# Working During COVID-19

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Overview

As a university, we will 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.

Underlying all policies and procedures related to reactivation are Cornell's guiding principles for COVID-19 response as expressed in President Pollack's April 7 message to the community.

Guiding Principles for COVID-19 Response

Caring for our students.

We will do everything possible to enable all current and newly admitted students to complete their Cornell educations, despite the obstacles created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Family circumstances, financial resources, and students’ lives will undoubtedly change in many ways. Working to see that all students have the financial resources they need is among our highest priorities. We also realize that financial concerns are not the only new stresses that students will face, and we aim to provide the support that our students will need to succeed academically and personally.

Safeguarding our future as a world-class academic institution.

We believe deeply in the value of Cornell's exceptional academic community and will strive always to ensure that our scholarly enterprise is supported and thriving. Throughout its 155-year history, Cornell has defended truth, expanded knowledge, and explored what it means to be human, while bringing its mission to the world through research and outreach. Through past wars, epidemics, and economic downturns, Cornell continued to teach, continued to conduct world-class research, continued to engage, and continued to adapt to a changing world. Cornell has endured the unprecedented before and will do so again. I believe deeply that, ultimately, we will emerge from this newest challenge even stronger.

Maintaining our staffing.

Cornell is Cornell because of our wonderful faculty and students, and because of our exceptional staff: our custodians, technicians, dining workers, office professionals, and skilled trades and grounds staff, to name just a few. We are a community, and we will do everything we can to keep our community together. Even now, when everyone who can is sheltering in place, many of our dedicated staff are enabling students who could not go home to have a home at Cornell. Despite the challenges, they are coming in every day, keeping the lights on, the buildings warm and safe, and the food ready. In addition, many of our staff have successfully moved to working remotely – by no means an easy undertaking in this difficult time. While I truly wish that I could say with certainty that there will be no furloughs or layoffs, there is, unfortunately, too much about the future that we simply do not know. What we do know is that when we make decisions about our collective future, the welfare of our employees will remain a critically important factor.
Seeking new knowledge.

It may seem incongruous to speak of seeking opportunities in the midst of crisis, but we are an educational institution. We are fundamentally about learning. And as we navigate through this time, we will pay attention to what we can learn along the way. We may learn about new ways of working remotely, we may learn about new ways of delivering education, and we will undoubtedly find new ways to develop resilience in the face of the unprecedented.

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.

The following guide is designed to provide employees with information on returning to working on campus as well as continuing in a remote arrangement.

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. Visit hr.cornell.edu/covid-19-employee-guidance to verify that this is the most updated version of the guide.
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 (see page 2), 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.

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.

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, breakrooms, 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.

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 plans will be evaluated based on these criteria:**

1. Does the proposed work require on-campus resources?

2. 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?

3. Are necessary facilities available? Has the use of these facilities been coordinated with the appropriate directors?

4. 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 knowledge and resources to meet them?
Staffing Approaches to minimize the risk of COVID-19

College/units should consider how or whether they may limit the number of employees and interactions 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.
On-Campus Considerations

All employees returning to campus, including those who were previously approved to be on campus, must follow all federal, state and local orders and directives as well as the policies and protocols detailed in this guide for working on campus.

As on-campus presence 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. If localized outbreaks occur, the university may need to implement tighter restrictions and reduced on-site staffing.

Cloth Face Coverings/Masks and Social Distancing

All individuals will be required to adhere to the university’s guidelines on use of cloth face coverings/masks and social distancing. Information about the university’s expectations can be found at covid.cornell.edu/prevention/face-coverings.

Arrival / Departure Control

Departments and building coordinators should identify usable building access points and coordinate arrival and departure times, as well as meal and break periods, of staff to reduce congestion during typical “rush hours” of the business day. Appropriately, staggering arrival and departures, and meal and break periods, will reduce personal interactions at building access points, hallways, stairs/elevators, kitchens, break rooms, etc. In the event a unit needs to adjust schedules, meal or break periods for employees represented by a union, please consult with Workforce Policy and Labor Relations prior to implementation.

Cornell Healthy Campus Signs

As buildings come back online, it is important that adequate and consistent signage is in place to ensure employees are aware of the health requirements associated with working and researching on-campus.

Signage is available to print here: https://covid.cornell.edu/resources/graphics/.

