**ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY**

**STAFF AND FACULTY RETURN TO WORK GUIDANCE**

**6.19.20**

**Stage 1 (Initial Return). Implementation Period: July 6 through July 17**

Please note that Stage 1 dates are subject to divisional or departmental needs and can be modified for these units.

During Stage 1, the University will bring approximately 30% of the entire workforce back to campus. Only employees deemed essential to support academic, research and extra-curricular activities should be scheduled to return to campus during this time period. The university will use Stage I to test the institution’s ability to exercise systems and procedures, care for our workers, and protect our community. Departments/units will use Stage 1 to learn and make adjustments as necessary in preparation for the beginning of the fall semester.

Returning to normal functions should not be the focus of Stage 1. Employees should return in a limited capacity to support institutional operations, research and teaching activities, student support services, athletics and the needs of the returning students, faculty, and staff.

Employees that can effectively work from home and whose presence is not required to support the return of students and university functions should also continue working from home. Adjusting work schedules, limiting the number of people in the workplace, alternating workdays for employees, adjusting start and end times for employees, and adjusting entry and exit points in the workplace should all be considered and will help ensure flexibility and social distancing. If childcare availability is limited and/or K-12 schools are closed, departments are encouraged to work with faculty, staff and students and provide flexible scheduling as duties permit.

Policies and practices for health monitoring, COVID-19 prevention strategies, social distancing, training and education, and signage should be in place prior to the return of these employees.

Offices and workspaces should be adjusted to meet the 6-feet social distancing requirement. Deans and department vice presidents will ensure that workspaces and classrooms are adjusted accordingly. Additional measures should be considered to prevent COVID-19, including but not limited to:

* Health care monitoring of employees to ensure individuals do not come to work sick
* Face coverings are required in areas where 6 feet social distancing cannot be consistently achieved, and will be required in designated areas on campus; employees should be made aware of these requirements and the requirements will be posted on the RWU COVID-19 website
* Restricting or prohibiting non-essential visitors
* Utilizing video or phone conferencing instead of face-to-face meetings whenever possible
	+ Modifying workstations or staggering schedules/days of the week as needed
	+ Reducing the number of chairs in common areas
	+ Increase ventilation air exchanges, if feasible; MERV-13 air filters being installed throughout campus.
	+ Foot openers or propping doors open should be considered to avoid high-touch surfaces however fire code regulations must be adhered to (see appendix A)
* Ensuring signage to encourage social distancing, hand washing, etc.
* Providing hand and respiratory hygiene products
* Working with facilities/custodial staff to ensure appropriate cleaning and sanitizing of the workplace, office, classroom etc.
* Prohibiting nonessential, university-related travel
* If vehicle travel is necessary, minimize number of occupants in the vehicle is highly recommended
* Continuing practice of signing in to each building entered to facilitate contact tracing

*Please note that many of the items listed require work or assistance from other departmental units. A checklist has been provided in Appendix A to provide guidance on contacts and steps to be taken.*

*If the conditions are met, continuation to Stage 2 should be considered after a period of two to three weeks.*

**Stage 2 (Second Group). Implementation Period: July 20 through July 31**

Please note that Stage 2 dates are subject to divisional or departmental needs and can be modified for these units.

During Stage 2, departments/units will bring additional workforce back to campus for the purpose of increasing operational capacity and support activities on campus. Although a complete/full return to normal campus operations is not anticipated during Stage 2, departments/units should enhance preparations for the return of students for the fall semester.

Each departmental unit should develop a proposed plan that details, based on operational needs and functional objectives, how, when and which employees will be returned to the workplace as stay-at-home restrictions loosen and as the anticipated dates for students’ return and the resumption of classes approaches.

Each divisional plan should take into consideration limitations imposed by governing law, regulatory requirements and governmental guidelines, as well as the actual necessity of employees’ physical return to campus. Plans should be reviewed by the divisional Vice President before employees are allowed back to work.

All guidelines and requirements established for Stage 1 above continue to apply and should be implemented by departments/units. If all conditions are met, continuation to Stage 3 should be considered after a period of 2 weeks.

**Stage 3 (Final Group). Implementation Period: August 3 through August 14**

Please note that Stage 3 dates are subject to divisional or departmental needs and can be modified for these units.

During Stage 3, the remaining workforce (excluding employees who have been authorized or directed to continue to work from home) will be returned to campus to conduct final preparations for the 2020 academic year and the full return of our students. Departments should utilize remote work or alternate scheduling (rotating employees) arrangements wherever possible.

All guidelines and requirements established for Stage 1 above continue to apply and should be implemented by departments/units. During Stage 3, plexiglass or other barriers that would limit the connection to other workstations or in areas such as check-in stations, customer service greeting areas should be installed. Classrooms by this stage will have been reorganized to account for social distancing requirements with excess furnishings removed in consultation with the respective Deans.

**Stage 4 (Academic Year). Implementation Period: August 15 to end of Academic Year**

Stage 4 will introduce the start of the 2020 academic year and the return to campus full operations with appropriate and ongoing mitigation strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Managers are encouraged to continue to promote tele-working arrangements that have been successful and where daily physical presence is not required.

All guidelines and requirements established in Stage 1 above continue to apply and should continue to be implemented by departments/units. The university will closely supervise all aspects of campus operations to ensure the maximum participation of employees and students in socially responsible behavior throughout the university community, the use of personal protective equipment and compliance with measures consistent with local, state and federal guidelines, and the commitment to the highest level of excellence in education, research and extra-curricular activities.

Employees who are high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 may seek workplace accommodations in accordance with the temporary COVID-19 accommodation policy.

***PLEASE SEE “HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF” SECTION AFTER APPENDIX FOR ADDITIONAL TIPS ON WORKING SAFELY.***

**Appendix A**

Checklist for Actions for Returning to Work

* Employee staffing plan per stage Departmental Manager
	+ Employees working remotely
	+ Employees on rotating / staggered schedule (by day or week)
	+ Social distancing within work areas
* Daily cleaning of common areas and common equipment Department Manager

(copiers, tables door handles, waiting areas etc.)

* Cleaning / Sanitizing Stations Contact Facilities
* Signage for work areas Contact Facilities
* Furniture or equipment modifications Contact Facilities
* Workforce accommodations (see policy from Human Resources)
* Return to Work Training Contact EH&S
* Face coverings requirements Contact EH&S
* Visitor protocols TBD
* Testing of Employees In progress - TBD

How to Protect Yourself

**Wash your hands often**

* Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
* If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

**Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others**

* You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
* The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
* Continue to keep 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

**Avoid close contact**

* Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your home. If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.
* Put distance between yourself and other people outside of your home. Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus. Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people.
* Do not gather in groups – follow state guidelines
* Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.
* Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

**Cover coughs and sneezes**

* If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
* Throw used tissues in the trash.
* Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.