

# COVID–19 PHYSICAL DISTANCING AT WORK, ALTERNATIVE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS & WORKING FROM HOME

The health and wellbeing of Monash staff and students is a key priority for the University, whilst sustaining our capacity to provide quality education, research and support services.

The University will continue to operate in line with Government guidelines and with endorsement from the University's Chief Medical Officer. For up-to-date information regarding changes to our operations, please visit our dedicated [website and fact sheet](#).

<p>OUR CURRENT OPERATIONS</p>	<p><b>Working from home</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In line with the Victorian Government's <a href="#">roadmap to reopening</a>, working from home arrangements will continue for all staff (unless deemed a <a href="#">permitted worker</a>), until further notice.</li> <li>All professional staff who work from home in response to COVID-19 must have completed the <a href="#">COVID-19 Working from Home Registration</a> form. This is mandatory so we can meet our obligations to provide a safe work environment.</li> <li>Managers/supervisors are responsible for managing their teams while working remotely which includes holding regular team meetings, maintaining regular contact with teams and setting and documenting performance expectations whilst working remotely.</li> </ul> <p><b>Permitted workers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The State Government has applied directives regarding permitted workers. These <a href="#">staff groups are exempt</a> can continue to attend campus to deliver essential services.</li> <li>Staff who are required to come to campus will need to have an authorised <a href="#">permitted workers' permit</a>, approved by Monash.</li> <li>Only the Chief Human Resources Officer, Bridgid Connors, is authorised to issue such permits.</li> <li>Staff deemed eligible for a permit, are to submit a request to their supervisor.</li> <li>Faculties and divisions can send requests to <a href="mailto:hr@monash.edu">hr@monash.edu</a>. Please do not submit requests for staff who clearly are not permitted workers.</li> <li><b><u>Individual requests are not to be made to Human Resources and will not be actioned.</u></b></li> </ul> <p><b>Face masks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In line with the Victorian Government advice, it is a condition of entry to our campuses that a face mask is worn by all students, staff, and visitors to campus.</li> <li>Staff will be required to wear their own personally supplied face mask, with some <a href="#">exceptions</a> as directed by the government, such as for medical reasons. Satisfactory evidence to support an exception (such as documentation from a registered medical practitioner) should be carried at all times and produced when requested by an authorised officer of the University.</li> <li>Permitted staff who remain on site must wear a mask at all times. Masks are optional when working alone in an individual office, however one will need to be worn, if others enter the office or you enter an open plan area.</li> <li>Teaching staff are not required to wear a face mask while teaching, so long as 1.5 metre physical distancing can be met. However, a mask must be worn in between classes, while on campus and/or if determined by a risk assessment to do so.</li> <li>Masks must also be worn to and from campus in line with the <a href="#">Department of Health &amp; Human</a></li> </ul>
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	<p><a href="#">Services (DHHS) guidelines.</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mask will be supplied by the University where the University has conducted a risk assessment and deemed that a surgical, or other grade, mask is required and to Monash Residential Services (MRS) residents in Clayton and Peninsula.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">University travel</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff must comply with Government guidelines.</li> <li>The University recommends all domestic travel is avoided unless it is absolutely essential for the performance of your work. Work-related international travel is not possible at this time. Where it is essential to travel, the following applies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For travel to restricted areas, staff must, prior to booking, obtain the relevant State exemption or permit.</li> <li>Approval for travel must be strictly in accordance with the University's Travel Procedures.</li> </ul> </li> <li>For more information on State requirements visit <a href="#">Coronavirus (COVID-19) advice for travellers.</a></li> </ul>