If existing signage does not meet your unit’s specific needs, please contact askehs@cornell.edu who can work with you to develop a suitable sign.
Guidance for Workplace Scenarios

Special Considerations

All employees are expected to be available to perform the essential functions of their roles. Consistent with current policies and to the extent possible, the university, and its representatives, will provide assistance to those who have medical or personal concerns. No staff member should be compelled to return to campus to do work that can be accomplished remotely. If work cannot be done remotely, supervisors should contact their local HR representative and consider the avenues noted below.

Typically, qualifying employees pursue an accommodation to help them address their concerns related to returning to work. For some employees with underlying health conditions, a supervisor may have concerns regarding their employees health and safety if they return. Supervisors may not prevent employees from returning to work based solely on the supervisor’s belief that the employee falls into the CDC’s categories of individuals at higher risk for severe complications from COVID-19. For guidance on the ADA Reasonable Accommodation process and other support mechanisms available to employees, please see https://hr.cornell.edu/benefits-pay/leaves-disability/disability-accommodations.

Accommodation Due to Medical Conditions

Faculty and staff who are asked to return to work on-site who have an underlying medical condition, or those who are pregnant, may submit an ADA Reasonable Accommodation request, including accommodation requests for PPE, related to returning to the workplace by contacting Medical Leaves Administration at wcds@cornell.edu or calling 607-255-1177. More information and forms are available at: https://hr.cornell.edu/benefits-pay/leaves-disability/disability-accommodations.

If an employee is unable to wear a required face covering due to medical, religious or other protected reason, they can follow the appropriate process for requesting an ADA reasonable accommodation or a religious accommodation (University Policy 6.13.8, Religious Accommodation).

Refer to CDC guidance for the list of People Who Are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness.

Employees Caring for Family Members

Employees who regularly care for a family member who is at higher risk for severe complications from COVID-19 may be able to work remotely or may be eligible for time off under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Further, staff members may be covered by NYS Paid Family Leave. More information on various leave programs is available at https://hr.cornell.edu/benefits-pay/leaves-disability or by contacting Medical Leaves Administration at 607-255-1177 to determine the appropriate leave for an employee’s situation and needs.
Voluntary Reduction in Hours

An employee may request a voluntary short-term reduction in hours (appointment) to help them meet their personal needs.

Staff Time Off: If a staff member is not available, or not willing, to work as required, they may use their leave accrual balances in accordance with standard vacation and HAP policies after consultation with their supervisor. A staff member may also request an unpaid leave for up to 3 months if:

- the employee does not qualify for a workplace accommodation
- the situation doesn't qualify for an approved paid leave
- a remote work arrangement is not feasible

During an unpaid leave, an employee is responsible for their share of health, dental and vision premiums.

N95 Voluntary Use Program

Employees who do not meet the requirements for a medical accommodation and/or don't have any workplace exposure that warrants wearing of a N95 respirator may participate in the EHS voluntary use program after completing the required training. Participation requires the employee to provide their own N95 respirator. Contact askehs@cornell.edu for more information.

Workplace Exposure Assessment

Faculty and staff who are seeking a workplace evaluation due to potential risks related to their job should contact askehs@cornell.edu.

Teaching Responsibilities

Wherever possible, individuals with responsibility for creating and teaching courses may determine whether the course will be conducted in person or online during the fall semester.

Hourly Student Employment

Contact the Student Employment Office with questions pertaining to hourly student employment.
Employee Responsibilities

Expectations

All employees, working on the Cornell campus, even if only occasionally, are required to adhere to all CDC, NYS, local health department, and Cornell University orders, guidelines, policies and procedures at all times. Failure to adhere to all required orders, guidelines, policies and procedures may lead to disciplinary action, including termination, and/or loss of privileges, including access to campus buildings and resources.

Health Monitoring and Reporting/Daily Health Screening

As Cornell reactivates its Ithaca campus, each of us has a part to play in saving lives to halt the spread of the novel coronavirus. In alignment with NYS requirements, we have implemented the Daily Check system. All faculty, staff and students who have been approved to resume on-campus work or research are required to complete the Daily Check each day before arriving on campus or accessing campus facilities.

As the process of bringing staff back to work on campus continues, more information on the relevant employee requirements will be provided.

Personal Health Practices

All employees returning to campus must adhere to the university's Employee Health Protection Procedures and complete EHS Return To Work Health and Safety Training for COVID-19.

