Return to the Workplace Plan

Phase I: June 8, 2020
Contents

Guiding Principles .................................................................................................................. 3
Return to the Workplace ......................................................................................................... 3
Workplace Expectations & Guidelines .................................................................................... 3
Symptom Monitoring Requirement .......................................................................................... 3
Mental and Emotional Wellbeing .......................................................................................... 4
  Worklife/Life Balance .............................................................................................................. 4
  Healthy Islander ....................................................................................................................... 4
Phased Return to Campus ........................................................................................................ 4
Return to Work Options .......................................................................................................... 5
  Remote Work .......................................................................................................................... 5
  Alternating Days .................................................................................................................... 5
  Staggered Reporting/Departing .............................................................................................. 5
  Children and Dependents in the Workplace ........................................................................... 5
Your first day back ................................................................................................................... 5
Returning of Equipment ........................................................................................................ 6
Health & Safety Guidance ...................................................................................................... 6
Social Distancing ..................................................................................................................... 6
Face Coverings and/or Masks .................................................................................................. 6
Use and care of face coverings ............................................................................................... 7
  Putting on the face covering: .................................................................................................. 7
  Taking off the face covering: .................................................................................................. 7
  Care, storage, and laundering: ............................................................................................... 7
Taking Temperatures ................................................................................................................ 7
Handwashing ............................................................................................................................ 7
Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene ................................................................................................... 8
Gloves ....................................................................................................................................... 8
Goggles/Face Shields ............................................................................................................... 8
Cleaning/Disinfection .............................................................................................................. 8
Cleaning Computers and Electronics ...................................................................................... 8
Campus Visitors ....................................................................................................................... 9
Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios .......................................................................... 9
Public Transportation ............................................................................................................. 9
Working in Office Environments ............................................................................................ 9
Enter/Exit Control ........................................................................................................... 10
Travel .................................................................................................................................. 10
Common Spaces .................................................................................................................. 10
Restrooms ............................................................................................................................. 10
Elevators ............................................................................................................................... 11
Meetings ............................................................................................................................... 11
Dining .................................................................................................................................. 11
Laboratories ......................................................................................................................... 11
Plexiglass .............................................................................................................................. 11
Golf Carts .............................................................................................................................. 11
Smoking Areas ...................................................................................................................... 12
Student Return To Campus ................................................................................................. 12
Guiding Principles
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s (TAMU-CC) policies and protocols for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic are rooted in the safety and well-being of all faculty, staff, and visitors. The primary goals of TAMU-CC’s response are to protect the health of our students and employees while continuing the institution’s vital education, research, and outreach.

TAMU-CC’s plans are also consistent with guidance provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas, the Texas A&M University System, Nueces County, and the City of Corpus Christi. Our knowledge and understanding of the COVID-19 virus continue to evolve and our policies and plans will be updated as more information becomes available.

TAMU-CC’s plans to return to normal operations will include a phased-in approach. The timeline is subject to change, and it is important to understand that the process may be longer or shorter than faculty and staff expect.

Return to the Workplace
Workplace Expectations & Guidelines
All employees are expected to fully comply with the policies, protocols, and guidelines outlined in this document. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination. Per Texas A&M University System, all employees must complete “Protocol and Certification for System Member Employees” (course 2114130) and “Safe Practices for Returning to the Office During the COVID-19 Pandemic” (course 2114131) in TrainTraq.

Symptom Monitoring Requirement
Employees should continue to self-monitor for symptoms. Employees instructed to return to the workplace must be free of ANY symptoms potentially related to COVID-19 before reporting to campus. These symptoms include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit
- Known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19

Employees experiencing symptoms should contact their health care provider, enter appropriate leave in Workday and inform their supervisor. As a reminder, those employees on Blue Cross Blue Shield insurance can visit MDLive rather than visiting a medical facility.
According to CDC, individuals with certain conditions are at a higher risk of complications due to COVID-19. Those conditions may include:

- Older adults (aged 65 years and older)
- Chronic lung disease
- Moderate to severe asthma
- Serious heart conditions
- Being immunocompromised
- Severe obesity (BMI of 40 or higher)
- Diabetes
- Chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis
- Liver disease

**Mental and Emotional Wellbeing**

**Worklife/Life Balance:** Employee assistance is available to offer emotional support during this stressful period. Telephonic or video counseling is available, and you can access this service using most smartphones, tablets, and computers with a camera. You may contact the provider by calling 1-800-851-1714 or visiting their website at [www.compsych.com](http://www.compsych.com) Web ID: TAMUS

**Healthy Islander:** TAMU-CC is committed to supporting your overall health and wellbeing. Visit the [HR Coronavirus Benefits](http://www.compsych.com) website for more information on programs that encourage and offer support to manage stress and enhance your resilience.

