DIVISION OF
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

OFFICE OPERATIONS FRAMEWORK & GUIDELINES FOR RETURNING TO CAMPUS
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC
Fall 2020

For detailed and up-to-date campus guidance, visit umd.edu/4Maryland and uhr.umd.edu/coronavirus/return-to- campus/. This document will be updated as we receive any additional guidance from the university or USM.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is the result of work by a committee convened by Provost Mary Ann Rankin and chaired by Associate Vice President Cynthia Hale to develop guidelines for return to on-campus work and related teleworking agreements for units in Academic Affairs.

The provost's charge to the committee was: *The Academic Affairs leadership and staff have a shared responsibility and an established record of excellence in effectively meeting the needs of our students, supporting our research mission, and providing efficient and reliable administrative support. As we plan for a return of students and faculty to campus this fall, I ask that you develop equitable and humane principles and procedures for a return to in-person campus work and related teleworking agreements that uphold our shared vision of service excellence."*

Once the campus is open to returning students and faculty, academic offices need to be staffed. We have an obligation to meet the demand of in-person service need*s,* anticipating additional adjustments as circumstances continue to evolve. When academic buildings are open and accessible, it is appropriate for offices to have some level of staffing to meet critical needs and to ensure the safety of people, facilities, and equipment. This report presents guidelines for equitably establishing appropriate staff presence in each campus service unit. Our shared goal is *to create enough of a physical presence on campus to ensure excellent service to our UMD community-- students, faculty, staff, and visitors-- both in person and online.* We develop a series of considerations and associated standards while allowing for gradations of scale, culture, and business objectives and personal issues. Finally, we include information about teleworking agreements and supporting resources and provide an example of a telework agreement that was developed and effectively enacted this spring.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
- Cynthia R. Hale (chair), Associate Vice President for Finance and Personnel, Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost (SVPAAP)
- Mariah Bauer, Director, Strategic Initiatives and Planning Deputy Director, Administrative Modernization Program (AMP), SVPAAP
- David Cronrath (ex officio), Professor and Associate Provost, SVPAAP
- David Baugh, Director of IT and Facilities, College of Information Studies
- Kathleen Cavanaugh, Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Humanities

- Nora Czumak, Director of Administrative Services, Enrollment Management
- Joseph JaJa, Professor and Chair, College of Engineering
- Joanne Leffson-Bryant, Director, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- Tiffany Rogers, Director of Human Resources, Libraries
- Katherine Russell, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- Heidi Sauber, Director, College of Engineering
- Kimberly Schmidt, Assistant Dean, Finance and Administration, School of Public Policy
- Eric Van Johnson, Assistant Dean, Office of Undergraduate Studies, and Director, Office of Letters and Sciences

* Scott Roberts, Assistant Dean, Graduate School, participated and contributed.

I. Introduction

Preliminary results of the Summer 2020 Staff Experience Survey revealed some important considerations: 1) UMD employees are concerned about the risks of returning to campus during the COVID-19 pandemic, and 2) many believe they have been performing their duties as well (if not better) from home than in their campus space. Given this information, university leadership and each supervisor should be prepared to clearly articulate the need for a physical return of some staff to campus and the important data-driven steps, based on recommendations of public health experts, that are being taken to keep everyone working on campus as safe as possible. These steps include:

- Required COVID-19 testing for all students, faculty, and staff returning to campus, with repeated testing opportunities planned throughout the semester
- Required masking of everyone on campus at all times except in private offices
- Required 6-ft distancing with floor and seating indicators in public spaces
- One-way traffic and limited entrance and exit doors in heavily used buildings
- Requiring all students and employees to report absence of COVID-19 symptoms daily
- Twice a day cleaning and disinfecting restrooms and high touch surfaces in all occupied buildings
- Anti-viral wipes or cleanser stations added near all external doors and elevators
- Air handling systems checked and upgraded where necessary to insure adequate air movement in offices
- Plexiglass barriers installed where significant people traffic is likely

