

USER GROUP MANAGER GUIDEBOOK

A MANAGER FOCUSED
GUIDE FOR COOK COUNTY
EMPLOYEE RE-ENTRY



MAY 2020

The last few months have brought challenges for the world, our organization and our employees. We are so thankful for all your hard work during this unprecedented time. Your resilience is unrivaled.

As our leaders and the Re-entry Task Force continue developing a plan for the returning employees by wave, know that the health and safety of you and your team members remains our top priority. Cook County is committed to a careful methodical approach to re-entering our facilities and returning our staff to work.

As we begin our journey back into the office, this guidebook will serve as a key resource for understanding new behaviors, norms and procedures for working in the office environment. The procedures were developed in conjunction with Cushman & Wakefield and the Cook County Re-entry Task Force representing BAM and BHR team members. The recommendations align with current County policies and integrate global real estate best practices to assist leadership with the steps to prepare all aspects of real estate response protocols. Together BAM, BHR and the President's Office has spoken to different department agencies and groups to assess needs as employees come back to the office in staggered waves. BAM, BHR and the President's Office will continue to review applicable health policies to ensure County guidelines align with best practices and public health recommendations.

If you represent a User Group, refer to all Re-entry planning and 6 Foot Office protocols for preparing the workplace. Partnership on procuring materials, space planning or unique space requests will be supported by Real Estate, Facilities Management and Capital Planning Partners.

RE-ENTRY PLANNING

- » Conduct space planning to identify individual seat occupancy and seat assignments that maintain 6 Foot distancing guidelines. Real Estate will provide the maximum occupancy for offices and open office areas to maintain physical distancing requirements.
- » Complete planning for your employees for staggered work shifts and work from home schedules. Refer to BHR Return to Work analysis tool for assistance in planning for alternative scheduling such as rotating days, staggered shifts and extended work from home arrangements.
- » Identify what technology will be needed for staff to work remotely for long-term flexible working until all staff can return to the office. Work with Bureau of Technology to identify unique or special technology requests.
- » Designate a Re-entry Captain for your agency/department to interact with the Re-entry Task Force. Re-entry Captains relate all COVID-related planning and requesting to the Task Force.
- » Other responsibilities may include:
 - » Receive additional training for implementing guidelines and informing staff
 - » Enforce Guidelines issued by the County related to COVID-19 Notification and report COVID cases to DFM
 - » Post policy signage
- » Re-entry Captains should be aware of the Space Allocation Committee (SAC) process. A SAC form should only be submitted when a Department is requesting space not already assigned to them.
- » In the event of illness while on site, please let your HR Business Partner know as soon as possible. Designate a specific enclosed room - possibly small conference room on each floor - to isolate any person identifying themselves with symptoms. Notify DFM of the location of the isolation space after use.
- » Each department per building will receive a package of “physical distancing support items”. Items include small bottles of hand sanitizer and an employee-issued stylus or similar object which will be used to operate designated equipment. The soft-tipped stylus is safe to use on computer screens and will not damage the equipment.



IN-OFFICE POLICIES

- » PPE for employees at various protection levels will be provided based on existing conditions. Managers should review OSHA occupational pyramid for COVID-19 to determine their employees' level of exposure risk. The levels and specific equipment will vary by User Group.
- » Communicate to employees that policy signage will be posted in high-traffic areas to direct proper usage. This includes floor markers demarcating safe distances in areas where queues could form. Managers should work with their organizational leaders to develop and administer staff training sessions. It is the employees' responsibility to adhere to all guidelines when working in the office.
- » Develop and designate circulation patterns in office corridors and spaces using handbook guidelines. Assistance in developing plans will be provided by Facilities Management. A kit of materials (such as signage and directional arrows) for communicating protocols will be provided. Requests in privately-managed buildings will be routed to respective private property management partners.
- » If no signage is posted regarding occupancy for any large communal areas, i.e. auditoriums, cafeterias, etc., contact Facilities Management or Building Management for guidance. Employees are responsible to self-monitor physical distancing in cafeterias.
- » Limit food deliveries to keep as many people out of the building as possible; also helps reduce packaging/containers/food handled by others outside of the building.
- » Food delivery safety is the responsibility of the employee. Employees should meet delivery people outside of the building and sanitize packaging and other exterior materials.

**REFER TO OSHA GUIDELINES
FOR EXPOSURE RISK LEVELS TO
DETERMINE APPROPRIATE PPE**



IN-OFFICE POLICIES *Continued*

- » Keep internal doors open to reduce the need for avoidable contact where feasible and appropriate.
- » Re-entry Captains are responsible for communicating proper protocol and monitoring compliance for face covering policy.
- » Communicate the policy on remaining at home if not feeling well in accordance with HR policies. If employees are not feeling well for any reason, it is requested that they work from home for the day and monitor health before returning to the office.
- » Coach employees to critically evaluate the requirement for in-person meetings and use technology platforms instead.
- » Institute a clean desk policy and designate storage areas for personal items, if not already present.

SPACE DENSITY / MONITORING

- » Re-entry Captains to develop a method for conducting regular counts of occupants per floor. Results should be shared with managers and organizational leadership.

FREQUENTLY TOUCHED SURFACES

- » Instruct employees to use a stylus or similar object to operate the time clock and avoid touching the device with fingers. Use the stylus to press the “in” or “out” prompt being careful not to damage equipment.
- » Communicate to employees that 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. Where present, use wipes to disinfect shared touchpoints.

