

Return to Work Action Plan

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)



Return to Work Action Plan

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Introduction

In the Town of Upton, it is our priority to keep our employees and their families healthy, especially in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, we will abide by governmental guidelines when possible as we strive to balance public health concerns with the needs of our community. This return to work action plan details how we plan to reopen our business operations and still keep all of our employees and residents safe to every extent possible. This plan, which pulls from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidance, highlights the responsibilities of managers and employees, and outlines the steps the Town of Upton is taking to address COVID-19.

While we will implement various protocols to ensure your safety, it's up to you and your co-workers to execute on these protocols daily. By releasing this return to work action plan, the Town of Upton hopes to clearly communicate our plans moving forward, highlight workplace protocols to protect your health and safety and establish a level of comfort for all of our employees as we plan for your return to work.

We understand that every employee's situation is different and encourage those with specific risks or concerns to reach out to their supervisor or Human Resources to discuss alternate arrangements, should they be necessary.

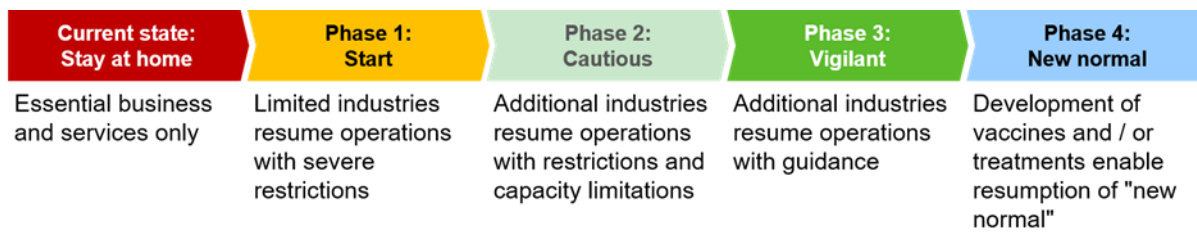


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Return to Work Timeline

Due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, creating an exact timeline for resuming “normal” operations is not feasible. The Town of Upton will continue to monitor applicable federal and state guidance to determine next steps for reopening municipal buildings and their respective services.

At this time, we’ve created a tentative *Return to Work Action Plan* consistent with the Baker-Polito Administration’s four-phase approach, along with federal guidelines. Public health metrics has determined when the first phase of reopening begins, as well as when it is safe to move into later phases. Each phase will last a minimum of three weeks and could last longer before moving to the next phase; if public health metrics worsen, the State may need to return to an earlier phase.



Stay at Home

This is the current stage we are in. At present, our buildings are closed to non-essential employees, vendors, and visitors. Employees who are able to work remotely are asked to continue doing so until further notice. We are implementing [Workplace Safety Standards](#) in preparation of opening our buildings in compliance with the protocols and best practices and are undertaking [self-certification](#) as we transition to Phase One over the next several days.

Phase One

Under Phase One, operations resume with restrictions. Staffing levels resume on site in accordance with safety standards mandated by the State. Employees who are considered high risk should continue to remain home and work remotely. Buildings remain closed to the public. Curbside pick-up and electronic methods are the primary modes of service delivery. Public meetings will be conducted by remote participation until further notice. Gatherings will continue to be limited to a maximum of 10 people, unless otherwise provided in other orders and guidelines. Phase 1 is tentatively scheduled from June 1 to June 30.

The Town must meet certain [Safety Standards for Office Spaces](#) designed to reduce the risk of new COVID-19 transmission to employees and residents before reopening. Departments operating to provide Essential Services, as defined in the Governor's March 23, 2020 Executive Order, updated on March 31, April 28, and May 15, may remain open and have until May 25, 2020 to comply with these mandatory safety standards.

- **COVID-19 control plan:** Complete the [template](#) to fulfill this requirement. This plan does not need to be submitted to a state agency for approval, but must be retained on the premises of the business and be provided in the event of an inspection.

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- **Compliance attestation poster:** A signed [poster](#), attesting a completed COVID-19 control plan, and posting it in an area within the business premises that is visible to employees and visitors.
- **Other posters:** Post signs and posters describing the rules for maintaining social distancing, hygiene protocols, cleaning, and disinfecting. These include an [Employer Poster](#) and a [Worker Poster](#).

Nonessential Travel

Under Phase One guidance from the Governor, nonessential travel should be avoided. Business-related travel will not resume under Phase One.

Workplace Protocols to Follow When Returning to Work

The Town of Upton has implemented various workplace protocols designed to preserve the health and safety of our employees as they return to work. This section further explains these protocols. For additional information, please reach out to your manager or supervisor.