Presenting Symptoms

Employees who do not feel well must stay out of their workplace so as to minimize potential exposure of their colleagues and others. These employees should use remote work, their leave accruals, or unpaid leave and should seek medical guidance (see page 11 for guidance when directed to quarantine or isolate). They may only return to on-site work once cleared in accordance with university COVID-19 health monitoring procedures.
Testing (presenting symptoms)

Employees who are presenting COVID-19 symptoms and have gone for COVID-19 testing, will be placed on a paid leave, and will not be required to use their leave accruals (HAP or vacation) until the test results are received. They may only return to on-site work once cleared in accordance with university COVID-19 health monitoring procedures.

Negative Test Result:

If results are negative, and their symptoms are determined to be not COVID-19 related, employees may return to work once cleared in accordance with university COVID-19 health monitoring procedures. If they continue to feel unwell, though not due to COVID-19, they may use accrued time until they are well and able to return to work.

Positive Test Result:

If an employee has tested positive they will be directed to isolate by the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for employees outside of Tompkins County or NY state, the appropriate local health department), another authorized agency, or their primary care physician. See below for guidance when directed to quarantine or isolate.

See page 27 for guidance regarding what to do if an employee’s household member tests positive, is quarantined, or removed from work or school because of COVID-19 concerns.

Quarantine

Employees who are quarantined by the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for employees outside of Tompkins County or NY state, the appropriate local health department), another authorized agency, or their primary care physician, and are symptomatic, may choose to work remotely if their job responsibilities may be performed remotely. If the employee is asymptomatic, they will be expected to work remotely if their duties make remote work possible. If their job responsibilities do not allow for them to work remotely, they will be placed on paid leave for 14 calendar days.

Employees will not be required to use accruals during the paid leave. If the period of quarantine continues beyond 14 calendar days, the employee should consult with Medical Leaves Administration to move to short-term disability leave, New York Paid Family Leave, or another type of leave as appropriate.

Isolation

Employees who are placed in isolation by the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for employees outside of Tompkins County or NY state, the appropriate local health department) or other authorized agency, will be placed on paid leave for 14 calendar days. If the employee is symptomatic and able to continue working remotely, they may choose to do so. If the employee is asymptomatic, they will be expected to work remotely if their duties make remote work possible.

Employees will not be required to use accruals during the paid leave. If the period of isolation continues beyond 14 calendar days, the employee should consult with Medical Leaves Administration to move to short-term disability leave, New York Paid Family Leave, or another type of leave as appropriate.

Definitions

What is quarantine?

Quarantine means separating a healthy person or group of healthy people away from others due to exposure to a contagious disease like COVID-19.

What is isolation?

Isolation means separating a sick person with a contagious disease like COVID-19 away from others.

For more information visit the Tompkins County Health Department website.
What To Do If Notified Of A Positive Test Or Quarantine/Isolation Order:

If an employee tests positive for COVID-19 or is ordered to quarantine or isolate by the Tompkins County Health Department (or, for employees outside of Tompkins County or NY state, the appropriate local health department), another authorized agency, or their primary care physician, they must immediately notify their local HR representative of the positive test or order to quarantine and alert their supervisor that they are unable to work. Employees are not required to tell their supervisor any medical diagnosis. However, if an employee is unable to work, in keeping with current policy, the employee is expected to notify his or her supervisor as soon as possible.

Note: The employee may self-disclose medical information with anyone of their choosing; however, ADA does not permit employers, regardless of how the information was obtained, to disclose an employee’s medical information to an employee’s colleagues, customers, or vendors. Employers can generally inform colleagues, customers, or vendors that an “employee has tested positive for COVID-19” or that an employee “has been exposed to COVID-19.” The employee(s) should not be identified and identifying information should not be provided. Employers may and should report a positive test result to public health officials.

It is important for supervisors and human resources representatives to know how to report (1) employees who have confirmed cases of COVID-19 and (2) employees whom have been ordered to isolate or quarantine based on known or suspected exposure to the virus. Employees, supervisors and human resources representatives are responsible for reporting employees with confirmed COVID-19 test results through appropriate channels. For specific information on the process for handling confirmed cases and orders of isolation/quarantine go to Guidance for Human Resources Representatives and Supervisors for COVID-19 Positive, Quarantined, or Isolated Employees. This internal reporting protocol is designed to protect the privacy of affected employees while at the same time, permitting Cornell to implement proper space disinfection and other safety measures.

