



Repopulation of Campus: Fall 2021



With the increasing vaccination of faculty, staff, and students, more on-campus operations can, and should, return to normal over the coming months in anticipation of a fully in-person fall semester beginning in August.

Consequently, colleges and units will now determine how they approach repopulating campus and the appropriate level of ongoing flexible or remote work for their employees.

All repopulation plans must be developed in alignment with the following principles, workplace guidance, and priority framework.

Principles

- The university continues to embrace a phased approach to resuming operations on our campuses – one that is underscored by a commitment to the health and safety of our campus community, while continuing to pursue our core missions of learning, scholarship, innovation and service.
- COVID-19 continues to drive building occupancy, Cornell testing protocols, health and safety guidance and subsequently, work-related activities such as in-person meetings and office usage. All campus repopulation decisions must take into consideration New York state and [Cornell workplace guidance](#).
- The university supports the exploration of continued flexible and remote work options in situations when such working arrangements fully advance the educational, research and outreach missions of the university and addresses employee needs. Decisions will be made at the college and unit level under general guidelines provided by the university.

Special considerations relating to instruction and the student experience

The expectation of in-person work is especially important in the instructional realm. Students legitimately expect routine, direct interactions with faculty, teaching assistants, other instructional staff and student services staff. As indicated in [April 2 statement regarding fall instruction](#), our intent is to return to full in-person mode, without routinely scheduled online options, for classes normally taught in person. Implementation of this goal will be consistent with New York state guidance and the extent of immunity in our community. Faculty are encouraged to explore how particularly successful teaching innovations developed during virtual instruction can be utilized on an ongoing basis.

Workplace Guidance

All campus repopulation decisions must take into consideration New York state and [Cornell workplace guidance](#), notably:

- [Testing](#)
- [Daily Check](#)
- [Vaccination](#)
- [Health and safety requirements of on-campus employees](#)
- [Visitors](#)

Priority Setting

When planning for increased on-campus activity, colleges and units should decide which functions, positions (and people), and activities most need to be on campus to pursue an optimal student experience for the fall 2021 semester. All areas should have plans in place to reduce on-campus presence and activities immediately if infection rates increase beyond acceptable levels.

Decisions regarding the repopulation of campus should be made in accordance with:

1. Organizational needs,
2. Position roles and responsibilities,
3. Individual performance and preference (when possible), and
4. Infrastructure.

Framework

Step 1: Organizational Needs Assessment

- University priorities.
- Expectations of students and parents/families around the student experience.
- Vibrancy of the campus community.
- The requirements to support 100% in-person instruction.
- The requirements to support research, clinical and extension operations at 100%.
- College or unit culture.
- Potential for turnover and opportunities for recruitment.
- Managing the return, or continued remote work arrangements, of employees who have moved or left the area.
- For areas that will have a hybrid work environment, ability to manage that mixed environment.

Step 2: Position roles and responsibilities

- The extent to which in-person presence and/or collaboration is essential to the successful achievement of unit priorities and outcomes.
- If position tasks depend on frequent input from colleagues or other stakeholders.
- Equitable application of objective decisions (note that decisions may vary for similar positions based upon organizational needs of the college/unit).

Step 3: Individual/employee performance and preference (when possible)

- Employee performance.
- Challenges of those who are still fully remote:
 - Personal and family health concerns,

- Child-care and K-12 school limitations this summer, and perhaps into the fall.
- Addressing staff safety questions and concerns.
- [Medical accommodations](#) (Policy 6.13) or [religious accommodations](#) (Policy 16.3.8) in accordance with university policies and procedures.
- Remote work arrangement does not create extra work or hardship for anyone else working onsite.

Step 4: Infrastructure

- Building and office space following NYS COVID-19 6-foot social distancing requirements; effective May 19, building capacity restrictions have been eliminated.
- Technology needs.
- Redeployment of space freed up by hybrid or remote work.

Institutional Support

HR is facilitating discussion with college officers and local college and unit HR representatives to provide a forum for shared understanding of the fall repopulation plan campus-wide. Tools have been designed to help guide colleges and units through their individual planning as we collaborate to make consistent mission-based decisions university-wide.

Resources

Return to Campus Requests

As we repopulate the campus, it is important that employees be assigned (or reassigned) to a testing group that accurately represents their time on campus. If they are not previously approved to be on campus, this will activate Daily Check and place them in surveillance testing (unless they have submitted proof of being fully vaccinated through the university tool). Individual or one-off changes may be requested by the employee through the Daily Check portal under “request to change your testing frequency”. Changes to college and unit populations impacting groups of employees should be coordinated through your college or unit local HR team.

Manager and Supervisor Tools

HR will continue to develop [tools and training for managers and supervisors](#) of employees:

- Guidance for [returning employees to work on-campus](#) has been developed, e.g., health and safety requirements, testing protocols, meeting guidelines, etc.
- Guidance for [managing remote employees](#), e.g., productivity, communication, support, etc.

Flexible Work Options

- The university's long-standing [Flexibility in the Workplace policy](#) covers a variety of flexible work arrangements including hybrid and fully remote work scenarios. As stated in the policy, decisions to implement flexible work will be made by an employee's unit leadership. More information about a variety of flexible and remote work arrangements is available [here](#).
 - Information for employees [working remotely during COVID](#).
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