Welcome to our Return to Onsite Work FAQs. As we begin the process of returning to onsite work, we anticipate that you will have questions regarding the logistics of being back in our workspaces again. To help address your concerns, we have assembled these FAQs, based on questions we have received throughout the SUNY Empire State College community. These responses are current as of May 13, 2021. For any additional questions, you are encouraged to reach out to your supervisor or the Office of Human Resources.

**Moving**
I need help moving my boxes. Can someone help me?
Yes, the facilities department will be assisting with office moves. Reference the email you received on moving instructions. Please make sure your office vacancy form is completed. The Saratoga locations will be moved by our facilities staff, and contracted movers will assist, as needed, at other locations. Labeled boxes will be transported to your new location.

My office has moved, and I don’t know where my new office is located.
Please check with your supervisor or department head.

How do I go about getting new keys and a swipe card to access the new location?
Reach out to the Office of Safety and Security for card and key questions. Please email: Joan.Dubois@esc.edu.

**PPE/Supplies**
I forgot my mask today. Where can I find one?
It is suggested you leave extra masks in your office as a precaution. A limited supply of disposable masks will be available at each location near the check-in area.

Will PPE be provided to employees?
Each building will be supplied with masks and gloves. Protective barriers will be pre-installed in areas where distancing may not otherwise be possible.

Where can I find hand sanitizer?
Hand sanitizer will be provided at check-in areas and throughout our locations.

Will there be any supplies provided to assist with cleaning and sanitation of personal spaces?
Yes, each location will be provided with a disinfecting “kit” containing the following items:
- Disinfecting wipes
- Sanitizer
- Gloves
- Disposable masks
Building Access
Will the front doors still be locked?
Yes, doors will initially remain locked during business hours, but you may gain access with your ID badge. Once we are fully operational (August 2 at most locations), the doors will return to their previous lock/unlock schedule. Certain locations may change protocols as needed.

Will there be a check-in kiosk?
Yes, all main entrances will have an Empire Entry iPad kiosk. All staff, students, and guests will be able to access the kiosk for sign-in purposes. The iPad will be pre-set to Empire Entry, powered by the Envoy app. The same app may be downloaded to your mobile device and used for the same purpose. Using your mobile device will allow you to pre-register (complete your health screening) prior to your arrival, help with traffic flow, and avoid a high-touch area. For those who have been in the office for the past several months, please note that the daily health report has been moved to the Envoy app.

Will the front desk have a COVID-19 screening form?
The kiosk and Empire Entry should eliminate the need for paper-based forms. However, each location should have an Emergency COVID-19 Screening Form in the event of a technical issue or power outage.

I work in one building. Am I allowed to travel to another building without prior permission?
Once we are back onsite, you will be able to travel to multiple locations without waiting for approval. Please complete Empire Entry, powered by the Envoy app, to check in and out of each building for contact tracing purposes.

Will there be any restrictions on coming and going during the workday?
The only requirement will be to “check in” and “check out” of each location using the ENVOY app.

Will employees have to “redo” the app if they leave the building?
Yes, if you are leaving the building for an extended time, or to enter another location. If you are taking your break, or do not plan to leave the building for an extended period of time, you do not have to complete the Empire Entry process again.

What do we do if there are no staff at the front desk after hours?
Ideally, work schedules should cover the needs for the building. Front desk schedules will be the responsibility of the front desk supervisor and may require alternate hours for certain employees to guarantee staffing. Again, everyone entering a building must sign in using Empire Entry powered by the Envoy app. Doors will be locked after normal business hours.

Face Mask Guidelines
I’m using a SUNY Empire/state vehicle. Do I have to wear a mask if commuting with others?
Our mask policy would be the same for vehicles (and travel) as it is in the workplace. Please wear PPE if social distancing is not possible. If you are traveling alone, you do not need to wear a mask.

If I’m fully vaccinated, do I have to wear a mask at all?
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued updated masking guidance on May 13, 2021, allowing vaccinated individuals to engage in pre-pandemic activities without wearing a mask, subject to federal, state, and local laws. SUNY Empire State College is awaiting guidance from the State DOH and SUNY System
Administration before revising any masking protocols. **Until then, a mask must be worn in all common areas by both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.** The location-specific guidance includes information about mask wearing in individual workspaces. Updates to this may follow as we receive new information and guidance.