Travel

All Cornell employees have a critical role to play in reducing the possibility of COVID-19 transmission within our campus and surrounding community by avoiding high-risk travel, whether for university business or personal reasons. Examples of high-risk travel include visits to areas with high incidences of coronavirus or using public modes of transit, such as planes, trains, subways, ships and other closed environments. Please review the COVID-19 Cornell Travel and Visitor Policy and the information below.

All faculty, staff and students who have been approved to work or conduct research on-campus are required to complete the Daily Check each day before arriving on campus or accessing campus facilities, follow all medical guidance and adhere to their required testing schedule.
New Employees Arriving in the Local Area

All individuals must follow all directives and restrictions, as stated in [CDC Travel Recommendations](#) or [NYS COVID-19 Travel Advisory](#). New employees who are arriving in the local area who are not subject to a mandatory 14 day travel quarantine and who will be working, even occasionally, on campus are to seek a test for COVID-19, and obtain a negative result, prior to their first day. Those who work fully remotely may choose to be tested. See below for guidance on scheduling a test. If subject to a quarantine resulting from a travel or positive test result and the quarantine period extends beyond an employee’s first day of work they will be expected to work remotely if they are asymptomatic and their work duties make remote work possible. If their job responsibilities do not allow for them to work remotely, they will be placed on paid leave for up to 14 calendar days. Employees will not be required to use accruals during the paid leave. If the period of quarantine continues beyond 14 calendar days, the employee should consult with Medical Leaves Administration to move to short-term disability leave, New York Paid Family Leave, or another type of leave if appropriate.

Testing must be completed at the Cayuga Health Sampling Site at 40 Catherwood Drive in Ithaca (mall). Click here to [schedule your testing appointment](#). You will have no out-of-pocket expenses for this testing.

*Note: When responding to the online scheduling questions please keep the information below in mind.*

- For the question of "I am seeking COVID testing because" please select "I am an employee, contractor, student or visitor of an organization recommending or requiring screening".
- Then select Cornell Employee
- Skip the optional insurance questions when registering for testing

**Business Travel**

Essential business travel requires approval by the dean of the college, appropriate vice president, or vice provost and must follow current Cornell Policies governing travel generally. If an employee must quarantine after approved business travel, they may work remotely if feasible or they will be placed on paid leave for 14 calendar days and not be required to use their leave accruals (HAP or vacation). For more information, please review the [COVID-19 Cornell Travel and Visitor Policy](#).

**Personal Travel**

*Travel within the United States*

Employees who travel outside of New York and within the United States, will be expected to follow [New York State guidance](#), upon their return. See New York State Mandatory Quarantine for Travelers section below for more details. For more information, please review the [COVID-19 Cornell Travel and Visitor Policy](#).
**International Travel**

Employees who travel internationally, will be expected to follow [CDC guidance](https://www.cdc.gov), and any other relevant federal or state guidance, upon their return. If a period of quarantine is required, employees will be expected to work remotely, if possible. If not possible, they may be reassigned other work to enable remote work. If no reassignment of work is available, they may be required to use their leave accruals or be placed on an unpaid leave if accruals aren't available. For more information, please review the [COVID-19 Cornell Travel and Visitor Policy](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory).

**New York State Mandatory Quarantine for Travelers:**

Governors in New York, Connecticut and New Jersey recently announced that travelers from states with high infection rates will be required to quarantine for 14 days when they enter New York, Connecticut or New Jersey. The directive applies both to residents of the impacted states who travel to New York and New Yorkers who have traveled to the impacted states and are returning home to New York. Please note: The states that fall into this category will be continuously updated – states having an infection rate of 10 per 100,000 residents or 10% or higher positivity rate over a 7-day rolling average fall into this category.

The quarantine will be self-administered. The Governor has raised the possibility of mandated quarantine and/or fines for those who do not voluntarily self-quarantine. Go to [https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory) for more information, including an up to date list of states covered by the order. Employees who must quarantine under this order will be expected to work remotely, if possible. If not possible, they may be reassigned other work to enable remote work. If no reassignment of work is available, they may be required to use their leave accruals or be placed on an unpaid leave if accruals aren't available. If the government mandated quarantine is imposed on a state after an individual has left for (or is in or returning from) that state, that individual will be paid during the time of the individual's quarantine.

