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We recognize that ever-changing guidance comes from various federal, state, and local authorities, in addition to MDH and the CDC. Our plan may change as we adapt to new information.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The pandemic focused our attention on habits that protected the health and wellbeing of our community. Continuing these habits will not only limit COVID spread, but it may also help minimize the effects of the flu and other illnesses. In the interest of maintaining the health and safety of our campus, continue to follow these important practices:

Get Vaccinated

Employees are encouraged to get vaccinated.

- [Minnesota Vaccine Connector](#)
- [Wisconsin Vaccine Registry](#)

Get Tested

Testing locations remain open and available.

- [Minnesota Testing Site Locations](#)
- [Wisconsin Testing Site Locations](#)

Self-Report

If you receive a positive COVID-19 test result or have been vaccinated you may complete [WSU's Self-Report form](#). All information you provide in completing this form is considered voluntary; you are not legally required to provide it. By providing this information, you acknowledge that you are submitting private information to be used by the University for reporting purposes. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Self-Monitor

Watch for symptoms of COVID-19. Take your temperature if symptoms develop and follow [MDH guidance](#).

Stay Home if Sick

If you are sick or have symptoms follow department call-in protocols and utilize leave as appropriate.

Quarantine

Situations may arise that require a quarantine period. Be prepared that this could occur with little notice.

Respect Mask (and other PPE) Usage and Physical Distance

Personal safety preferences will vary. Masking up and physical distancing are proven ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our community. Wear a mask/PPE and distance yourself if you feel more comfortable. Be respectful of individual preferences that may vary from your own.

EMPLOYEES COMING TOGETHER ON CAMPUS

To all employees who continued their work on our campuses, THANK YOU!

To all employees who performed their work remotely, THANK YOU!

We acknowledge that along with the pandemic has come growth and change. We embraced the term “pivot” and made many adjustments personally and professionally that we likely did not consider pre-COVID. Some experienced varying levels of stress or anxiety with the onset of the pandemic as we adjusted in short order and shifted the way in which we worked and lived. With restrictions lifting and vaccination progress continuing, we are excited for our colleagues to come together again on our campuses.

Departments that are open in summer are being staffed on campus for in-person coverage during their summer hours. Supervisors may choose to have all staff return to campus, to stagger return to campus dates or to utilize a rotating on-campus schedule to cover the department hours. Each department and position are unique, as is every employee, which means plans for returning employees to campus will also be unique.

Staff will return to campus by July 12, 2021, and faculty will return by August 16, 2021, based on position schedules. A new [MMB Telework Policy](#) will take effect in July. WSU will be reintegrating departments and employees to campus, and **all ad hoc telework arrangements will end July 11, 2021.**

We acknowledge that as we again shift the way in which we work and live, we may again experience some level of stress or anxiety.

Here are some tips to support you.

- **Talk to your department leadership.** Make sure you are aware of the return plan for your department and discuss any questions you have about this, or anything else.
- **You may experience concerns and negative emotions.** It is important to acknowledge how you feel and identify steps you can take in response to those concerns. It is also important to be compassionate and patient with others. Talk with your supervisor or reach out to a trusted source including the [Employee Assistance Program](#).
- **Show compassion.** Every person’s experience and comfort level around COVID-19 is unique to them. Not only is it important to acknowledge how you feel, but it is also important to acknowledge how others may feel. Those who have been working remotely may be unsure of what it is like to be back on campus. Those who have continued to work on campus may need to adjust to working with more colleagues and students on campus. The returning of colleagues and students will shift this dynamic. **Be compassionate and patient with others who feel differently than you do.**

- **Communicate with others.** Ask others about their level of comfort when you interact. Respect masking. Respect requests for distance. Vaccination status is personal information that does not need to be shared within teams or classrooms, or with individuals.
- **Prepare to adjust.** As more people return to campus, there will be changes. You may have gotten into a nice rhythm and comfort level with less people around, having your pet as your office mate, or working remotely with no one around, and that will be changing. Being aware of this and acknowledging that there will be more people will help you adjust.
- Wash your hands! It's good advice anytime!
- Keep in mind that everyone is doing the best they can.