**Phased Return to Campus**

TAMU-CC will phase in a return of employees over time and each new phase will be scheduled only after University leadership reassesses the risk and decides to proceed. The phased approach allows the campus to continue operations with a reduced number of people on campus to ensure we are meeting CDC guidance before progressing to the next phase. Please note that the dates for each phase are estimated and subject to change.

**Phase 1** (estimated June 8): Up to 25 percent of employees should return to work on campus.

**Phase 2** (estimated July 1): Up to 50 percent of employees should return to work on campus.

**Phase 3** (estimated August 1): Up to 75 percent of employees should return to work on campus.

**Phase 4** (estimated August 17): All remaining employees should return to on campus work, with the exception of those with an approved Alternate Work Location.

During the initial phases, consideration should be given to those who are at high risk as defined above, caring for children or family members, or who can more effectively and are able to continue working remotely. Supervisors should discuss with their teams to identify staff who will continue working from home and those returning.

Employees may not return to campus if they:

- have a diagnosis or suspected case of coronavirus;
● are currently exhibiting symptoms associated with COVID-19 as they are listed in the Symptom Monitoring Requirement section above;
● have had close (less than six feet) contact with anyone that has a lab confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days; or
● in the last 14 days have returned from travel or traveled through an area with state or local travel restrictions that mandate quarantine upon arrival home.

Employees who report to campus and are symptomatic as described in the Symptom Monitoring Requirement section above, will be asked to leave the workplace and continue to remote work until they are symptom-free. Failure to comply with these guidelines, as well as failure to comply with a request to leave the workplace may result in disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination. If the employee refuses to leave the workplace the supervisor should contact senior management and engage UPD, if necessary.

Return to Work Options
Employees instructed to return to work on campus should work within their building and department to ensure compliance with required social distancing measures and to reduce population density within workspaces. Supervisors will devise a phased schedule based upon the estimated dates provided in the Phased Return to Campus section which must be shared with their Vice President or Athletic Director.

Remote Work: During the initial phases those who can work remotely to fulfill their work responsibilities may continue to do so to reduce the number of individuals on campus. Any arrangements after Phase 4 should be approved by the employee’s immediate supervisor and Vice President via an Alternate Work Location form.

Alternating Days: To limit the number of individuals and interactions among those on campus, during the initial phases, departments may schedule staffing on alternating days. These alternating schedules will help ensure social distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces.

Staggered Reporting/Departing: The beginning and end of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting and departure times by at least 30 minutes will reduce traffic in common areas to meet social distancing requirements. (See Enter/Exit Controls for further details).

Children and Dependents in the Workplace: To ensure the health and safety of our employees, please remember per University procedure 33.99.99.C0.05 limits children and adult dependents in the workplace to infrequent and brief visits and should not be in work areas regularly and/or for extended periods of time.

Your first day back
Employees returning to work should first report to the University Center to pick up their face covering and a small personal spray bottle of disinfectant, which can be refilled. Pickup will be from 8:30am - 2pm at the SandDollar Office. Please bring your SandDollar card with you and follow social distancing markings to ensure at least 6 feet of distance.
Information on refills will be posted under the For Faculty and Staff section of the campus FAQs. Please check this website often as we will update this page as activity increases and we can address the needs across campus.

Returning of Equipment
Employees who carried office university property off campus should return the equipment and verify that all equipment pieces have been returned with their department head and department's accountable property officer.

Loaner laptops or other loaned IT equipment should also be returned. Please contact the IT Service Desk to make an appointment to return it. The IT Service Desk will coordinate a time and location so you may safely return your checkout items.

Upon return to campus:
  ● Employees are encouraged to reconnect their devices such as desktops or monitors.
  ● Check that devices such as printers and scanners, which may have been powered down during the remote work period, are turned on.
  ● Reboot office computers that may have been left running to ensure that it processes any updates or patches that may still need to be applied.

For any other issues or concerns regarding your technology as you return to the workplace please contact the IT Service Desk at 361.825.2692 or ithelp@tamucc.edu. If there is an urgent, work impacting problem, please communicate that to assist with appropriate prioritization.

If the employee must return to remote work and equipment must be checked out please fill out an office campus use permit form (https://adminservices.tamucc.edu/Property-Management/assets/off-campus-permit.pdf) or contact the IT Service Desk at 361.825.2692 or ithelp@tamucc.edu if a loaner is required.

Health & Safety Guidance
Social Distancing
Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools to avoid being exposed to the COVID-19 virus and slow its spread. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms. Social distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk. Employees who have returned to campus should follow these social distancing practices:
  ● Always stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people
  ● No more than 10 should gather in groups
  ● Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings

Face Coverings and/or Masks
To prevent the transmission of the virus, the CDC recommends that employees wear a face covering or mask while in close proximity to others (within 6 feet) and in public settings where other social
distancing measures are difficult to maintain (common work spaces, meeting rooms, classrooms, hallways, etc.). Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi will comply with that recommendation.

