UMBC is carefully developing a multi-phase approach to a Return to On Campus Work plan that will give full consideration to the well-being of employees and the safety of the work environment. Our knowledge and understanding of COVID-19 continues to evolve and our plans and procedures will be updated as more information becomes available.

In coordination with Facilities Management and Environmental Safety and Health, the following document provides guidance for bringing employees back to campus, physical distancing and hygiene policies, and self-monitoring of health. The Department of Human Resources is available to assist supervisors/department heads and campus leaders as they work through processes for the gradual transition of employees from remote work back to campus.

CORE CONCEPTS

- Continue remote work to the greatest extent possible.
- Proceed thoughtfully, consistently, and deliberately when making decisions.
- Be compassionate and flexible. Supervisors/Department Heads are asked to work with employees who may have childcare concerns, are in a high-risk group, or have other circumstances that warrant special consideration. Be mindful of the anxiety that might be felt by employees.
- Be ready to adjust based on guidance from USM, CDC, state and local government.
- Implement scheduling in a fair manner.
- Communicate often.

All employees are expected to fully comply with the policies, protocols and guidelines outlined in this document. Failure to do so may result in corrective action.
MULTI-PHASE APPROACH

UMBC will use a multi-phase approach to return employees to campus. This approach is necessary to ensure appropriate physical distancing, availability of personal protective equipment (PPE), and symptom tracking and testing capabilities for COVID-19. We will assess expanded staffing based on mission-critical operations, ability to control and manage specific work environments, specific services that support the student experience, pursuit of research and creative activities, campus operations, to advance community engagement and need to access on-site resources.

The need to reduce the number of people on campus (density) to meet physical distancing requirements will continue for some time. It is the case that employees who can continue to effectively work remotely will likely continue to do so through the end of the fall semester. No unit or department can increase staffing levels to support on-campus operations without approval from the Return to On Campus Work Review Committee.

Preparation Phase (Phase 0: March 18 – June 14, 2020)

During the Preparation Phase (Phase 0), employees who can effectively work remotely will continue to do so. A limited number of employees will be asked to work on campus. Visitors and students not approved to be on campus are strongly discouraged from coming to campus.

Phase 1 – Summer Pilot Research Activities and Preparation for Limited Return to Campus (June 15 - August 2, 2020)

During Phase 1, employees who can effectively work remotely will continue to do so. A limited number of employees will be working on campus, to include faculty who are asked to return to on campus work for research and creative achievement purposes. Visitors and students not approved to be on campus are strongly discouraged from coming to campus.

Phase 2 – Limited Return to Campus (August 3 – Until the End of the Semester, Unless Conditions Change)

During Phase 2, most employees who are able to work remotely will continue to do so. A limited number of faculty and staff will be approved to work on campus to offer specific services that support the student experience and campus operations. There will be a small number of classes offered on campus and all other classes will continue to be online. A limited number of students and visitors will be on campus during phase 2. Only those employees who have received the necessary return to on campus work approval are asked to come to campus to work.
If a staff or faculty member has an occasional reason to work on campus, a written request for an exception must be submitted to the supervisor/department head for approval by the vice president/dean or designee.

**Supervisor/Department Head**

Throughout the multi-phased process, supervisors/department heads will have a pivotal role in identifying employees required to work on campus. In order to be prepared for employees returning to campus, supervisors/department heads are asked to complete the tasks on the Supervisor/Department Head Checklist.

Supervisors/department heads are encouraged to notify employees of a possible return to on campus work at the time of application. It is important that supervisors/department heads offer opportunities for employees to have conversations around scheduling options as well as any concerns they may have about returning to campus.

**Return to On Campus Work Approval Process (Phase 1)**

- Complete the RCA Access Request Form
  - Tips for Completing the Access Request form can be found here.
  - The Access Request Form will be subject to review and approval by the Department Chair, Environmental Safety & Health, the Associate Dean for Research, the Dean, and the Vice President for Research.
- Successfully complete the Office of Environmental Health and Safety Mandatory Training Module Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Awareness.

