employee training on emergency procedures, good workplace hygiene, effective work practices for distributed teams.
- Training materials on company intranet
- Posters, signage and displays related to employee learnings about new practices.

APPROACHES TO DRIVE EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS

Engagement and enablement are important components for the success of employees, and COVID-19 is bringing new challenges to organizations to support the workforce. Maintaining high engagement from an organization's workforce during this phase of the recovery will have a direct impact on productivity. Engagement is driven by several internal and external factors including work environment, feeling of belonging and safety.

- **Consider what is on an employee's mind.** In times of change and uncertainty, employees will have different personal needs. Organizations should recognize that factors such as health concerns, dependent care or job security are real. Providing resources and support for employees to manage through these challenges is as important as changes in the workplace.
- **Give employees a voice.** Tools such as centralized Q&A, pulse surveys and focus groups are all ways to understand what is on employees' minds in real time. Action oriented platforms for "voice of the employee" builds trust while addressing employees' concerns directly.
- **Communicate.** As organizations prepare their workforce to return to the workplace, a thoughtful communication plan, customized for different audiences, will net positive results. Consider ongoing and frequent updates to keep employees informed. In the absence of information and clarity, people may create their own versions of the "truth."

OTHER TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- **Performance Management:** Upon returning to a new economic environment, some organizations will find their priorities have shifted. Clear communication of company strategies and objectives is critical to re-align and re-engage leaders and employees throughout the business. All managers and employees should be encouraged to revisit their 2020 goals to ensure alignment with the organization's direction. A midyear connection point between managers and each of their direct reports will help ensure each employee is focusing on the right objectives, and will help employees feel more engaged and committed to their work and the organization.
- **Rewards and Recognition:** To incentivize employees to perform, different forms of recognition or rewards can be deployed. In the organization's new environment, are there any practices that are no longer aligned with the changes?
- **Talent and Development:** A time of uncertainty and crisis can test a leader's resiliency and ability to drive change in an organization. It also tests their appetite to be a leader during such times. In returning to the new normal, reviewing an organization's leadership capability can really provide insights into appropriate actions. Take the time to review the strength of your leadership and assess what opportunities are there for development. Identify those strong in leading through ambiguity and give them opportunities to lead your return to work communications and initiatives.
- **Learning Platforms:** As an organization updates its approach to learning and delivery methods (for example, moving to more virtual learning), it should also assess how their learning program's design and content should be adjusted to address new ways of working and demands on leadership.

WHAT'S NEXT

Technology will continue to be a major force in shaping how organizations operate and how people live and work. The COVID-19 pandemic has only further underscored that reality. For further reading, we offer some insights on the kinds of changes technology may bring the workplace, many of which are already beginning to take hold.

GET READY FOR PERMANENT HYBRID WAYS OF WORKING

If ever there was a watershed moment that has shined a spotlight on the importance of investing in technology, the quick spread of COVID-19 is it. In every aspect of the response to the crisis, technology has played a critical role—from enabling remote working (with very limited notice in many cases), to tracking cases and patient health, to pinpointing contact patterns and isolating the spread. All of it has required robust analysis, millions of data elements, and significant leverage of collaboration, analytics, and sensor technology and more.

Below we have highlighted a few of the most critical elements for consideration as organizations return to the workplace in the new normal.

Business leaders across industries are asking for help measuring and managing the impact of COVID-19 on business continuity and their employees' wellbeing. Companies are struggling with how to respond to what is happening now, in the near term, and what needs to be considered longer term when the health crisis eventually subsides. Based on a conversation with Manish Wardekar, Workplace Intelligence Specialist at Microsoft, combined with our industry observations, we believe there are important near-term and long-term implications for organizations.

Near Term

Leaders must be able to understand what is happening inside their organizations on four different levels:

- **Keep employees engaged and protect their wellbeing:** Distractions, changing habits, inadequate equipment and poor connectivity can take a toll on individual wellbeing and effectiveness. Questions to consider include:
  - Are employees working as usual? Look out for sudden drops in levels of activity and those areas within the company undergoing the greatest change
  - How are employees adapting to the disruption? Increases in IM, calls and meetings are expected as employees find alternatives to face-to- interactions. They may also indicate where collaboration is becoming less effective.
  - Is remote work affecting work-life balance? Look out for groups with unusually high levels of after-hours work and length of work week. These groups within the company may be at risk of burn-out
- **Maintain healthy interactions within teams:** Employees are at risk of isolation, in turn creating fragmentation within teams. This increases the risk of falling productivity. Questions to consider include:
  - Are managers providing the right support? Look out for teams with low average weekly 1:1 time with their manager. Employees within these teams are at risk of becoming isolated.
  - Are team members staying connected? Look for drops in collaboration levels and interactions with colleagues as this can indicate a disruption in normal working patterns. These teams may be undergoing the greatest challenges.
  - Have business as usual activities been disrupted? Look for teams with sudden drops in recurring meetings as these groups may be experiencing a significant disruption in business as usual activities.
- **Enable collaboration between teams and organizations:** Collaboration between teams may break if employees can only maintain a subset of their usual interactions. This increases the risk of fragmentation and creating silos. Questions to consider include:
  - How are internal networks evolving? Look out for drops in average network size and breadth. This can indicate areas at risk of isolation
  - Has cross-functional teaming been disrupted? Look out for drops in collaboration levels between teams as this can indicate a disruption in normal working patterns
- **Stay aligned with customers and suppliers:** External connectivity may suffer as other companies experience similar disruption. External interactions at risk of being cancelled or postponed. Questions to consider include:
  - How are external networks evolving? Look out for drops in average network size and breadth. This can indicate external-facing areas of the company that are being disrupted
  - Have external engagements been disrupted? Look out for changes in key metrics as these can indicate a disruption in normal working patterns.

