WORKPLACE GUIDELINES
FOR CAMPUS REPOPULATION

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PURPOSE STATEMENT

Florida International University (FIU) has developed a progressive and intentional approach to the restoration of on-campus activity. This plan is designed to mitigate risk to our constituents while preserving the student experience and fulfilling our university’s mission.

FIU will follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidelines for Safety/Health, consider local and state orders for movement, and take into account the preparedness levels of the university and surrounding communities. FIU will reference the Governor’s Recovery Plan, and any relevant local ordinances following guidelines outlined therein. As our knowledge and understanding of COVID-19 evolves, we will continue to update practices and protocols to best address the health and safety of our faculty, staff, students, constituents, and community as we optimize operations of the academic enterprise.

While Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs) are of paramount importance in guiding the repopulation process, supervisors play a crucial role in our continued commitment to seek creative solutions. As we fulfill the university’s mission, we do so with the health and well-being of our workforce in mind. During the re-opening of the university, the leadership of supervisors is vital. These guidelines also serve as a valuable tool to empower supervisors to engage in informed and supported decision making with their direct reports regarding their department’s return to campus.

WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS & GUIDELINES

All faculty and staff are expected to fully comply with the policies, protocols and guidelines outlined and referenced in this document.

INTENTIONAL APPROACH TO REPOPULATION

As we continue to evaluate our progress in repopulation, business unit heads are empowered to recall additional employees to work on-campus based on university business needs, while adhering to these established guidelines. We expect onsite student learning will increase in specific labs or other approved areas with appropriate risk mitigation measures in place.

The Fall 2020 semester will include multiple approaches to our “new normal,” with the appropriate additional on-campus staffing, while continuing to utilize alternate scheduling, remote work, and other measures to maintain physical distancing and flexibility. Remote work policies will be revised to reflect measurable performance goals for those employees who will continue to work remotely. Students will return to campus in accordance with a defined student repopulation plan that may include modifications in class schedules and course delivery to ensure student success while maintaining required risk mitigation measures.

The university will assess increases to staffing levels based on mission-critical operations, ability to control and manage specific work environments, and necessity to access on-site resources. Approved decisions for increases to population will be communicated through multiple sources: External Relations, Human Resources, the respective dean, vice president or vice provost.
We anticipate the need to meet physical distancing requirements will continue for some time. As a result, units that can continue to effectively work remotely will likely continue to do so where appropriate until restrictions are eased for larger gatherings.

The ultimate goal is to return to full campus capacity when conditions are favorable to do so. However, physical return to campus in support of university operations will be incremental and in proportion to the need to support students, research, and/or academic programs, in this order:

- Supervisors return in an effort to prepare for employees.
- Employees return in an effort to prepare for students.

**WHAT WE ARE DOING**

Recognizing the critical importance of faculty/staff/student confidence in returning to campus, the following mitigation and safety measures have taken place as university-wide efforts:

- Developed required COVID-19 Training to Return to Work (including, but not limited to, guidance on face covering usage, restroom occupation, use of elevators, in-person meeting etiquette, etc.).
- Taken measures to address testing/tracing/disinfection.
- Incorporated floor markings to guide flow of pedestrian traffic.
- Established maximum capacities and/or guidelines for populating restrooms, elevators, and gathering places.
- Provided signage throughout campus with reminders of physical distancing.
- Developed P3 application, a mobile app that allows for health self-assessment to be completed prior to campus arrival.
- Posted and promoted prevention strategies (handwashing, physical distancing, facial covering).
- Installed hand sanitizer stations throughout campus locations.
- Purchased face coverings for distribution (two per employee, one per student.)
- Purchased disinfectant sprays for distribution to all faculty and staff.

**SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

The following protocols are to be followed by employees in adherence to CDC Guidelines for Safety/Health:

- **Wear face coverings for safety of self and others.** Appropriate use of face coverings is critical to minimize risk to others near you. You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick. The face covering is **not** a substitute for physical distancing and must be worn at all times while on campus, even if working in an office alone.
- **Maintain physical distancing of at least 6 feet.**
- **Ensure physical presence with others does not exceed 15 minutes, to the extent possible.**
- All members of FIU community are expected to complete the [COVID-19 Training to Return to Work](https://example.com) and actively participate in protecting themselves and others. Failure to adhere to established safety protocols may result in disciplinary action.
• Maintain work areas clean using products provided and/or recommended by the university.
• Refrain from use of others’ work equipment (phones, computers, pens, pads, etc.).
• Refrain from physical contact with others, including handshakes.

