

Helpful Information for Employees Regarding the University's Phased Return to Campus

Welcome back to campus! You'll notice various changes in the way our workplace looks, as well as new practices and protocols. We understand these changes may be difficult, and we are here to support you. As part of that effort, one mask is being provided to each of our employees. Please contact your vice president, associate vice president, or dean to receive your mask. Our goal is to collaboratively ensure you feel safe and secure, so together we can navigate the complexities of our "new normal."

The purpose of this document is to assist you in understanding university best practices and guidelines to ensure a safe work environment for everyone. Utah Valley University, in consultation with Emergency and Safety Management, will follow the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state and local health departments regarding phasing UVU back to traditional work on campus.

1. Keep up to date with accurate information.

It is difficult to make properly informed decisions based on speculation, rumors, and assumptions. Therefore, you need to stay up to date with accurate information and make decisions based on facts. You may find up-to-date information on UVU's COVID-19 websites:

- [UVU Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Employee Guide](#)
- [UVU Emergency Information Website \(uvu.info\)](#)

Additional information may be found in communications sent through HRMatters and UVAnnounce.

2. Communicate with your manager.

Communicate openly with your manager so all parties have the correct information to allow for any needed support. Do not assume that your manager knows any specifics regarding your situation. We are navigating a new work environment with individual stressors and personal situations that can change rapidly. Open and timely communication not only assists in building trust but will also temper frustrations and reduce the spread of rumors that may cause unneeded anxiety in the workplace.

Before returning to campus, you are encouraged to have a 1:1 conversation with your manager. Here are some suggestions of topics that would help make this conversation beneficial to both parties:

- The well-being of you and your loved ones
- Challenges and successes of working from home (if applicable)
- Your comfort level and main concerns (if any) regarding returning to work on campus
- Considerations or actions that would help you feel more comfortable
- The impact of a continued remote work atmosphere (if applicable)
- Factors that would make the transition back to campus easier

3. You have a safe platform to raise concerns.

UVU is committed to giving you a safe platform wherein concerns can be raised. This includes mental health anxieties regarding the risk of having contracted or being exposed to COVID-19 and adjusting to current life situations. A proactive approach can increase your overall well-being. It is important to remember that your mental health is just as important as your physical health. Experiencing stress, anxiety, depression, grief, and/or uncertainty is normal when dealing with unusual circumstances that are

out of our control. Maintaining good mental health can help you and your family better cope with COVID-19 and the uncertainty it is creating. HR Benefits has compiled a [list of resources](#) available to help during this time of uncertainty.

Also, we ask you to continue to provide useful feedback to supervisors and Human Resources regarding any concerns. Human Resources is aware there may be nervousness and anxiety in the workplace, and possibly even conflicts, given the current situation. Addressing these concerns early on allows for proper care and ensures apprehensions do not escalate into larger grievances.

4. If you need flexibility, ask for it.

This is a time of high stress and anxiety for everyone, including you, your supervisor, and your colleagues. Everyone must understand there will be different needs depending on individual circumstances (e.g., those with young children may need more time off or flexible work arrangements). This time of uncertainty will pass, but what will be remembered is how we treat each other long after the threat of the virus subsides.

5. One size may not fit all.

While consistency in treatment is generally to be favored, be conscious that one size may not fit all. For example, continued remote work may not be an appropriate step moving forward. While the university is currently working on implementing safety practices, it is important to remember that protection is an issue everyone needs to address. While on campus, please follow the guidance set forth by the CDC and local health departments. This includes social distancing, practicing proper hand hygiene, limiting the touching of your face, and properly covering your face when in public areas.

While returning to campus will be a phased effort, please note the university is working to ensure all departments are set up to handle safety protocols before employees return to work on campus.

The CDC has provided recommendations for individuals who should exhibit extra caution, as there are factors that increase risk. If you believe you fall under the high-risk category based on [CDC guidance](#), you are encouraged to work with your supervisor and Human Resources without fear of discrimination or retaliation from the university. You are encouraged to investigate the following options regarding high risk:

1. Have an open conversation with your supervisor regarding possible continued remote work (possible updated agreement may be required), updated schedules (if applicable), and department adherence to safety protocols.
2. Reach out to Human Resources for possible assistance with extra leave per the new [Families First Coronavirus Response Act \(FFCRA\)](#).
3. Start the interactive process with Human Resources to review possible adjustments that can assist you in performing the essential functions of your position.

If you are in doubt about a situation or how to proceed, please feel free to reach out to Human Resources for guidance.