II. Defining appropriate on-site staffing levels

The University of Maryland was designed to be a brick and mortar entity, and our business model supports a physical campus that is typically teeming with activity. COVID-19 disrupted "normal operations." We have, of course, been "open for business" and teleworking[1] over the past several months. Most staff were, however, hired to be physically present in College Park, and were largely on-site employees before COVID-19. **There is an implicit and reasonable expectation that if students (and faculty) return to campus this fall, there is a need for in-**

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[1] It is important to distinguish between teleworking or telecommuting and remote working. In the case of the latter, the employee lives outside of the geographic area. Though some individuals at UMD do work remotely and have remote work contracts, the great majority telework, which means that there is some on-site work performed by the employee.

person staff coverage in the academic and administrative units to provide critical support and oversight.

Therefore, the campus directive is that offices in academic units should open as soon as possible and no later than September 14. Deans, Department Heads and Directors should immediately begin to develop plans to bring staff back to campus, following the guidelines provided below.

Employees must be tested and have received a negative test result for COVID-19 before returning to campus work. Staff should be advised to schedule tests immediately, using the information provided by the campus at uhr.umd.edu/coronavirus/return-to-campus/covid-19-testing-information. Test result information can be recorded at[:return.umd.edu](:return.umd.edu)

III. Equitably establishing an on-campus presence and related guidelines

Here follows a set of basic principles and guidance that may be used as each unit in Academic Affairs develops a plan for a return to campus. Units vary in size and detail as will their teleworking plans, but our shared goal is to provide enough staff presence on campus, equitably and safely, to ensure excellent service to our students, staff, faculty, and visitors, both in person *and* online.

The following *guidelines* should be used as each unit in Academic Affairs creates their individual return to campus plan:
- Each unit and office in Academic Affairs that provides essential support of any kind should create a plan to ensure appropriate in person staffing levels and work during core hours.
- Offices should detail equitable and appropriate staff distributions.   In general. each employee should be included in the physical presence plan with on-site requirements taking specific circumstances into account (see below).
- Every individual in Academic Affairs who is teleworking should have a teleworking agreement in place by the beginning of the Fall 2020 semester (August 31). More detail and a teleworking agreement template are provided below.
- Under normal conditions, standard office hours are 8:30-4:30 or 9:00-5:00. Service hours should be based on the needs of the constituents served, and some level of physical coverage is expected, five days a week. If in-person service hours are abbreviated or limited, there should be a clear rationale as to why abbreviated hours are sufficient for maintaining excellence.
- Supervisors need to be sensitive regarding power dynamics and privacy issues. In some cases, asking for volunteers could result in individuals feeling pressured to offer service. Decisions regarding work assignments and requests for exceptions must be done equitably, based on clearly expressed principles.
- Student workers provide valuable support across the UMD campus. If student workers wish to return to campus, they may be included in an office staffing plan, but should not be used disproportionately nor be scheduled to staff an office alone.
- Different arrangements may be made when developing a staff rotation plan. The goal of reducing COVID-19 transmission should be considered in developing the rotation to the degree to which the service unit is able to do so. Sample rotations to consider include:

1. Teams A, B, C, with one week in office and two weeks at home.
2. Two teams (two weeks in and two weeks out).
3. Team A (only works Monday and Tuesday), Team B (only works Wednesday and Thursday), Team C (only works on Fridays).
   Samples 1 and 2 are work schedules that minimize the risk of transmission to employees by creating a 14-day gap after each in-office period to reduce the number of people in a unit who become ill, and to facilitate contact tracing.

