

HUMAN RESOURCES

Transition and Full Reopening Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

“I am asking that our transition planning focus on two principles: core mission and commitment to strategic plan. Our core mission is to transform lives, and we do so by providing an immersive learning experience to students. It is essential that we return to campus and rebuild that invaluable immersive environment.”

President Renu Khator

TRANSITION PLAN

1. Why do we need a transition period?

The transition period between June 15 and August 2 will allow vice presidents the flexibility needed to bring their units back to campus gradually and safely. Some units are working on campus now based on the nature and work activities of their job. During the transition period, you will begin to come to campus at least 2 or more days per week, gradually increasing the frequency until everyone is back in the office five days a week beginning August 2.

2. What do I have to do during the transition?

Based on your unit’s mission and your work activities, your vice president will formulate a plan to gradually bring you back to campus.

3. What happens if there is another wave of COVID-19 infections?

While our assumption is that we can put the pandemic behind us, the situation in many countries is a stark reminder that COVID-19 will not be gone “anywhere” until it is gone “everywhere.” Our priority is to keep our community safe. Our strategy is to follow the CDC and state guidelines. If we need to adjust, we will.

WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY

1. I have a medical condition that prohibits me from coming to campus. What shall I do?

If you are an employee seeking a reasonable workplace accommodation, please contact EOS by phone at 713-743-8835 or by email at eos@uh.edu.

2. Can I work from home because I find it convenient?

Our guiding principles are the values and core mission of our University including the goals of our strategic plan. You and your supervisor should determine the nature of your work based on your unit's mission and related work activities.

3. I am a parent of small children and/or caregiver for a family member and I need more time to find childcare/elderly care. Can I receive an extension?

An extension will not be granted. The university has developed a transition approach to provide you the time to plan for family care. Your vice president will formulate a plan to gradually bring you back to campus for you to return to work during the period between June 15 and August 2. Additionally, the University offers Back-Up Child and Elder Care for all benefits eligible staff that may require this service. Please visit the Human Resources Benefits page to find out more information about [Bright Horizons Back Up Care](#).

4. My children's schools and summer camps are not open in person, and I do not have childcare, do I have to return to campus?

Everyone is required to return to campus. The university has developed a transition approach to provide you the time to plan for family care. Your vice president will formulate a plan to gradually bring you back to campus for you to return to work during the period between June 15 and August 2. Additionally, the University offers Back-Up Child and Elder Care for all benefits eligible staff that may require this service. Please visit the Human Resources Benefits page to find out more information about [Bright Horizons Back Up Care](#).

5. Will all meetings be face-to-face?

This is a decision for supervisors and managers to make considering the criteria necessary to maintain a safe and effective meeting.

6. Can I participate in face-to-face meetings or activities?

We will continue to follow CDC guidelines and state mandates regarding in-person meetings or activities, which may change over time. Currently, all participants can gather or conduct activities indoors or outdoors without wearing a mask.

7. How will the deaf, who rely on lip reading, function in face-to-face meetings with participants wearing masks?

When planning meetings, supervisors and managers will make accommodations for the deaf.

8. Will campus facilities, like dining halls, library, and parking, be open?

Most, if not all, campus facilities will be open.

TRAVEL GUIDELINES

1. Will there be restrictions for domestic or international travel?

Currently there are restrictions based on CDC guidelines. We will continue to monitor the situation and revise our policies as the situation evolves. Please check the COVID-19 website for the latest [policies](#).

WORKPLACE PREVENTION

1. Do we have to conduct daily self-health checks?

Your presence on campus each day means that you have performed a [daily assessment](#) of your health/exposure and you:

- Are NOT exhibiting any [Coronavirus Symptoms](#) (with the exception of symptoms related to a pre-existing medical condition or a medical diagnosis unrelated to COVID-19)
- Have NOT tested positive for COVID-19
- Have NOT knowingly been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or suspected/presumed COVID-19

2. Will face coverings be required on campus?

Pursuant to the Governor's executive order (GA-36), the University is no longer mandating the wearing of face coverings. While we move forward to address appropriate edits to our COVID-19 protocols, any protocol that requires face coverings at UH will no longer be enforced; however, people can continue to wear a face covering if they wish.

