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**Date:** June 26, 2020

**To:** All Faculty and Staff

**RE:** Update Regarding Re-Opening

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The School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS) is developing and implementing comprehensive plans for phased return to on-site work for employees across all of our locations. In the coming weeks, all department chairs and program/office directors will support the design of flexible re-opening plans to allow for effective social and physical distancing of faculty and staff. A guiding principle is that employees whose work does not require on-site presence will continue to work remotely.

Separately, SMHS academic programs are developing plans for fall 2020 on-site instruction, based on university guidance and the individual circumstances of the program.

### **University Re-Opening Guidance**

The university's current [guidance for Phase 2 of reopening](#) calls for a gradual return to campus for a limited number of individuals starting on July 6th. Please note that SMHS has already started the process of re-opening research labs in Ross Hall and the 8th floor of SEH. A limited number of faculty with forthcoming on-campus clinical skills teaching responsibilities will return to various locations, including Ross Hall, 2000 Penn, and the Virginia Science & Technology Campus. We do not anticipate calling back additional employees to those buildings at this time. Other SMHS locations, such as the Watergate, will remain closed to non-designated employees. Unless otherwise instructed, please continue to telework until further notice.

All requests for employees to have temporary building access or to return to on site work must be approved by SMHS leadership. Managers may submit these requests to Hellen Olumilua ([holumilu@gwu.edu](mailto:holumilu@gwu.edu)) and Sharon Boyd ([sboyd@gwu.edu](mailto:sboyd@gwu.edu)).

The university anticipates a further limited return to campus in mid-July, with exact timing to be determined based on local government guidelines. Once the District of Columbia reaches Phase 3 of re-opening, telework will still be encouraged, but individual schools will be allowed to permit no more than 50 percent of its employees (including faculty and staff) to return to campus at any given time in support of the reopening process.

### **SMHS Office Re-Opening Plans**

While we await further guidance from the university regarding the fall re-opening, we are asking all leaders of offices and department chairs to evaluate their on-site needs and work environments in preparation for an enhanced return to on-site work. Leaders should develop internal staffing plans for the return of no more than 50% of personnel to SMHS office spaces. Staffing levels must also allow for effective physical distancing within SMHS office spaces.

All plans should include measures to maintain social and physical distancing between individuals. If more than one person is in a room, masks/face coverings should be worn at all times. In non-clinical environments, no more than one person should be in the same room unless the required 6 feet of distancing can be consistently maintained.

If possible, consider options such as moving desks to create more distance between on-site workers. For reception areas, the SMHS facilities team may be able to assist with the installation of plexiglass or other solid screens. In cases where it is not possible to modify workspaces to ensure sufficient physical distance between individuals, managers will be expected to build continued employee telework and staggered on-site staffing into their re-opening plans.

If you have additional questions or comments, please contact [SMHSNews@gwu.edu](mailto:SMHSNews@gwu.edu).

