Suddath Back to Work Planner: ARE YOU READY?

To help ease the transition for organizations like yours, Suddath® developed this back to work planner with expert insight into how to best plan for reopening your offices, including visual representations of reconfigured workspaces and convenient checklists.
The COVID-19 pandemic will be a defining event for the world. We will continue to see how the virus impacts our workplaces as we transition into the next phase of the pandemic.

Many workplaces are looking at how to best bring remote employees back into the office. There’s a variety of factors that must be considered. From reengineering workspaces to meet social distancing guidelines, to ensuring employees feel confident and safe in this new environment, this next step poses challenges for businesses across the nation.

One popular approach is bringing employees back in phases, starting with those whose role is most disrupted by working remote. This phased approach gives organizations an opportunity to pilot their program and make adjustments before the entire employee population is back in the office. Another challenge offices face is how to monitor illness within their workforce. Some businesses have already implemented temperature checks for all employees, but experts warn these measures shouldn’t be taken alone because up to a quarter of COVID-19 patients don’t develop a fever.

Another approach is not bringing some employees back into the office at all. Nearly 75% of CFOs plan to shift some previously onsite employees to permanently remote positions after COVID-19, according to a Gartner survey from April 2020.

Whether you operate a small office or workplaces around the globe, our simple guide will make it easier to navigate this transition.
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Creating Safer Workspaces

As government restrictions are lifted and employees return to offices, management will need to create a safer, more socially distant environment and restack space to account for new occupancy. Collaboration spaces have been popular trends for years, and while collaboration and teamwork will be just as important as ever, organizations will be challenged with balancing social distancing within these spaces. Open floor plans and shared spaces may need to implement more safety measures than traditional cubicle environments in order to help protect employees. Organizations that have reduced workforces will face different challenges than those who have the same or more employees, but nearly all workplaces will need some level of adjustment.

IS YOUR BUSINESS READY?

SIMPLE TIPS TO CREATE SAFER WORKSPACES

- Remove seats and tables to meet social distancing guidelines
- Exits and entrances marked as one way to create traffic flow in halls and aisles
- Add signage, floor marker, instructions, mobile cleaning stations and PPE pickup
- Dividers, screens, partitions and panels provided for protection
- “You” spaces for employees to work individually

4 STEPS TO RETURNING TO THE OFFICE

STEP 1: Plan for short-term and long-term occupancy
STEP 2: Adjust workspaces for better health and safety
STEP 3: Manage office cleaning and ongoing services
STEP 4: Set employees up for a successful transition

To make each step easier to manage we created an interactive checklist

DOWNLOAD CHECKLIST
**STEP 1: Realigning Your Workspace for Your New Workforce**

The COVID-19 pandemic had a huge impact on almost all businesses, many of which unexpectedly lost revenue and had to furlough or lay off employees. Others saw massive growth in a short amount of time. Whichever side of the spectrum your organization falls on, you’ll want to conduct a new census to look at the number of in-office workers to properly plan for your space.

**SHORT-TERM OFFICE NEEDS**

In the short-term, your organization can answer a few key questions to determine how you will accommodate the new guidelines to help keep employees safer.

- How many employees were furloughed or laid off?
- Can certain employees work remote for the time being?
- Can you institute an A and B shift?

Based on your answers, you can move forward conducting a new occupancy audit to accommodate the new number of employees that will be in your office on a daily basis. Once you have that number, you’ll want to determine the following:

- How will movement and workflow change?
- Will furniture need to be removed to meet CDC guidelines?
- Will short-term storage be needed for furniture and other office items?
- Will additional technology be needed to accommodate a more digital workforce?
- Do we have a systematic way to bring employees back from working remote that limits risk?
- Are our short-term needs different than our long-term needs?

**THE RIGHT WAY TO STORE ITEMS**

If your short-term needs do not align with your long-term needs, or you’re not sure which direction your business is headed, you’ll need to safely and properly store surplus office items including workstations, chairs, equipment and supplies. With so much uncertainty surrounding the future of the workforce, organizations will want to work with a partner that has an excellent system in place to keep track of all stored items in order to quickly and easily access these items when needed.

Find out how Suddath’s expertise and innovative technology give you full visibility and control making it easier to manage stored items.
LONG-TERM OFFICE CHANGES

In the long-term, you’ll want to take a more strategic approach, including deciding if you need to transition to a new space to accommodate your workforce. When it comes time to make those decisions, you’ll want to work with experts that can maximize your space and help plan for the future of your business.