**Return to On Campus Work Approval Process (Phase 2)**

Approval to work on campus will follow the Return to On Campus Work Approval Process.

After receiving approval through the area dean or vice president, supervisors/department heads will contact employees approved to return to campus.

**Work Location/Scheduling Options**

As we begin the transition back to campus, it is important that we realize that work as we knew it may change. Our “new normal” will likely include more telework options for employees. Remote work will continue for some time.

**Remote Work:** Those who can work or teach remotely to fulfill some or all of their work responsibilities may continue to do so in order to reduce the number of individuals on campus and minimize spread of the virus.
**Alternating Days**: In order to limit the number of individuals and interactions on campus, units should schedule partial in-person staffing on alternating days. Such schedules will help enable physical distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces.

**Staggered Reporting/Departing**: The beginning and end of the workday brings many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting and departure times by will reduce traffic in common areas to help meet physical distancing requirements.

It will often be the case that those employees who are identified as needed on campus, and approved to return as such, will work under more than one of the scheduling options listed above.

**Preparing to Return to On Campus Work**

In preparation for return to on campus work, employees are expected to fully comply with the policies, protocols and guidelines outlined. Supervisors/Department heads must confirm that employees have completed the requirements before coming to work on campus. Employees who do not comply with stated guidelines will be subject to corrective action.

**Before** an approved employee returns to work on campus, the following is **required**.

1. **Self Check** (Information will be provided soon.)
3. Take the associated quiz.
4. Review the **Employee Checklist**.

Supervisors/Department heads should work with employees who do not have access technology to identify the best way to complete view the video.

**SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES WITH CHILDCARE CONCERNS**

Some employees returning to on campus work may be working parents and guardians facing childcare concerns and challenges. Supervisors/Department heads must make every effort to be supportive and as reasonably flexible in accommodating the needs of these employees. Areas of supportive measures may include the following.

- Frequent wellbeing check-ins.
- Temporary modified work schedule.
- Leave-specific accommodations (accrued leave, FFCRA, etc.).
- Consideration of on-campus childcare (**Y Preschool**).

Regardless of the approach, supervisors/department heads are asked to ensure the lines of communication are always open and consistent.
SUPPORT FOR HIGH RISK EMPLOYEES

Some individuals may be concerned about returning to their assigned worksite. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified certain conditions that may put individuals at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. These include older persons (65 and older) and persons with the following serious health conditions:

- Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- Serious heart conditions, including heart failure, coronary artery disease, congenital heart disease, cardiomyopathies, and pulmonary hypertension
- Compromised immune systems
- Severe obesity (body mass index of 40 or higher)
- Diabetes
- Chronic kidney disease when undergoing dialysis
- Liver disease

When considering possible work options for high-risk employees:

- **Be Flexible** - Offer flexible options such as telework to employees. This will eliminate the need for employees to travel to or from higher transmission areas in order to get to work.
- **Offer Alternate Duties** – Whenever possible, consider offering vulnerable employees duties that minimize their contact with others.
- **Refer Employees to Available Leave Options**
- **Advise Employees to Contact UMBCs Human Resources Team to Discuss Eligibility for Reasonable Accommodations** - Certain high-risk employees may be eligible for reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Human Resources at covid19hrresponseteam@umbc.edu is available to assist in determining an employee’s eligibility for reasonable accommodations.

Employees under 65 without underlying conditions who are unwilling to return to return to campus

Supervisors/Department heads should be prepared to respond to employees identified to return to campus who are unwilling to return. Consider the reason that underlies the unwillingness and determine whether a workable compromise can be met that assuages the employee’s fear while meeting the needs of the job. If there is no workable compromise, accrued annual, compensatory, holiday, personal or approved leave without pay (LWOP) might be viable options. Unless the employee is under medical care, sick leave is not an approved
leave option. For more information contact Human Resources at covid19hrresponseteam@umbc.edu.

SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

UMBC is committed to supporting the overall health and wellbeing of all employees. To help employees deal with uncertainty, fear, or any other challenges, our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Services are available to provide short-term counseling services for employees and their dependents to help with concerns constructively before they become major issues. Additional support is available through UMBC Together.

Daily Symptom Monitoring

Symptom monitoring requirements can be found here.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements

UMBC will provide two cloth face coverings for faculty and staff who are required to return to campus to work. Departments will be required to request the appropriate number for their department by submitting a work order to Facilities Management (FM).

Please Note: Departments must continue to purchase any specific required PPE outside of face masks. Facilities Management (FM) does not have N95 or KN95 masks, goggles, gowns or face shields. Departments requiring these items should work with their existing suppliers to purchase what they need. If a department has difficulty completing an order for any of these items, the departmental representative should contact Procurement for assistance.

Face coverings or masks are required to be worn in buildings and outdoors when in the presence of others. UMBC will provide two cloth face coverings for faculty and staff required to return to on campus work. Employees may also purchase or provide their own face coverings if they prefer. Face coverings are not required when alone in a closed room, such as a private office or lab. Self-purchased masks with slogans and/or symbols must be appropriate for a professional environment.

- All faculty and staff returning to work on campus must have in their possession and be able to use a face covering. Face covering means a covering that fully covers a person’s nose and mouth. Acceptable face coverings include disposable masks and reusable cloth coverings, including scarves and bandanas.
- Face coverings must be worn inside buildings while traveling from one location to another.
If an employee has a private office, the face covering may be removed once the office is entered.

If employees share an office with other employees, employees may remove their face coverings only if the CDC’s physical distancing guidelines can be maintained.

Face coverings must be worn when an employee leaves the workspace to travel to bathrooms, other offices or meetings.

Face coverings must be in an employee’s possession outside and worn if walking, talking, or working within 6 feet of others.

If employees are working (even outside) within six feet of others, a face covering must be worn.

**Appropriate use of face masks or coverings** is critical in minimizing risk to others near you. It’s possible that you could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick. Face coverings are essential to use in conjunction with physical distancing and hand washing to protect yourself and others from getting the virus.

**Gloves** – If gloves are necessary, a department must process a work order for the number of pairs required for the department employees working on campus who require gloves.

**Sanitizer stations** - UMBC is providing sanitizer stations in common areas. Additional sanitizers, requested specifically for departmental spaces, can be provided by FM through a work order. The cost of additional sanitizer stations will be charged to the department through the journal entry (JE) process. Alternately, a department may opt to directly purchase sanitizers.

**Disinfectant Spray and paper towels** – UMBC is providing disinfectant spray and paper towels for departments with employees returning to work on campus. These items can be secured through the work order process.

**Additional Signage** - Signage beyond the standard building signs must be requested by departments through the work order process. If approved, UMBC FM will provide the additional signage. **A request for additional signage requires planning ahead.**

**Customer shields or plexiglass dividers** - Departments identifying a potential need for customer shields or plexiglass dividers should make a request through the work order process. If approved based on an assessment of need, FM will provide the shields or dividers. **A request for customer shields or plexiglass dividers requires planning ahead. Other mitigation measures must be explored prior to utilizing customer shields.**
Physical Distancing

Keeping space between individuals is one of the best tools the university has to help avoid exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 and slow its spread. Since people can spread the virus without knowing they have it, it is important to stay away from others when possible, even if you have no symptoms. Physical distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk of getting very sick. Employees on campus must observe the following physical distancing practices:

- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people at all times. Respect other’s personal space and do not enter offices or work areas of other employees. Instead, use the phone or talk from the doorway while maintaining at least six feet of distance.
- Do not gather in groups of 10 or more. Large meetings should be conducted via teleconferencing tools. If approved to meet in person, the participants should be limited to less than 10 and the meeting shall be held in a space that allows for proper physical distancing with all participants wearing face coverings.
- Physical alterations to any work spaces should be considered while filling out the “Return to On Campus Work” application.
  - Physical alteration requests will be reviewed with the requesting department and if approved will be charged back to the department once complete.
  - Physical alterations should be a last resort and other mitigation measures should be considered prior to requesting physical alterations.
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.

