



## @YourService during your RETURN TO THE OFFICE

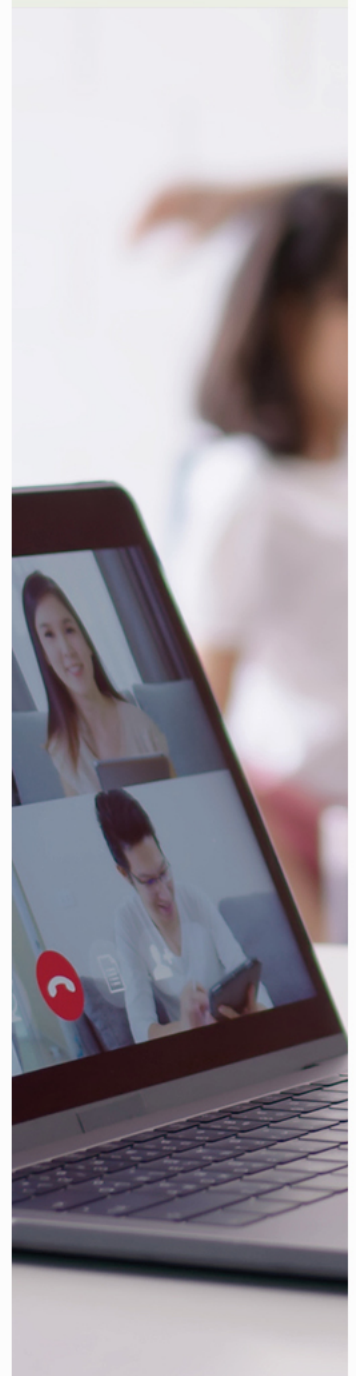
### COVID-19: MANAGING VIRTUAL AND ON-SITE TEAMS

**As more people are vaccinated and the incidence of COVID-19 in the community goes down, organizations that shifted dramatically to remote work may consider a cautious return to in-person work—with only a portion of the workforce present at any one time.**

For many organizations, that will mean a changing mix of virtual and on-site work, with some employees continuing to work from home while others go into the workplace. It will likely mean new social distancing and sanitation measures and attention to ventilation. It may mean shift changes to spread out the times at which employees are present. Those changes are likely to move both forward and backward as business activity and the number of COVID-19 cases in the community rise and fall. Experts predict it will be some time before organizations are able to return to previous work practices of full workspaces, large meetings, and regular travel. Here are some suggestions for leading your team through these next phases of transition.

#### **Continue best practices in managing employees who are working from home:**

- Out of sight can't mean out of mind. Check in regularly with employees to see how they are doing and whether they are encountering any problems in their work that need your support or intervention.
- Ask about how the technology is working to enable efficient work from home. Look for weak spots that may be hurting your team's productivity, and work with your organization to address them.
- Adjust performance metrics to include reasonable outputs given changing needs and goals. Look for achievable and measurable output goals as opposed to subjective factors.
- Trust your employees to be working to the best of their ability unless individual employees give you reason to believe they are not. Show that trust by resisting the temptation to over-monitor. The vast majority of employees want to do good work and will respond positively to a trusting and supportive manager.



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### Be sure you understand individual concerns and constraints when you make decisions about when and where employees are expected to work:

