Reactivation Planning

Cornell’s Approach to Phased Reopening

It’s important to note that Cornell’s approach to a phased reopening is designed to address the unique challenges of living, working and studying in this type of close-contact environment. While cloth face coverings and masks are important to minimizing the spread of COVID-19, reducing the density of our campuses continues to be a critical safety aspect of our plans.

It should be noted that although local, state, and federal agency guidelines may allow for certain levels of reentry, the university views these as minimum thresholds. Cornell plans to continue to limit workforce presence on campus with continued use of remote work where possible.

Cornell is a continuously operating residential university and some employees must work on campus to provide services that are essential to residential life, campus health and safety, research, and/or education. As we move into a phased re-entry, some departments and units may increase their on-campus presence before others.

Employees are only permitted to return to work on campus after receiving direction from their supervisor to do so. The supervisor may only give such guidance after having the unit’s reactivation plan approved in accordance with university reactivation guidelines for each phase. All other employees will be expected to continue to work remotely. If an employee is unclear if they are to report to work on-site, they should contact their supervisor.

As on-campus staffing increases and operations expand, Cornell leadership and public health officials will closely monitor and assess the potential spread of the virus, as well as adjust existing policies and procedures to mitigate risk of infection.

As is the case across the globe, our knowledge and understanding of COVID-19 continues to evolve. These guidelines, especially those surrounding health policies and practices, are subject to change as state and federal guidelines, and university committee recommendations, evolve.

Employees Represented by Collective Bargaining Units

In the event that employees in the unit are represented by a union, the union must agree to all changes in terms and conditions of employment. Contact Workforce Policy and Labor Relations at policyquestions@cornell.edu for guidance prior to advancing any changes.

Guidance for College/Unit Reentry Plans

While each area has responsibility for drafting their respective reentry plans, all plans must incorporate institutional decisions consistent with New York state (NYS) orders and guidelines and follow recommendations from the federal, state, and local health agencies. At the present time, the maximum NYS permitted occupancy for any building is 50% of the maximum occupancy. Cornell may choose to further restrict occupancy levels as part of its phased approach.

In accordance with university’s campus reactivation requirements, unit leaders have the responsibility to develop reactivation plans that include details about workplace reentry, procedures, and controls in their plans. Reactivation plans should align with Cornell’s guiding principles for COVID-19 response, follow the hierarchy of controls and include workplace interventions to address occupancy density, use of cloth face coverings and masks, controls to ensure social distancing, sanitization, personal hygiene, and education and awareness. Units with shared space must work across units to develop a mutually
agreeable plan for shared usage of space. These plans and controls must be completed and approved prior to employees returning.

Employees cannot resume work on campus until the unit plan has been approved, and no supervisor may direct an employee to work on campus without reentry approval.

**Deciding Who Returns to Campus and When**

Our work environment is going to be significantly different than it was before this crisis began, at least for the foreseeable future.

The need for physical/social distancing, complications inherent to workspace design and layout and access to testing means that bringing every employee back to campus is not a viable option at this time.

Furthermore, the solutions to these challenges – continuing remote work, reducing on-campus building occupancy, restricted use of conference and meeting spaces, dining facilities, break rooms, and elevators, and protocols related to personal protective equipment (PPE), wearing cloth face coverings and masks, and social distancing – will inevitably change the way we work and connect as a community.

With that in mind, colleges/units must evaluate the overall effectiveness of bringing employees back to campus during this time when our knowledge and understanding of COVID-19 is still evolving. Cornell will be implementing a phased approach to workforce reentry and will give specific details and guidance when each phase can commence.

**Reactivation Plan Template**

1. Briefly describe the work that would be conducted on campus and explain what on-campus resources are needed for this work. Identify source of funding.
2. Identify the individuals who would use on-campus facilities.
3. Identify the specific campus facilities where the work would be done, describing how workspaces will be physically separated to maintain social distancing requirements. (This should be a room-by-room description.)
4. Describe how use of these spaces will be scheduled to keep maximum facility occupancy below the required level, and how scheduling will be coordinated among those using shared or adjacent on-campus facilities (e.g., same wing or floor of a building).
5. Identify any on-campus resources outside the identified workspaces that will be required for the work (e.g., access to library). Use of such resources must be coordinated with the directors of those facilities and must adhere to the reactivation procedures for each facility.
6. If it is essential to include undergraduates in the on-campus effort, describe the need for that here, along with the number of students involved.
7. If it is essential to include volunteers in the on-campus effort, describe the need for that here.

All reactivation plans must be approved by the Dean/Vice President and must ensure:

- The health and safety of students, staff and faculty are our top priorities. New York state and local guidelines for health and safety will be met or exceeded.
- No one will be compelled to return to campus to do work that can be accomplished remotely.
- The process for reactivation will be transparent, fair and equitable.

**Reactivation plan evaluation criteria**

- Does the proposed work require on-campus resources?
- Are plans for workspace layout and scheduling sufficient to meet social distancing and maximum occupancy guidelines? Are plans coordinated by wing, floor and building as appropriate?
- Are necessary facilities available? Has the use of these facilities been coordinated with the appropriate directors?
- Do the individuals using on-campus resources have a firm understanding of their responsibilities (e.g. do not come in if feeling ill, use cloth face coverings and masks or PPE if required, disinfect workspaces) and have the necessary
Staffing approaches to minimize the risk of COVID-19

College/units should consider how or whether they may limit the number of employees and inter-actions on campus when developing on-site workplace reentry plans.

Remote Work

Those who can work remotely to fulfill their work responsibilities will continue to do so. These arrangements can be done in a full or partial day/week schedule, as appropriate, and are expected to be an integral part of staffing plans where feasible. Additional information can be found in Managing Remote Teams - Guide For Managers.