- When building the rotation schedule, it is important to account for the possibility of having to quarantine after personal travel or having to isolate after illness /exposure to the virus.
- Flexibility should be granted to accommodate people who must assist children with online learning during the work day, adjusting work hours or percent time.
- The rotation schedule should be clear and all information about each staff person's location (in person or online), responsibilities, and contact information should be immediately available so that there is seamless customer support provided. The expectation is that the offices will not be fully staffed and we will be working with limited coverage for some time. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that those who are in the office on a given day will assume additional duties, such as helping with mail delivery, paycheck pickup, answering phones, etc.
- This is not a static situation and return to campus plans will likely need to evolve. The suggestion is to plan for the first semester. Build in phases and checkpoints and be prepared to adjust as needed. Consider phase one a pilot and have phase one of your return to campus plan begin as soon as possible, so that you will be ready when classes begin on Monday, September 14.
- Employees who are unable to perform their duties remotely or whose duties have been significantly reduced because of the pandemic will need individual plans developed with oversight by UHR. One option, again, is to offer reduced hours. Employees interested in exploring this possibility should talk with their supervisor. Some colleges have established "job pools" for job/duty shifting and sharing across units. With guidance from UHR, a central pool of individuals interested in job sharing could be developed, including supporting guidance on documentation and process. As long as alternative work duties and expectations are carefully documented, this can be a successful approach to temporarily helping a community member retain work during the pandemic without an official position modification. To ensure that alternative work duties are within the same grade level, a UHR compensation manager should be asked to evaluate both job descriptions. The employee would then be officially notified of the adjustment.
- Once a plan has been developed, a supervisor must give the employee sufficient time to make personal arrangements. We recommend that up to 10 working days of lead time be granted before an employee must report to campus.
- Providing short term advance leave to new employees should be considered during the fall semester since new employees do not have any leave reserves.
- Be aware that supervisors will have been unable to observe employees in an in-person work environment before making significant employment decisions at the end of the probationary period.[2]

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[2] We have communicated with UHR on this point and the probation may only be extended if the employee was on some form of leave for a period of time. In that case, probation may be extended by the amount of time that they were on leave.

IV. Personal circumstances that may impact in-person work during the pandemic

Personal concerns surrounding a return to campus during COVID-19 generally fall into three categories:

a. Health or medical concerns
Planning must accommodate those individuals who are deemed "high risk" and might be more susceptible to serious complications stemming from COVID-19, either because of age and/or specific health concerns or who are co-located with or cohabitating with high risk individual(s).

b. Work-life balance concerns
COVID-19 has put a strain on individuals who are providing care to dependents, including children and elders. School closures may require employees to provide home-schooling and/or increased oversight of education being provided online. Options for employees who are balancing work and home responsibilities include:
- Adjusting remote and/or in-person work schedules.
- Temporarily reducing work hours or percent time.

Such challenges should be addressed with the immediate supervisor first and then taken to the dean and UHR for further approvals.

c. Transportation concerns
Employees who use public transportation may be concerned about risk of exposure traveling to and from campus. If so, the employee should speak with his/her direct supervisor to explore the feasibility of shifting work hours to avoid rush hour travel on public transport. Supervisors should also direct employees who use public transportation to review current CDC guidelines that provide relevant suggestions: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/using-transportation.html

V. Use of accrued leave

As units prepare for staff to return to campus, supervisors should be aware that staff may use their accrued (annual, personal, sick and/or compensatory) leave (or other paid leave for which they may be eligible) to deal with COVID-related issues such as those noted in section IV above. In addition, the federal government has mandated that additional paid leave benefits be provided to employees who are in quarantine or who are caring for an individual who is in quarantine, are experiencing COVID related symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis and/or caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed or whose child care provider is unavailable for COVID-related reasons.

We urge managers and supervisors to visit the UHR Families First Coronavirus Response Act webpage or contact the UHR Leave Management team via email at umdleave@umd.edu for information and assistance and to be fully informed with regard to the use of leave by employees.

Overall, it is important to have open dialogue between supervisors and supervisees as we work together to return to campus. The university is making every effort to bring us back safely. General information about COVID-19 safety measures may be found 4Maryland Fall 2020 Reopening Plan and should be communicated to faculty and staff. On a more individual level, we should work to make people feel as safe as possible by, for example, placing them in private offices when they come to campus if they would prefer, and putting careful thought into local

coverage schedules. If an employee is interested in exploring the types of leave that might be available to them during COVID-19, they should visit the UHR site that details options: https://uhr.umd.edu/coronavirus/families-first-coronavirus-response-act/

Arrangements made between supervisors and supervisees who are able to perform some portion of their duties remotely should be documented in their teleworking agreements. UHR is prepared to provide guidance. If supervisors are directing employees to contact UHR, they might also involve their staff relations consultant to assist the employee.

