

Return-to-work Guide

Guidelines for reorienting your employees to the workplace during the 2020 COVID-19 health crisis



Leadership Message

Rush University System for Health has emerged as a national leader during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing outstanding care with excellent outcomes for even the sickest patients. Now, we want to share our expertise to help U.S. businesses get back to work.

We offer custom solutions to help you protect your employees, customers and visitors — and to safely resume operations. Partnership has always been a cornerstone of our culture at Rush. We know that in the midst of this crisis, there are numerous ways we can help. Let us leverage our knowledge and expertise, driven by science and guided by analytics, to give you a measure of confidence and security as our region — as the country — becomes vibrant and active again.

It would be impossible to overstate the challenges we have faced as a nation as a result of COVID-19. U.S. businesses have shouldered great burdens: whether they remained open to provide essential services, whether they were forced to pivot and enable the majority of their employees to work remotely or whether they had to shut their doors in response to necessary but disruptive shelter-in-place orders.

Now, as the intensity of the COVID-19 crisis has ebbed somewhat, all businesses in all sectors must define and respond to a “new normal.” As a business leader, you may be calling back employees who are afraid to return. You may be grappling with the problem of configuring your workspaces, conference rooms, visiting spaces or retail floors to allow for the “social distancing” that is necessary to lessen the potential for infection while COVID-19 still circulates in our communities. You need to monitor for the presence of infection among your staff, visitors and customers while still providing a welcoming environment for all. And, because you stay informed, you know you have to be prepared for the potential of a second COVID-19 wave. The way we do business in this country, in the world, is vastly different today than it was only a few short months ago — and it may never be the same.

It would be our privilege to help you — whether you are a large business or small — anticipate and embrace the changes that will keep your enterprise viable now and in the years ahead.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Omar Lateef'.

Dr. Omar Lateef, CEO, Rush University Medical Center

Overview

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed workplaces around the U.S. in countless ways in the last few months. The Rush Business Solutions team has prepared this document to help business leaders safely resume operations and to orientate their employees to a “new normal.”

We hope these guidelines are helpful. We know this is not an exhaustive list and that businesses in different sectors may have special concerns. The Rush Business Solutions team is available to consult with business leaders seeking expert guidance on employee testing and screening, workplace hygiene, work-from-home guidelines and more.



For more information on how Rush can help your organization safely return to work, contact Paola Pescara, VP Strategic Growth at (312) 563-4472, or by email at employersolutions@rush.edu.

Table of Contents

Safety procedures for employees, customers and visitors	5
Monitoring employee health	7
Other ways to keep the workplace safe	8
Managing schedules and communication	9
Social distancing and the workplace	11

Rush — one of 35 medical centers in the nation designated by the CDC as having the highest standards in infection control — has adopted extensive precautions to minimize risk of exposure to COVID-19 for patients, and employees.

Safety Procedures for Employees, Customers and Visitors

Provide access to facemasks and monitor employee compliance. We recommend that businesses require all employees, customers and visitors to wear masks while on business premises.

Provide access to hand sanitizer and hand-washing areas. Encourage consistent hand washing and allow for employees to take time to complete regular hand-washing routines.



Wash hands: Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This practice is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing, going to the bathroom, and before eating or preparing food.



Hand sanitizer: If soap and water are not available, use a hospital-approved alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.



Watch this [video](#) on What NOT to do when wearing a facemask, courtesy of Rush University Medical Center.

How to wash your hands

Protect yourself and others



1 Wet your hands



2 Apply soap



3 Scrub palm to palm



4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced



5 Scrub back of hand



6 Base of thumbs and fingernails



7 Wash hands for 20 seconds



8 Rinse hands with water



9 Dry hands

Download print-ready 6x6" handwashing instruction cling [here](#).

Monitoring Employee Health

To prevent COVID-19 outbreaks in your workplace, Rush Business Solutions recommends the following:



Require employees to take their temperature twice a day — before work and after returning home. Anyone whose temperature is elevated — above XX.X degrees Fahrenheit — should stay home.



Enforce a policy that requires employees to stay home when they are sick and to return home if they become unwell while at work.



Require employees to see their primary care provider if they are experiencing fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, body aches, sore throat and loss of taste or smell. These are all possible signs of COVID-19. If any of your employees experience these symptoms, they should immediately call their primary care provider or consult an on-demand video provider.



Fever



Shortness of breath



Cough or runny nose



Sore throat and loss of taste or smell



Consider creating a safety program and designating “safe department champions” for different areas of your business to help consistently reinforce workplace safety practices. You may also want to consider making a safety review part of managers’ regular check-ins with their employees.

