

FAQs: Return to ON-Campus Work

1. How were the phases for employee return to on-campus work determined?

The phases were established to enable a safe and thoughtful approach to the increased campus operations over the summer as we prepare for the return of students in the fall. Departments will have the flexibility to adjust based on specific departmental and position needs.

2. What are the dates of each phase for return to campus work?

As of publication of these FAQs, the dates are as follows. Updates may be necessary based on changing city, county, state and federal guidelines.

Phase 1 - TARGET DATES: May 18 - May 31

- Continuation of current Infrastructure and Critical Services and Research Support.
- Operations & Facilities such as grounds & custodial, Police, receiving dock and Chartwells dining. Other Divisions/Departments may include, in full or limited resources, University Computing and Information, Student Health Services, Environmental, Health and safety, etc., as directed by their leadership.

Phase 2 - TARGET DATES: June 1 - June 14

- Critical On-site Administrative and Business Operations as communicated from Divisional/College leadership.

Phase 3 - TARGET DATES: June 15 - June 28

- Administrative, Business, Academic and Student Support Operations as communicated from Divisional/College leadership.

Phase 4 - TARGET DATES: July 7 - August 23

- Staggered attendance of remaining Faculty and Staff needed for beginning of academic school year operations.

3. How will employees know when they need to return to on-campus work?

Division/College leadership will create return to workplace plans to include accounting for the number of personnel in the department, physical work setting to allow for proper social distancing, work activities needing to be prioritized, and level of service needed to provide to constituents as campus begins to open as part of the four-phase plan.

Employees should receive communication from their supervisor regarding the anticipated date of return to on-campus work, including a timeline to prepare for that transition. Additionally, in preparation of returning to campus, employees will also need to complete the TAP e-learning course SH2005 COVID-19 Return to Work and SH006 Coronavirus 19 Protocol Certificate at login.tap.uh.edu prior to an employee's return to campus.

FAQs: Return to ON-Campus Work

4. What if I want to return to campus earlier than my supervisor tells me I can?

Departmental leadership is asked to determine return to campus timelines for faculty and staff based on several different factors but most importantly keeping a healthy and safe environment. Supervisors are asked to communicate to their employees an appropriate timeline for your individual position's return to campus, which should be adhered to unless appropriate approvals are obtained.

5. What if I am in a high-risk group for COVID-19 or care for a household family member who is at high-risk?

Employees are not required to disclose if they are in a high-risk category based upon preexisting medical condition. If an employee considers him or herself to be high-risk for COVID-19 based on the [CDC guidelines](#) and have concerns regarding returning to on-campus work, the employee may voluntarily discuss with his or her manager or may request an accommodation from UHCL HR. If an employee voluntarily discloses, this information will be kept confidential in accordance with UHCL personnel policies.

Supervisors, in coordination with HR, will work with employees who are requesting accommodations to care for self or a family member with high-risk conditions to discuss options that support a healthy and safe work environment while determining ways to complete position responsibilities. Some employees may be permitted to continue with telework arrangements through extended phases of return to campus with periodic reviews of return to campus dates for individual positions.

6. What do I need to do before returning to campus for work?

Prior to returning to the workplace, employees will need to complete TAP e-learning course SH2005 COVID-19 Return to Work and SH006 Coronavirus 19 Protocol Certificate at login.tap.uh.edu. This e-learning will provide ways to return to the workplace and campus in the safest way while protecting the health of our co-workers, students and visitors. Checklists for ALL Employees and Managers are also available to aid you in preparations for returning to on-campus work.

7. What are the basic requirements to be aware of in returning to on-campus work?

Employees will be required to maintain at least 6 feet of separation from other individuals not within the same household. Employees should comply with social distance guidelines, and when such distancing is not feasible, employees should notify their supervisor. Supervisors may contact UHCL EHS for guidance in obtaining face coverings for voluntary usage by employees.

Employees are also asked to self-screen BEFORE going to work for any new or worsening [symptoms of possible COVID-19](#).

