

RETURN TO NORMAL OPERATIONS

March 11, 2021



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Disclaimer:

The guidance is based on the information available at this time and will be updated as more information becomes available.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2021-12

- Governor McMaster issued Executive Order 2021-12 late Friday evening (3/5/2021)
- State Human Resources required all state agencies to submit plans by noon Wednesday, March 10, 2021 for approval.
- Our plan was submitted and approved.
- Staff employees who do not fall into an exception are to report for on campus work during the week of March 15, 2021.
- Return dates for employees who meet exceptions will be phased in over the next six weeks.

EXPEDITIOUS RETURN

- **During the week of March 15, 2021** supervisors are to return all staff employees to the workplace who have:
 - private offices OR
 - workspaces in which safety equipment such as sneeze guards/plexiglass have been installed for open spaces & 6 feet of spacing between employees can be maintained.

EXCEPTION: SPACE NOT UP TO SAFETY STANDARDS

- Workspaces in which safety equipment may be required, i.e. sneeze guards/plexiglass for open spaces and 6 feet of spacing between employees needs to be modified.
- Units must promptly modify work space
- employees must return as soon as safety standards are in place but **no later than April 5, 2021 to the workplace.**

EXCEPTIONS: CHILDCARE

- **Employees who are working remotely because of childcare responsibilities will be afforded time to make alternative arrangements.**
- Employees with pre-school or school age children whose daycare or school is not operating on a full-time schedule will be required to report to campus as soon as accommodations are made but **no later than April 5, 2021.**
- Schools/Divisions will be responsible to review employee circumstances and determine an appropriate report date within this time limit.

EXCEPTIONS: TELECOMMUTING AGREEMENT

- **Employees who are working remotely because of a formal telecommuting agreement that was in place prior to February 20, 2020.** The terms of these agreements will remain in place.
- Formal telecommuting agreements initiated after February 20, 2020 will need to be submitted to Employee Relations for review.
- The May 15, 2021 end date for temporary remote work agreements established in response to the pandemic is rescinded effective March 19, 2021. All employees covered by these agreements must report to campus or meet one of the other exceptions.

EXCEPTIONS: HIGH RISK

- **For staff with health conditions which make them high risk for contracting COVID-19:**
 - employees are expected to obtain a vaccine and report to work as soon as vaccination protocol is complete but no later than **April 17, 2021**.
 - Employees must request an accommodation, with appropriate supporting documentation, to remain working remotely under this exception.
 - Employees working remotely under this exception are expected to take steps to obtain a vaccine and complete the vaccination process by April 17, 2021.
 - Each request will be evaluated separately to determine if the employee's request to continue to work remotely is warranted.

Additional Information and Resources for HR Contacts

VACCINES

Employees are strongly encouraged to obtain the vaccine wherever they are able to schedule an appointment.

Vaccination is not a condition of return. Only approved personnel in high risk categories will be approved to continue remote work while they complete the vaccination process.

Vaccine Information

- [UofSC COVID Vaccine Information](#)
- [DHEC Vaccine Information](#)

COVID-19 TESTING

Employees returning to campus for the first time this spring are required to be tested for COVID during the first week they are on campus unless they:

- have received 2 doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- one dose of Johnson and Johnson vaccine, or
- are within 90 days of a positive COVID test.

Documentation of vaccination are to be uploaded into myhealthspace to be exempt from COVID testing.

INFORMATION FOR SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS

- [COVID 19 Information in HR Toolbox](#)
- [COVID 19 Safety Guidelines](#)
- Return to Work Template for those with Schedule Change
- Return to Normal Operations FAQs
- Expected to follow all safety protocols. Whenever possible continue to conduct group meetings via TEAMS to maintain social distancing.

INFORMATION FOR COLLEGE/DIVISION HR CONTACT

- [Remote Tracker](#)
- [Attestation Form](#)
- Daily Census Reporting
- Return to Work Template for those with Schedule Change
- Return to Normal Operations FAQs
- Expected to follow all safety protocols. Whenever possible continue to conduct group meetings via TEAMS to maintain social distancing.

Return to Normal Operations FAQs

DOES THIS EXPECTATION INCLUDE THOSE EMPLOYEES WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS?

Yes. We are still expected to follow the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and other federal and state laws. Therefore, if an employee has a disability (e.g., congestive heart failure) that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identifies as placing the individual at higher risk for severe illness resulting from the COVID-19 virus, the agency should go through the interactive process to evaluate a request for a **temporary** reasonable accommodation to work remotely until the individual has had an **opportunity** to be vaccinated.

IS AN EMPLOYEE EXPECTED TO REPORT TO THE WORKPLACE IF A FAMILY MEMBER OR HOUSEHOLD RESIDENT IS AT HIGHER RISK FOR SEVERE ILLNESS FROM THE COVID-19 VIRUS?

Yes. The Americans with Disabilities Act does not apply when the individual with a disability is a family member or household resident of the employee. Qualifying employees may be eligible for leave pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) if they need to care for a family member with a serious health condition. Requests for FMLA leave will need to be made by the employee and processed in accordance with federal law and policy.

IF THE CHILDCARE CENTER OR SCHOOL FOR THE CHILD OF AN EMPLOYEE IS NOT OPEN TO IN-PERSON LEARNING FULLTIME, IS THE EMPLOYEE EXPECTED TO REPORT TO THE WORKPLACE?

Yes. All employees are expected to return to the workplace fulltime. However, parents with pre-school or school age dependents who attend school or daycare facilities not offering in-person instruction/care may be given additional time, not to exceed **April 5, 2021**, to make arrangements for alternative childcare accommodations.

IS THE TEMPORARY REMOTE WORK AGREEMENT STILL IN EFFECT?

No, the Executive Order states employees should start returning to work as of March 15, 2021.

IF WE HAVE EMPLOYEES WHO WANT TO TELECOMMUTE CAN THEY?

No, guidance from State Human Resources is no new telecommuting agreement should be authorized at this time. State HR is looking into new guidelines for telecommuting in the future.

WE HAVE AN EMPLOYEE WHO HAS RECEIVED THE VACCINE BUT IS AFRAID TO COME TO WORK. WHAT DO I DO?

Employees are to return to work unless they are working under a formal telecommuting agreement that was established prior to February 19, 2020. The supervisor should discuss with the employee and if necessary, elevate to Employee Relations.

DOES THE EXECUTIVE ORDER AFFECT SPRING TEACHING ONLINE?

The executive order will not change how we are offering instruction during the spring semester.

QUESTIONS?



THANKS!