For a vast majority of employees, a face covering meets CDC guidelines, and one face covering will be provided by the University to all employees. Healthcare workers and first responders will be provided masks which meet CDC guidelines. Although the University will be providing a face covering or mask, you may wear your own choosing if you prefer.

Use and care of face coverings

Putting on the face covering:
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to handling the face covering.
- Ensure the face covering fits over the nose and under the chin.
- Situate the face covering properly with nose wire, where applicable, so it is snug against the nose.
- Tie straps behind the head and neck or loop around the ears.
- Throughout the process: Avoid touching the front of the face covering.

Taking off the face covering:
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth when removing the face covering.
- Loop your finger into the strap and pull the strap away from the ear or untie the straps.
- Wash hands immediately after removing.

Care, storage, and laundering:
- Keep face coverings stored in a paper bag when not in use.
- Cloth face coverings should not be used more than one day at a time and should be washed after use with laundry detergent. Cloth face coverings should be replaced immediately if soiled, damaged (e.g. ripped, punctured), or visibly contaminated.
- Disposable masks should not be used for more than one day and should be placed in the trash after you leave campus. The mask should also be placed in the trash if it is soiled, damaged (e.g., stretched ear loops, torn or punctured material), or visibly contaminated.

Taking Temperatures
Employees should check their own temperature daily before reporting to campus.

Handwashing
Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or touching your face. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and wash your hands after touching your face.

Hand sanitizer stations are located across campus and will be refilled as needed. If you find a station that needs to be refilled, please email facilities.services@tamucc.edu with the exact location.
Coughing/Sneezing Hygiene
Remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow and throw used tissues in the trash. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Gloves
According to the CDC, gloves are not necessary for general use and do not replace good hand hygiene. Washing with soap or cleaning your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol often is considered the best practice. If your job duties warrant gloves your supervisor will work with you.

Goggles/Face Shields
Employees are not required to wear goggles or face shields as part of general activity on campus.

Cleaning/Disinfection
Service Solutions Company (SSC) teams have enhanced their disinfecting and cleaning practices across campus and are paying attention to high-traffic areas and high-touch fixtures such as door handles, push plates, light switches, elevator buttons, and handrails located in common areas. This disinfecting will be in addition to their routine custodial activities such as mopping, vacuuming, and emptying trash. SSC will continue to monitor soap and hand sanitizer dispensers and more frequently. If you find a station that needs to be refilled please email facilities.services@tamucc.edu with the exact location using building name, floor, and room number.

Individual offices will have interior and exterior doorknobs disinfected daily. Each employee will be supplied with a small personal spray bottle of disinfectant, which can be refilled, to wipe down commonly used surfaces before and after use with products that meet the EPA’s criteria for use against COVID-19 and are appropriate for the surface. This includes any shared items or equipment (e.g. copiers, printers, computers, A/V and other electrical equipment, coffee makers, desks, desk lamps and tables, room light switches, doorknobs, etc.). Departments will be supplied with disinfectant for refills.

Cleaning Computers and Electronics
The following information provides guidance for cleaning computers, copiers, printers, and other electronics with the disinfectant provided. For computer labs, larger refillable bottles will be made available to disinfect surfaces. It is important to follow manufacturer recommendations to avoid damage when cleaning computers, computer accessories, touchscreen devices and electronics.

General cleaning tips:
- Use a lint-free cloth, such as a screen wipe or a cloth made from microfiber.
- Avoid excessive wiping and submerging item in cleanser to avoid damage.
- Unplug all external power sources and cables.
- Do not use aerosol sprays, bleach or abrasive cleaners.
● Ensure moisture does not get into any openings.
● **Never** spray cleaner directly on an item.
● Do not use fabric or leather surfaces on items, as this can scratch or damage to the items.
● **Do not use bleach** to disinfect computers and electronics

More information can be found on these websites:
● Apple: [How to clean your Apple products](#)
● Microsoft: [Clean and care for your Surface](#)
● Dell: [Guidance for Keeping Your Dell Technologies Equipment Clean](#)

**Campus Visitors**

Campus visitors are limited to those considered critical to the mission of the university and departments must obtain approval by their Vice President or designee prior to their visit. Campus visitors are expected to follow the same guidance as employees and should not be on campus until after 9am and leave before 4pm to reduce traffic in common areas. Invited guests should not be left unaccompanied in campus buildings and should not visit campus if they have any of the symptoms listed on page 2.