Employees providing essential and critical services for the operation or safety of the University, as identified by college/unit leadership are to follow the Exemptions for Essential Workers guidance found at [https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory). This guidance applies to individuals who come to New York State to perform essential and critical services as well as New York State residents who provide these services in New York, who leave and then return to New York.
Gatherings

All in-person university-sponsored events and activities are suspended at least through the end of September. This measure applies to any group activities or gatherings sponsored by a college, department, unit or lab — whether on or off campus. Examples of such gatherings include orientation events, social activities and retirement celebrations.

Personal Activities

All employees are strongly advised to follow CDC and health department guidance outside of work to minimize the potential spread of COVID-19 to themselves, their coworkers and others.

Visitors

At this time, the university is limiting visitor access to campus buildings. Visitors may only access Cornell buildings with advanced permission and is required to strictly adhere to all health and safety precautions, including use of cloth face coverings/masks and social distancing.

Retirees

Only retirees who have received specific approval may access Cornell buildings at this time. As with all people on campus, retirees will be expected to follow all health and safety guidance issued by federal, state and local authorities as well as Cornell specific guidance.

Volunteers

At this time, volunteers should not be utilized on campus unless specifically addressed in an approved reactivation plan.

Noncompliance with federal, state, or university guidance

If you observe non-compliance of work rules, contact your supervisor. In the event you feel you are being asked to do anything in violation of university policies or guidelines, speak to your supervisor, manager, or HR representative. For health and safety issues, contact Environmental Health and Safety. Such situations can also be reported to the Ethics Point Hotline.

Support Services

The university will provide all support services necessary to advance its core mission. The delivery of such services may be different as many employees will continue to work remotely, and the university will utilize a variety of technologies to deliver needed services. If on-site presence is required to deliver needed services, appropriate arrangements will be made.
**Additional Guidance for Staff**

*Vacation Accruals*

Recognizing these uncertain times, and in support of general travel concerns, a one-time exception to the university vacation policy has been made. Vacation balances will not be reset on October 15, 2020, as would normally occur, for those with a balance that exceeds the established maximum. Employees will be permitted to carry over vacation accrual balances that are over the maximum established in university policy. The reset process will run, as scheduled, on October 15, 2021. However, vacation buy-outs at the end of employment will not exceed the maximum payouts under regular policy.

*HAP/Vacation Usage*

When employees are scheduled but not available to work, they are expected to record HAP and vacation time in accordance with university policies.

Exempt employees who are regularly unavailable to work during their workday (for childcare or other reasons) are instructed to record HAP/Vacation in increments of 1 hour or more. Infrequent absences should continue to be recorded in .5 day and full day increments.

If an employee has exhausted all of their leave accruals, or prefers not to use them, and does not qualify for any workplace accommodation or leave programs, they may request an unpaid leave of up to 3 months.

**Probationary Periods**

In light of COVID-19 remote work directives, employees who are subject to probationary periods may have such periods extended if they are not regularly performing the essential functions of their job and or the supervisor is not a good position, because of remote work or other reasons related to COVID-19, to assess the employee's performance.

**Inconvenience Pay**

Employees will receive inconvenience pay according to existing policy and collective bargaining agreements. If an employee is no longer working a qualifying shift, either remotely or on-site, inconvenience pay will stop until such time as the employee returns to a qualifying shift. Before stopping inconvenience pay, the affected employees and if applicable, the union should be notified.

*Also applies to academic employees who accrue vacation and HAP*
Return from Furlough or Shared Work

Individuals who are recalled from a short-term furlough or shared work program should be given at least 7-days notice so they can adjust their schedules, including personal arrangements as appropriate, and be prepared to arrive at work as directed.

*Individuals who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement may have additional restrictions, including seniority rights, that govern recall of covered employees. Contact Workforce Policy and Labor Relations to discuss.*

Pay Continuance

To support university efforts to apply for the Employee Retention Tax Credit, if an employee, exempt or non-exempt, is available to work but their work cannot be performed remotely, supervisors should instruct such employees to record their time as described below:

- Non-exempt employees are instructed to record idle hours in Workday Time Off using the code of “Hours Not Worked - COVID-19.” You will be paid your full rate for these hours under separate earnings in your paycheck.

- Exempt employees are instructed to record idle hours using the Workday Time Off functionality and selecting the time off plan of “Time Not Worked - COVID-19.” This time off may be recorded in half day, whole day or less than half day increments to accurately reflect idle time.

