FAQs for Supervisors - Return to Campus Planning

High-Risk Employees

I'm aware that one of my employees has a long-standing medical condition. They haven't expressed any concern about COVID-19, but I am concerned they could be more susceptible. Should I inquire with the employee of any concerns? Can I recommend or instruct the employee to work from home?

No. Requests for alternative work arrangements or schedules should only be initiated by the employee. Supervisor are encouraged to routinely remind their staff to review the COVID-19 page for updates and guidance.

What work accommodations can I make for high-risk employees?

In addition to accommodations provided in accordance with the ADA, the university provides alternative work arrangements for employees in response to public health emergency guidance when it will enable the performance of the employee's essential functions and when doing so does not create an undue hardship to the institution. After an employee has initiated the request, managers and supervisors are to immediately explore and implement social distancing strategies, which include flexible work arrangements and hybrid work schedules.

If the above approach does not resolve the employee's concerns or flexible work arrangements are not available based upon the essential functions of the employee's job, the supervisor should advise the employee to complete the UWG COVID-19 [Alternative Work Arrangements Request Form](). Upon receipt of the completed form, Human Resources will contact the supervisor and employee to further discuss available work arrangements based upon the essential functions of the employee's job.

What should I do if the employee is high-risk, but does not have work duties that can be performed from home?

In addition to accommodations provided in accordance with the ADA, the university provides work arrangements for employees in response to public health emergency guidance when it will enable the performance of the employee's essential functions and when doing so does not create an undue hardship to the institution.

After an employee has initiated the request, managers and supervisors are to immediately explore and implement social distancing strategies, which include flexible work arrangements, staggered schedules, alternative or rotating job duties. Employees requesting an alternative work arrangement or schedule should complete the UWG COVID-19 [Alternative Work Arrangements Request Form](). Upon receipt of the completed form, Human Resources will contact the supervisor and employee to further discuss available work arrangements based upon the essential functions of the employee's job.

Social Distancing

What should I do if I see employees gathering in a common space?

Supervisors are encouraged to promote social distancing and effective infection control practices, such as regular hand-washing, coughing and sneezing etiquette (into the elbow), and proper tissue usage and disposal.

What steps should I take if my employees work in an open office environment?

Departments should assess open work environments and meeting rooms to institute measures to physically separate and increase distance among employees. Employees working in open, cubicle environments should be encouraged to maintain at least 6 feet distance from co-workers. If possible, make arrangements for at least one vacant workspace between employees.

If social distance cannot be achieved, the supervisor may need to implement alternative work arrangements (change shifts, reassignment, or equipment) to ensure workplace safety.

Who do I contact to request accommodations or assistance with creating a safe environment for face-to-face transactions or for adjusting the workplace layout to accommodate social distancing?

Work request tickets may be submitted to the Campus Planning and Facilities Work Information Center at wic@westga.edu for review and evaluation of needed accommodations.

Can I have a face-to-face meeting if social distancing practices can be implemented?

Meetings should be conducted using virtual meeting software when possible. If face-to-face meetings are required, social distancing measures are to be used which will allow attendees to sit at minimum 6 feet apart for the entire duration of the meeting.

Face Coverings

Are face coverings required?

Yes. All faculty, staff, students, and visitors are required to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet of social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use will be in addition to, and is not a substitute for, social distancing.

Face coverings are not required when an individual is alone in an enclosed office or study room, or in campus outdoor settings where social distancing requirements are met.

Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area. Repeated refusal to comply with the requirement may result in discipline through the applicable conduct code for faculty, staff, or students. Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons.

What should I do if an employee refuses to wear a face covering?

Employees who do not work in designated service or operational positions should provide their own face covering as a part of their normal work attire. Employees refusing to wear a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or leave the area. Repeated refusal to comply with the requirement may result in discipline through the applicable conduct code for faculty, staff, or students. Contact Human Resources for further guidance on addressing these behaviors.

What constitutes an appropriate face covering?

Face coverings should meet CDC guidelines and should cover both the nose and the mouth. Face coverings should be professional and business-like and should not contain any inappropriate or offensive graphics, symbols, or wording. Additionally, face coverings must be clean and unsoiled in appearance.

Essential Travel

How do I request an essential travel exception for an employee?

Essential travel requires divisional approval by submitting the [Essential Travel Authorization Form](#).

Health Screening (Self-Report)

How will I receive training on how to use the self-reporting application?

If you need technical assistance on how to use the self-reporting application, please contact the ITS Service Desk at servicedesk@westga.edu or 678-839-6587

What are employees expected to do before they report to work each day?

Employees are strongly encouraged to assess and report their health status and capability to work daily. Employees should complete their self-reporting requirement using the eTracks Self-Reporting application, regardless of work location (remote or on-campus). This exercise should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

Are employees required to submit their self-health assessment each day?

Employees may opt-out of self-health reporting. To do so, they should login to the eTracks application, select the Opt-Out link in the menu list, and click the proper option. Employees who have opted out of the self-health reporting are expected to monitor their individual health status and report a positive COVID-19 test to Human Resources at covid-hr@westga.edu or 678-839-6111.

How will an employee submit their self-health assessment if they do not have access to utilize the Self-Reporting App and plan to report to work?

You should inquire about their reason for lack of access. If they do not have access to the Internet or if they are not technically savvy, you can allow them to log onto a laptop or desktop at the start of their shift. The supervisor should work with Human Resources as appropriate measures should be taken to maintain social distance. If social distance cannot be achieved, the supervisor may need to implement alternative work arrangements (change shifts, reassignment, or equipment).

How will an employee submit their self-health assessment if they do not have access to utilize the Self-Reporting App and do not plan to report to work?