**KEEPING AN
OFFICE CLEAN IS A
TWO-WAY STREET**

*Employee diligence and
enhanced facilities
maintenance will maintain
a safe environment*



FREQUENTLY TOUCHED SURFACES *Continued*

- » Educate staff on alternative methods to push buttons including use of elbows, sleeves, or objects other than fingers to push buttons when required. Stylus or similar object may also be used where practical.
- » User Groups will be responsible for providing additional cleaning supplies, over and above what Facilities will provide in office common areas.
- » Inform occupants that there are some internal doors that can be left open or removed on a case-by-case basis. Exit and entry doors, along with other fire doors, are not to be left open. Please consult with DFM if you are unsure if a door is a designated fire door.
- » Discourage the use of conference phones and encourage the use of mobile phones or laptop softphones for teleconferences.
- » Offices with a phone entry system should post signage encouraging visitors to use mobile phones to reach individuals within the office suite.
- » Remove unnecessary chairs in common areas. Create a work order for assistance from DFM for removal of chairs for long-term storage. Note that removal process will be iterative and will continue through the summer months.
- » Affix notices to common and meeting spaces reminding occupants to avoid or disinfect touchpoints after use. Facilities will provide standard language for signage and disinfecting materials.
- » Encourage staff to use electronic media and dissuade printing. Utilize electronic signatures where possible. When printing, be cautious to maintain physical distancing.

INDIVIDUAL SEATS

- » To maintain proper distancing at individual seats, designate seats that can be used as well as those that are not to be used. DFM can provide assistance with planning seating if needed. Signage with consistent language will be provided to users and should be used to designate desks that are not to be used. If removal of desks is needed, please complete a work order through DFM. Removal of desks by DFM will be ongoing and will continue through the summer.



INDIVIDUAL SEATS *Continued*

- » Add individual workspaces to areas previously used for group activities such as training/meeting rooms and café areas. User Group to use the work order system for the conversion process. Remain cognizant of additional electrical and technology infrastructure requirements.
- » If rearranging / reappropriating an existing space within your Department, a SAC form does not need to be submitted. If requesting a new space that is not already assigned to your Department, a SAC form should be submitted, with the COVID-19 box checked.

MEETING AND SHARED SPACES

- » Discourage in-person meetings in favor of virtual Microsoft Teams meetings for large gatherings. Work with DFM to identify methods for setting up rooms for the desired number of participants.
- » Inform employees of “Clean After Each Use” policy for MFD (Multi Function Device) shared areas (scan/copy/print).
- » Reduce capacity of meeting spaces by removing some chairs from large meeting rooms. Guidelines for maximum occupancy per meeting room will be provided via Real Estate/Facilities/Capital Planning teams based on safe distancing guidelines. Near-term solution is to mark chairs that shouldn't be used with signs or "X's." Create a work order for assistance from DFM for removal of chairs for long-term storage. Note that removal process will be iterative and will continue through the summer months.
- » Prohibit shared use of small rooms (designed for <4 people) and convert to single occupant use only.
- » Communicate to employees new usage policies in certain high-traffic rooms. For example, cafeterias will prohibit more than 1 person per table.

**BACK TO THE OFFICE PLANNING IS AN
EVOLVING PROCESS.**

*We will work with you on
space planning to maintain
safe distancing standards.*



FACILITIES CLEANING/SUPPLIES

- » Explain the process for procuring additional cleaning supplies and signage with the Facilities group.

VISITOR POLICY

- » Assess the typical population of non-employee visitors in the space. Where appropriate, limit access to certain categories of site visitors such as vendors or contractors.
- » Inform visitors of face covering requirements while on site.

FOOD POLICY

- » Inform employees of usage policies for common refrigerators and microwaves for food preparation.
- » Encourage occupants to bring food and beverage items from home and manage them individually.
- » Designate suitable in-office eating areas.

MAIL/SUPPLY ROOMS

- » Designate one person to go in and out of supply rooms.
- » Assign delivery management and sterilization as a task to specific employees only.
- » For Deliveries Clerks: administer receipt of and sanitize all items arriving in the workplace such as packages and items from couriers.
- » 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. DFM can provide assistance as necessary.
- » Remove items from boxes and appropriately discard.



EMPLOYEE CONNECTIVITY/ COMMUNICATIONS

- » Develop a central point of consistently updated information for employee reference on your website. Create a reminder to update the website with latest information on a regular (such as weekly) basis. Reference the Employee Handbook which will provide a comprehensive Q&A on policies and expectations.
- » Practice early communication. As plans are forming, keep the workforce informed as soon as appropriate.
- » Provide ongoing methods of additional training to reinforce messaging and changes in the work environment. Repetition will help employees acknowledge and retain important messages and information.
- » 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.
- » In coordination with Human Resources, utilize tools to solicit employee feedback to understand concerns of employees in real time.
- » Schedule 1:1 time with employees. Teams with low average weekly 1:1 time with their manager put employees at a greater risk of becoming isolated.

IN CONCLUSION

SPACE PLANNING – plan for staff seating and meeting room use using Real Estate guidelines for maximum occupancy

COMMUNICATION – inform staff of new policies on room usage, cleaning after use and proper distancing in high-traffic areas

MONITOR – Re-entry Captains enforce guidelines and relay planning related inquires to the Re-entry Task Force.





*Alone we can do so little. Together we
can do so much.*

-Helen Keller



**CUSHMAN &
WAKEFIELD**