Returning to Work on Campus
For Employees

September 2021
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1. Introduction

The University of Ottawa Administration Committee has requested that a COVID-19 recovery process for the resumption of University activities begin.

Our community’s health and safety remain central to the University’s priorities. All of our decisions follow public health guidelines.

Employees play a key role in this effort. You have shown unprecedented determination and commitment when it comes to furthering the University’s academic mission despite the circumstances, and we will continue to ensure your well-being.

Human Resources has developed this return to work on campus guide to provide general instructions and advice for you. In particular, this guide:

- Provides information on HR practices that must be observed before and during the gradual return to campus.
- Promotes a work environment that reflects the University’s response to provincial and City of Ottawa public health guidelines.
- Relies on lessons learned from faculties and services who have had employees working on campus throughout the pandemic.

We are hopeful that the University-wide planning underway in the faculties and services will ensure a smooth return to campus, and that we will be able to completely fulfil our academic and research mission.

2. Return to work on campus

2.1 Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination

The University of Ottawa will now require COVID-19 vaccination for all faculty, staff and visitors by September 7, 2021 (1st dose) and October 15, 2021 (full vaccination).

The health of our community is important and it is a responsibility for all of us to share. Employees are required to certify their vaccination status by September 6, 2021 at 11:59pm, through the COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration online tool (available online as of September 1st). Please visit regularly the University of Ottawa Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination web page.

2.2 Orientation session before resuming work on campus

Health and safety are at the forefront of our plans. Before you return, we encourage you to complete the COVID-19 — Returning to Work on Campus: Protecting Yourself and Others orientation.
The session is meant to make sure that you’re familiar with the changes implemented on campus and what you must do daily to ensure your health and safety and that of others.

2.3 Well-being and mental health
Going back to work on campus after months of working from home may be difficult, especially if you continue having to deal with concerns about your health, the health of a family member or child care. It’s normal to be worried or feel anxious about resuming activities outside of home.

Since the start of the pandemic, many resources to help employees have been added to the Mental Health and Wellness website. They’re now available to all employee groups, including contract employees. We encourage you to see the following:

- Employee and family assistance program | University Of Ottawa
- Stay healthy and connected through COVID-19 | University Of Ottawa

2.4 COVID Assessment Tool
2.4.1 COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration
Students, faculty, staff members, and visitors (contractors, vendors, tenants, visitors), can use the COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration tool to declare and prove their vaccination status or to request an accommodation.

2.4.2 COVID-19 Daily Health Check-in
As per Ottawa Public Health recommendations and uOttawa requirements, everyone who comes to campus must complete the Daily COVID-19 Assessment Tool (uottawa.ca) Health Check-In to screen for COVID-19 prior to reporting to work each day. This is to prevent anyone with COVID-19 symptoms or who may have been exposed to COVID-19 from entering the workplace.

It’s important that you not report to work if you’re sick or have symptoms. This is critical to limiting the spread of the virus on campus.

If you answer yes to any of questions in the COVID-19 Assessment Tool (uottawa.ca), you’ll be told to stay home, isolate from others and, follow instructions indicated on the daily health check-in.

If you must stay home
Advise your supervisor and the Health and Wellness Team. In your message, include your name, contact information (phone number or email address), unit and self-assessment result. The senior health and accommodation adviser assigned to your faculty or service will contact you to ensure all public health recommendations are followed and confirm when you can resume work on campus.
2.5 If you get sick at work

Don’t come into work if you feel sick or have symptoms. If you become ill while at work isolate yourself from others immediately.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, contact your supervisor immediately and self-isolate until you can safely leave the workplace. If you need immediate medical assistance, Protection Services will be called.

If you can’t drive your own vehicle home, your supervisor will make arrangements for you to get home. Public transportation is not an option.

A ride with a family member or by taxi will be arranged. The cost for the taxi will be covered by the University. Wear a mask and wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before getting into the vehicle, and sit in the back seat with the window opened. If transportation is by taxi, the company, name and number or operator should be recorded.

Health and Wellness will be advised that you reported feeling ill and an Accident, Incident, Occupational Illness or Near Miss report form must be completed. The senior health and accommodation adviser will contact you to determine what follow-up measures are needed.

You must also email Health and Wellness Team, including your name, contact information (phone number or preferred email) and unit.

The senior health and accommodation adviser will contact you to ensure all public health recommendations are followed (self-isolation, testing, etc.). Health and Wellness will confirm the duration of your absence as well as when you can resume work on campus. All absences from work should be recorded in the FAST leave management system, as per usual. If you’re absent because of COVID-19, enter your leave, selecting the “Sick Leave (COVID-19)” category.

2.6 Accommodation requests - Vaccination

2.6.1 Request for accommodation on medical grounds
If you request an accommodation on medical grounds, you will be required to provide documents supporting your request from your healthcare provider. This will be clearly explained as you use the COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration tool to request an accommodation.

2.6.2 Accommodations for Religion/Creed
You must use the COVID-19 Vaccination Declaration to request an accommodation.

Those faculty or staff members who have been granted an accommodation or who are waiting for accommodation approval will be required to undergo testing at least twice per seven-day period here on campus.
2.6.3. Requests for accommodation due to family status
Employees must send requests for accommodation for reasons related to family status to their manager.

2.7 Work refusal under the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act

During COVID-19, the provisions of the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act continue to apply, including your right to refuse unsafe work.

The University has implemented measures to meet public health requirements and ensure your health and safety. If you feel unsafe, you can initiate the University work refusal procedure.

The BounceBack program is a great resource if you’re feeling stressed, worried or anxious about events related to COVID-19. It’s a free resource offered by the Canadian Mental Health Association in many different languages.

For up to date information about the spread of COVID-19 in the community and testing centre locations, see the Ottawa Public Health website or the Ville de Gatineau COVID-19 website.

3. If you need an employee card
• Take a picture of yourself, preferably against a white or neutral wall (no objects on the wall), and save it as a JPEG.
• Email the picture to HRinfo@uOttawa.ca with the subject line “Employee card request — 100#####” (your employee number).
• When we receive the information, we’ll check your status in the Human Resources database.
• If your file is up to date, we’ll print the card and send it by internal mail to your faculty or service.

4. Resources for employees

4.1 Stay connected and healthy through COVID-19
Human Resources has created a webpage titled Stay healthy and connected through COVID-19 | University Of Ottawa for employees, with support and information on the following:

• Home workspace
• Taking care of your mental health
• Taking care of your physical health
• Managing child care or other personal responsibilities
• Absences or returning to work
• Staying safe — essential workers
• Online training via Microsoft Teams
• Action Learning Groups
• Coaching
If you have any questions about these services, contact your HR business partner or HR manager.

5. Contact Human Resources

- Benefits: hrbenefits@uOttawa.ca
- Leave: leaveshr@uOttawa.ca
- Employment and Immigration: immigrat@uOttawa.ca
- Talent Management: hrtalentmanagement@uOttawa.ca
- HR Info: HRinfo@uOttawa.ca
- Leadership, Learning and Organizational Development: HRlearning@uOttawa.ca
- Compensation: infopay@uOttawa.ca
- Pension Plan: hrpension@uOttawa.ca
- Performance Management Program: performance@uOttawa.ca
- Health and Wellness: hrhealth@uOttawa.ca