**Do I have to wear a mask? Where and when?**

Masks must be worn in **ALL** public areas and during meetings, including offices, and whenever meeting with students, guests, and coworkers. This requirement helps us to protect one another, especially when it is not possible to maintain social distancing (i.e., in bathrooms, stairwells, elevators, etc.). When indoors, individuals should maintain a distance of at least six feet from others and use a face covering when social distancing is not possible. SUNY Empire will maintain a limited supply of face masks at the entrances to its open locations.

**Limited exemptions are as follows:**
- **Medical reasons:** Employees who are unable to wear face masks due to a medical or other health condition should consult with the Office of Human Resources at (518) 587-2100, ext. 2240.
- **Eating and drinking:** You do not have to wear a face covering when actively eating or drinking while seated in areas with appropriate social distancing. If you are in a break area and not in the act of eating or drinking, you should wear your mask.
- **Individual space:** Face coverings can be removed only when alone in a cubicle or office, or when outside the building, while following social distancing guidelines.
- **Shared office space:** If you sit in a cubicle environment and there are others within six feet of you, you must wear your face mask.

**For quick reference, see chart below:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Mask Required</th>
<th>No Mask Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual office</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shared office alone</td>
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<td>Shared office not alone *</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office suite with cubicles/desks with less than 5 ft divider height</td>
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<td>Office suite with cubicles with more than 5 ft divider height</td>
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<td>Cubicles with less than 5 ft wall/divider height</td>
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<td>Cubicles with more than 5 ft wall/divider height</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reception Desk with no one present in reception area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reception Desk when visitors approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Riding in an elevator with another person</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Walking in common areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visiting a co-worker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attending a group meeting</td>
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<td>Outdoor in small groups</td>
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*If all staff in a shared office space provide proof of vaccination to the Office of Human Resources, this may relieve a small group from mask wearing in a specified, shared office space. HR approval is required, and six feet of social distancing will still be needed.*
Cleaning Protocols
How often are high-touch areas disinfected?
High-touch areas will be disinfected once daily. Shared equipment and appliances should be disinfected by those using them before and after each use.

How often is my office disinfected?
Personal spaces will not be regularly disinfected by cleaning staff/contractors. Cleaning staff/contractors will be focusing their disinfection efforts on common areas and shared spaces. However as previously noted, sanitizing wipes will be provided for staff who wish to sanitize their own space.

I would prefer that the cleaners NOT clean my office. Is that ok?
Yes, the cleaning schedule will not include disinfecting of individual offices. For any specific requests to avoid your office altogether, or for other concerns, please submit a facilities incident ticket.

Are there any specific requirements to disinfect technology (microphones, computers, headsets, keyboards)?
Electronic devices, including shared computers, printers/copiers, and touchscreen displays, should be disinfected before and after each use by the user. Direct spraying and misting of electronic equipment and devices are discouraged. The disinfecting procedure is to use a disinfectant wipe, or spray a small amount of disinfectant onto a cloth before wiping the device.

Will areas that have been mostly vacant for over a year receive a deep cleaning?
We are working with staff at our owned locations and contractors at our leased locations to conduct comprehensive custodial work before onsite return.

Who is responsible for cleaning up the areas in Selden?
Our contracted cleaning company will be responsible for routine cleaning. As always, employees and students should clean up after themselves.

How often is the building cleaned?
All high-touch and trafficked areas including bathrooms, hallways, stairways, bathrooms, and meeting rooms (if used) will be cleaned daily.

Who will clean up after us in breakrooms?
Breakrooms will be disinfected daily as part of the regular cleaning schedule. However, you should always clean up after yourself when using the breakroom.

How is the cleaning being handled and what is MY responsibility?
Common spaces including hallways, bathrooms, stairways and classrooms/meeting rooms (if used) will be cleaned/disinfected daily. Each employee is responsible for disinfecting shared equipment and appliances before and after each use. Individual offices will be cleaned periodically. Individual offices will not be on the daily disinfection schedule.

Have offices that haven't been occupied while we have been remote been dusted?
Yes. In addition, water and HVAC systems have been running.