Longer Term

So the question is what is going to be the new normal? Though organizations are going through a short-term disruption, by harnessing the power of collaboration data to understand how work is getting done, many leaders will be able to make adjustments to minimize the impact.

We are already hearing from companies that had little to no remote work up to now, realizing that business can actually be done with some percentage of their workforce working remotely—and specifically in Microsoft's case, a significant percentage of employees working entirely remotely. Many companies are coming to the realization that some percentage of their workforce will never come back to an office environment—they will be

permanent remote workers. This shift is going to have significant impact on how companies think about office space, the real-estate footprint, infrastructure, and the technology that is going to have to be in place long term to support the new work paradigm.

Beyond near-term potential savings on space, the shift could have additional positive impacts. If done correctly, some of the challenges of remote work—feelings of isolation, increased after-hours work and so forth—may be offset by increased employee engagement and satisfaction through more flexible hours, more time with friends and family, savings on transportation costs and avoiding long commutes. There is a lot to figure out as we continue to manage the current situation. But the good news is that with tools, technology and insights to be able to make better decisions, we can look at ways to minimize disadvantages and embrace the positives.

Discover additional details about what Microsoft has learned from its experiences at: https://aka.ms/home-work-blog

HOW SMART IS YOUR BUILDING?

While the concept of "smart" or "digital" buildings is not new to the real estate industry, the COVID-19 crisis has underscored the need to develop more comprehensive and connected strategies that target how buildings are built, occupied and operated. Investors, landlords, occupants and building operators will need to shift focus on how to mitigate the risks associated with future pandemics, natural disasters, or human-made events, including cybersecurity incidents, utility outages and the like. Developing a clear strategy that outlines the policies, processes, and technologies required to enable the 'new normal' will be of vital importance.

As we move toward the resolution of the current pandemic crisis, the role of the physical building will become more significant. The technical ability to integrate, visualize, and control building and workplace systems through remote connectivity and automation have been in place for quite some time. But the real estate industry has been relatively slow to adopt these capabilities for various reasons. In preparation for the new normal, industry participants will need to position themselves to effectively manage their properties, be it one building or large portfolio, in a more secure, connected, and automated fashion.

Some Recommendations

Commit the time and resources to identify strategies to recognize and mitigate potential risks arising from future disruptions. These strategies will, in many cases, overlap and support opportunities to drive operational efficiency and enhance occupant experiences in normal operating modes.

- Focus on enabling future decision-making based on available data from various sources, including building systems and integrated third-party sources
- Create a unified operational view of critical data to enable a rapid, effective response to an adverse situation
- Align opportunities to augment existing data sets using technologies that help inform decision-makers. Examples may include occupancy sensors or air quality monitoring capabilities
- Focus on automation. Develop automated sequences that can quickly be enacted during an event to manage or change building operations while minimizing the need for human intervention
- Invest in operational building technologies that enhance the integration, visibility, and control of building and workplace systems

Responding to the 'new normal' is a journey and will take an investment from all corners of the real estate industry. We have a unique challenge today, and the future no doubt will bring new challenges and opportunities. Cushman & Wakefield's Digital Building Practice continuously evaluates those challenges and opportunities on behalf of our clients while acting as a trusted adviser in moving toward meeting the 'new normal.' Expect COVID-19 to be a catalyst for the adoption of smart building technology.

FINAL THOUGHTS

While we have provided a host of considerations to help plan for and manage a successful reopening of the workplace, each organization has unique needs that require a unique roadmap. Focusing on these six essential areas is a good place to start.

1. Prepare the Building
2. Prepare the Workforce
3. Control Access
4. Create a Social Distancing Plan
5. Reduce Touch Points and Increase Cleaning
6. Communicate for Confidence

We'll continue to provide more guidance and recommendations as new ideas and practices emerge—that's part of our ongoing commitment to helping our clients prepare for what's next.

In the meantime, contact us to learn more about how we can help you during this crucial phase of the recovery.

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