VI. Creating teleworking agreements and resources

The university has a site dedicated to developing and implementing telework agreements: https://uhr.umd.edu/telework/. As stated on the website, during the COVID-19 emergency, certain requirements will be WAIVED for telework eligibility, including the requirement that telework not be a substitute for child or eldercare, and the requirement that an employee must have successfully completed the probation period and have met or exceeded expectations on their performance review. The template for the telework agreement is in the process of being updated and will be released soon.

See **APPENDIX A** to view UHR's directions and a template for teleworking agreements., followed by a sample of a telework agreement that was developed for an employee in Engineering Career Services and implemented in March of 2020. The agreement maps closely to the telework agreement that was approved by UHR and the Senate Executive Committee in Spring of 2017. COVID-19 particular adjustments have been highlighted. Note that the agreement includes both the work schedule and the work plan. The UMD telework workplace self-certification checklist may be viewed in **APPENDIX B**. Both may serve as models of how to frame telework agreements as we prepare for a return to campus.

Supervisors and staff should also be aware of the LinkedIn Learning resource (https://linkedinlearning.umd.edu), to which all UMD employees have access. Once an individual logs in, he/she is able to view training materials for those who are working remotely and who are managing staff working remotely. These are useful resources for employees who are not experienced with managing or working on remote teams.

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE TELEWORK AGREEMENT

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

TELEWORK AGREEMENT
(Approved by UHR and Senate Executive Committee April 19, 2017)

This agreement confirms the telework arrangement for *NAME, TITLE* in the *OFFICE in the SCHOOL*.

1. By signing this agreement, the employee confirms that s/he has reviewed, understands, and agrees to abide by its terms and applicable University and Department policy and provisions, which include but are not limited to those for:

    -   work hours, accessibility, and job performance
    -   use of and responsibility for UMD owned equipment and resources
    -   establishing a work space
    -   safety and ergonomics
    -   work related injuries
    -   confidentiality of information and data
    -   intellectual property
    -   revocability of the agreement

2. ***Terms of Employment***: This telework agreement is not a contract of employment and does not provide any contractual rights to continued employment. It does not alter or supersede the terms of the existing employment relationship. The employee remains obligated to comply with all University rules, policies, practices, procedures, and instructions that would apply if the employee were working at the regular University worksite. Work products the employee develops or produces while telecommuting remain solely the property of the University of Maryland.

    Work hours, compensation, and leave scheduling while teleworking must conform with and adhere to applicable UMD or USM policies, and the *Memorandum of Understanding* (if applicable). The employee's supervisor must pre-approve requests to work overtime or use accrued leave in the same manner as when the employee works at the regular University worksite.

    Nothing in this Agreement precludes the supervisor, department, and/or University from taking any appropriate disciplinary or adverse action against the employee if the employee fails to comply with the provisions of this Agreement.

University policies and procedures related to drug and alcohol use are not affected by the Telework Agreement or the employee's status as a teleworker.

This Agreement shall be construed, interpreted, and enforced according to the laws of the State of Maryland. It is the employee's responsibility to determine any tax implications of maintaining a remote worksite in the employee's home.

The supervisor retains the right to modify the Agreement on a temporary basis as a result of business necessity or as a result of a request by the employee that is supported by the supervisor. Any modification of this agreement shall be in writing. A copy of the written modification shall be given to the employee, and a copy shall be placed in the employee's department file.

3. ***Duration of Commitment & Reversibility***: This telework arrangement shall begin on *Wednesday, March 18, 2020* and continue until *the remote work expectation by the State of Maryland is lifted and direction from UMD officials indicate the end of full-remote work post the COVID-19 emergency* or until ended by the employee or employer. Should the employee wish to terminate the teleworking arrangement, the employee agrees to provide a minimum of 7 calendar days' advance notice to the employer.