Who do we go to if there is a building/cleaning issue?
Employee concerns should be communicated via work tickets. Please use the following link: Submit Facilities Incident | ServiceNow (service-now.com)

What time will the daily cleaning be? What about evening events—will there be a special cleaning afterward? Based on current SUNY and DOH guidelines, all classrooms (if used), meeting rooms (if used) and high-touch common areas will be disinfected daily. We will adjust specific professional cleaning schedules in the building to account for high traffic areas. Disinfectant supplies will be provided and accessible to all for additional disinfecting as needed, based on individual comfort or need for more frequent disinfection of personal space. All staff are required to share the responsibility of sanitizing shared equipment and appliances before and after each use.

Is the ticketing system the best way to alert the college to issues related to cleaning or facilities that are related to covid? Yes, IT incident tickets and facilities work request tickets are the best ways for us to get the right help you need. It ensures proper communication and tracking to resolve issues.

Workspaces
I share an office and it makes me uncomfortable. What should I do? Those sharing single offices should work together on a schedule for office use. If you are sharing a closed room workspace with multiple desks, please follow the capacities posted. If you have further concerns, please discuss with your supervisor.

I work in an open area, and it makes me uncomfortable. What should I do? We will be providing PPE and protective barriers in areas where social distancing is not possible. If additional protections are needed for your specific location, please request them through a facilities work request ticket, with your supervisor’s approval.

How are shared offices going to work? If you share an office with multiple desks, phase-in plans have been coordinated on an A/B schedule to limit occupancy during Phases 1-3. Employees in multi-desk shared workspaces should follow masking and social distancing protocols. If you share an office with one desk, you should work with your office partner on establishing the best schedule for both. This should help avoid double occupancy. You may also use the Envoy app to “reserve” and communicate this sharing.

What is the plan for shared offices in close proximity? Workspaces should be distanced at a six-foot minimum from the nearest coworker. Facilities is in the process of assessing all workspaces to examine distancing and installing barriers where distancing is not possible. Workspace concerns should be discussed with your immediate supervisor.

What can I expect in terms of my technology requirements, office supplies and other office needs when I am back working onsite? Because you may be splitting time during the phase-in period between onsite and offsite, you may have a need for technology. If you have a SUNY Empire desktop that you are using at home, please reach out to Information Technology Services (ITS) to request a laptop. Each employee will be allotted the following:

- A laptop with two monitors, keyboard, mouse, headset, videocam, power charger and docking station. Only one set of technology per employee is allowed.
• If you are sharing a space, and need an additional monitor for home use, please request this through an ITS incident ticket.

All technology questions must be communicated and requested via an I.T. work ticket.

**Meetings and Appointments**

I don’t want to have any in-person meetings. Is it ok to request that all my meetings be held virtually?

Some meetings will need to be held in-person. Please check with the meeting organizer as to whether there is a virtual option for specific meetings.

What will the expectation/culture for meetings be when we return?

Face-to-face meetings will be allowed, and meeting rooms must follow the capacity allowed in each room. Masking protocol and 6 ft distancing must be followed. Virtual meetings are still acceptable and may be more common than prior to the pandemic.

Can I host student appointments in my office?

Yes, if you are following distancing and mask wearing protocols.

Can I have guests or visitors come into the building?

In order to control the number of people at each location, we ask that employees and students not bring guests and children into the workplace. If a guest or visitor has an appointment, or is a “walk-in,” they should be directed to sign in via Empire Entry powered by the Envoy app. This may be done by accessing the app on your smart device, or at the iPad kiosk at the location entrance.

Can I host a group in my location, and what is the max?

Official college business meetings may take place and should be limited to room capacities and socially distanced, adhering to DOH guidelines. Room capacities will be posted in each location. Room reservations will continue to be made as before. At this point in time, shared food and beverages will not be allowed.

**Communication and Feedback**

When is the next Town Hall?

Monday May 24, 2021 at 1 p.m.

Is there a COVID Response Team or COVID rep for a location?

Points of contact will be established at each location and will communicate with the facilities and operations team on a weekly basis. These individuals will be the contact for COVID-related questions for that location.

**Testing Protocols**

Do I have to be tested? Where and when?

