

**Business Continuity Toolkit Resource**

**Pandemic Return to Workplace Checklist**

*The information contained herein is of a general nature and is not intended to address the circumstances of any particular individual or entity. Although we endeavor to provide accurate and timely information, there can be no guarantee that such information is accurate as of the date it is received or that it will continue to be accurate in the future. No one should act on such information without appropriate professional advice after a thorough examination of the particular situation.*

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This resource is part of the business continuity management (BCM) toolkit and it provides a checklist of activities to be conducted before and after employees return to the workplace after a pandemic situation occurs. This checklist should be used in conjunction with a pandemic response plan.

If the business determines that a return to work is beneficial for all employees or specific groups, it should engage early with building management and insurers to confirm appropriate risk management mitigations/considerations are in place.

A business has a duty to first protect the health and wellbeing of their people, customers and visitors to their facilities or store. There are a number of important activities that must be performed before employees returns to ensure the building/office environment is safe and ready to be occupied again.

This checklist is to be used once the authoritative health organization or local/provincial/federal government begins easing restrictions and allows organizations to return to onsite work. Additional activities may be required, depending on the nature of the facility.

1. Required preparation prior to workplace return

* Contact building/property management and obtain an itemized listing of:
  + Cleansing activities performed since the office/building closing for the pandemic crisis
  + Outstanding preventative maintenance work (scheduled or unscheduled) that needs to be performed prior to re-occupancy
  + Listing of any security events since the building closed for the pandemic
  + Validate HVAC systems are working appropriately and certified
  + Validate all automated building features (lights turning off, door locks, elevators) have been confirmed back to normal configurations and have been tested
  + Confirm building parking capacity and operations have returned to normal
  + Determine if there is a planned “deep clean” activity before re-occupancy.
* If property management has not performed a “deep clean” of the facility recently (e.g. within 1 week of re-occupancy), organize this to be performed (washrooms, desks, carpet, fridge, lockers, all handles/doorknobs, servery, cafeteria, etc.)
* Work with the building/office management company on potential entry procedures, for example temperature checks; infra-red gates or temperature guns; subject to local regulation and practice
* Re-establish security services if they have been scaled down (security personnel, etc.)
* Re-enable personnel access cards/security passes
* Develop a visitor policy and process for your premises, and where applicable gain an understanding of your clients' visitor policies if your personnel have to visit their sites
* Identify a declaration process for staff and visitors to complete prior to or on entering the facility
* Determine if returning employees will need to be screened/certified for return
* Work with the management team to schedule the gradual return of the various groups / teams based on function (e.g. Human Resources, purchasing, operations, warehouse, etc.) on different days / weeks to avoid a mass return on the same day. Ensure a communication has been developed, approved and distributed in advance to avoid confusion
* Establish approach whereby only a percentage of employees are present on premise at the same time (with the remaining staff working remotely). Split teams and units into A, B, C teams. Develop a schedule for them to alternate presence in the office. Develop hand-over protocols.
* Establish social distancing routines in the office, such as reduced presence in the office, staggered arrival, departure and lunch times, reduced lift usage, access to meeting areas, meeting room limits, etc.
* Communicate to employees that they will need to disinfect and return any equipment (screens, docking stations, etc.) that was taken home, prior to returning onsite
* Confirm transit services have returned to normal and are available for staff who normally use public transit
* Confirm with the IT support team that all network infrastructure within the office/facility is confirmed as operational (wifi, network connections, video conferencing, etc.)
* Review all open IT tickets and prioritize / identify any incidents that would impact a return to the office/facility
* Perform a physical walk-around of the facility to confirm there is no damage or situations that would affect personnel safety. Contact the insurance carrier to report any damage or situations requiring attention
* Determine if changes to the office/facility layout are required (desks, proximity of personnel, etc.)
* Re-establish catering and food service arrangements (coffee, tea, soft drinks, etc.)
* Re-establish mail, messenger and printing services
* Re-establish washroom services (cleaning, stocking supplies)
* Consider upgrade of washroom supplies (hand washing reminders, additional hand sanitizers, and anti-bacterial soap). Post signs in the office/facility and washrooms to maintain appropriate hygiene
* Re-establish daily office/facility cleaning services and consider additional hand sanitizers on floors, wipes, etc. for returning staff
* Obtain and provide disinfectant wipes on each floor, for individuals that prefer to clean their workstations upon return
* Obtain and provide all types of personal protective equipment (PPE) that is required based on the nature of the facility and personnel interaction, including masks, face shields, disposable gowns, etc.
* Establish a process for staff to report issues upon their return (e.g. have individual Floor Wardens)
* Obtain a listing of all outstanding orders to confirm quantities and expected delivery details
* Draft, approve and distribute a notice to suppliers that the company is returning to normal operations, including any special considerations or processes.