Return-to-campus toolkit

For employees returning to work on campus
Employees returning to work on campus

A checklist for employees returning to work following working remotely during COVID-19

We look forward to welcoming you back to campus! COVID-19 has had a significant impact on all our working arrangements and many are appreciative of a return to the physical workplace. It’s possible that the transition back to in-person working will be seamless and straightforward for you. On the other hand, the transition back to on-campus working may also present challenges that you had not anticipated.

We have prepared this resource to support you in this process, whatever comes your way.

☐ Take UBC's COVID safety training

Please make sure you have completed the mandatory online UBC COVID-19 course.

☐ Talk to your manager or supervisor

Ask your manager or supervisor what to expect upon your return. Some questions to ask are:

- Do we have colleagues who have remained on campus? If so, what should we take into consideration regarding them when we return to campus?
- Have there been changes to our physical workspace or scheduling changes made to accommodate physical distancing?
- What does the flow of staff and/or students through our workspace look like?
- Have there been any changes to parking, security codes, or other practical adaptations?
- Are there new protocols or procedures to follow, and if these have changed how will we stay up to date?
What changes, if any, will there be to the workflow within our team?

**What is the COVID-19 safety plan in our workplace?** Note, if you notice yourself worrying for your physical safety while at work, use fact-checking to help you put risks in perspective. It’s ok (and quite understandable) to be cautious, but if your anxiety is starting to feel overwhelming, consider seeking further support from some of the resources outlined below.

If there is a building or office manager, they might also have an update for you before the return to the office.

- **Finalize your arrangements**

  Going back to the workplace may mean that the adaptive routine and systems that you and your family have developed during this pandemic may shift.

  Consider how a return to the physical workplace may affect any caring responsibilities you have, or how best you may protect those in your immediate community who may be at high risk of COVID-19. Be sure to discuss any concerns you may have with your manager ahead of time.

- **Finding the new normal**

  These have been very difficult and uncertain times, and may remain challenging for some time to come. As we continue the process of re-opening, it’s understandable to need some time to adjust to new working arrangements.

  Many of us have experienced significant and sudden changes to roles, responsibilities, working locations and work patterns. While some of these changes may have felt positive, others may have been more unwanted and it may take time for you and your workspace to adjust.

  Some of your colleagues may have already returned to working on campus, or do not have the ability to work remotely. Please demonstrate compassion and do your best to understand what their experience may be.

  **Everyone’s experience and comfort level around COVID-19 is unique to them.**

  *Maybe:*
  
  - You have been working from home with dependents at home and it has been very hard to work
  - You live alone and have been dealing with social isolation
  - You may experience many emotions. Feelings of worry, anxiety, concern. It is important to acknowledge how you feel. It is also important to be compassionate and patient with others. Those without the ability to work remotely may have difficulty adjusting to having their colleagues returning to work on campus
Keep in mind that everyone is doing the best they can. Brené Brown shares some helpful guidelines.

- Prioritize your psychological wellbeing

  It may feel like a tough task to return to your workspace. Much has changed in the past few months and even if your workplace has stayed the same, you have likely been through a lot of unique and maybe difficult experiences.

  - Be kind to yourself
  - Be kind to others around you: their experience, too, has been unique
  - Focus on your individual and collective wellbeing through this process of change
  - Take breaks, make time to move, check in with yourself and prioritize self-care in a way that is meaningful for you

- Know where to seek further support

  If you are having trouble managing the transitions in your working arrangements, please reach out and ask for help. UBC has a number of resources available to support you during this time of transition and your wellbeing is our priority.

  - UBC HR Wellbeing and Benefits
  - UBC HR Workplace Wellbeing Ambassadors
  - 3 steps to supporting colleagues in distress
  - Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP): UBC’s EFAP provider is Morneau Shepell. You can access the Care Access Centre 24/7 at 1-800-387-4765
  - Union or professional association: Contact your union or professional association for support