Alternating Schedules

Departments may schedule partial on campus staffing, consistent with practices that address health and safety concerns, e.g., developing staffing, in cohort groups, to alternate on- and off-campus work.

Temporary Job Redesign

In cases where members of a work team have partial on-campus responsibilities and partial responsibilities which can be performed remotely, work may be temporarily shifted to create a separation of roles with full on-campus responsibilities or no on-campus responsibilities. This approach will limit the number of employees who have to be on-campus and allow others to work completely remotely.

Staggered Reporting/Departing

Staggering reporting and departure times by at least 30 minutes, where possible, will reduce traffic in common areas to meet social distancing requirements.

Note: Changes in arrival and departure times for unionized staff members should be fully discussed with the bargaining representative by Workforce Policy and Labor Relations before implementation.

Control Checklists

The risk of coronavirus infection, like any hazard, is mitigated by controls and specific changes to the environment or activities, including application of personal health and safety measures. The following checklists provide guidance for using cloth face coverings and masks, administrative, and engineering controls to create a safe research reactivation plan.

Checklist for Cloth Face Coverings and Masks

It is important to plan for use of appropriate cloth face coverings and masks and to ensure adequate supplies are stocked before executing plans to reactivate research.

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<th>Task</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Working on campus or other Cornell facility</td>
<td>All individuals returning to campus or other Cornell facility are required to follow the Face Covering and Mask procedure and practice physical distancing.</td>
<td>If a person does not have a cloth face covering covering the university will provide face coverings at no charge to the employee or unit. See the Face Covering and Mask Guidance on Cornell EHS COVID site for directions to acquire face coverings.</td>
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Obtain and stock cleaning supplies and cloth face coverings and masks as appropriate

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<td>Obtain and stock cleaning supplies and cloth face coverings and masks as appropriate</td>
<td>Work with your facility manager to ensure needed supplies are available.</td>
<td>Obtaining needed cleaning supplies and cloth face coverings and masks may require advance planning. Identify needs and work with your facility manager as soon as possible.</td>
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Checklist for Administrative Controls

Administrative controls are practices that help prevent the transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19. These controls do not replace existing guidance for safe and responsible workplace practices but are in addition to them.

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<td>Administrative work</td>
<td>Work that can be performed at home should continue to be performed off campus until further notice.</td>
<td>In some cases, obstacles such as poor internet connections or crowded conditions make ordinary office activities difficult to do at home. Measures to improve these conditions should be considered and implemented. If these measures do not permit an employee to perform needed work at home, working from campus may be appropriate.</td>
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<td>Personnel instructed to come to campus for onsite work</td>
<td>Practice social distancing, proper use of cloth face coverings and frequent handwashing, and proper sanitizing techniques as instructed.</td>
<td>If you observe non-compliance of work rules, contact your supervisor. In the event you feel compelled to work, speak to your supervisor, manager, Graduate School, or HR representative. For health and safety issues, contact Environmental Health and Safety. Such situations can also be reported to the Ethics Point Hotline.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reversal in work, work pause</td>
<td>Prioritize activities that can be shut down quickly without significant difficulty or expense.</td>
<td>If COVID-19 infection rates increase, reactivation may be reversed.</td>
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<td>Pre-occupancy check</td>
<td>A pre-occupancy check with the responsible facility manager is required for each room to be reactivated.</td>
<td>For shared rooms, plan with the other departments/units and the facility manager.</td>
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<td>Working alone</td>
<td>General safety procedures cannot be neglected and need additional attention when individuals are working at lower density and in more shifts. For low- and medium-risk work, plans for virtual buddies or other check-in/check-out system should be put in place.</td>
<td>A virtual buddy could text hourly, for example, to check in on an employee alone in an on-campus facility.</td>
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Everyone returning to campus must complete the required CULearn Training on SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 and attest that they will follow protocols.

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**Checklist for Engineering Controls**

Engineering controls are physical changes to a building or room that reduce the probability of COVID-19 infection. Most engineering controls must be implemented by facilities and maintenance personnel on behalf of department chairs, center directors, or academic unit heads. Many engineering controls are expensive, and some may not be possible in all buildings.

Building and facilities managers will lead the planning for and implementation of engineering controls for their building or facility.

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<td>Returning HVAC to normal operations</td>
<td>Convert HVAC systems to negative pressure, which tends to draw air from outside a building into the rooms in use.</td>
<td>This may be impracticable or overly expensive in many buildings. Request review and approval by facility manager.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designating entry and exit</td>
<td>Identify and mark specific doorways for entry and exit into a building. Designate and mark specific sets of stairs for moving up and down in a building.</td>
<td>This may be impracticable in some facilities due to building layout. Request review by facility manager.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room air changes returning to normal operations</td>
<td>Increase airflow exchange rates to bring higher rates of fresh air into relatively high occupancy areas.</td>
<td>This may be impracticable or overly expensive in many buildings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access control</td>
<td>Secure all building entry and exit points. Consider permanently locking as many entrances as safety codes allow.</td>
<td>Keycard access is preferable but may not be feasible for many buildings.</td>
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<td>Dividing workstations</td>
<td>Place physical barriers (e.g. plexiglass plates) between individual workstations in shared areas.</td>
<td>Depending on funding source, this may be planned and proposed by individual faculty. Consult with facilities manager.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designated walkways</td>
<td>Place tape, arrows, and signs in work areas to help individuals maintain social distance.</td>
<td>This should be implemented by individual faculty or work groups. See COVID-19 Guidance for Facilities Management Staff for examples and further details.</td>
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