Also see the quick reference aid for employees: [Recording Time or Hours Not Worked COVID-19](#)

Sponsored Funded positions

For pay periods starting on or after July 1, salaries and benefits for individuals who are *unable to perform work* because a worksite is unavailable due to COVID-19 restrictions, *may no longer be charged to federally-sponsored awards or federal appropriations*. Per university policy, such individuals typically must continue to be paid from PI or unit funds. Salaries and benefits for individuals *working* in reactivated worksites or performing project duties remotely may still be charged to projects where allocable. Additionally, where appropriate, *non-federally funded* sponsored awards may be used for salary continuation allowed under the pandemic emergency. As a reminder, an individual may not be added to, or have effort increased on, a project for the purpose of salary continuation.
Recording Time

For more information on recording time related to any of the scenarios above, visit https://apps.hr.cornell.edu/workdayCommunications/HCM job aids/COVID-19 Guidelines for Workday.pdf

Military Leave

If an eligible employee is called to active duty as a member of the U.S. Military or National Guard, Policy 6.9, Time Away From Work, Military Leave of Absence, or if applicable the relevant collective bargaining agreement, would apply. You must provide your supervisor advanced written or verbal notice as soon as possible, along with a copy of the military orders, if available.

Volunteer Service

Regular full- and part-time academic and nonacademic employees who are trained and registered as emergency responders with the Red Cross or other similar organizations may be granted up to five days paid leave per calendar year for time away from work needed to provide volunteer services emergency response. More information can be found in the emergency responder section of University Policy 6.9 Time Away from Work or if applicable the relevant collective bargaining agreement.
Working Remotely

In March 2020, the majority of the workforce was required to quickly transition to remote work without advance notice. At this time, Cornell encourages unit leadership to begin evaluating their remote working arrangements to maximize the effectiveness of this approach moving forward. As each unit develops their reactivation plan, they must identify which members of their workforce will be asked to return to work on campus in each phase.

Once a reactivation plan is approved, unit leadership should communicate these decisions to their managers. Though the timing of the different reopening phases may change due to new occurrences of infection, managers are expected to provide employees with information about their expected return to work date. Managers are encouraged to use these communications to address remote work, including an employee's need for additional equipment and/or addressing other remote work challenges (e.g., interdepartmental communication, delivery of work product, poor home internet connection).

For staff whose anticipated return to on-campus work is planned for later in the reentry process, unit managers should review with each such staff member the current status, including successes and possible improvements of remote work for the employee, supervisor, co-workers, and those they support. Long-term remote work assignments should be specified in a remote work plan. Specifically, all parties should:

- Review the Security Practices When Working From Home web page at: https://it.cornell.edu/faculty-security-and-policy-staff-students/security-practices-when-working-home
- Review the Flexibility in the Workplace Policy 6.6.13. Note: a temporary exception has been made to this policy regarding the requirement that an employee must have childcare while working from home. This policy exception will likely remain in effect until the K-12 school system and community childcare options are generally available.
- Complete a Flexible Work Agreement Form which clearly outlines performance expectations, communications and needed resources for effective remote work.
- Guidance and assistance for remote workers to set up ergonomically healthy workspaces are available through the Cornell Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention Program (MIPP).

Also see “Managing Remote Teams - Guide for Managers”
In situations where functioning remotely has worked well, it is recommended that a regular full-time or part-time remote working arrangement be considered. Some employees may be reluctant to continue remote work and express an interest in returning to campus. If the unit is scheduled for a return to campus later in the reentry plan, it might be helpful to have discussions with those employees about the differences in emergency remote working during the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing remote work. Some of these key differences include:

- COVID-19 remote work is being done as a social distancing measure. Employees are being isolated in all parts of their lives so the isolation is most likely greater than it would be when society as a whole is more open and where they can still come to campus for meetings and engage socially with others.

- The current emergency remote work situation occurred without planning or training so many employees did not have the tools or resources work effectively away from campus.

- An on-going remote work situation many not have the additional challenges of caregiving and homeschooling existing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Many employees have a less than ideal office space (no privacy); an on-going remote work plan may be able to address some of those issues.
Employee Resources

**Mental and Emotional Wellbeing**

**eni Confidential Counseling Services**

1-800-327-2255 – provides confidential counseling services at no cost for up to three visits to benefits eligible employees and family members. Available 24/7, licensed mental health professionals provide phone or in-person counseling for a variety of stressors and needs. At the end of the three visits, eni will work with the employee's own health coverage benefits to refer to an in-network provider, when possible and as appropriate.

