Workplace Reintegration Timeline Key Messages

- In accordance with Alberta’s Open for Summer Plan, the City of Edmonton launched Phase 2 of the Workplace Reintegration Plan on July 5th, which means a threshold of up to 33% occupancy in all City workplaces, including high rises.
- Leaders will continue to determine who may be required to attend the worksite for business reasons.
- Employees who are not required to attend the worksite for business needs will continue to temporarily work from home. Employees who have an interest in returning to the workplace may return before September 20, within the 33% occupancy.
- People Leaders will communicate with their teams about the scheduling of attendance at the workplace within established thresholds.
- Individual business areas will be responsible for managing occupancy.
- On August 1, masking is optional and employees are no longer required to maintain 2 metres physical distance. Pre-shift screening and isolation/quarantine requirements are still in effect.
- We will return to 100% occupancy in City buildings on September 20, 2021

Expectations for Leaders

- Re-read the Employee Reorientation to the Workplace to prepare for conversations with your team and encourage your staff to review the document again as well.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. As a leader, do I need to bring back up to 33% of my employees before September 20, 2021?

No, there is no requirement for teams to have 33% occupancy in their workplace. Business areas should use job function requirements; business/customer needs and mental health and wellness (wanting to return to the office) to determine the best strategy for return to the workplace for their needs. Staff may continue to work full-time from home under the Temporary Work From Home Arrangement, may need to return to the workplace full-time for business needs or may combine work from home and return to the workplace as appropriate.

Q: How will People Leaders determine who is required to attend the worksite?

Each area will connect with their teams to discuss their approach for Phase 2, up to 33% occupancy. The decision-making factors will include: job function requirements; business/customer needs; and mental health and wellness considerations (wanting to return to the office).
These questions will help the business area determine if, and who, should return to the workplace:

- Are employees required in the office to access certain equipment not available remotely?
- Are any employees needed back in the workplace to support service delivery or for other business/customer needs?
- Have any employees specifically asked to return to the workplace?
- Are there special circumstances or unique situations that may arise where employees will be required back in the workplace (e.g. presentations, engagement sessions, in-person training etc.)?

Leaders are asked to encourage employees who continue to work from home during Phase 2, to get used to being in the office again, by coming in a day or two in each pay period. Employees can take the opportunity to safely connect with a colleague for coffee or patronize a downtown business.

**Please Note:** Some employees have dependent children and will need notice if they are required to return to the office so they can make childcare arrangements. We ask leaders to be flexible, sensitive and accommodating in exploring options for this first phase of reintegration, where operationally possible.

**Q: How will People Leaders and business areas be able to manage occupancy?**

During Phase 2 each business area will use its own method to ensure that they are not exceeding the occupancy rates. This can be done in a way that works for the individual business areas - whether a spreadsheet that shows who is in the workspace each day; establishing for example, a schedule for Team A to be in the workspace one week and Team B to be in the workspace the next week or having those who are going to be in the office accept a Google Calendar meeting invite for the day they will attend. For later stages of reintegration before coming into work, we will introduce a technology solution, App Space, to book high-rise workspaces and manage occupancy.

Leaders are not expected to report regularly on employees working in City work spaces. However Leaders do need to ensure they are aware of their worksite's occupancy thresholds and that capacity is not being exceeded.

Where there are multiple City departments, branches or sections working on the same floor, the parties will work together to manage occupancy. An easy way to do this is for each team to limit their own occupancy to 33% so that the whole floor maintains 33% occupancy. In other situations, a team may need higher occupancy and can coordinate with a team that can maintain a lower occupancy at this time.

**Q: What can I share with employees to ease their discomfort with elevators and other shared spaces?**

Elevators have high rates of air exchange which places riding an elevator with all passengers wearing masks in a low exposure risk category, with a relative risk similar to that of shopping in a supermarket. We encourage you to be flexible with start and end times so that crowding at buildings requiring the use of elevators is limited. Employees are encouraged to wash their hands and avoid touching their face after touching elevator buttons. Some employees may choose to wear a mask until they are seated at their workstation and that choice must be respected.

**Q: Are external guests allowed in the workplace?**

External guests should still be encouraged to use video conferencing whenever possible. However, if a business need for the guest's visit exists, then they may be allowed in the workplace provided they complete the AHS self-assessment tool prior to meeting.
Q: What do I do if an employee feels sick?

If an employee informs you from home that they are feeling unwell, advise them that they are not to report to the workplace and should instead work from home temporarily if they are able to, until they are well enough, or to use sick time until all symptoms have resolved. Please refer to the COVID-19 Employee Guide for information on time reporting, compensation and leave. If an employee informs you that they are feeling unwell or have symptoms in the workplace, refer to the Rapid Response procedure (responding to symptomatic individuals in the workplace). It is important to take swift action to help the employee and ensure the safety of others in the workplace.

Q: What about the re-entry for staff who are at higher risk of COVID-19 (or have people in their household who are at higher risk)?

Any employees who have medical conditions deemed higher risk for impact from COVID-19 can talk with their respective Disability Management Consultant to review any return to work supports or considerations to address concerns raised. Continue to model respectful workplace behaviours and ensure confidentiality of employee medical information.

Q. What are the cleaning protocols for common areas such as kitchens/washrooms?

Kitchen areas and washrooms will be cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis at minimum by Custodial Services. High-touch surfaces should be cleaned by each user and kitchen appliances and surfaces disinfected after each use. It is everyone’s responsibility to maintain a clean and sanitary workplace. In preparation for increased occupancy, the City will increase the cleaning of routinely touched surfaces such as tabletops, door handles, common seating areas, bathroom fixtures, boardroom phones and keyboards.

Q. With reduced occupancy in the workplaces, there may not be Fire Wardens or First Aiders on every floor. What can I do to ensure my employees are familiar with how to respond to an emergency?

Advise employees that there may not be a fire warden or first aider in the area at all times, therefore it is important that they familiarize themselves with the Emergency Response Plan for the facility and know how to respond in case of emergency. Emergency Response Plans can be found on onecity or posted on the health and safety board at your facility.

Q. How can I assist my team during this transition back to the workplace?

In addition to the guidance provided in the Employee Reorientation to the Workplace, the following resources can help with making sure we support the psychological health and wellbeing of employees and ourselves.

- People Leader Resource Sheet - Mental Preparation, Self Care and Resources to Support Others
- City of Edmonton Employees Wellness Resources and Supports