The University encourages persons who are not fully vaccinated to continue to wear face coverings in public settings where they will be around other people, to protect themselves, and others who are not fully vaccinated, against COVID-19 infection.

Please check the COVID-19 website for the latest [updates](#).

3. What is the protocol on social distancing?

The current protocol is based on current [CDC guidelines](#). As with all the guidance and protocols related to COVID-19, the University will adjust its guidance as necessary to reflect new information and findings. Please check the University's COVID-19 website for the most recent [COVID safety requirements](#).

4. Whom do we notify if people in common areas are not social distancing?

Please contact the faculty or staff member who is supervising the person or the space where the infraction occurred.

5. Will the employee break rooms have special protocols?

The current protocols of social distancing in public areas, such as break rooms, will follow [CDC guidelines](#). As with all the guidance and protocols related to COVID-19, the University will adjust its guidance as necessary to reflect new information and findings.

6. I need to plan events for the fall. What can I expect regarding the COVID-19 event guidelines?

The University regularly monitors the latest public health guidance surrounding events and gatherings. We anticipate that guidance regarding events will improve by the fall and are planning a transitional phase regarding event capacities to utilize full event capacities by the fall. More guidance will be forthcoming and the latest guidance may be found at <https://uh.edu/covid-19/guidelines-protocols/event-guidelines/>.

Additionally, the events screening committee will continue to operate for the foreseeable future to process event exception requests for those events held in non-Managed venues. If you have questions about the COVID-19 event guidelines, please contact eventrequests@uh.edu.

CAMPUS CLEANING & SAFETY PRACTICES

1. How will common areas be sanitized?

UH maintenance staff, under the guidance of the COVID-19 Coordinator, have been following CDC guidelines for cleaning and sanitizing office buildings and common areas. As with all the guidance and protocols related to COVID-19, the University will adjust its [guidance](#) as necessary to reflect new information and findings.

2. Has the University taken any additional steps to filter the air in our buildings?

The facilities staff in Administration and Finance, under the guidance of the COVID-19 team, has reviewed the air circulation system in all buildings. All buildings meet the safety codes. In newer buildings, MERV-13 filters have been installed. In older buildings, new filter media, reported to be MERV-13 rating equivalent and able to capture 99% of the virus, have been installed. This filter media was developed in the lab of Dr. Shay Curran, one of UH's faculty.

3. Will there be sanitizing stations on campus?

All public areas are equipped with hand sanitizer dispensers placed at entrances, elevator lobbies and other key areas throughout buildings. Sanitizing wipes and/or disinfectant spray are in classrooms and departments for use on hard surfaces. Restroom fixtures have touchless faucets, touchless soap dispensers, and touchless paper towel dispensers and foot pull door openers.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS & VACCINATION INFORMATION

1. Will I be required to get a COVID-19 vaccination?

According to Governor-Abbott's Executive Order, any organization receiving state funds cannot require a COVID-19 vaccination. However, the University strongly encourages all students, faculty and staff to get a COVID-19 vaccination, which is readily available at [multiple sites](#) throughout the region. The UH Student Health Center is not offering the COVID-19 vaccine currently.

2. Will I lose my job or suffer any consequences if I do not get a COVID-19 vaccination?

You will not face any adverse job impact from not being vaccinated. However, to protect yourself and those around you, we strongly encourage you to consider being vaccinated.

3. Can my manager ask if I have been vaccinated? Can they ask if I have had COVID-19?

Your manager should not ask whether any employee has received the vaccine or contracted COVID-19. However, if you test positive for COVID-19, it is your responsibility to report your diagnosis via the [online form](#).