Employees who do not intend to report to work due to sickness or other events should follow existing protocols for notifying their immediate supervisor.

What should I do if an employee notifies me that they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or has tested positive?

If you, as the supervisor, receive a report that one of your employees is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or has tested positive for the virus, you should instruct the employee to immediately contact Human Resources at 678-839-6111 or covid-hr@westga.edu. As the supervisor, you must also report this information directly to Human Resources at 678-839-6111 or covid-hr@westga.edu. This confidential health information should not be shared with unauthorized personnel. Human Resources will be responsible for providing the necessary details to the appropriate individuals and departments as well as notifying the Georgia Department of Public Health to initiate contact tracing.

What should I do if any employee notifies me that they don't feel well but are not necessarily experiencing identified COVID-19 symptoms?

The university encourages sick employees to remain at home. All absences unrelated to COVID-19 should be reviewed under the individual department's standard attendance guidelines and expectations. Eligible employees are expected to request leave to cover absences or time away from work.

What action shall I take if an employee feels sick at work and needs to go home?

Employees who become sick at work should notify their supervisor. They should be instructed to leave work and seek medical attention and/or go home. All absences unrelated to COVID-19 should be reviewed under the individual department's standard attendance guidelines and

expectations. Eligible employees are expected to request leave to cover absences or time away from work. Contact Human Resources for specific guidance, as needed.

What questions can I ask an employee when they request sick time or calls out?

Supervisors must refrain from asking any questions related to specific medical conditions, symptoms, or diagnoses. You may ask the expected duration of the employee's absence or request the status of any work-related projects or assignments. In the event you are advised the employee's absence is related to COVID-19, you must notify Human Resources immediately at 678-839-6111 or covid-hr@westga.edu.

What is the process that I must follow to allow an employee to return to work if they have tested positive for COVID-19?

Human Resources will closely monitor the employee's isolation period and request all necessary medical documentation, to include physician's notes and/or test results. The direct supervisor will be notified via email of the employee's expected date of return. An employee should not be allowed to return to work without prior authorization and notification from Human Resources.

What is the process that I must follow to allow an employee to return to work if they have been in contact with a COVID-19 positive individual, but have not tested positive for the virus?

Employees who come in contact with COVID-19 positive individuals are required to self-quarantine for 14 days. Human Resources will closely monitor the employee's isolation period and request all necessary medical documentation, to include physician's notes and/or test results. The direct supervisor will be notified via email of the employee's expected date of return. An employee should not be allowed to return to work without prior authorization and notification from Human Resources.

What should I do if an employee appears to have symptoms of COVID-19 while at work?

It is important to keep in mind that seasonal allergies and cold/flu season are ongoing. Do not assume that symptoms of respiratory issues are positive for COVID-19. As a preliminary step, supervisors should explain to all of their employees that the university encourages sick employees to use their accrued sick time, that we will work with them to cover meetings, classes, or work that needs to occur in their absence and that, given the current circumstances, it is critical that employees be diligent about avoiding others and remaining at home when they have symptoms.

Is a doctor's note required for allowing an employee to return to work after illness?

Due to COVID-19 impact on the healthcare system, it may not be reasonably possible to obtain a doctor's note from a healthcare provider. Therefore, employees should communicate any changes in their work status and their ability to perform their job duties to their direct supervisor to determine needed documentation for a return to campus.

Can I approve remote work for an employee while they are under quarantine or isolation due to COVID-19?

Yes, supervisors are encouraged to allow remote work, when possible, for an employee who is under quarantine or isolation due to COVID-19.

How should absences for COVID-19 related illness be reported on the timesheet?

Upon notification, Human Resources will enter all applicable sick leave for absences related to COVID-19.

General

How do I obtain needed cleaning or sanitation supplies?

Cleaning and sanitation supplies may be ordered through Central Stores using current ordering practices. Due to forecasts of high demand, departments are encouraged to make reasonable requests for supplies.

What do I do if an employee expresses fear in returning to work and does not want to return to the workplace?

Employees should bring their concerns to their supervisor and discuss options available to support the work to be completed, while also supporting the health and safety of our employees. HR can also provide support in facilitating conversations with supervisors and employees to determine needs and accommodations available to meet those needs. Possible accommodations include continuing remote work arrangements or hybrid schedules, office space restructuring, and schedule rotations.

What do I do if an employee can't return to work due to lack of childcare or elder-care?

Supervisors are encouraged to be proactive, thoughtful, and creative in considering flexible work arrangements, in light of challenges created by school closures or virtual learning, quarantines, and increased absences for personal illness or to care for dependents. Where possible, supervisors should make every effort to allow employees to remain engaged in work, while also focusing on their team's ability to maintain operations.

In circumstances where flexible work arrangements are not a reasonable option, employees are able to request leave or expanded FMLA under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act to cover absences related to state-mandated school and place of care closures. In addition, employees may be eligible for expanded family medical leave if they need to care for dependents due to school or place of care closures.

Can I allow my employees to bring their children to work, since schools and daycares are closed?

No. Employees are not allowed to bring children or other family members to work for safety and health concerns related to the spread of COVID-19 and the university's focus on social distancing. Consider implementing flexible work arrangements, such as remote work and flexible schedules, where operationally feasible.

Where can I find training for supporting my employees as we navigate back to the workplace?

DevelopWest has two videos to provide additional information. The training videos, Navigating the Post-pandemic Workplace and Leading in the Post-pandemic Workplace, can be found by clicking on the links provided or searching the catalog in DevelopWest.

Who should I contact if I have additional questions or concerns related to COVID-19?

Please contact the Human Resources COVID-19 Response Team at 678-839-6111 or covid-hr@westga.edu for additional guidance related to COVID-19.