<p>THE WORK ENVIRONMENT</p>	<p><a href="#">Physical distancing practices</a></p> <p>It's important we continue to keep our University community safe and we all play a role in slowing the spread of COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If staff are required to be on campus, work areas are responsible for ensuring physical distancing practices are adopted. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arranging the work area to accommodate physical distancing of 1.5m.</li> <li>Open plan office environments will require 4m<sup>2</sup> of floor space per person and accommodate physical distancing of 1.5m between people and workstations.</li> <li>In an enclosed space (e.g. lecture theatre, function room) have no more than 1 person per 4m<sup>2</sup> of floor space on average and have fewer than 100 persons.</li> </ul> </li> <li>It may be necessary to implement alternative arrangements to accommodate physical distancing such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>relocating teams or parts of teams to alternative nearby work locations e.g. using spare offices, break out areas or meeting rooms; or</li> <li>rotating members of teams to work from home where they cannot be accommodated in the workplace; or</li> <li>staggering start times to reduce congestion within the office or to avoid peak public transport times.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Consider meeting rooms sizes and if physical distancing can be accommodated. Where space is a concern alternative arrangements must be made, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using video conferencing (zoom) or conference call.</li> <li>Hybrid face to face (accommodating appropriate physical social distancing) and including a zoom option for larger meeting sizes.</li> <li>Considering alternative arrangements for large meetings or gatherings such as smaller repeat meetings (e.g. for staff updates) or meeting outside (weather permitting).</li> </ul> </li> <li>Additional physical distancing practices include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keeping a distance of 1.5m between each other and avoid personal contact, including not shaking hands.</li> <li>Maintaining good hand, sneeze and cough hygiene. Wash hands regularly with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitiser.</li> <li>Limiting food handling and sharing in the workplace. Eat lunch at a workstation/desk or outside rather than in the lunchroom.</li> <li>Cleaning workstations regularly.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><a href="#">University wide safety measures</a></p> <p>The University is implementing a number of initiatives such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing physical distancing guidelines and signage for all learning, research, work and community spaces on campus. Each space has been reviewed for adherence with physical distancing laws and activities have been adjusted accordingly.</li> <li>Increasing cleaning on our campuses, including regular disinfection of high-traffic community spaces (including bathrooms and kitchens) and cleaning learning and research spaces in between each activity.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing hand sanitiser stations across our campuses.</li> </ul> <p>See additional guidance set out in the <a href="#">OHS Return to Work guidelines</a>.</p>
<p>EQUIPMENT TO SUPPORT WORKING FROM HOME</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff who are approved for a temporary working from home arrangement in response to COVID-19 are to use their existing laptop to work from home. In the event that they do not have a laptop, staff should contact the eSolutions service desk <a href="mailto:servicedesk@monash.edu">servicedesk@monash.edu</a> for a temporary laptop kit to be loaned for the duration of the Working from Home Period. This kit will include the items required to work from home.</li> <li>For staff to work effectively home, it is recognised it may be necessary to supplement the technology available in their homes with University-owned IT equipment such as keyboards, monitors and docking stations. This <b>excludes</b> office furniture such as chairs and desks.</li> <li>Under no circumstances are staff to remove existing desktop computers or office furniture from work environments. The University must have access to its equipment in the event it needs to deploy equipment to other areas.</li> <li>Do not order new equipment. eSolutions have loan laptops available.</li> <li>Under no circumstances is a Monash credit card to be used to purchase IT equipment.</li> <li>Additional equipment can be accessed through eSolutions and will be allocated on a priority basis. Requests should be sent to <a href="mailto:servicedesk@monash.edu">servicedesk@monash.edu</a>.</li> <li>eSolutions have implemented a new process to record all University-owned IT equipment that has been relocated to allow staff to work from home and identified some key risks this presents to staff and the University.</li> </ul> <p><b>Return of University equipment</b></p> <p>Upon our safe return to the workplace, all University-owned IT equipment must be returned in accordance with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff who borrowed IT equipment from their department/faculty (e.g. staff members work laptop, keyboards, monitors and docking stations) must be returned to the original location when the business unit returns to normal operations.</li> <li>Staff who borrowed IT equipment from eSolutions (e.g. temporary laptop kit or mobile device) must return all items within 30 days of the business unit returning to normal operations. eSolutions have tracked all loaned IT equipment, and will work with each department to ensure University assets are returned within this time frame. Please note that after 30 days any outstanding loan devices will be disabled for use and business units will be charged the full cost for such devices.