

Guiding Principles on Returning to the Workplace

In preparation for Phase 3, the ABIR has developed the following guiding principles to identify a broad set of considerations to help facilitate safety, leadership, compassion and strategy in companies' individual efforts to move forward. These guiding principles are not meant to be directive or exhaustive but to highlight areas for consideration by companies returning employees to an office environment.

I. Steps to return to the workplace that ensure the safety of employees and clients must be clearly established

- Understand Government mandates in order to establish new protocols and provide clear guidance to employees on how to interact in the office (e.g., protocols if co-worker contracts COVID-19).
- Determine the steps to prepare and maintain appropriate health standards for offices (e.g., deep cleans, supplying sanitizers, appropriate signage on protocols, etc.).
- Develop a process for monitoring local COVID-19 developments.
- Ensure alignment with the Government and other industries on the procurement and allocation of personal protective equipment (PPE) for the office.
- Focus on establishing a Return to Workplace plan that includes short-term, mid-term and long-term considerations.
- Include a plan addressing the possibility of a "second wave" of COVID-19 infection that allows your company to easily convert back to working from home.

II. Business objectives and strategies should be evaluated to consider the impact of COVID-19 to clients, employees, shareholders and key stakeholders' new habits and the effects this may have on the market

- Consider any legal ramifications of offering employees flexible working arrangements (e.g., work from home).
- Revise cultural view of flexible work policies for Bermuda (the external lens).
- Consider the need to evaluate requirements and protocols for staff attending external meetings, conferences, training, etc.
- Provide support to management in managing employees remotely (e.g., training).
- Establish and communicate to employees, policies that provide clarity and include the ability to address ad-hoc employee requests due to individual circumstances.
- Consider the timing of transitioning employees back to the office (e.g., facing reporting, renewal or other stressful periods and where transitioning/adherence to return to work protocols may be disruptive).
- Address personal and business travel, related risks that may arise with the Phase 4 reopening of the airport.

III. Support employee wellbeing by prioritizing employee health and safety

- Ensure any sample screening procedures are conducted discreetly and sensitively by appropriately designated persons (e.g., screening questionnaires, anti-body testing, temperature checks).
- Establish protocols for external visitors to the workplace.
- Create an employee Return to Workplace plan that allows for adequate social distancing in your office space based on the characteristics of your specific office and in line with Government guidance.
- Consider Return to Workplace plans that acknowledge employees' circumstances:
 - i. Those who need to continue to work from home due to personal circumstances (childcare, vulnerable or anxious about going back to work) and
 - ii. Employees ready and able to return to the office (mentally and physically) and/or those that need to be in the office to perform their work duties (e.g., Facilities)
- Continue to offer support through virtual gym, household fun engagements and other healthy activities that encourage employee connections and help them to stay active and connected, especially as some staff begin to return to the office.
- There are various new technologies that can help track employee well-being. An example is the "Muuvment" app being developed in Bermuda.