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 employees, supervisors/department heads and campus leaders as you work through processes for the gradual transition 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 social distancing, availability of personal protective equipment (PPE), 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 and campus operations, and necessity of access to 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 Campus 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 work on campus 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 can continue work remotely will continue to do so. A limited number of faculty and staff will 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 approved visitors will be on campus during phase 2. **Only those employees who have received the necessary approval will be permitted to work on campus.**

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.
Preparing to Return

Employees are expected to comply fully with the policies, protocols and guidelines outlined in this document. Employees who do not comply with stated guidelines will be subject to corrective action.

Before an approved employee returns to on campus work, the following requirements must be met.

1. **Self Check** (Information will be provided soon)
2. Have a meeting with the supervisor to discuss the date of return, schedule, and any concerns about returning to campus.
   Visit blackboard.umbc.edu and click on “Organizations,” then "Return to Campus," to access the training. Please also review the online symptom monitoring tool before coming to campus, to make sure you can access it (available later this week). If you need help with the tool, support will be available during on-campus testing.

4. Review the Employee Checklist.

Employees who do not have access to technology to review the video should work with their department to identify the best way to complete this requirement. We are asking supervisors to be helpful in identifying solutions.

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).

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 work on campus. 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.

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.
- Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.

HYGIENE, HAND WASHING, & MORE

Proper hygiene is the 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 follow a routine that includes 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](https://www.cdc.gov), 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 to wipe high-touch surfaces and tables and 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.).

**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 you leave 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](https://www.msu.edu/it/). 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.

During your time on campus, you are encouraged to communicate with your colleagues and supervisors as needed by email, instant message, telephone, or other available technology rather than face-to-face.

**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 the 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.

**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.

**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.