Yes, at this point, all staff and students who are onsite will need to be tested. Testing type and schedule will differ by location. Depending on your location, you will be part of a pool test, or do an individual test. This will determine test drop locations and times. Check with your location-specific plan regarding the test type.

Do I need a test even if vaccinated?

Yes, at this point all employees and students who are onsite must be tested weekly.

How to do I participate in pool testing?
Based on information we know as of mid-May, all staff and SUNY students who will be onsite will need to submit a weekly test based on the schedule provided for their location. If the location is using pool testing, you will be provided with the day(s) and time(s) when the testing will be conducted. The SUNY Empire Office of Human Resources will be managing the process. Other locations will be using individual test kits.

**How do I participate in individual testing?**
For our smaller locations, we will provide individual test kits rather than pool test kits. You will need to submit an individual test weekly. The individual test kits will be distributed to your location. You are responsible for placing your individual kit in the mail once you prepared your sample.

**I have a meeting during the times that pool testing is offered. What should I do?**
Pool testing will be offered at multiple times during the week. Testing dates and times will take place on a regular schedule, and you will be able to block time during the day to complete the test.

**Will COVID testing be done weekly at each building?**
SUNY employees and students are required to submit weekly COVID tests at each location.

**Please describe in more detail how the pool testing works. Are they done in groups by department, building, etc.? How quickly do we receive the results?**
Pool testing is done using tests from employees who are at the same location, on the same day, at the same time. The college does not conduct the pool test itself. This is done by Upstate Medical University. Test results are typically received within 48 hours. You can access your result, but employees are only directly notified of results when a pool is positive. If your pool tests positive, you will hear from a contact tracer and be required to quarantine until the positive test(s) is identified, which usually takes a day or two. Positive tests will be reported to your county health department. Those who test positive will be interviewed for contact tracing purposes and required to quarantine at home for 10 days from the date of the positive result. If you are negative in that pool and were not in close contact with the positive test, you may return to work the next day. Anyone identified as being in close contact for a prolonged period with the individual who tested positive will be required to quarantine for 10 days, unless vaccinated and showing no symptoms (based on current guidance).

**How is/will testing be handled to avoid large groups of people together at once?**
Test check-in and test administration are organized in a manner to facilitate distancing and reduce density. The process is efficient to avoid prolonged contact.

**What are the expectations of employees and students who are in the building only during the evenings (i.e., study groups)?**
Current guidelines require faculty, staff, and students to be tested if they’re onsite for more than one hour at a time.

**Airflow and Filtration**

**How often are the air filters changed?**
This is different at each location depending on the HVAC systems. At leased locations, we are in constant consultation with our landlords, and they will be changing filters based on individual HVAC system requirements.

**How is airflow being examined at all locations?**
As previously mentioned, HVAC systems are different at every location. We are in contact with our landlords and the Office of General Services (OGS), and have conducted inspections of our owned systems. All are currently in
working order, and filters are being changed according to required system specifications. If you notice anything irregular or have concerns with system operations, follow building procedures. Additionally, please submit a facilities work request ticket for follow-up.

**Common Spaces**

**Will there be one-way traffic patterns?**
We will not be placing traffic pattern signs throughout the locations. However, please use your best judgment, maintain distancing, and avoid congregating in high-traffic areas.

**Will appliances and convenience equipment be available and how will they be maintained (i.e., refrigerators, Keurig, microwave, etc.)?**
Appliances will be available to you as they have in the past. Refrigerators must be emptied at the end of each day. You should disinfect appliances/equipment before and after each use.

**What are gender-neutral bathrooms?**
A gender-neutral bathroom is a single occupancy bathroom that anyone can use. The governor of New York recently signed a new law that went into effect in March 2021. The law requires all single-use bathrooms in state-owned and operated buildings be designated as gender neutral. You may refer to the specific law here. You will notice new signs in some locations where this applies.

**Work Schedules**

**Will staff schedules be adjusted, so we won’t be in at the same time?**
Yes, employees will continue to follow a phased-in schedule. Please refer to the Return to Onsite Work Plan for more details. We anticipate all employees returning to their typical onsite schedules in Phase 4.

