# enableHR

# Transitioning back to the workplace
## A comprehensive checklist to help you get back to business

Whether your employees are working from home (WFH) or delivering their duties from the workplace, their health and safety is your responsibility. If your business is ready to transition from WFH to reopening your doors, we've created a comprehensive checklist to help you do this safely.

## Physical distancing

○ Think about a structure for your team to gradually return to the workplace. This may include alternating days or weeks for different staff or offering staggered hours.

○ Consider the layout of your workplace. Does the existing plan allow for social distancing of 1.5 metres between each person? If not, consider a layout that will accommodate this arrangement (which may include utilising meeting rooms). If workstations can't be changed, consider staggering employee attendance to reflect available space.

○ Consider removing chairs from meeting rooms to control the maximum safe number of guests and space out the chairs to ensure occupants sit at the appropriate distance.

○ What plans does your building management have in place to practice safe social distancing and hygiene of common areas? How will you deal with travelling in lifts or using shared kitchen or bathroom facilities?

## Health and hygiene

○ Set up a hygiene station at the entrances and exits of the workplace for all staff or visitors to access prior to entering the work area.

○ Where staff cannot wash hands before entering the work area, they should be encouraged to wash hands or sanitise as soon as possible after entry.

○ Check that your team members don't have any continuing health concerns before returning to the workplace.

○ Ensure bathrooms are well stocked with hand wash and paper towels.

○ Instruct your workers to limit contact with others – no shaking hands at all, and only touch objects where necessary. Avoid hotdesking: where possible, ensure that employees have their own workspaces and resources to minimise shared contact of items (for example, keyboards, clipboards and stationery).

○ Where items such as keys and passes to certain rooms or storage spaces would normally be shared between workers, consider allocating responsibility to a single employee to reduce contact.

○ Minimise the provision of any shared foods or drinks that are offered in the workplace, such as biscuit tins, lolly jars or milk cartons. Where such items are necessary, provide mechanisms for sanitisation between use.

## Cleaning

○ Instruct workers to wear gloves when cleaning and wash their hands thoroughly with soap or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser before and after wearing gloves.

○ Provide hygiene and personal protective equipment items such as hand sanitiser, gloves, paper towel, and disinfectant for employees and remind them to clean shared workstations and resources (such as printers) using this equipment.

○ Clean frequently touched areas and surfaces several times a day with a detergent or disinfectant solution or wipe. This includes POS equipment, elevator buttons, handrails, tables, countertops, doorknobs, sinks and keyboards.

○ Instruct workers to clean personal property that comes to work, such as sunglasses, mobile phones and iPads with disinfectant, such as disinfectant wipes.

## Monitoring

○ Direct workers to stay home if they're sick. If they're displaying symptoms of COVID-19 ask them to call the National Coronavirus Hotline (1800 020 080).

○ Instruct workers to tell you if they're displaying symptoms of COVID-19, have been in close contact with a person who has COVID-19 or have been tested for COVID-19.

○ Remind staff of their leave entitlements if they're sick or required to self-quarantine.

○ Treat personal information about individual workers' health carefully, in line with privacy laws.

## Communication

- ⚪ Encourage all team members to download the COVID-Safe App to assist with contact tracking.

- ⚪ Create an internal communication strategy that clearly relays information within the return to workplace plan.

- ⚪ Place posters around the workplace to remind staff to keep at least 1.5 metres of distance between everyone.

- ⚪ Place signs at the entrance to lifts and meeting rooms to ensure the maximum safe capacity is not exceeded.

- ⚪ Place signs about the symptoms of COVID-19 in the workplace.

- ⚪ Place posters in bathrooms and near hygiene stations with instructions on how to hand wash/hand rub.

- ⚪ Instruct staff to hold meetings online or over the phone instead of in person.

- ⚪ Nominate an employee to be responsible for keeping everyone the required 1.5-metre distance apart in accordance with the latest government requirements.

- ⚪ Instruct workers on other ways to limit the spread of germs, including by not touching their face, by sneezing into their elbow, and by staying home if feeling sick.

- ⚪ Have automatic alerts set up on computer systems to remind workers about washing hands and not touching eyes, nose and face.
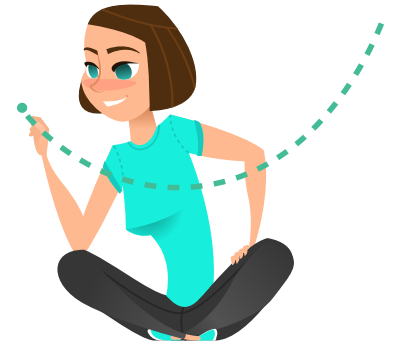
## Other operational matters

- ⚪ Nominate a worker or a team of workers to champion safe practices in the workplace and teach their colleagues the proper procedures listed above. List this person/s as a key contact for employees with whom to raise questions or concerns relating to COVID-19 or the business's health response, so such matters can be dealt with promptly and in an informed manner.

- ⚪ Develop a plan to ensure business continuity if there is a suspected or confirmed outbreak of COVID-19 in your workplace. Is there a plan in place if an employee is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, including how you will support that person and what you need to do to ensure the workplace remains safe for other workers?

- ⚪ Assess if you have appropriate cleaning products and personal protective equipment available to disinfect your workplace following an outbreak. If you do not, consider options for hiring a cleaning company to do this work.

- ⚪ Put a protocol in place for reopening your workplace after an outbreak or quarantine period.

- ⚪ Stay informed about the latest information on the pandemic.

- ⚪ Keep morale up: ensure you keep in regular communication with your staff, including reporting on positive matters. Mental health is a work health and safety issue too!