</li> </ul> <p><b>Expense reimbursement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any purchase of personal IT equipment or home office furniture are categorised as personal expenses and no claim for reimbursement by the University will be approved.</li> <li>The ATO has a comprehensive list of working from home items that you can claim on your tax return. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>electricity expenses associated with heating, cooling and lighting the area from which you are working and running items you are using for work</li> <li>cleaning costs for a dedicated work area</li> <li>phone and internet expenses</li> <li>computer consumables (for example, printer paper and ink) and stationery</li> <li>home office equipment, including computers, printers, phones, furniture and furnishings</li> </ul> </li> <li>Staff should seek their own taxation advice for claiming any deductions arising from such personal expenses. Staff may also refer to the <a href="#">ATO</a> for further information.</li> <li>Where staff incur out of pocket expenses directly related to working from home for charges relating to broadband/data which are over and above their normal home use charges, these reasonable excess charges can be claimed through an expenditure claim form with appropriate evidence of the increased costs provided.</li> <li>Other reasonable expenses incurred by you which are directly related to carrying out your role, and which are not supported by the ATO, may be submitted for consideration of reimbursement by the University in accordance with the <a href="#">Corporate Credit Card and Reimbursements Procedure</a>.</li> </ul> <p><b>OHS risks and equipment damage</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly check in on the wellbeing of your staff - both email and phone calls.</li> <li>• Staff working from home should take regular breaks from the computer, get up and walk around and also practice these helpful at <a href="#">desk exercises</a>.</li> <li>• When removing IT equipment practice safe manual handling and only take equipment that can safely be carried by one person (equipment should not weigh more than 10kg).</li> <li>• Appropriate steps should be taken to mitigate the OHS risks of removal, including use of trolleys where necessary.</li> <li>• IT equipment is fragile and can be easily damaged when not handled correctly or appropriately protected during removal.</li> <li>• All University-funded IT equipment that is relocated must be returned to the original location when the University returns to normal operation.</li> <li>• Damage to relocated IT equipment will be the responsibility of the faculty/division, noting that the end-user IT equipment is not insured against damage or loss.</li> </ul>
<p>FLEXIBILITY OPTIONS</p>	<p><a href="#">Childcare and remote learning - access to carers leave</a></p> <p>As outlined in the Victorian Government's <a href="#">roadmap to reopening</a>, a staggered return to onsite childcare and onsite learning at school commenced from 5 October 2020.</p> <p>For the period 12 October 2020 - 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020, access to apply for a-day-a-week carer's will only be available to staff working from home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with children in years 8 – 10 who are still studying remotely; or</li> <li>• where a school or childcare is temporarily closed.</li> </ul> <p>For all other staff, previous carers leave arrangements in accordance with the <a href="#">Sick and Carers leave procedure</a> will apply.</p> <p><a href="#">Other flexibility options</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University will continue to be flexible in order to assist staff to meet their personal/family circumstances as a result of the impacts of COVID-19 in accordance with <a href="#">cl.16.1.1, Schedule 6 – The COVID-19 Schedule</a>.</li> <li>• Where staff are not able to fulfil the full requirements of their role but have the capacity to perform a percentage of their duties/percentage of total hours, we ask staff to:       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Temporarily reduce their fraction of employment to reflect the amount of work they are able to perform, in accordance with <a href="#">cl.16.1.2, Schedule 6 – The COVID-19 Schedule</a>; or</li> <li>2. Temporarily reduce their fraction and at their election, top up salary by using accrued annual leave or long service leave to maintain their normal salary (at their normal fraction); or</li> <li>3. Alternatively, where the staff member's preference is to not perform any duties, they should consider applying for annual or long service leave (where accrued) or purchasing additional leave in accordance with <a href="#">cl. 16.1.3, Schedule 6 – The COVID-19 Schedule</a>.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• In any request by a staff member for one of the above flexible work arrangements, the University will continue to pay superannuation and leave accruals on their substantive fraction in accordance with <a href="#">Schedule 6 – The COVID-19 Schedule</a>.</li> <li>• Staff should discuss their individual circumstances with their supervisor.</li> </ul>