**Will I be going back into the office on staggered days or full time?**
Yes, some employees will be on a staggered schedule; others will be onsite full-time, depending on job requirements. For additional details, please refer to the location-by-location Return to Onsite Work Plan. Phase-in already began in fall 2020. The remainder of staff will phase-in during the months of May, June, July, and August. This will allow you to reacquaint yourself with your work site. You should prepare to work your full schedule onsite beginning August 2. There are exceptions to the general phase-in dates at some locations based on construction projects or new location arrangements. Check your individual location plans and speak with your supervisor regarding your phase-in schedule.

**Protocol Compliance**

**Who will deal with students or staff who don’t follow proper health and safety protocols?**
Students failing to comply with COVID protocols, including mask wearing, will be referred to David Caso, associate director for Community Standards, david.caso@esc.edu for further action. We do not anticipate confrontations at our locations, but if you encounter a situation that becomes confrontational, you should immediately remove yourself and notify your supervisor. Employees failing to comply with COVID protocols will be referred to the Office of Human Resources.

**What do we do if we have too many people scheduled to be a room?**
Planning and reservations are the best way to avoid room overbooking. If the room capacity has been reached, you should seek an alternate location.

**Quarantining and Charging Time**
If I am required to quarantine, can I still work and get paid?
If you are required to quarantine due to a positive test or contact tracing, you should work with your supervisor as to whether you can continue to work while in quarantine. If you are not able to work while in quarantine, you should work with the Office of Human Resources as to how to best use your COVID leave since you may still be eligible for state COVID-19 Sick Leave. It can be used for up to 14 days for those placed in mandatory or precautionary quarantine and do not have the ability to continue to work from home. Any questions should be directed to the Office of Human Resources.

If I wake up and I am sick (non-COVID), do I work from home or take a sick day?
If you are sick and scheduled to work onsite, you should stay at home and use appropriate leave time if available.

If I must take care of an individual who is sick, can I work from home?
Please consult with your supervisor and Human Resources if you have questions regarding your specific situation.

Food protocols
Is it ok to order my lunch and have it delivered to the office?
Yes, but you should arrange to meet the delivery driver outside to reduce building foot traffic. If you order lunch for more than one person, it must be individually packaged (no catering buffets or platters). When dining or on breaks, be sure to follow social distancing protocols. Food will need to be paid for by the individual and will not be sponsored by the college.

What is the protocol for shared food?
Locations will need to follow local government regulations pertaining to public dining. Until further notice, shared food and community food items (such as catering, baked goods, candy dishes) will be prohibited in the workplace. Lunches and breaks should be taken in small groups, following proper social distancing protocols.

Flexibility and Accommodations
Is flexibility possible during and after the phase in period?
SUNY Empire understands that individual employees, based on their personal circumstances, may be seeking flexibility in how they manage their professional and personal responsibilities, especially as we return to work. There are several options for individual employees to explore flexibility, both in the return-to-work phase-in process, and beyond:

- Individuals interested in requesting a modified phase-in schedule for June and July will need supervisor and HR approval. Requests should be made by submitting the Alternate Phase in Schedule COVID 19 to Human Resources.
- Please consider the following options to help in assisting your return to work after August 1. The college offers these options to support work-life flexibility:
  - Alternative Work Location Request Process (professional employees only). An alternate work location assignment or schedule is defined as a working arrangement of a specified limited duration. All requests should be made using the Alternate Work Location Request.
  - Voluntary Work Reduction Schedule (VRWS). VRWS is a program for employees to voluntarily trade income for time off. The program allows for a reduced work schedule of between five (5) and thirty (30) percent. Employees may participate in the program for up to twenty-six (26)
payroll periods, which is equivalent to one year. All VRWS requests should be made through department supervisors in consultation with the Office of Human Resources.

- Use of appropriate leave accruals with prior approval from supervisor.
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is designed to help state employees better balance work and life, as well as more serious problems that may impact work performance. EAP services are confidential, voluntary, and offered at no cost to employees and their families.

**How do I request an ADA accommodation?**

For ADA accommodations, please contact the Office of Human Resources. Requests for accommodations will be granted based on ADA federal guidelines. Please complete the ADA Application for Reasonable Accommodation and submit for review.

**What guidance is being given to supervisors to ensure consistency in decision making?**

All formal requests and forms will require the approval of the Office of Human Resources for consistency in decision making.