If you already know your current space is no longer the right fit for your business long-term, and you’re looking to move into a new office, you can use your new occupancy plans to help identify how much space will be needed. If you’re hoping to use your current furniture in a new space, be sure to work with experts to ensure the proper fit and functionality in a new space, otherwise you may end up with desks that don’t fit in offices or oversized tables for conference rooms.

START SPACE PLANNING

- How many employees will sit in the office regularly?
- How much meeting space do we need?
- What is our growth potential in the next couple years?
- Will existing or new furniture fit our space properly?
- How can space be maximized to best serve our organization while maintaining CDC guidelines?
- Are decommissioning services necessary?

Find out how Suddath’s decommissioning services saved Kimley-Horn nearly $25,000. READ CASE STUDY
OCCUPANCY PLANNING CHECKLIST

- Audit number of workers for short-term and long-term plans
- Get short-term storage for furniture and other office items
- Evaluate long-term space needs
- Book moving and decommissioning services, if necessary
STEP 2: Healthier, Safer Environments

PERSONAL WORKSTATIONS

Whether you have a more traditional office environment with cubicles, open seating or shared desks, or your employee workstations are embedded within your business environment, such as in hotels, medical facilities and government agencies, most personal workstations will require some level of de-densifying or barrier to help decrease potential virus spread.

De-densifying to maintain the recommended six-foot distance between personal workstations can be as simple as leaving unoccupied desks between each employee, if that's an option for your business. However, you will want to remove chairs, and potentially furniture, or use signage to signal they are out of commission so employees are not tempted to use them.

Another way to help limit interactions is by adding physical barrier around workstations. You've most likely seen plexiglass structures in grocery stores around the nation, the same concept can be implemented within the office environment. By using plexiglass, rolling visual boards, partitions and other physical barriers, organizations can keep employees isolated and safer.

Relocating workstations is another way to help to keep coworkers six feet apart. Moving desks into empty conference rooms or unused areas of your office can alleviate areas that are overcrowded. Organizations will need to assess these areas to determine if they have the technology infrastructure to support employee workstations, and then consider the tasks of IT disconnects and reconnects to get employees back online.

Suddath makes it easy to relocate workstations, including IT disconnects and reconnects. LEARN MORE
PERSONAL WORKSTATION CHECKLIST

- De-densify by removing or relocating workstations, or placing employees at every other workstation
- Add plexiglass, rolling visual boards or other physical barriers to divide workstations and to provide privacy on aisleways
- Add privacy partitions to workstations and remove guest seating
- Rotate existing modular workstations so work desks face away from each other
- Replace fabric chairs with wipeable chairs for easier cleaning
- In offices, include tape markers to designate where guests should stand
OPTION 1: POST-COVID-19 WORKSTATION FLOORPLAN REMOVING ITEMS

The below rendering is an example of how to remove chairs to allow for safe distancing.

OPTION 2: POST-COVID-19 WORKSTATION FLOORPLAN USING PARTITIONS

The below rendering is an example of how to add partitions to create a safer office environment.
SHARED SPACES AND COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Designed to bring people together, conference rooms and other meeting spaces will need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to see if they are large enough to accommodate social distancing. Some organizations may choose to repurpose these rooms or completely close them off, while others may choose to use these spaces as a way for employees to remove themselves from general working space.

Break rooms and kitchens are two other shared spaces that will need to be evaluated. Organizations can use signage and tape to indicate which doors people should use and where people should stand to maintain distance. However, excess seating and furniture should be removed to limit the temptation to linger in these areas.

A simple way to decrease risk in common areas is to add sanitizing stations to entrances, which can include hand sanitizer, foams, wipes and other non-water sanitizing options. Additional ways to maintain distance in common areas is to label doors as entrance and exit, designate stairwells as up or down, limit capacity on elevators and use tape and other signage to make hallways either one way or to divide the traffic flow.

MAIN ENTRIES, EXITS, ELEVATORS AND RESTROOMS

Other important shared spaces are main entrances, exits, elevators and restrooms, especially for offices with a high volume of employees. Consider establishing the following:

- Operate restrooms at 50% capacity
- Make one-way stairwells, if possible
- Limit capacity in elevators and require PPE
- Include sanitation stations near these areas
- Create a barrier around reception

Suddath simplifies the process of de-densifying common areas and creating social distance.

LEARN MORE
CONFERENCE ROOM AND SHARED SPACES CHECKLIST:

- Place chairs six feet apart in conference rooms and remove additional seating from conference rooms, break rooms and kitchens.
- Reduce number of seats and add u-shape desktop screens for shared work areas.
- Use signage to inform employees which doors to use for in and out.
- Place marks on the floor so people stand at least six feet apart.
- Add angled privacy floor screens as needed to direct traffic.
- Set up sanitizing stations at entrances.
- For soft seating areas, replace sofas with single seats in washable surfaces.
PRE-COVID-19 SHARED SPACE FLOORPLAN

The below rendering depicts the challenges of working around existing seating.