Employees are asked to use cloth face coverings (over the nose and mouth) when within 6 feet of another person who is not a member of the same household, when in group settings in the workplace or where social distancing is more difficult.

In-person meetings must comply with the latest governmental guidance in effect at the time of the meeting. As of the date of this document, there must be fewer than 10 people, and social distancing guidelines must be followed. Certain types of services are also required to maintain 25% occupancy level rates. Supervisors should contact DPS/Emergency Management with questions. Microsoft Teams and Zoom meetings should be utilized whenever possible.

FAQs: Return to ON-Campus Work

8. Will face coverings or masks be required while at work or on campus?

Per CDC guidelines and COVID Task Force Guidance, face coverings (over the nose and mouth) should be used when social distancing is not feasible. Unless a job requires a mask, each individual should bring their own face covering to the workplace. Supervisors may contact EHS to request face coverings.

9. Will employees be allowed to travel for business purposes during the return to on-campus work phases?

Non-essential business domestic and international travel is not allowed through the summer. Employees should be mindful of COVID-related travel advisories for personal and essential business travel. Any mission-critical exceptions must be approved in advance by the appropriate senior administrator. We continue to monitor all federal or state mandates regarding travel both international and domestic and will provide updates as needed.

10. Will telework options remain available for employees who are not scheduled to return until later in the summer?

UHCL will continue to offer temporary telework work options to faculty and staff as an option to continue working, as directed by their supervisor. During temporary remote work options, employees should plan to be available during normal business hours to perform their regular tasks, as well as to attend meetings virtually. Employees working remotely may be required to report to campus at certain times such as for certain meetings and may be asked to return to their regular, in-office work location with short notice. Any request for accommodation for a disability should comply with Americans with Disability Act. As always, non-working time away from the office should be coordinated with and approved by supervisors regardless of whether you are working on campus or virtually.

If any employee does not have the work volume to continue position responsibilities while awaiting authorization to return to campus, the use of any paid leave benefits should an individual have available may be utilized in accordance with UHCL policies. For example, staff may qualify for paid caregiver leave or may use accrued vacation leave to make up any additional hours due to lack of work assignments. If a staff member is sick or caring for a sick family member, any accrued sick leave should be utilized.

11. When should employees return to work after absences related to an injury or illness?

Faculty and staff should return to work when they are fit for duty as outlined in the University's Return to Work/Fitness for Duty Policy. This includes on-campus and telework. UHCL's goal is to return workers to work in the safest manner possible while acknowledging possible limitations that may impact the ability to perform the essential functions of the job thus requiring modifications. While a return to the workplace typically requires the assessment and documentation by the employee's health care provider, this may not be reasonably possible due to COVID-19. Therefore, employees should follow CDC guidelines to determine the appropriate time to return to work, while UHCL requires returning employees to be symptom and fever-free for at least 72 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to work.

12. What will UHCL's response be should someone on campus become ill due to COVID-19?

UHCL will always work to protect the privacy of all employees as well as the health and safety of the campus community. UHCL asks all employees to self-monitor daily before coming to work and requires employees to stay home when not well and to follow return to work protocol of being symptom and fever-free for at least 72 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to work.

FAQs: Return to ON-Campus Work

UHCL will work to isolate the area(s) of exposure and follow CDC guidelines to clean and disinfect areas used by ill employees.

13. Will employees be required to provide a doctor's note now that we are returning to on-campus work if they have been ill?

Employees may be asked to provide a fit for duty certification as outlined in the University's Return to Work/Fitness for Duty Policy. Due to COVID-19 impact to the health care system, it may not be reasonably possible to obtain a doctor's note from your health care provider. Therefore, employees should communicate any changes in their work status and their ability to perform their job duties to their direct supervisor to determine needed documentation for a return to campus.

