



DDDH Notices

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Planning for AY 21-22

APR 26, 2021 8:00 AM BY ELYNE COLE, SENIOR ASSOCIATE CHANCELLOR FOR HUMAN RESOURCES

Dear Colleagues,

As we get ever closer to the end of this academic year, our thoughts increasingly turn to having our organizations be ready by August 1 to put the final touches on our readiness to welcome our AY21-22 students on Move-In day (August 15, 2021). In particular, we must consider how the new academic year will collectively impact our operations and staff.

We know that you and your teams are already thinking about how you want your operation to look in August -- and beyond. We have a large Return to Campus Operations HR workgroup that includes many of our HR colleagues from your organizations. They have been partnering with our staff to develop recommendations and guidance as we look to utilize lessons we have learned from this year of largely remote operations as part of our ongoing Operational Excellence efforts. We aim to issue more formal guidance by the end of May but wanted to share some key points now as you start your planning efforts.

At Illinois, we are fortunate that our SHIELD saliva testing program has been a key component of having a safe work environment for our staff who have continued to work on-campus. SHIELD testing and the increased vaccination rates in our area will serve us well as more staff return to campus work. It is time to consider how to optimally accomplish your organization's objectives. We must all challenge ourselves to not simply default to our pre-COVID working arrangements without considering what other models can give us greater flexibility, and help us achieve our strategic financial, space utilization and sustainability goals. At this time, there is no expectation that a unit must submit their fall 2021 plans to the Executive Steering team for review or approval.

As you think about your operations, we urge you to consider the following:

Which operations and staff have improved with a remote working arrangement

Would setting up a hybrid of remote and on-campus schedules for staff work equally as well, or perhaps better than, fully remote or fully on-campus

What savings could be achieved by using space in ways to reduce the need for leased space or utilizing space differently, such as shared office space, repurposed space for instruction, discussion or study group space or other collaborative use?

Hybrid on-campus and remote arrangements can be fashioned in many ways, there is no single formula. We urge you to first assess the work and the staff and determine initially the most effective model for each person's work and their work style. You will certainly want to consider the preference of your staff but ultimately the decision on how to structure your organization and its work is yours to make.

If you have a need to have staff return to on-campus work prior to August 1, 2021, be sure to communicate clearly with staff why the operations need to transition early. As you plan, please also remember that some K-12 children are still in remote learning situations and many summer childcare options are still finalizing their availability and plans. It is important that you communicate clearly and early to your staff, ensuring they have adequate time to make any needed arrangements for child care or other needs.

If an employee has received an accommodation through the ADA Division of the Office for Access and Equity, including remote work accommodations, and the employee's supervisor, dean or department head has questions about whether the accommodation is still appropriate, they should contact OAE to have these questions resolved via the ADA interactive process rather than directly addressing potential accommodation changes with the employee. It is important to note that this process can take thirty days or longer during periods of high volume. (CAM policy HR-67). All existing ADA accommodations will remain in place unless they are revised through the OAE process.

The use of face coverings and social distancing in accordance with CDC and IDPH guidance will continue in AY 21-22, even among fully vaccinated individuals. Assuming you will have at least some staff who continue to work remotely, meetings will need to continue to occur via platforms such as Teams, Zoom or Skype in order to facilitate both on-campus and remote participants.

Given that many staff will be retiring early this summer as part of the Staff Voluntary Retirement Plan, we expect that you will be making changes to how work is completed, in addition to thinking about “where” the work is completed. Illinois Human Resources is prepared to assist as you consider these changes to your operations and invite you to consult with us in the earliest stages of your planning. If you are considering changing work assignments among your staff, this consultation is key in assessing impact to classification and any additional consideration for your union represented staff. Please contact us at IHR-Consult@illinois.edu so that we can provide assistance and guidance.

Looking forward with you,

Elyne G. Cole
Senior Associate Chancellor for Human Resources

0 COMMENTS
