

getting started with return planning

considerations
to guide your
decision-making
process

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BY IRVINE COMPANY



when is the right time to bring employees back to the workplace?

This is a complicated question impacted by many factors unique to your company and community. Your organization may have already developed several different return plans over the last year only to put these plans on hold as conditions changed. At Irvine Company, we've faced similar challenges, quickly adapting plans to keep our teams safe while ensuring our workplaces remain open for essential businesses.

As we look to the next six months, everything from vaccine rollout to state and local guidelines may influence when you and your employees feel comfortable returning to the workplace. Approaches may differ too, depending on your business needs. Some companies are following a phased return, initially offering the workplace as an option for employees who need a quiet place to focus or who need proprietary information they cannot securely access remotely. Other companies are rearranging layouts to accommodate team collaboration sessions where in-person connection is critical.

no matter your timing and approach, every successful return starts with ensuring your employees feel confident coming into the workplace.

At Irvine Company, workplace wellness is part of our DNA:

- As California's leader in workplace innovation, we're the *first in the nation* to have our workplace communities designated as **Verified Healthy Buildings** by UL.
- We partnered with SafeTraces, an indoor environmental quality testing leader, to confirm our air ventilation and filtration efficacy.
- We invited the UCI Health team, led by top epidemiologists and infection prevention experts, to consider our coronavirus-related health and safety plans and protocols.

As long-term owners, we're uniquely positioned to pioneer industry-leading wellness systems and bold design solutions, keeping companies like yours on the cutting-edge of what's possible.

This short overview will help organize initial ideas and kick-start your thinking. We'll walk you through options for a phased return, considerations for how best to utilize your workspace to support hybrid work needs, and how to assemble your stakeholder planning team. Once these building blocks are in place, follow our Return to the Workplace Toolkit to track your progress, review materials, and check off return steps.

Let's get ready to come back with confidence.

reimagining the workspace and workday, your way

As businesses prepare for employees to return to the workplace, leaders have an exciting opportunity to reimagine their workspace and workday.

After nearly a year of working remotely, we've experienced a range of benefits and challenges. For some employees, reduced commute time and fewer in-office distractions have boosted productivity. For others, remote work has hindered innovation, collaboration, engagement and team building. Across the board, our expectations for the workplace have evolved — and return planning must take these new expectations into account.

The pandemic has accelerated many pre-COVID workplace trends, including the importance of workplace wellness and employees' desire to have greater autonomy over their workday. **We're entering a hybrid world where in-person experiences must fully integrate with remote options.** Irvine Company workplaces are designed to support these new ways of working, and our Workplace Success Team is available to assist with your company's unique needs.

selecting a return approach

- **Stagger Team Schedules.** Reduce the number of employees on site at any given time by rotating teams depending on the day of the week. *Benefit: limited workspace changes required.*
- **Expand the Workspace.** Add square footage using space with flexible lease terms to enable all employees to return safely. *Benefit: enables all employees to return.*

- **Convert Individual Workspace to Collaborative Space.** Minimize individual work stations in favor of team space for collaborative work, employees work from home for individual projects. *Benefit: maximizes culture building.*

considerations to guide decision-making

- **Promoting a Sense of Safety.** Employees need to feel safe in order to be productive. All elements of the workplace from layouts and furniture to policies and procedures need to promote a sense of control for employees over their environment and personal space.
- **Change Management.** Changes to the physical space must be accompanied by training employees to use it safely. Develop a plan for articulating and reinforcing expectations.
- **Functional Design.** Impactful, functional design compels employees to intuitively conduct themselves in safer ways.
- **Flexibility.** As health guidelines evolve, space must seamlessly adapt. Consider new layouts and furniture from the perspective of agility.

workspace modifications: the six-foot office

Before employees can safely return to the workspace, businesses must consider the best options for achieving the six feet of physical distancing recommended by CDC guidelines. These are some steps your company can take:

- **Shared Desks.** Remove long, shared tables used for “hotdesking” or “hoteling.”
- **Partitions.** Add solid or translucent partitions between individual employee desks.
- **Spacing.** Add separation between workstations or stagger seating.
- **Orientation.** Re-orient workstations to avoid face-to-face placement.
- **Private Offices.** Limit offices to one person and prop open doors for touch-free entry and exit. In spacious offices that retain guest seating, use fixed or difficult-to-move furniture to maintain distancing and add a table for each seat to eliminate the use of shared surfaces.

- **Team Spaces.** Maximize flexibility and space utilization by replacing larger furniture pieces designed for group use, like a large sofa, with lightweight pieces that are designed for single-person use. When possible, choose pieces on casters for easy reconfiguration.
- **Conference Rooms.** If possible, replace large conference tables with individual tables to maximize space utility and eliminate shared surfaces. Add high top tables at the perimeter to increase capacity if spacing allows. Keep doors open for touch-free entrance and exit.
- **Technology.** Leverage technology for touch-free control of workplace access, climate settings, lighting, shared printers and more.

planning for return

shared responsibilities

Our goal is the same as yours: a smooth return to a safe, healthy workplace.
This starts with clear communication between all stakeholders:

our teams

Workplace Success Team
Wellness Partners
Custodial/Sanitation Partners
Dining Partners
Amenity Partners

your company

Executive Leadership
Human Resources
Facility Manager
Legal Team

Together, we all have a shared responsibility to protect and support workplace well-being. Irvine Company has developed comprehensive guidelines based on the latest CDC guidance as well as state and local requirements. These guidelines include wearing face coverings in all common spaces, observing reduced elevator capacity limitations, and adjusted path-of-travel markers.



ready to take the next step in your planning process? our return to the workplace toolkit can help your company:

assess employee readiness

Do you know who is ready, willing and able to return to the workplace? Follow this guide to create an employee survey to assess readiness.

adjust workspace layouts

Are you comfortable with your current furniture arrangement? Learn what workspace modifications you can make to promote social distancing, and access special layout resources developed by our Workplace Success Team.

establish employee return plans

Do employees know how to prepare and what to expect? Customize an employee guide and communication templates to manage expectations.

order workspace signage

Does your space have the necessary signage? Put in a signage request to equip your office with the appropriate materials.



we're ready when you're ready

Your Customer Resource Team is ready to support your safe return and answer any questions about your specific workplace community. For the latest information on Irvine Company's approach to workplace wellness, including air filtration, building ventilation and cleaning protocols, visit [ComeBackWithConfidence.com](https://www.comebackwithconfidence.com)

FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS SPECIFIC TO YOUR WORKPLACE
COMMUNITY, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR CUSTOMER RESOURCE
CENTER. CONTACT INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT
IRVINECOMPANYOFFICE.COM



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