Employee Screening

Keeping employees safe is our priority. To accomplish this task, we have created various procedures for screening employees who return to work, dealing with exposure to COVID-19, responding to a confirmed case of COVID-19 and reporting transparency.

*Employee Screening Protocols^{*1}*

Employees may be asked to confirm the status of their health as part of working in the buildings. The Town reserves the right to implement a screening protocol for symptoms, such as temperature checks or signed certifications, at any point. Results will be tracked separately from any personnel records and will be kept confidential. This protocol will commonly be implemented upon initial opening of the buildings, and as a response to a confirmed diagnosis.

Self-Certify - Prior to returning to work, each employee will [self-certify](#) to their supervisor that they:

- Have no signs of a fever or a measured temperature above 100.3 degrees or greater, a cough or trouble breathing within the past 24 hours.
- Have not had "close contact" with an individual diagnosed with COVID-19. "Close contact" means living in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, caring for a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, being within 6 feet of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 for about 15 minutes, or coming in direct contact with secretions (e.g., sharing utensils, being coughed on) from a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, while that person was symptomatic.
- Have not been asked to self-isolate or quarantine by their doctor or a local public health official.

¹ *The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission permits employers to measure employees' body temperatures before allowing them to enter the worksite. Any employee screening will be implemented on a nondiscriminatory basis, and all information gleaned should be treated as confidential medical information—specifically, the identity of workers exhibiting a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms should only be shared with members of Town management with a true need to know.

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Employees exhibiting symptoms or unable to self-certify should be directed to leave the work site and seek medical attention and applicable testing by their health care provider. They are not to return to the work site until cleared by a medical professional.

Employee Health and Safety Protocols

The success of our return to work action plan relies on how well our employees follow social distancing and [health and safety protocols](#). Please bring any concerns regarding the following protocols to a manager or supervisor immediately. As such, the following protocols have been implemented to ensure your health and safety.

To help employees remain healthy, hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes are available throughout the buildings. We have limited amounts of these supplies and will continue to restock as we are able. It is suggested that employees wash their hands more frequently than normal. Additionally, building management has instructed the buildings cleaning crew to disinfect key areas such as faucets and door handles on a daily basis.

Face Coverings

Employees are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings when interacting with public to help slow the spread of the virus. Face coverings prevent you from infecting others and others from infecting you.

- Employees will be required to wear a cloth face mask when working in close contact (< 6 feet) for a prolonged period of time*² with other employees or citizens or entering a citizen's home or business.
 - Employees may wear their own personal mask or one that will be provided by the Town. Personal masks should be professional and not display any inappropriate wording, images, or logos, and should be safely worn and cleaned regularly.
- Complementary handmade face coverings can be provided by the Senior Center upon request.

Social Distancing Protocol

All employees should try to avoid in-person meetings. Online conferencing, email or phone should be used when possible, even when employees are in the same building. Unavoidable in-person meetings should be short, in a large meeting room where people can sit at least six feet from each other.

Employees should follow social distancing best practices while at the Upton's facilities, including but not limited to workstations, common areas and buildings spaces. Specifically, employees are asked to:

- Stay 6 feet away from others when working or on breaks. Where a minimum distance cannot be maintained, engineering or administrative controls will be in place.
- Avoid riding the elevator with other people
- Avoid job tasks that require face-to-face work with others when possible.

² **Data are insufficient to precisely define the duration of time that constitutes a prolonged exposure. Recommendations vary on the length of time of exposure but 15 min of close exposure can be used as an operational definition. In healthcare settings, it is reasonable to define a prolonged exposure as any exposure greater than a few minutes because the contact is someone who is ill. Brief interactions are less likely to result in transmission; however, symptoms and the type of interaction (e.g., did the person cough directly into the face of the individual) remain important.

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- Avoid contact with others whenever possible (e.g., handshakes).
- Avoid touching surfaces that may have been touched by others when possible.
- Distance themselves from anyone who appears to be sick.
- Avoid gathering when entering and exiting the facility. Employees should also only enter and exit designated areas.
- Follow any posted signage regarding COVID-19 social distancing practices.
- Disinfect their workspace often.
- Avoid touching their face.
- Avoid nonessential gatherings.
- Stagger lunches to limit the number of individuals in the break room.
- Avoid using common areas.

The Town may extend our social distancing guidelines after the buildings reopens. Please monitor your email and adhere to any additional guidance as it is provided.

