

Good morning,

As we continue to work remotely, we have also been preparing for what it will look like when the ESC and its affiliate sites reopen our offices for staff and visitors. What the exact date may be I cannot tell you at this point, and it may not look the same for all, but I did want to share with you an idea of what things may look like and how we will operate upon our return.

Our leadership team has developed a web page for staff with guidance on reopening and what requirements will be in place to do so safely. These requirements and the resulting protocols have been reviewed and approved by local public health officials, so it's important that we all know them and understand the expectations prior to arriving at any of our facilities to work onsite.

Our onsite work will be guided by three core principles:

1. Protecting the health of our employees, visitors, and their families;
2. Supporting community efforts to control the spread of the virus; and
3. Being an example in responsibly returning to working onsite.

The ESC's [Reopening Guidance for Staff web page](#) will provide you direction as to what protocols our employees have taken and will be taking to ensure these principles are met.

There are five primary protocols to observe while working onsite:

1. Staff and visitors will be required to wear a face covering when entering and leaving the building and anytime when not alone at their assigned individual work stations. If an individual is unable to wear a face covering due to health concerns, we will ask that they validate this with a note from their physician. Each staff member will be provided a face covering.
2. Conducting daily self-evaluation health assessments to determine if "fit for duty" before arriving at office locations. All staff and visitors also will be assessed prior to being permitted to enter the facility. Individuals with a body temperature of 100 degrees or greater are asked not to report to work and/or will be sent home after assessment.
3. Following all hygiene requirements including frequent handwashing and social distancing restrictions. Hand sanitizer stations will be available at entrances as well as other high-traffic areas within the building such as restrooms, copiers, and conference rooms. Staff will be provided with stylus pens to use for the operation of copiers. Social distancing restrictions will include markings on floors for proper spacing as well as signage on walls to limit the sharing of common spaces such as elevators and restrooms. All water fountains will be shut off and closed for use. And unfortunately, we won't be shaking hands or giving hugs.
4. Regularly cleaning and sanitizing all high-touch surfaces throughout the day and after work hours. Staff will clean and sanitize their own individual work stations and will be provided proper supplies to do so.

5. Limiting access to ESC offices by visitors to appointments only and expecting staff to remain at their work stations at all times with few exceptions such as using the restroom. Work station dividers will be installed where there is not enough space for required social distance. A major shift will be the inability to congregate at other staff member work stations. Internal meetings may not be held in individual offices unless that office includes a conference space allowing for social distance.

If you have questions or concerns regarding these protocols, please work with your immediate supervisor and the Office of Human Resources.

There will be more details to follow, including resources and information on the [web page](#) such as how to cope with the potential anxiety of returning to the office, what to do if sick at work, accessing our employee assistance program, and site-specific guidance for each of our buildings.

I understand that each of us will feel some level of awkwardness in returning to work and that will vary depending on each of our own unique experiences and perspectives. Adding to this awkwardness will be the uncertainty of what the future may bring. It is important to remember that a critical part of moving through these difficult times is engaging in activities that were previously routine, including returning to work on a regular basis.

We look forward to helping all of our employees with that process. However, we are not insensitive to the uneasiness that doing so may cause for some of you - but we will get through this together and be a stronger organization for having gone through it – together.

Thank you for your commitment over the past three months. Take care.

Tom

[Reopening Guidance for Staff Web Page](#)