Rush offers primary care in person and virtually through video on demand. We’ve also developed resources for people who are concerned that they may have — or may have been exposed to — COVID-19. [Visit rush.edu/coronavirus to learn more.](https://rush.edu/coronavirus)

Other Ways to Keep Your Workplace Safe

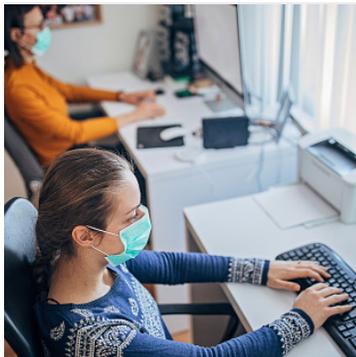
In addition to universal masking and monitoring employee health, there are a number of additional measures you can take to help protect your employees, customers and visitors from COVID-19 exposure.



Temperature screening: Consider the use of contactless, infrared temperature scanners at entrances.



Visitor signage: Post signs to communicate special measures or requirements that you are taking for their safety — and give them a resource to contact if they have questions or suggestions. If you operate a retail business opening up to customers again, consider limits to the number of people in your facility at one time.



Social distancing: Reconfigure your business environment — employee workspaces, entrances, waiting areas, retail space and outdoor areas — to ensure that your employees, visitors and customers can remain at least six feet apart. Post signs as reminders or to communicate changes in work spaces.



Meticulous cleaning: Reassure your employees, visitors and customers that their safety is your top priority by following even more stringent cleaning and disinfecting procedures than usual. Isolation of COVID-19 patients: We have reconfigured our hospital to isolate COVID-19 patients in our emergency department, inpatient units and clinics to avoid contact with non-COVID patients.



Cellphone parking lot: Consider setting up a designated parking area near your business for people to wait for friends or loved ones who are doing business with you.

Managing Schedules

Establish a comprehensive and documented plan outlining your scheduling needs for at least the next 30 to 60 days based on operational needs and/or required work deliverables.

Revisit previously established work-from-home practices. Identify what your plans are to continue or discontinue this practice, specifying dates.



Consider scheduling options that are flexible and allow for compliance of 6 feet spacing and safe work practices.

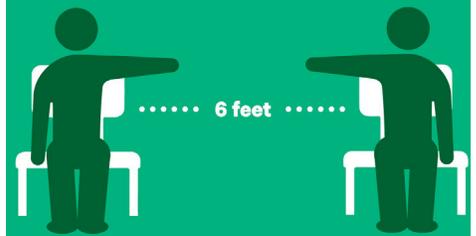


If you have employees who will continue to have a work-from-home document performance expectations and the work from home duration.



Clearly communicate guidelines and policies related to FMLA, other leaves of absence and special accommodations for vulnerable employees.

Social Distancing Works.



**No more than
___ people
permitted in this
room/area at one time.**

Connecting and Communication

Develop a communication plan to share scheduling needs and expectations with all employees and other relevant stakeholders.



Limit number of people in attendance for in-person meetings. In-person meetings should not include more than 10 people. Develop guidelines for keeping in-person meetings small, with all participants in face masks and six feet apart.

- ▶ All participants in in-person meetings should be wearing face masks and allow for social distancing.
- ▶ As much as possible, use virtual meeting tools. Offer resources to help people become accustomed to a new way of interacting with colleagues.



Follow up with employees who have identified themselves as part of high-risk/vulnerable population to clarify employment intentions as well as answer any questions they may have and reiterate options for re-entry.



Communicate regularly the department's "new normal" practices and requirements of staff, addressing performance expectations, safety compliance, etc.

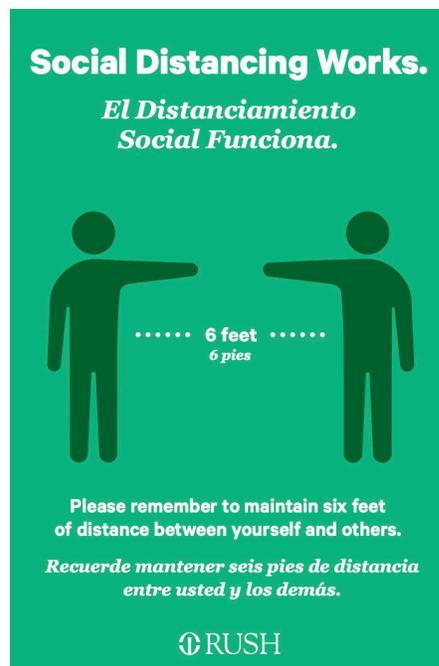
Social distancing and the workplace

1. Reinforce personal space cleaning/sanitizing expectations.
2. Plan for consistent and regularly scheduled cleaning.
3. Staff should be responsible for cleaning their own high-use items (i.e. wipe down computer keyboard before and after use, wipe down work space, etc.).
4. Ensure employee workspace and break room set up is in compliance with social distancing and proper spacing rules.
5. Any conference room that does not allow for the six-foot rule should not be used.
6. Mark areas with visible signage reminding employees of the six-feet of social distancing.
7. Review with employees any changes surrounding entrance and exit points.
8. If applicable, ensure employee badges are properly activated and working for staff to return.

View and download social distancing signs and more on the [Rush Business Solutions website](#).



8.5x11"



11x17"



8.5x8"