General Employee Health and Hygiene

Practicing good hygiene is essential to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Do your part by practicing good hygiene at work and at home:

- Regularly wash your hands for at least 20 seconds throughout the day with warm water and soap, specifically before eating.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

Employee Mental Health Considerations

Understanding that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased stress levels of employees across the country, we want to prioritize our employees' mental health during these uncertain times. As such, we have made every effort to ensure that the workplace is safe for employees to return to work and are ready to discuss personal situations. Managers and supervisors are aware of mental health considerations during this transition. Employees with concerns regarding their mental health should request [additional resources](#) from HR or supervisor.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocol

Employees should do their part to help keep the buildings as clean as possible by cleaning and disinfecting their workstations and surfaces they commonly use, and their general office area. Employees should also avoid using others' workstations, tools and equipment. Additionally, whenever an employee uses a common piece of equipment (e.g., printer or fax machine), it should be wiped down prior to and following use. Proper cleaning and disinfecting supplies will be provided by the Town. Employees should wash their hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds after cleaning or sanitizing a surface.

We have facilitated cleaning of common areas and other frequently touched surfaces throughout the day. The frequency and scope of this cleaning may change depending on the situation. Employees are asked to leave trash and recycling outside the office door for daily pick-up.

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Office Procedures

In addition to the guidance outlined above, the Town has implemented the following workplace procedures to be followed until social distancing guidelines are lifted:

- **Deliveries**—Town of Upton will set up contactless drop zones for all deliveries, including mail and packages. An assigned contact or contacts will process mail and packages at least three times per week, utilizing gloves. Employees ordering food delivery service will need to instruct drivers to utilize drop off zones for contactless delivery.
 - All parcels will be left in the vestibule of the lower level entrance of Town Hall and all internal mail will be deposited in the black drop box in the Town Hall visitor parking lot.
- **Visitors**—Until further notice, all visitors are prohibited, and any interviews should be conducted virtually.

Further guidance may be added to this list of [workplace procedures](#) as employees return to work. Employees should monitor workplace communications to ensure they're up to date on all health and safety communications.

Exposure and Confirmed Illness Protocols

Monitoring Protocol Watch for Symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness.

Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms or combinations of these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

This list is not all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

When to Seek Emergency Medical Attention

Look for **emergency warning signs** for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, **seek emergency medical care immediately**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

*This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

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Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility: Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

Employee's Responsibility

In the event that you become **symptomatic** or are deemed by your physician to have a medical condition that places you at a high risk to contract COVID-19, please do not come to work. Instead, follow these steps:

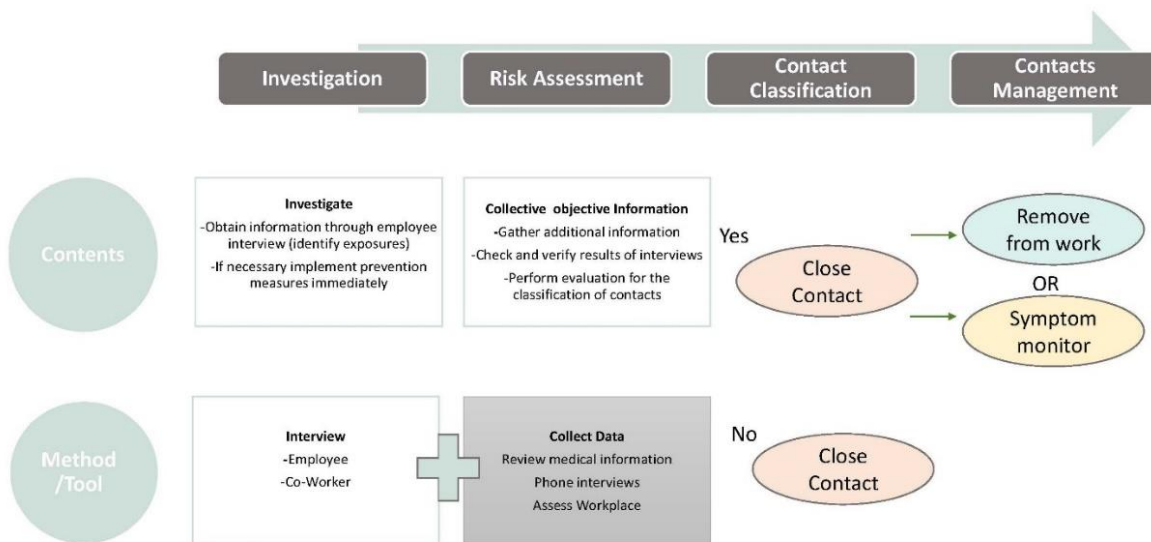
1. Notify your Supervisor and HR Immediately. If you meet any of the following criteria, please do not come to work.