Employees concerned about potential exposure to COVID-19 should contact Human Resources or Safety regarding personal protective equipment.

Employees with a personal medical concern may request an accommodation and should contact Jessica Wenzel in Human Resources to begin the formal Americans with Disabilities Act request process.

OFFICE REOPENING - SUPERVISOR CHECKLIST

This checklist can help departments plan for a return to the office that is thoughtful, organized, and effective.

Step 1: Share the plan

- Communicate WSU's return to campus plan to team members who are already back on campus or will be returning to campus.
- Communicate University health and safety protocols
- Communicate that the MMB [HR/LR Policy #1422, Telework Policy](#) has been updated and current ad hoc telework arrangements will end by July 11, 2021.
- Establish a process and timeline to inform team members whether they will have the option to continue teleworking or whether they will return to the office.

Step 2: Get the workplace ready

- If having an employee come to campus intermittently, consider what equipment would need to be transported back and forth to campus or what additional equipment the department may need to purchase.
- Assess workspaces and make any changes or updates that are needed.
- Consider and implement changes you need to make to support health and safety improvements.
- Requests for modifications and changes to workplaces should be submitted using the [Work Request Form](#).
- Consider and implement changes you could make regarding tools and technology to support more telework or hybrid work environments.
- Contact [IT and/or TLT](#) for equipment and technology support and training.

Step 3: Prepare your team

- Keeping your team members informed about progress and new workplace norms is the key to a successful plan.
- Create and implement a communications plan to keep your employees current on planning for the office reopening.
- Designate someone to pick up and deliver mail to and from the Facilities Services building.
- Employees approved to continue teleworking will need to commit to a consistent telework schedule and sign a Telework Agreement that aligns with the new MMB Telework Policy.

Step 4: Welcome your team

- Celebrate the team's ability to reunite as a whole and acknowledge that change can be hard, even for Warriors.
- Allow team members time to clean and settle back into their workspace. Facilities Services will be cleaning office spaces however personal workspaces will need to be cleaned by individual employees.

Step 5: Get feedback

- Continue office communications well after employees have returned to the office so that you can communicate changes and adjustments that are made.
- Implement a mechanism to collect feedback from team members about how the return to the office or the hybrid telework workplace is working for them.
- Determine a plan to regularly assess feedback and implement changes, as needed.

Step 6: Watch for updates

- Watch for campus-wide updates via WSU email.
- Updates on building access and cleaning will be communicated by Facilities Services.
- Updates on technology will be communicated by Information Technology.

OFFICE REOPENING - EMPLOYEE CHECKLIST

This checklist can help employees plan for a return to the office that is thoughtful, organized, and effective.

Step 1: Know the plan

- Confirm requirements and expectations with your supervisor:
 - Return dates.
 - Work schedule, hours and department work location (if different).
 - Department workspace changes: use and requirements for individual workspaces, front facing areas and shared spaces (kitchens, supplies, conference rooms).
 - Access points to department and individual workspaces, if different than prior to COVID.
 - Department-based cleaning protocols.
 - Other department-level requirements or protocols.

Step 2: Get ready

- Pack up any University technology equipment (including printers, scanners, cables and accessories) and any other materials or state property you were using remotely that will be needed when you return to on-campus work.
- Contact IT for an appointment if you need assistance in reinstalling equipment on campus.
- Ensure you have your ID Badge and building/office key(s) prior to arriving on campus.
- Understand the health and safety protocols.
- Self-screen daily before leaving home for symptoms of COVID-19. Check the [MDH website](#) or with your healthcare provider for the most current information. If you have any of the symptoms of COVID-19 you SHOULD STAY HOME until you have contacted your healthcare provider for further guidance. Use of personal leave would apply.

Step 3: Return to campus

- Rigorously practice hand hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette, cleanliness, and sanitation.
- Maintain distance from other individuals when possible.
- Continuously self-screen for the symptoms of COVID-19. If you begin to show symptoms, notify your supervisor and leave work immediately. Limit contact with other individuals on campus and contact your healthcare provider for further guidance.
- Keep in-person meeting size to a minimum and spread out as much as possible or utilize [Microsoft Teams](#) or [Zoom](#) for meetings.
- Maintain office cleanliness by removing unnecessary personal items or debris to create clean counter spaces and support of cleaning efforts on common surfaces.
- Contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) if needed. Please see the EAP webpage for additional resources available: <https://mn.gov/mmb/segip/health-and-wellbeing/eap/>.

