

Returning to work after Covid



After the government announced that it will be issuing a roadmap out of the current national restrictions on 22 February 2021, and as we hopefully head **towards the end of lockdown**, we thought it sensible to consider the challenges everyone faces regarding the **return to work**. It isn't necessarily straightforward!

There's a lot to think about...



Risk Assessments



Covid-secure premises



Checking equipment



Whilst physical considerations are important, our focus is your most important asset –

your people.



As we prepare to return to some sort of normal we want to try and help you to ensure that your **teams are match-fit and ready for work.**

Everyone's situation is different, some people have been furloughed for months, some on flexi-furlough, others working from home, some have carried on (more or less) as normal and some people have never worked harder in their lives. Whatever your situation you will face challenges and this spotlight is intended to provide some **help and guidance** on how to approach the return to work.



Communicate. The best way to understand how your employees are feeling is to ask them. Their world may have turned upside down and you need to understand how they feel. Most of us have two ears and one mouth - it has never been more important to listen to your people. If your working world has changed to such an extent where jobs have fundamentally changed, you should properly consult with those affected. Please call us and we will guide you through the process.



Empathise. Even if you speak regularly to your employees it can still be hard to know exactly how they are feeling. Having listened to each employee's situation and worries – caring commitments, mental or physical health concerns, anxiety, bereavement, loneliness – you must show your understanding and demonstrate that you truly support your teams returning to a safe and happy workplace.



Engage. It is important to recognise that each person will feel differently – some employees may be raring to return to the workplace whilst others may have serious concerns and anxiety. Talk to your employees individually and in groups to build a sense of collective purpose and support.



Re-orientate. For all employees, whether they have worked for you for decades or months, last year has been unlike any other, especially for those who have been furloughed. Returning to work may feel like starting all over again. Think about running induction, re-onboarding or refresher workshops or training. Whether you go over old ground or cover new topics and changes, re-orientation is important

Remember...*training is permitted for furloughed employees so you can run these training sessions now and use this opportunity before they return to work.*



Day one. Be clear about your expectations about what day one will look like. Cover commuting and travel, new safety regimes, what restrictions are in place and what social distancing will look like. Provide clarity and reassurance to all of your staff.



Use experts. You can't do everything yourself - you cannot be an expert in everything. Reach out for support. The government guidance, occupation health and well-being specialists, charities and other third-party organisations can help you plan your return to work or support your employees' individual needs and to make everyone feel safe and welcome. Cream HR are here to help in any area that we can.

The earlier you begin to re-engage your team members the better.

Start now, even though we know timescales may change.

Call or email us for expert advice and a tailored programme for a safe return to work.

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