**Guidance for Specific Workplace Scenarios**

**Public Transportation**

If you must take public transportation, wear a face covering or mask before entering the bus and avoid touching surfaces with your hands. Upon disembarking, wash your hands or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

**Working in Office Environments**

If you work in an open environment, be sure to maintain at least 6 feet distance from co-workers. If possible, have at least one workspace separating you from another co-worker. You must wear a face covering or mask while in a shared workspace/room if you are unable to maintain social distancing.

Departments should assess open work environments and meeting rooms to institute measures to physically separate and increase distance between employees, other coworkers, and customers, such as:

- visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, or signs to indicate to customers where they should stand while waiting in line.
- one-way directional signage for large open workspaces with multiple through-ways to increase distance between employees moving through the space.
- Consider designating specific stairways for up or down traffic if building space allows.

Administrative Operations in conjunction with Environmental Health and Safety will place signage in common areas. If after the departmental assessment additional signage is needed please email EVPFA@tamucc.edu.

If you work in an office, no more than one person should be in the same room unless the required 6 feet of distancing can be consistently maintained. If more than one person is in a room and social distancing
cannot be maintained, face coverings or masks must be worn. A face covering or mask is not required if you are working alone in a confined office space or if social distancing can be maintained.

Face coverings or masks must also be used in any TAMU-CC facility where social distancing cannot be maintained, including walking in narrow hallways where others travel and in break rooms, conference rooms, and other meeting locations.

**Enter/Exit Control**

Administrative Operations in coordination with Environmental Health and Safety will place signage at building entrances noting if the door is an entrance only, exit only, or for the user to please stay to the right. Office suite and classroom access points, when possible, will have access points as designated entrances and exits.

The beginning and end of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Coordination of the arrival and departure times of employees should occur to reduce congestion during typical “rush hours” of the business day. Staggering reporting and departure times by at least 30 minutes will reduce traffic in common areas to meet social distancing requirements. Departments should stagger reporting/departing.

Once you have been instructed to return to the workplace, you should report to work or depart work through the designated building access and at the designated time to limit the number of people entering and exiting buildings at any one time.

**Travel**

Business travel should be limited to mission critical functions to assure the continued safety of the campus community. Employees engaged in business-related and personal travel who suspect they have been exposed to COVID-19 while away from the university are required to notify their supervisor and place themselves in self-quarantine for a period of time in accordance with current CDC guidance.

**Common Spaces**

In hallways, workrooms, and breakrooms it is always important to maintain 6 feet distance between you and others. If more than one person is in these common spaces a face covering or mask must be worn if social distancing cannot be maintained. Individuals should not sit facing one another. Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in employee breakrooms to support social distancing practices between employees. Wipe all surfaces, including tables, refrigerator handles, coffee machines, copiers, etc. after use.

**Restrooms**

Where there is more than one urinal, every other urinal will be closed to maximize the distances between individuals. In restrooms with stalls, employees are encouraged to occupy every other stall, if possible. After using the restroom, wash your hands thoroughly or use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.
Elevators
No more than two people may be on the elevator at a time. Those who are able should use the stairs whenever possible. While using an elevator, you must wear face covering or mask if others are present and avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers, if possible. Wash your hands thoroughly afterward or use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

Meetings
Convening in groups increases the risk of transmitting the virus. Where feasible, meetings should be held in whole or part using the extensive range of available collaboration tools (WebEx, Microsoft Teams, telephone, etc.).

In-person meetings are limited to no more than ten individuals and all attendees should maintain 6 feet of separation. Departments should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in meeting rooms to support social distancing practices between attendees. All attendees must wear a face covering or mask while sharing space in a common room if social distancing cannot be maintained.

While on campus, you are encouraged to communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed by email, telephone, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, Jabber, or other available technology rather than meeting face-to-face.

Dining
Before and after eating, you should wash your hands thoroughly to reduce the potential transmission of the virus. Given the difficulty in complying with social distancing while serving food, you must wear a face covering or mask in the dining areas until you are ready to eat. Face covering or mask should be worn when exiting the dining areas as well. On-campus dining will have markings to ensure at least 6 feet of distance between each customer. Seating has also been removed to ensure social distancing. Employees are encouraged to take food back to their work environment or eat outside as able.

Laboratories
Researchers performing non-hazardous and/or dry work should, whenever possible, perform such work in their individual workspace. Researchers conducting work with hazardous or bio-hazardous material or conducting work on animals should follow social distancing guidelines, but never work alone.

Plexiglass
Plexiglass has been installed in areas where service to customers occurs within 6 feet (Bursar’s Office, Mail Services, Dining areas, etc.).

Golf Carts
If possible, golf cart usage should be limited to one person. If more than one person is necessary, riders must wear a face covering or mask since social distancing cannot be maintained.
**Smoking Areas**
Per University procedure 34.05.99.C1, smoking is only permissible in approved locations and it is always important to maintain 6 feet distance between you and others.

**Student Return To Campus**
A follow up document will be provided to address procedures related to the Student return to campus.