HYGIENE, HAND WASHING, & MORE

Proper hygiene is one thing that everyone can practice to reduce the spread of germs and viruses. As faculty, staff and students return to campus, every person needs to discipline themselves into a routine with proper hygiene.

- Everyone is encouraged to wash hands frequently with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds and utilize sanitizer when soap and water is not available. Hands should be washed prior to eating and again after eating and any time after using the restroom.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Don’t share tools or equipment. If sharing is necessary, consider disinfecting the tool or equipment between uses or wear gloves or both.
- Faculty and staff should disinfect their work areas and maintain a clean work environment.
- Departments with frequently utilized shared spaces should disinfect these spaces several times a day.
• Mobile phones should be disinfected daily as they are frequently placed on high touch surfaces. Avoid sharing phones with others.

In accordance with CDC guidance, Facilities Management has been cleaning areas of academic, administrative, and residential buildings that have been occupied during the period of limited campus operations. Buildings have been and will continue to be cleaned in accordance with CDC guidelines, focusing on high-touch public areas such as restrooms, hallways, conference rooms, and kitchens.

Employees are asked wipe high-touch surfaces and tables in chairs in common areas after each use. These surfaces include any shared-space location or equipment (e.g., copiers, printers, computers, A/V and other electrical equipment, coffee makers, desks and tables, light switches, doorknobs, etc.).

Departments may obtain hand sanitizer, surface cleaning wipes, face coverings/masks, and thermometers through the normal office supply purchasing process.

**Using Restrooms**

Use of restrooms should be limited based on size of the space to ensure at least 6 feet of distance between individuals. Masks should be worn when walking to and from shared restrooms. Wash your hands thoroughly before leaving the restroom to reduce potential transmission of the virus.

**Using Elevators**

When in an elevator, maintain 6 feet of space from others or use the elevator alone. If you are using the elevator, wear your mask or face covering, and avoid touching the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers, if possible. Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer upon departing the elevator.

**Meetings**

Convening in groups increases the risk of viral transmission. Where reasonable, meetings should be held in whole or in part using the extensive range of available collaboration tools (e.g. Webex, WebexTeams, telephone, etc.) supported by DOIT.

In-person meetings are limited to the restrictions of local, state, and federal orders, and generally should not exceed 50 percent of a room's capacity. In no case should in-person meetings be held in a room where the mandatory 6 feet of separation for physical distancing requirements cannot be met. Campus units should remove or rearrange chairs and tables or add visual cue marks in meeting rooms to support physical distancing.
between attendees. All attendees should wear a mask or face covering while sharing space in a common room.

**Supervisors/Department Heads should encourage employees to avoid face-to-face communications as much as possible.**

**Meals**

Before and after eating, you should wash your hands thoroughly to reduce the potential transmission of the virus.

If dining on campus, you should wear your mask or face covering until you are ready to eat and then replace it immediately afterward. Eating establishments must meet requirements to allow at least 6 feet of distance between each customer, including lines and seating arrangements. Individuals should not sit facing one another. Employees are encouraged to take food back to their office area or eat outside.

If you are eating in your work environment (break room, office, etc.), maintain 6 feet of distance between you and others. Individuals should not sit facing each other. Only remove your mask or face covering in order to eat, then put it back on immediately afterward. Campus units should remove or rearrange chairs and tables, or add visual cue marks in employee break rooms to support physical distancing between employees. Clean and disinfect all surfaces, including tables, refrigerator handles, coffee machines, etc. after using in common areas.

**REPORTING CONCERNS**

Ensuring the health and safety of all campus community members is everyone’s responsibility. If you have concerns about your safety at work, we encourage you to discuss those concerns with your supervisor, department head/chairperson, or Human Resources at covid19hrresponseteam@umbc.edu.