

# Returning to the Workplace Guidelines

## Introduction

Premier Scott Moe has released the [Re-Open Saskatchewan](#) plan that will guide our province as Saskatchewan residents and our provincial economy begin to emerge from isolation. The plan provides a methodical and phased-in approach to slowly and responsibly lift restrictions on businesses and services.

For Government of Saskatchewan employees, it is up to senior leaders and managers to use caution when returning of employees to the workplace. The province and government will continue to follow the guidance of the Chief Medical Health Officer to make decisions.

## Purpose and Principles

This guide will help managers to make decisions about when and how employees who have been working from home return to the workplace.

Safety is the top priority for employees and citizens. Employees will return when Public Health authorities say it is safe, in a way that is safe to do so. Citizen service is also a key consideration in determining which employees return to the workplace.

## Steps

Follow these steps to determine when employees should return to the workplace. As the province moves into phases 3 and 4 of the [Re-Open Saskatchewan](#) plan, **managers should consider returning employees to the workplace gradually.**

### Step 1: Triggers for employees to return

*See Appendix A – Decision tree for determining if an employee should return to the workplace for a visual.*

1. Are there any public health orders or legitimate individual circumstances restricting employees' ability to work? (i.e. travel restrictions in the north)

If yes, employees should continue working from home if they can do so effectively. See *Step 4: Other Considerations* for short and long-term considerations.

2. When returning to the workplace, can the key service be delivered in a way that follows all physical distancing and/or safety procedures for both the employee and the client/customer?

If no, employees should continue to work from home until a plan is developed and implemented to resolve the concerns.

If yes, continue to *Step 2: Considerations for Return* to consider who and how employees should return.

## Step 2: Considerations for Return

There are a number of criteria to consider when determining a plan to return employees to the workplace.

In order to initiate a return of employees to the workplace, the manager requires approval from the Deputy Minister, CEO or President of their organization. Ensure you have a plan in place to communicate the service change to the Minister's Office, employees and citizens.

When developing your plan to return employees, consider the following:

### 1. Level of service

What is the number of employees who need to return to meet the service needs?

### 2. Schedule/timing

Will employees be returning to the workplace full-time or part-time? What are the implications of that (e.g. transporting computers)?

Will employees take turns or shifts returning to the workplace?

#### Determining which employees return:

- Skills - which employees are able to provide the needed service?
- Personal situation – childcare arrangements, high-risk or immune compromised, sick or self-isolating
- Workstations – are employees located far enough apart to ensure physical distancing?
- Productivity – are there employees less able to work from home due to internet, technology or other challenges who would benefit from returning to the workplace?

Be sure to have discussions with employees and teams throughout the process and as the situation changes.

If an employee is unable to return to the workplace due to a medical concern, they should work with their manager and HR Business Partner.

## Step 3: Employee and Citizen Safety

A number of safety procedures and guidelines must be in place in order to return employees to the workplace. Employees and managers must understand and comply with all safety requirements.

The ministry must assess each workplace and determine the necessary procedures using the safety resources below.

Safety considerations include:

- Physical distancing – two-metre distancing between people should be maintained

- Hand washing and etiquette – wash hands frequently and practice cough/sneeze etiquette
- Cleaning – enhanced cleaning procedures and wiping of high-touch surfaces
- Elevators – avoid use or follow capacity restrictions
- Shared spaces – restrict access or ensure physical distancing
- Shared devices – remove shared devices where possible or determine enhanced cleaning protocols for use
- Mental health – monitor and support good practices
- Illness – closely monitor for signs of illness and return home as necessary
- Client/colleague interaction – conduct business remotely where possible (email, phone, video)
- Awareness – ensure employees are aware and understand all safety protocols and procedures
- Others – workplace-specific considerations to keep employees and citizens safe

## Returning Employees

When returning employees to the workplace, managers are responsible for re-orienting and sharing information with employees on the return process, safety procedures, etc. as well as making sure they feel safe returning to the workplace.

## Communication Resources

*Use these resources to communicate to employees about returning to the workplace.*

[Email/phone template for managers to send/use to contact employees](#)

[Questions and Answers on Returning to the Workplace](#)

## Safety Resources

*Use these links and resources to guide safety procedures for your workplace. Find all Government COVID-19 information on [Taskroom](#).*

[Return to the Workplace Taskroom page](#) – houses all of the resources below

[Health, Safety and Wellness Checklist for Workplaces](#) – for assessing workplaces for returning employees

[COVID-19 Workplace Information](#) – Saskatchewan.ca guidelines for general workplace operations, including cleaning and PPE, worker health and preventative measures

[Cloth mask guidelines](#)

[Employee Checklist for Returning to the Workplace](#)

[Government Space Information](#) - includes cleaning, office procedures, signage, templates, posters

## Step 4: Other Considerations

There are a variety of other human resource, safety, technology, efficiency, building management and culture considerations that managers may want to consider whether returning employees to work in the short or long term.

Questions to consider:

- What changes are required in our strategic or operational plans?
- How did our processes and systems shift and adapt to meet the organization's needs? What challenges did we encounter?
- How do we ensure employee onboarding, learning and development continue?
- How do we preserve the work that is going well for long-term or permanent considerations (i.e. flexible work arrangements, telework)?
- How do we embed improvements and innovations we've implemented as a result of COVID-19?
- How will we manage job applicants, external vendors, contractors and other visitors?
- How will working from home affect building arrangements?
- Have safety procedures affected our ability to work?
- How has work from home affected physical and mental health?
- Have we leveraged technology effectively? What more could we do?
- What are our successes and challenges for employee engagement and culture?