**Faculty and Staff Assistance Program**

fsap@cornell.edu, 607-255-2673 - Benefits eligible employees, retirees, and spouses/partners may contact the FSAP by phone to obtain free support. If the volume of calls exceeds the FSAP’s ability to respond in a timely fashion, please consider contacting ENI (above). FSAP is now offering virtual sessions for employees.

**Coping with the COVID-19 Pandemic**  *(pdf)*

Guidance from the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program provides tips for employees to help with coping during the pandemic.

**Telemedicine**

Employees are encouraged to take advantage of a variety of telemedicine and tele-behavioral health visits that are available through each of our health plans through local and nation-wide providers. These alternatives to traditional in-person office visits allow for the continuation of vital services to support the health and well-being of employees and their families – whether located in Ithaca or anywhere in the United States.

For more detailed information about telemedicine offerings and telemedicine coverage available through both Endowed and Contract College health plans, see [Special Benefit Considerations During COVID-19](#).
Physical Wellbeing

EHS 2019 - Return to Work Health and Safety Training

Cornell Wellness

Remote access to programs and services available, including new offerings for fitness, meditation, and more – wellness@cornell.edu, wellness.cornell.edu

RAVE Guardian App

Free to the campus community. Can enhance the user’s personal safety both on and off-campus by turning any smartphone into a personal safety device.

Workplace Accommodations

See information in Guidance for Workplace Scenarios (page 8) for information regarding seeking an ADA reasonable accommodation.

Caring for Children & Elders/Adults

Cornell and community resources are available to support employees caring for children and adults. Resources include free premium membership to Care.com to locate caregivers, work/life resource and referral services, support groups, parent and elder care newsletters.

HR Contacts

Questions about your individual work circumstances, or employee and workplace guidance, can be directed to your college/unit HR Representative.

More Information

For more information about resources available to support members of the Cornell community see https://hr.cornell.edu/covid-19-workplace-guidance/community-resources
Appendix: Reactivating Campus Operations Checklists

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>CONTROL</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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 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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>CONTROL</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Everyone returning to campus must complete the required CULearn Training on SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19 and attest that they will follow protocols.</td>
<td>EHS Return to Work Health and Safety Training for COVID-19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>CONTROL</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reactivation Proposal 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.
Frequently Asked Questions

If an employee who is approved to be on campus has a household member (spouse, parent, child, etc.) who tests positive, is the employee permitted to come to campus?

The local Health Department will lead the contact tracing effort and direct all contacts (as they identify) to quarantine and/or seek testing as directed. If ordered to quarantine, the employee would not be permitted to be on campus until released from the quarantine. Additionally, employees who work on campus must complete Daily Check before they come onto campus. They should answer all questions truthfully. The Daily Check questions include questions related to household illness. If they turn red, they will have a telehealth visit with a CMC medical provider (at no charge to the employee) and must follow the medical guidance provided.

If they are able to work remotely during quarantine they are expected to do so. If unable to work remotely they will be placed on paid leave. See page 11 for details.

If an employee who is approved to be on campus has a household member (spouse, parent, child, etc.) who is directed to quarantine by the local Health Department, is the employee permitted to come to campus?

The local Health department will lead the contact tracing effort and direct all contacts (as they identify) to quarantine and/or seek testing as directed. If ordered to quarantine, the employee would not be permitted to be on campus until released from the quarantine. Additionally, employees who work on campus must complete Daily Check before they come onto campus. They should answer all questions truthfully. The Daily Check questions include questions related to household illness. If they turn red, they will have a telehealth visit with a CMC medical provider (at no charge to the employee) and must follow the medical guidance provided.

If they are able to work remotely during quarantine they are expected to do so. If unable to work remotely they will be placed on paid leave. See page 11 for details.

If an employee who is approved to be on campus has a household member (spouse, parent, child, etc.) who is taken out of work, school or day care by their doctor, due to concerns related to COVID symptoms, is the employee able to come to campus?

Employees who work on campus must complete Daily Check before they come onto campus. They should answer all questions truthfully. The Daily Check questions include questions related to household illness. If they turn red, they will have a telehealth visit with a CMC medical provider (at no charge to the employee) and must follow the medical guidance provided.

If they are instructed not to proceed to campus after the telehealth visit, if able to work remotely, they are expected to do so until they are cleared to return to work. If unable to work remotely, they will be placed on paid leave. See page 11 for details.