<p>RETURNING TO CAMPUS</p>	<p>Following campus reactivation, a formal WFH arrangement which existed before COVID-19 can continue in accordance with the agreed term. Refer to <a href="#">Working from Home Procedure</a>.</p> <p>We will accommodate working from home arrangements for the following staff where the current health advice is that they should continue to work remotely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff aged 70 years and over;</li> <li>• Staff aged 65 and over with chronic medical conditions;</li> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the age of 50;</li> <li>• Staff with chronic medical conditions or who are immunocompromised.</li> </ul> <p>Arrangements for staff with carer responsibilities for an immunocompromised member of their household, will be considered on a case by case basis by your supervisor and Monash HR.</p> <p>Whilst it will take some time to adjust to returning to campus, staff will be expected to return to work (unless otherwise exempt) in accordance with University and government announcements.</p>

<p>IF STAFF ARE FEELING UNWELL</p>	<p>Everyone is responsible for protecting their own health as well as the health and safety of others.</p> <p>Staff who are feeling unwell and showing COVID-19 symptoms, even if very mild, should not come to work and are strongly encouraged to get tested for COVID-19.</p> <p>COVID-19 symptoms include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Runny nose</li> <li>- Loss of sense of smell</li> <li>- Cough or difficulty breathing</li> <li>- Sore or scratchy throat</li> <li>- Fever, chills or sweats</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff who come to work and are feeling unwell may be directed by their supervisor to go home and not to return until they are fit to do so. The staff member is required to apply for sick leave unless they are well enough to work with the approval of their supervisor.</li> <li>• If a staff member is unable to perform their work due to illness, they must notify their supervisor and apply for any accrued sick leave.</li> <li>• If a staff member has exhausted their accrued sick leave, they may take annual leave or long service leave (where accrued).</li> <li>• If a staff member subsequently tests positive with COVID-19, any sick leave taken will be substituted by isolation leave.</li> </ul> <p>See additional guidance set out in the <a href="#">COVID-19 Staff Leave Guidelines</a>.</p>
<p>A STAFF MEMBER APPEARS TO BE UNWELL</p>	<p>Everyone is responsible for protecting their own health as well as the health and safety of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where a staff member is displaying COVID-19 symptoms, supervisors should respectfully and in an appropriate private setting, talk to the staff member about their health. It is reasonable to ask them for an explanation for their symptoms e.g. asthma or hay-fever.</li> <li>• If the supervisor is concerned that the staff member is unwell and displaying COVID-19 symptoms, they may direct the staff member to go home and not to return until they are fit to do so. The staff member is required to apply for sick leave if they are too unwell to perform their role adequately from home.</li> </ul> <p>Contact Access HR for further advice.</p>
<p>OTHER RESOURCES</p>	<p><b>Monash Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Employee Assistance Program</a> is available 24/7 to all Monash staff on 1300 360 364.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Monash Health &amp; Wellbeing Services</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Monash Counselling Services</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Monash Student Support</a> (incl. <a href="#">Financial Assistance</a> and <a href="#">Student Emergency Grants Scheme</a>, <a href="#">International Student Support</a>, and <a href="#">Financial</a> support for Indigenous students)</li> </ul> <p><b>Emotional Support &amp; Wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">LifeLine</a> (Call 13 11 14, or access support online)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Beyond Blue</a> (Call 1300 224 636, or access support online)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Kids Helpline</a> (Call 1800 55 1800, or access support online)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Headspace</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Reach Out</a></li> <li>• LGBTIQ+ specialised: <a href="#">Switchboard</a>, <a href="#">Thorne Harbour Health</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For HR guides refer to the <a href="#">COVID-19 HR Resources</a> webpage.</li> <li>• For OHS matters, contact the helpline on (03) 990 51016 or <a href="mailto:ohshelpline@monash.edu">ohshelpline@monash.edu</a></li> <li>• If you have questions relating to this guide, contact Access HR on (03) 990 20400 or <a href="mailto:hr@monash.edu">hr@monash.edu</a></li> <li>• The Department of Health &amp; Human Services - 1300 651 160</li> </ul>