Step 4: Watch for updates

- Watch for campus-wide updates via WSU email.
- Updates on building access and cleaning will be communicated by Facilities Services.
- Updates on technology will be communicated by Information Technology.

PRELIMINARY PLAN - ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

The University will continue to process what we have learned from the pandemic. Our plan will evolve over time as we move from working in response to COVID to exploring new opportunities for our work with the return of students, employees, and community members to our campuses.

WSU recognizes that alternative work arrangements can offer creative approaches to advance both our student and University needs, while promoting balance between work and personal life. In response, our preliminary plan includes the following alternative work arrangements:

Compressed Workweek

An arrangement that allows an employee to work their scheduled weekly hours but compress those hours into fewer workdays. For example, working four ten-hour days, or working nine hours on Monday through Thursday and four hours on Friday. The scheduled workweek must not generate an overtime obligation.

Hybrid Telework

An arrangement that allows an employee to perform a portion of their work on a scheduled regular, recurring basis at an approved telework location that is not the employee's permanent/principal WSU work location. The arrangement also provides that a portion of the employee's work is scheduled to be completed at the employee's permanent/principal WSU work location. This arrangement is not a condition of employment. The University may change or end the arrangement at any time.

Parameters for hybrid telework schedules under WSU's preliminary plan include:

- Work one or two days per work week at an approved remote work location and work the remainder of the work week on campus.
- Telework schedules must be within WSU's core hours unless alternative hours are applicable to meet WSU's business needs (i.e.: teaching an evening course or covering evening responsibilities for the department).
- Employees requesting hybrid work arrangements are responsible for ensuring ongoing childcare arrangements to allow for uninterrupted work time and focus.
- Telework locations outside of the United States are not allowed and will not be approved.

Review the telework location implications addressed in the [MMB Telework Policy](#). Telework outside of Minnesota can have income tax and workers compensation implications and must be reported each pay period.

WSU leaders/supervisors are accountable for equity in their department or division, and will use these guiding principles when considering alternative work arrangement requests:

- Prioritize the advancement of our students.
- Prioritize the advancement of our University mission and business needs.
- Where and how work is performed is driven by the work itself.
- Consider productivity of both the individual and the team.

WSU is developing a university policy and procedure for alternative work arrangements so at this time arrangements initiated for dates on or after July 12, 2021, will only be approved with end dates on or before December 31, 2021.

Considering an Alternative Work Arrangement

Alternative work arrangements are ALWAYS at the discretion of the University. In considering an alternative arrangement, review the following:

University questions

- Does the alternative arrangement prioritize the advancement of our students?
 - If yes, how? What assumptions is this based upon?
- Does the alternative arrangement prioritize the advancement of our University mission and business needs?
 - If yes, how? What assumptions is this based upon?
- How does the alternative arrangement ensure the objectives of the position and department are met?

Role specific questions

- Does the employee/position need to perform their work in the primary/permanent location?
 - If yes, why? What assumptions is this based upon?
- To what extent does the employee/position need to collaborate with others?
 - Does the collaboration need to be synchronous (at the same time) or can it be asynchronous (at different times)?
 - Can that collaboration be accomplished virtually without losing effectiveness?
- To what extent does the employee (or employees) need to rapidly exchange information with others?
 - Can that exchange be accomplished virtually without losing effectiveness?

Employee preference questions

- How does the employee feel about hybrid teleworking versus working in the primary/permanent location full-time?
 - Is the employee feeling disconnected while teleworking?
- What support or resources does the employee need to telework and feel good about it?
 - Is it possible to provide that support or those resources?