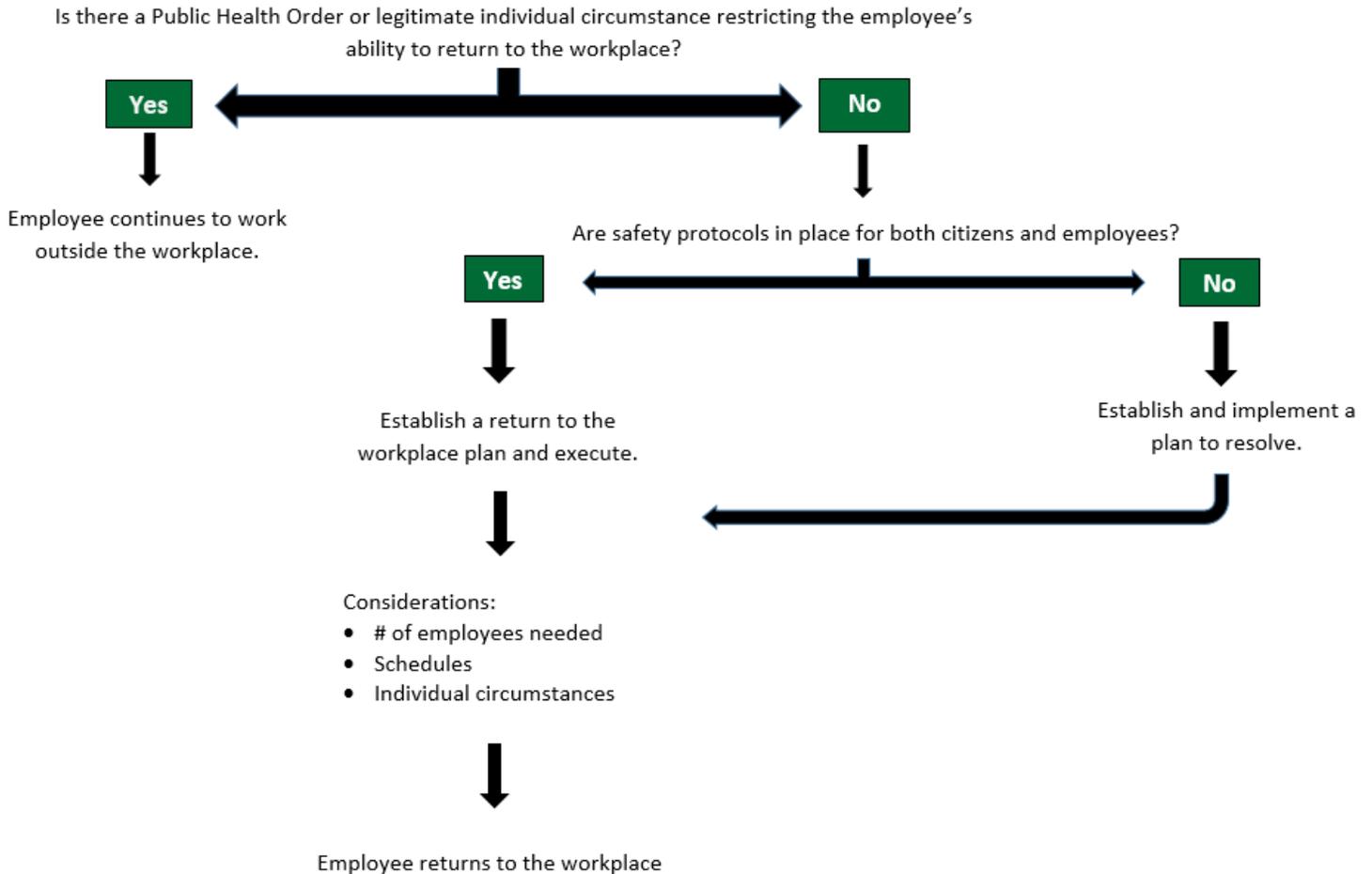
Appendix A – Decision tree for determining if an employee should return to the workplace

Appendix B – Safety Checklist for Managers

# Appendix A – Decision tree for determining if an employee should return to the workplace

Use this diagram to help decide if your employees should return to the workplace at this time.

## Decision Tree for determining If an employee should return to the workplace



## Appendix B – Safety Checklist for Managers

Use this checklist in conjunction with the full list of safety resources and considerations on [Taskroom](#) to confirm safety procedures are in place for employees to return to the workplace.

<input type="checkbox"/> Completed Workplace Hazard Identification and Assessment Form
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed Safe Operating Procedure Worksheet
<input type="checkbox"/> All managers and employees have reviewed the <a href="#">Employee Checklist for Returning to the Workplace</a> and <a href="#">Health, Safety and Wellness Checklist for Workplaces</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> Signage posted about cleaning procedures, bathrooms, shared spaces
<input type="checkbox"/> Workstations are two metres apart
<input type="checkbox"/> Shared devices removed or cleaning in place (coffee maker, water cooler)
<input type="checkbox"/> Removed chairs, taped floors, signage, etc. to ensure physical distancing
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiting rooms adjusted and signage for clients and visitors (waiting process, sanitizer)
Employees communicated with on: <input type="checkbox"/> Safety procedures <input type="checkbox"/> New workplace processes <input type="checkbox"/> Changes in scheduling, space, client interaction, avoiding in-person contact, travel, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Comments:

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