Continuation of the agreement is subject to review at any time and may be revoked at any time by the employer. The employer shall provide a minimum of 7 calendar days' notice prior to termination of the agreement.

The continuation or termination of this agreement by the employee or employer shall be in writing and shall be provided with a minimum of 7 calendar days' notice. However, the employer may give less than 7 calendar days' notice if the change is due to operational need, performance concerns, or disciplinary reasons.

4. ***Telework Assignment, Accountability and Performance Measurement***: Documentation detailing the employee's telework assignment(s), performance and communications expectations, and work schedule ***must*** be attached and incorporated into this Agreement.

The employee agrees to stay current on department and work group events and to facilitate communication with customers and co-workers who may need to interact with the employee while teleworking. The employee also agrees to keep the supervisor informed of progress on assignments worked on at the alternate worksite and any problems encountered while teleworking. The employee agrees to structure their time to ensure attendance at required meetings as scheduled or designated by the supervisor. The supervisor agrees to facilitate communication within the workgroup.

5. ***Equipment, Equipment Insurance, and Office Supplies***: University-owned resources may only be used for University business. The employee is responsible for ensuring that all items are properly used.

The employee agrees to take reasonable steps to protect any University property from theft, damage, or misuse. This includes maintaining data security and record confidentiality to at least the same standard as when working at the regular University worksite.

The employee shall comply with all departmental/unit and University policies and instructions regarding security of confidential information. The employee agrees to work with their department IT unit and/or the Division of Information Technology (DIT) to secure their personal computer through the use of VPN, disk encryption, and/or other technologies.

The employee agrees to protect departmental/unit records from unauthorized disclosure or damage, and shall comply with all requirements of law regarding disclosure of departmental/unit or University information. If a data or security breach occurs and University records may have been compromised, the employee shall immediately report the issue to both their supervisor and department head.

The employee agrees to adhere to Policy X- 1.00(A), Policy on the Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources.

The employee shall comply with all licensing agreements for the installation and use of University owned software, including software installation on multiple computers. The employee shall not copy University owned software in any manner unless such copying is expressly permitted by the licensing agreement. Depending on the circumstances, the employee may be responsible for any damage to or loss of University property.

When the employee uses personal equipment, software, data, supplies, and furniture, the employee is responsible for maintenance and repair of these items unless other arrangements have been made in advance and in writing with the supervisor. The University assumes no responsibility for any damage to, wear of, or loss of the employee's personal property.

The employee agrees to return in good working order and in a timely fashion all University-owned items used at the alternate worksite upon request or if the Telework Agreement is discontinued for any reason. If the University must initiate legal action to regain possession of University-owned property, the employee agrees to pay all costs incurred by the University.

6. ***Telework Site Safety and Ergonomics*:** The employee and the employer agree to work together to ensure that the alternate worksite is safe and ergonomically suitable. A Remote Workplace Self-Certification Checklist shall be completed by the employee and ***must*** be attached and incorporated into this Agreement.

The employee's University supervisor may make on-site visits to the employee's telework site, at a mutually agreed upon time, to ensure that the designated work space is safe

and free from hazards and to maintain, prepare, inspect, or retrieve University-owned equipment, software, data supplies, and furniture.

The employee will be covered by workers' compensation, and may be eligible for benefits for job-related injuries that occur in the course and scope of employment while teleworking. The employee remains liable for injuries to third parties and/or members of the employee's family on the employee's premises.

7. **Signature**: Signing this Telework Agreement means that it has been reviewed and agreed upon by the undersigned parties and they agree to abide by the University of Maryland Guidelines for Telework. A signed copy shall be given to the employee, employer, and a copy shall be placed in the employee's departmental record.

Employee's signature	Date 03/18/2020
Supervisor's signature	Date
Department head's signature (if required)	Date

Cc: Personnel file

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND TELEWORKER WORK SCHEDULE

This form is a guide for teleworkers and supervisors in planning work schedule(s) during telework periods. The form may be altered as necessary by the supervisor and employee. The use of this form is not mandatory; however, a work schedule is required to clearly define work expectations and must be attached to the Telework Agreement.