Team or unit questions

- Does a team of employees need to be in-person at the primary/permanent location during specific days or times for effective collaboration?
 - If yes, why? What assumptions is this based upon?
- What types of meetings or gatherings are best to hold in person?
 - Can the same objectives be met if some members participate virtually?
 - Can the same objectives be met through asynchronous collaboration?
- Are there days when employees on a team can work remotely?
 - What would be the expectations for the type of activities that would take place on days when an employee is remote?
- If the team is going to be hybrid, will there be required synchronous communication or meetings?
- Are there specific times or ways that everyone needs to be available, no matter their work location?

Requesting a Preliminary Alternative Work Arrangement

Compressed Work Week:

1. Compressed work week details need to be submitted to Human Resources. Supervisors need to send an [email to Human Resources](#) with the employee's name, position title, compressed work week start date, end date of the compressed work week, and the daily schedule of hours.
2. Human Resources will update the employee eTime schedule to the new schedule.

Hybrid Telework -

All previously submitted forms will no longer be valid after July 11, 2021. Human Resources will be initiating the cancellation process for these forms in WarriorSpace. This will send a notice to the supervisor to approve the cancellation. Upon supervisor approval of the cancellation, an email notification will be sent to the employee.

1. Reflect on the business needs and performance of each member on your team and if telework is an option.
2. If you are considering telework for an employee on your team read the updated MMB [HR/LR Policy #1422, Telework Policy](#) and [Supervisor Hybrid Telework Considerations](#).
3. Have conversations with team members to discuss MMB's telework policy, their preferences, and future work arrangements which meet the student and business needs of WSU. If telework is not an option due to the nature of someone's role, take time to explain the barriers telework can have on meeting WSU's student and business needs. If telework is not an option due to performance, provide constructive feedback and set a time to revisit the option.
4. If telework is of interest to the employee and meets the needs of the University and our students, provide them a link to MMB's [HR/LR Policy #1422, Telework Policy](#) and ask them to review.
5. Answer any questions they may have.
6. Have the employee initiate a [WSU Telework Request – Schedule and Acknowledgement form](#) which will be routed for review and approval by the eTimesheet approver, Information Technology, Vice President, Cabinet, and Human Resources.
7. Notification of approval or denial will be provided to the requestor and eTimesheet approver. Telework beyond 7/11/2021 requires full approval prior to start of the telework arrangement.

REQUIRED WEEKLY STATUS REPORT (Campus Leaders)

MMB continues to require that WSU account for every employee's primary work location on a weekly basis. WSU eTimesheet approvers must continue to report their employee headcounts **each Tuesday by 3:00pm**. Survey Link: [WSU COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency Survey](#)

COVID-19 RELATED LEAVES

MMB COVID-19 related leave policies are set to expire when the Peace Time Emergency expires, currently July 30, 2021, pending further communication from Governor Walz and MMB.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCE SITES

Employee Assistance Program	Through the EAP , all state employees and immediate family members can receive free, confidential services for your personal or professional life, from counseling to consultation on financial or legal matters. This includes five free counseling sessions a year per topic.
Employee Wellness Program – powered by Virgin Pulse	COVID-19 can cause feelings of stress and anxiety. Our wellbeing program offers some resources that can help you cope, including an activity that can help you practice mindfulness. Start this activity by logging into Virgin Pulse and use the program.
Whil	Whil programs are available through your Virgin Pulse account. These programs can help you develop repeatable skills to calm and focus the mind, and relax the central nervous system. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Log into Virgin Pulse and navigate to your Benefits page. 2. Click on the “View All” tab. 3. Locate and select a Whil Program, and click on “Start Now” to start watching your Whil sessions.
Ergonomics	MN Department of Administration has a listing of Ergonomic guidelines, policies and other resources you can use to ensure employee workspaces are ergonomically sound.
Warrior Well-Being	Warrior Well-Being links to free webinars, tips & tools to help keep your body, heart & spirit Warrior Strong.

COVID-19 RESOURCE SITES

Winona State University	https://www.winona.edu/emergency/health-alert.asp - Winona State COVID-19 information.
Minnesota State (MnSCU)	https://www.minnstate.edu/coronavirus/ - Includes Chancellor updates, resources for campuses and FAQs.
Be Ready MN (MMB)	mn.gov/bereadymn - MMB website is designed to provide general information for state agency employees
Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)	https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html –