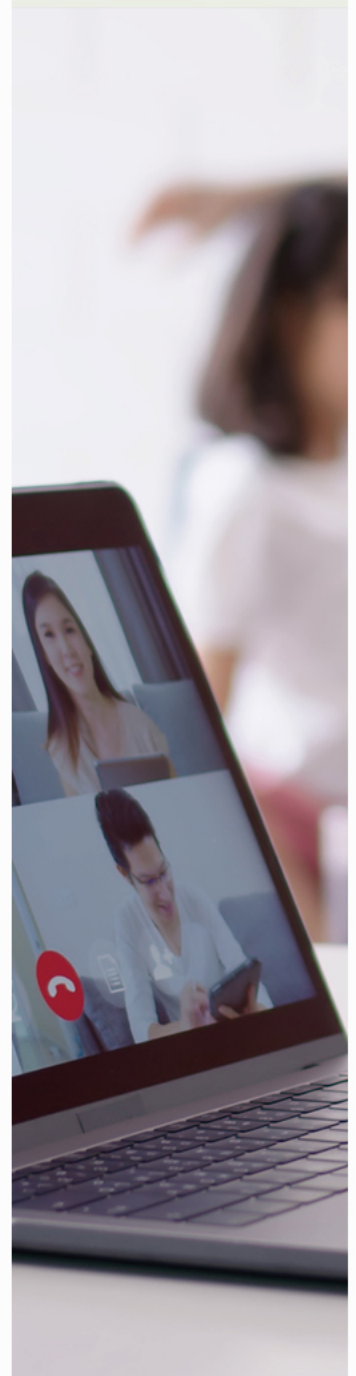
- Discuss any concerns individual employees have about their own health risk or the health risk of other members of their household.
- Discuss how child care and remote schooling are affecting when and where employees are able to work.
- Discuss how your employees would get to and from work safely if they are asked to, especially if they normally use public transportation.

### Demonstrate your care for employees who are asked to come into the workplace:

- Show that you are on top of measures to make the workplace safe. The list at the end of this guide offers an overview of what those measures might include, but the specific measures for your organization will be decided by your leadership team. Explain your organization's infection-control measures to your employees when you ask them to come into the workplace. Take the time to answer their questions.
- Make sure your employees understand what will be expected of them to keep the workplace safe—how they are to practice social distancing, whether they will be required to wear face masks or other personal protective equipment (PPE), whether temperature checks will be required, and what sanitary and disinfection practices they will be expected to follow.
- Show that you are monitoring adherence to the safe practices in the workplace, including the availability of hand sanitizer and PPE as required, and behaviors relating to social distancing and handwashing.

### Make the most of meetings:

- Manage meetings to encourage discussion. If you're simply telling the team news that doesn't require discussion, send or post the information rather than taking up time in a meeting.
- Consider shorter, more frequent meetings for problem-solving as the team's work changes.
- Be respectful of employees' time when deciding who to invite and who needs to be on for each part of the meeting. For a team meeting, you might have everyone join for the start of the meeting for both social connection and news and discussion relevant to all, then allow some members to drop off as you begin detailed discussion of other items.
- Be attentive to the quality of group meetings when some people are in the workplace and some are not. Veteran, virtual employees can tell you how difficult





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it is to attend a teleconference when some people are together in person and others are not. The virtual attendees often have trouble hearing what is said in a meeting room. Because visual cues are important in jumping into a conversation, virtual employees can feel excluded unless specifically asked for their thoughts. With social distancing and PPE requirements, it may not be desirable to have any employees gather in a conference room. It may be best to continue all-video or all-telephone meetings even when some employees are present in the workplace.

- Be attentive to the quality of video meetings. If people are showing video of themselves, ask that all do, so that people can read each other's facial expressions. Note that some meeting technologies involve a slight time lag, which can make meetings awkward as facial expressions don't correspond in time to what is being said. Time lags can also make it difficult to have a natural back-and-forth conversation. If you find that video meetings are making people anxious or frustrated because of time lags, you might switch to phone meetings or a different video-meeting platform.

Please be reminded that our EAP—**CCA@YourService**—is FREE to access and available 24/7 to assist you and your family members with a variety of personal, work-related, and everyday living needs, including:

- Processing difficult emotions
- Managing change and transition
- Caregiving and daily living resources and referrals
- Stress management and work-life balance

**ALWAYS AVAILABLE. ALWAYS CONFIDENTIAL.**

**PHONE: 800-833-8707**

**WEB: [www.myccaonline.com](http://www.myccaonline.com)**  
(Company Code: stjohns)

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