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR ALL WORKPLACES

Compliance with public health practices including hand hygiene, physical distancing, proper
cough/sneeze etiquette, frequent disinfection of personal workspace, common and high traffic areas,
symptom assessment, self temperature checks, and face coverings, is the campus’s new normal and is
our collective responsibility. Supervisors should consider and employ the following strategies as they
make decisions to return staff to work:

• Stagger arrival/departure times to reduce crowding in and out of workplace.
• To reduce congestion, minimize entry points to the workplace, where possible.
• Discourage nonessential trips within buildings.
• Review layouts to allow staff to work six feet apart and have at least one workspace separating
coworkers from one another, where possible.
• Avoid employees working face to face or working side by side, where possible.
• Determine if customer facing areas require plexiglass to create a physical barrier between
people where appropriate distancing is not possible.
• Stagger break times to reduce pressure on the break rooms.
• Encourage and support outside areas for breaks.
• Reconfigure seating and/or remove seating/tables to maintain spacing and reduce face-to-face
interactions, including waiting areas/lobbies.
• Work with Parking and Transportation along with Facilities to obtain signage needed to
maintain physical distancing.
• Keep hand sanitizer accessible for visitors.
• Use of department/unit break rooms should be avoided as physical distancing is not feasible.
Eating in public and with others increases possibilities for spread of any airborne viral
components.
• Continue to utilize Zoom platform for meetings where physical distancing will be
compromised.
• Recommendations for staff to return should be submitted to their corresponding dean or vice
president for approval.

SPACE REQUIREMENTS

The following workspace protocols must be met to ensure compliance with CDC Guidelines for
Safety/Health and to mitigate the spread of COVID-19:

• Configure workspaces to maintain minimum of six (6) feet distance between employees.
• People should not be positioned to face each other in workspaces with distances less than 6
feet.
• Identify points of entry/exit to direct flow of traffic to support physical distancing.
• Reconfigure congregated areas such as phone bank areas/computer lab spaces to accommodate physical distancing.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPERVISORS TO ASSESS AND PLAN

As supervisors begin the assessment to prepare for return to campus, consideration should be given to the following:

• The nature of the business or work being performed (Are students being supported by this presence? Is research being impacted by this presence? Are critical university operations being facilitated?)
• Employee’s role: What functions need to be performed on campus v. remotely.
• Workspaces (as outlined above).
• Is the work area high touch (e.g., general public, student volume, front office).
• Can work model incorporate ‘appointments only’ scenarios for on-campus presence to control traffic flow.
• Productivity of staff working remote. Please refer to the Decision Tree graph at the end of this document explaining various scenarios.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR RETURNING TO CAMPUS

Supervisors are encouraged to consider workforce capacity to determine employees whose job functions require a return to campus. Supervisors should assess employees’ ability to continue working remotely while completing their assigned job duties, where possible.

Recommendations for staff to return should be submitted to their corresponding dean or vice president for approval.

As supervisors are determining who should return to campus first, consideration should be given to departmental or functional interdependencies. In some cases, one area’s opening is dependent upon other areas. In addition to guidance from the Emergency Operations Center, monitor External Relations releases to learn of decisions for campus location re-openings.

Look for opportunities for faculty and staff who are equally or more productive working remotely to continue to do so in order to facilitate physical distancing on campus.

Consider compressed scheduling and alternating office sharing (swing spaces). The Office of Employee & Labor Relations can assist.

Look for opportunities to consolidate and/or temporarily repurpose space for student success, research or physical distancing for roles that need to be on campus.

 Capitalize on the momentum of remote work, where possible, with greater intentionality than before.

Give consideration to whether remote work makes a significant impact to cost reduction in your operation.

Adopt mindset that embraces success toward Next Horizon strategic plan goals.
GUIDELINES TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC POPULATIONS

Vulnerable/Immunocompromised Populations: The Center for Disease Control and Prevention lists characteristics of vulnerable and immunocompromised populations, which includes individuals over 65, who should take extra precautions from potential exposure. Provide greater flexibility for those individuals who self-disclose that they may be at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. However, do not compel, such persons to stay home if their preference is to return when called to do so. Faculty and staff need not disclose any details about their conditions to their supervisors.

Employees with Fear/Anxiety of Returning: The emotional and social disruptions of COVID-19, in combination with the constant media coverage and uncertainty, can take a toll on our faculty and staff. Supervisors are encouraged to work with employees and recommend available resources to assist them in normalizing the new workplace while encouraging them to work through this together. Reiterate measures being taken by the university as well as responsibilities being shared by our entire FIU community to make and maintain a safe, healthy work environment. Resources such as the FIU COVID-19 website, the Office of Employee Assistance, COVID-19 Emergency Policy, and HR Website all contain information to support, inspire, encourage, and boost confidence in returning to our FIU in a positive way.

Employees with Disabilities: Employees with pre-existing physical or mental conditions that have been exacerbated by COVID-19 may be entitled to reasonable accommodations. Be sure to engage with the employee in any accommodation requests by directing them to the Office of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA). Supervisors are expected to provide reasonable accommodations to employees with ADA-qualifying disabilities. Supervisors may confer with IDEA for information and guidance on accommodating ADA-qualifying disabilities.

Child/Elder Care Provisions: Provide flexibility to employees with child- or elder care obligations. The employee may be eligible for leave due to lack of childcare through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).
ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

- COVID-19 Emergency Policy
- HR Covid-19 Website
- FIU Covid-19 Website
- Office of Employee Assistance (OEA)
- Office of Employee & Labor Relations (ELR)
- Office of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA)
Workplace Repopulation Guidelines Workgroup:
El pagnier K. Hudson
Elizabeth Bejar
Pablo Ortiz
Andres Gil
Carlos Flores
Jennifer LaPorta
Elizabeth Marston
Val Aubourg
Damaris Valdes
Gloria Jacomino

References:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
American Colleges Health Association’s Guidelines
Duke University, Return to Work Publication
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)