- You are symptomatic
- You have been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19
- You're deemed by your physician to have a medical condition that places you at a high risk to contract COVID-19

2. Update your Supervisor and HR as soon as possible: Let them know what is going on - Were you able to get an appointment? Was your appointment cancelled? Are you awaiting test results? Do you need help finding an urgent care facility?

3. Diagnosis & Care Plan: Once you receive your diagnosis, please submit [documentation](#) to your manager and Human Resources outlining how long you have been instructed to remain out of work.

4. Occupational Exposure Investigation



Reporting Transparency Protocol

Any employee who experiences COVID-19 symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19 must notify HR as soon as practicable. The employee will be asked to assist with contact tracing. This information will be

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tracked separately from personnel records, and names will not be released. If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace, exposed employees will be notified depending on the circumstances. The Town may elect to close the buildings or a specific office for a period up to 72 hours following a confirmed case to allow for natural deactivation of the virus. When an employee tests positive for COVID-19, deep-cleaning procedures will be triggered.

COVID-19 Exposure and Confirmed Illness Protocol

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 or believe they have been infected will be instructed to follow the advice of a qualified medical professional and self-quarantine/isolate. When self-quarantining/isolating employees should:

- Stay away from other people in their home as much as possible, staying in a separate room and using a separate bathroom if available.
- Not allow visitors.
- Wear a face mask if they have to be around people.
- Avoid sharing household items, including drinking cups, eating utensils, towels and bedding.
- Clean high-touch surfaces daily.
- Continue monitoring their symptoms, calling their health care provider if their condition worsens.

In all cases, employees testing positive for the virus shall be returned to work under such conditions as has been established by the Center for Disease Control. The Town, at its own expense, may require an employee who has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus to undergo a fitness for duty examination.

Work Quarantine/Isolation Chart (see next page)

| Diagnosis | *High Risk Employee | *High Risk Household Contact | Asymptomatic Exposure/ Contact | Asymptomatic Exposure Negative Test | Asymptomatic Positive Test | Symptomatic Negative Test (or No Test) | Symptomatic Positive Test |
|-----------|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------|
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| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Workplace Guidance | Remove from workplace until further notice | Report to Work/Duty | Report to Work/Duty | Report to Work/Duty | Remove from work place until the following criteria are met: | Remove from work place until the following criteria are met: | Remove from work place until the following criteria are met: |
| Return to Work Guidance | | Employee returns to work and may wear a mask while at work if he/she chooses to do so. | If the employee remains asymptomatic, they will report to work but must adhere to the following practices prior to and during their work shift: | If the employee remains asymptomatic, they will report to work but must adhere to the following practices prior to and during their work shift: | If employee <u>has not</u> had a test to determine if they are still contagious, employee can return to work after these two things have happened: | If employee <u>has not</u> had a test to determine if they are still contagious, employee can return to work after these three things have happened: | If employee <u>has not</u> had a test to determine if they are still contagious, employee can return to work after these three things have happened: |
| | | | Regular Self-Monitoring: Employee must continue to monitor health for signs and symptoms. Wear a Facemask: Employee must wear a facemask at all times while in the workplace for 14 days after last exposure. Social Distance: Employee will maintain 6 feet and practice social distancing. Disinfect & Clean workspaces. Clean and disinfect all work areas and frequently touched items. | Regular Self-Monitoring: Employee must continue to monitor health for signs and symptoms. Wear a Facemask: Employee must wear a facemask at all times while in the workplace for 14 days after last exposure. Social Distance: Employee will maintain 6 feet and practice social distancing. Disinfect & Clean workspaces. Clean and disinfect all work areas and frequently touched items. | 1. At least 10 days have passed since the date of first positive test AND 2. employee continues to have no symptoms (no cough or shortness of breath) since the test. | 1. Employee has no fever for at least 24 hours (w/out use of fever-reducing medicine) AND 2. other symptoms have improved (e.g. cough or shortness of breath) AND 3. at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared. OR For patients with severe illness, duration of isolation for up to 20 days after symptom onset may be warranted. Consider consultation with infection control experts. | 1. Employee has no fever for at least 24 hours (w/out use of fever-reducing medicine) AND 2. other symptoms have improved (e.g. cough or shortness of breath) AND 3. at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared. OR For patients with severe illness, duration of isolation for up to 20 days after symptom onset may be warranted. Consider consultation with infection control experts. |
| | | | OR | OR | OR | OR | OR |
| Return to Work Guidance | | | 1. Stay home until 14 days after last exposure and maintain social distance from others. 2. Self-monitor for symptoms 3. Check temperature twice a day 4. Watch for fever, cough, or shortness of breath 5. Avoid contact with high-risk people. | 1. Stay home until 14 days after last exposure and maintain social distance from others. 2. Self-monitor for symptoms 3. Check temperature twice a day 4. Watch for fever, cough, or shortness of breath 5. Avoid contact with high-risk people. | If employee had a test to determine if still contagious, they can return to work after: Employee received two negative tests in a row, at least 24 hours apart in certain circumstances. | If employee had a test to determine if still contagious, they can return to work after: 1. Employee no longer has a fever (w/out use of fever-reducing medicine) AND 2. other symptoms have improved AND 3. Employee received two negative tests in a row, at least 24 hours apart in certain circumstances. | If employee had a test to determine if still contagious, they can return to work after: 1. Employee no longer has a fever (w/out use of fever-reducing medicine) AND 2. other symptoms have improved AND 3. Employee received two negative tests in a row, at least 24 hours apart in certain circumstances. |