Teleworker Name:

Main Office Workplace

ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

Remote Workplace

ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

Work Hours

Day	Hours	Location (R-Remote, M-Main)	Commuting Miles Saved (optional)
Monday	8 hours	R	_____
Tuesday	8 hours	R	_____
Wednesday	8 hours	M	_____
Thursday	8 hours	R	_____
Friday	8 hours	M	_____
*Saturday	_____	_____	_____
*Sunday	_____	_____	_____

*==*Given the exceptional circumstances of the pandemic and to ensure outstanding service for our students work hours will be flexible and might include nights and weekends.*==

Teleworker:
_____

Date: _____

Supervisor:
_____

Date: _____

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND TELEWORKER WORK PLAN

This form is a guide for teleworkers and supervisors in planning work during telework periods.

The form may be altered as necessary by the supervisor and employee. The use of this form is not mandatory; however, a work plan is required to clearly define work expectations and must be attached to the Telework Agreement.

Teleworker Name:
Days to Telework: XXX days during the COVID-19 Emergency

These are the conditions for teleworking agreed upon by the teleworker and the supervisor:

1. The following are the assignments to be worked on by the teleworker at the remote workplace and expected delivery dates:

Assignments [[EDIT]]	Delivery Date [[EDIT]]
Hold individual Zoom advising appointments	Ongoing
Staff walk-in Zoom room	Ongoing
Critique student resumes	Ongoing
Conduct mock interviews	Ongoing
Respond to student email questions/requests	Ongoing
Present workshops	Ongoing
Process F-1 students for CPT	Ongoing
Process students for Co-op	Ongoing
Edit & send weekly newsletter	Ongoing
Maintain job/internship database	Ongoing
Respond to employer email questions/requests	Ongoing

2. The teleworker agrees to call their office phone to collect phone messages whenever she receives an email indicating that there is a message on her answering machine. The teleworker agrees to check their email at least 8 times per day. The teleworker will be available for pre-scheduled virtual calls and meetings as necessary.

3. The teleworker agrees to obtain from the main office all supplies needed for work at the remote workplace. Out of pocket expenses for supplies regularly available at the main office will not normally be reimbursed unless prior authorization is given.

_____   _____

Teleworker   **Date**

_____   _____
                                                                                    __
Supervisor   **Date**

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE TELEWORK WORKPLACE SELF-CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND TELEWORK WORKPLACE SELF-CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST (Approved by UHR and Senate Executive Committee April 19, 2017)

Name: _____   Department: _____

Telework Address: _____

Telework Phone: _____

Supervisor: _____

This checklist is designed to assess the overall safety of your telework workplace and to ensure that you have space that has been properly prepared for teleworking. Upon completion, you shall sign and return this form to your supervisor and it must be attached to the Telework agreement.

Describe the workspace in your telework location:

Work Space Environment

1. Is the workspace free of potential hazards that could cause physical harm (frayed or loose wires, bare conductors, exposed wires to the ceiling, frayed or torn carpeting seams, uneven floor surfaces)? ___ Yes ___No

2. Are electrical outlets grounded (3-pronged)? ___ Yes ___No

3. Do chairs have any loose casters (wheels)? ___ Yes ___No

Are the rungs and legs of the chairs sturdy? ___ Yes ___No

4. Are the phone lines, electrical cords, and extension wires secured? ___ Yes __No

5. Is the office space neat, clean, and free of obstructions and excessive amounts of combustibles? ___ Yes ___ No

6. Is there enough light for reading? ___ Yes ___ No

7. Is a fire extinguisher easily accessible from the office space? ___ Yes ___ No

8. Is there a working (test) smoke detector within hearing distance of the workspace?
___ Yes ___ No
9. Is the area free from distractions? ___ Yes ___ No

SIGNATURES:

_____ Teleworker _____Date
_____ Supervisor _____Date