14. What additional resources are available for employees as we all prepare for a phased return to on-campus work?

UHCL has developed two Return to On-Campus Work Checklists to help prepare for a safe and healthy return to campus. The checklists can be found here:

- [Return to On-Campus Work Checklist for Employees](#)
- [Return to On-Campus Work Checklist for Managers](#)

15. Will employees still be required to self-quarantine if there has been a potential exposure to COVID-19?

Employees should notify and work with their supervisors if they believe they have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Should any employee start to experience symptoms of fever and/or upper respiratory illness, he or she should notify his or her supervisor, seek medical treatment and stay home in a non-work status in order to support full recovery. Faculty and staff who have potential exposure to COVID-19 but are not experiencing symptoms should follow CDC guidelines and self-quarantine for 14 days. During the period of self-quarantine, employees continue to telework unless they are otherwise on leave.

Employees should return to work when they are fit for duty as outlined in the University's Return to Work/Fitness for Duty Policy. UHCL's goal is to return workers to work in the safest manner possible while acknowledging possible limitations that may impact the ability to perform the essential functions of the job thus requiring modifications. While a return to work typically requires the assessment and documentation by the employee's health care provider, this may not be reasonably possible due to COVID-19. Therefore, employees should follow CDC guidelines to determine the appropriate time to return to work, while Baylor asks returning employees to be symptom free and fever-free for at least 72 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to work.

16. What if I am not comfortable coming to work due to possible exposure and I've been requested to start reporting to on-campus work?

Employees should bring their concerns to their supervisor and discuss options available to support the work needing to be done while supporting health and safety of our employees. HR can also provide support in facilitating conversations with supervisors and employees to determine needs and accommodations available to meet those needs. Possible accommodations may range from continuing telework arrangements to office restructuring, to possible schedule rotations. Any request for accommodation for a disability should comply with Americans with Disability Act.

FAQs: Return to ON-Campus Work

17. What if I have childcare issues that prevent me from reporting to on-campus work when requested?

Employees should discuss with their supervisor regarding availability to report for on-campus work, including for childcare. It is encouraged that employees who are asked to return to support on-campus operations talk with their childcare provider to look at options that may be available, including UHCL-provided documentation to support your return to campus need. When no childcare options are available then, during this COVID-19 response time, supervisors are encouraged to provide accommodations through continued telework when work is available, create opportunities to support rotating schedules, or extended hours of work where possible.

It is important that employees do not bring their children or other family members to the workplace to respect the health and safety of co-workers. This approach is critical to being able to maintain social distancing at all times. Departments are setting limitations based on the number of employees required to be on-campus so employee guests should be only in emergency situations.

18. What should an employee do if they suspect a co-worker of being ill and reporting to on-campus work?

Employees who suspect an employee is ill should encourage the employee to go home as soon as possible and ask them to notify their supervisor. Employees should not assume a diagnosis of any sort but merely inform one another of safe practices in "staying home" when not feeling well. Any concerns should be reported directly to your supervisor even if the employee is not in your department. Your supervisor should contact HR if the employee reports outside of their department or if within the same department request the employee to go home until confirmation from a medical provider is obtained that a return to work is possible. Employees may be asked to follow the potential exposure protocol for COVID-19, which is staying home until they are without symptoms, including fever free for at least 72 hours without fever-reducing medication before returning to work.

19. What should an employee do if they suspect a co-worker of being high-risk and reporting to on-campus work?

Employees are entitled to protections against discrimination based upon age, disability, and a number of other protected categories. Others should not presume to determine if someone is in a high-risk category. Each individual should assess him or herself with the CDC guidance and/or their health care provider to determine if she or he believes it is safe to come to work. If a co-worker learns of a high-risk factor, they must maintain confidentiality of that information, only reporting it with HR or a supervisor, or sharing it with permission of the individual with the risk factor.

20. When is it okay for student workers to return to on-campus work?

Student workers likely will not return to on-campus work until Phase 4, targeted to begin mid-July. Should there be telework responsibilities that are not being accomplished with current staff availability then student workers may be an option for additional work assignments.