*People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, serious heart conditions, immunocompromised, severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher), diabetes, chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis, liver disease, pregnant, or people 65 and older.

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Phase Two

Under Phase Two, the Town is planning a measured reopening of buildings to the public which will be accelerated or decelerated based on real-time COVID-19 data, in accordance with guidance from State public health authorities. Public health metrics will determine when it is safe to move into the second phase of the action plan; data suggests this may be around July 1.

The reopening of municipal buildings to visitors will be considered under this phase. Curbside pick-up and electronic methods continue to be the highly preferred modes of service delivery. Government guidance suggests that in Phase Two, gatherings may be extended to more than 10 people based on scientific data and trends. Observance of governmental guidelines related to occupancy and capacity given our buildings' square footage will continue. Similar to Phase One, all protocols to ensure the health and safety of our employees will continue to be implemented. High risk employees who are able to work from home should continue to do so.

Finally, although governmental guidance dictates that nonessential travel may resume under Phase Two, business-related travel will remain banned. Any employee who travels internationally for pleasure will follow self-quarantine guidelines and not return to work during this period to ensure the safety of their peers.

Visitors Health and Screening Protocols

Department Heads will designate a supervisor to screen visitors to their department(s) for respiratory symptoms of each visitor as a precautionary measure to reduce the spread of COVID-19. All visitors will be asked to complete a Covid-19 [Visitor Self-Screening Form](#). Individuals with any of the conditions described in the questionnaire will be restricted from entering. Each department must keep a daily log of names and contact information for visitors.

Face Coverings

Visitors will be required to wear a Town provided disposable mask, or their own personal mask when entering a Town building and go directly to their assigned work area without unnecessarily interacting with employees. Visitors should also practice social distancing and good hygiene while on-site.

Phase Three

Under Phase Three, the reopening plan expects to include the Senior Center, and additional recreational fields and facilities. Curbside pick-up and electronic methods are still the preferred modes of service delivery. All protocols to ensure the health and safety of our employees will continue to be implemented. As in previous phases, high risk employees who are able to work from home should continue to do so. At this phase, we may also consider resuming business-related travel. Non-essential travel guidance will follow direction from State and Federal authorities.

Phase Four

Under Phase Four, the development of vaccine and/or therapy enables resumption of "new normal".

Considerations

It's important to note again that these phases are tentative and are subject to change based on State guidance, and the pandemic itself. Should an employee test positive for COVID-19 after the buildings reopen, our plan may change in an effort to protect our employees. In addition, if cases of COVID-19 spike again in Massachusetts or in our local area, we will consider whether to remain open or close.

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We recognize that each individual will need to make a personal decision as to when he or she is comfortable returning to work based on individual circumstances. Please reach out to your supervisor, manager or HR to discuss your personal situation.

Conclusion

Town of Upton looks forward to the future of our employees returning to work. The COVID-19 pandemic has created uncertain times and resulted in unprecedented workplace changes. As communicated throughout this return to work action plan, we are prioritizing the health of our employees every step of the way as we consider reopening our doors.

We will execute on our plan cautiously, following applicable federal and state guidance as much as possible. We also understand that each employee's needs and situations will be different as our doors begin to reopen. Employees should discuss any concerns they have about returning to work as it relates to their personal health or situation with their manager or supervisor.

Finally, we ask that employees are patient and understanding of the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic may require our return to work plans to change. Employees will be given as much notice as possible in the event of an unforeseen setback or buildings closure.

Employees should direct questions regarding the content of this action plan to their supervisor. Furthermore, while the strategies highlighted in this document can protect workers from COVID-19, it's important to follow CDC guidance at all times. For more information, click [here](#).

