



University of Idaho

TO: University of Idaho Faculty and Staff
FROM: Scott Green, President
DATE: June 9, 2020
SUBJECT: U of I Gradually Opening in June and July

Idaho is moving quickly through the four stages of reopening following the COVID-19 shutdown. Gov. Brad Little will announce Thursday his decision regarding whether the state will enter Phase 4, which opens all businesses, recreation and travel but maintains safety protocols such as face coverings and social distancing. If approved, Monday, June 15, would be the first business day of Phase 4 and the day many people across Idaho are planning to return to their regular work location.

Leadership at the University of Idaho is working diligently to make returning to the workplace as safe as possible, but we also understand there is some trepidation and uncertainty about what that will look like. We will gradually reopen the university throughout June and July. I ask each of you to work with your supervisor to find the path that both serves your needs and those of the university. A reminder to supervisors that a decision regarding work adjustments must not be made at the department level when medical information is a factor. Those must be referred to HR for processing.

Center directors in Coeur d'Alene, Boise and Idaho Falls will provide information suited to their local situations and office setups. In addition, we expect all of our Extension offices to make decisions around the following protocols but to customize according to each location. If you have concerns or questions

about what is being done at your location, contact your center executive officer or local facility manager.

Face Coverings

Face coverings are required inside all university buildings, with limited exceptions. Face coverings include cloth masks, bandanas, scarves or any other material that covers the nose and mouth. The exception to the requirement is in a private office, in a room by yourself, in supervised workout locations, or office spaces where sufficient social distancing is sustainable for work stations. Face coverings must also be worn outside when social distancing of at least six feet is not sustainable.

Optional Return Phase | Monday, June 15 – Sunday, July 5

If you are already in your regular work location, continue to work from this location. Those who need to return to work, are more comfortable at work or who simply want to return to your regular work location can do so on Monday, barring any delay to Phase 4 announced by the governor. Those who need or want to continue to work from home can continue to do so, with supervisor approval and without any additional paperwork, until the Full Return Phase.

Additional guidance is in place for those returning:

- Face coverings are required in university buildings and when social distancing cannot be maintained outdoors.
- Employees who return to the workplace must follow [CDC Considerations for Institutions of Higher Education](#) (IHE) on social distancing while at a university location.
- Supervisors should make expectations clear and be flexible with employees concerned with their safety or dealing with other challenges.
- Decisions regarding work adjustments must not be made at the department level when medical information is a factor. These must be referred to HR for processing.
- Supervisors are encouraged to develop alternate schedules to decrease in-person contact, but still

accomplish the responsibilities of the unit. Tactics can include:

- Rotating/alternating work schedules;
- Staggered start/end times;
- Optimized office arrangement for distancing;
- Employee requested work flexibility/flexplace arrangements initiated through HR.
- Most buildings remain closed to the public.

In addition, all units will receive a cleaning kit. This kit includes:

- Box of disposable masks
- Box of disposable gloves
- Bottle of hand sanitizer
- Spray bottle with disinfectant concentrate (department will have to add water)
- Roll of paper towels

While custodians have worked hard over the past several months to deep clean many areas, it is incumbent on each of us to help maintain the cleanliness of our work spaces.

All flexplace requests should be [submitted through the online](#) form by June 15, so Human Resources can guide your request to the proper resource to help ensure it is formalized before entering the Full Return Phase. A decision regarding work adjustments must not be made at the department level when medical information is a factor. These must be referred to HR for processing.

Full Return Phase | Monday, July 6 – Friday, July 31

- Face coverings are required in campus buildings and when social distancing cannot be maintained outdoors.
- All employees report to work according to plans developed with supervisors, unless an HR-approved accommodation or flexplace agreement is in place.
- Healthy Vandal Pledge: This electronic agreement within VandalWeb must be signed by all those returning to a

regular work location. This document acknowledges the safety protocols in place at all university locations and your expected participation — to help keep our staff, faculty and students as healthy as possible.

- A decision regarding work adjustments must not be made at the department level when medical information is a factor. These must be referred to HR for processing.
- Supervisors are encouraged to develop alternate schedules to decrease in-person contact, but still accomplish unit responsibilities. Tactics can include:
 - Rotating/alternating work schedules;
 - Staggered start/end times;
 - Optimized office arrangement for distancing;
 - Employee requested work flexibility/flexplace arrangements initiated through HR.
- All offices are expected to meet the needs of in-person responsibilities in addition to phone/remote inquiries.
- Most buildings are open to the public.

“Open” Status | Saturday, Aug. 1

- Commencement kicks off the return to fully open status at all U of I locations.
- All employees return to standard work locations unless an HR-approved accommodation or work flexibility agreement is in place.
- Healthy Vandal Pledge: This electronic agreement within VandalWeb must be signed by all those returning to a regular work location. This document acknowledges the safety protocols in place at all university locations and your expected participation — to help keep our staff, faculty and students as healthy as possible.
- All buildings are open during standard summer hours/schedules.

If you have specific questions or concerns, please talk with your supervisor or [file a CARE Report](#).

These protocols may seem burdensome to some but are critical to our successful return to full university operations. We cannot eliminate COVID-19 from our communities, but we can slow its spread with deliberate actions and attention to the way we interact. Communicate with your supervisor if you are uncertain about how to safely return to the workplace. I am grateful for how our community has responded to this pandemic. Let's continue to be supportive of each other. When you do return, hold each other to a high standard of safety — we owe it to each other to participate fully in all safety protocols. The health and productivity of our communities depends on it.

Keep Calm and Vandal On!

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