POST-COVID-19 SHARED SPACE FLOORPLAN

This updated rendering shows how simple furniture removal and reconfiguration can allow for safe shared areas.

These virtual floorplans depict how common areas can be transformed to accommodate new guidelines and help keep employees safer while working in shared spaces. Additional safety measures to keep in mind include:

- Sanitation station at entrances
- Signage to direct traffic
- Decreased density in shared spaces
- Individual seating separated by six feet
- Removal of soft furniture
- Added video conferencing capabilities for remote worker collaboration
STEP 3: Manage Cleaning and Ongoing Services

As organizations look to find ways to keep office environments clean and minimize person-to-person contact, these changes will directly impact how ongoing services are rendered, as well as the volume, frequency and execution of delivery.

ENHANCED CLEANING SERVICES

Typical cleaning services will be enhanced for the foreseeable future as sanitizing shared surfaces is one of the best ways to prevent COVID-19 from spreading. There are some simple cleaning habits you can implement within your office to help keep employees safe throughout the day, such as wiping down doorknobs, seats, desk surfaces and keyboards in shared spaces.

As you’re preparing for employees to re-enter the office, you’ll want to deep clean soft surfaces like chairs, couches and panels, and wipe down all workstations, shared surfaces, doors and common areas. If you’ll be instituting shift work with shared workstations, wipe down services between shifts will be critical to maintaining a safe and healthy environment.

ONGOING SERVICES

From relocating workstations to delivering office supplies, there were many ongoing services that took place during a typical workday prior to the crisis. In our next normal, organizations will want to limit these types of services to after hours to help decrease person-to-person interaction, especially with people who may travel to other offices or businesses on a regular basis. Organizations will want to work with a flexible commercial mover that can accommodate after-hours or weekend projects. Also, working with a provider that offers a variety of services can help limit how many different teams must enter your building.

Suddath can save you significant time and expense with our broad menu of ongoing facility services.
OFFICE CLEANING CHECKLIST:

- Discuss your ongoing cleaning services with your provider to ensure they meet updated CDC guidelines or recommendations
- Plan pre-return wipe down and cleaning services
- Schedule regular cleanings for soft surfaces like chairs quarterly
- Deep clean panels yearly
- Wipe down workstations between shifts or after a workstation relocation
STEP 4: Bringing Employees Back to the Office

In addition to preparing your office for employees to return, you'll want to think through the easiest way to get them back into the office and online. If employees brought home equipment, they may need help returning it.

Share this checklist with your employees to ensure they have everything necessary to make their return to the office simple and streamlined.

DOWNLOAD INTERACTIVE CHECKLIST

BACK TO OFFICE CHECKLIST:

- Laptop or desktop computer
- Computer monitors
- Power and data cords
- Power strip
- Desk chair
- Printer

Suddath created an innovative system making it easy for employees to transition back into the office.

LEARN MORE
YOUR COMPLETE COMMERCIAL MOVER

As America's largest commercial mover, Suddath is uniquely equipped to handle all your back to work needs. From occupancy planning to decommissioning, and new services directly designed to support your workforce during the pandemic transition, we make it easier to get your employees back in the office and productive.

MENU OF SERVICES

- Occupancy planning
- Workplace social distancing services
- Remote work return services
- Warehousing and temporary storage
- Cleaning and office services
- Decommissioning

OCCUPANCY PLANNING

Whether you need help planning for short-term or long-term occupancy, our experts can evaluate your needs and identify ways to rearrange your current space or recommend a more cost-effective alternative to better serve your workforce for the future.

WORKPLACE SOCIAL DISTANCING SERVICES

With 100 years of experience, Suddath is ready to help your business get back on track with a wide range of helpful space planning, furniture planning, moving and installation services. Through our experienced consultants, proprietary technology and trained move teams, we deliver expert solutions to make the process faster, easier and safer for you and your employees.

Suddath offers an extensive range of specialized services all in one place to save you time and money. LEARN MORE
REMOTE WORK RETURN SERVICES

Help your employees confidently return to the office with strategic remote work return services. From retrieving equipment from your employees’ homes to ensuring their in-office workstations are completely functional, our comprehensive solutions make it easier to get your workforce back to work safely and efficiently.

SERVICES INCLUDE:

• Convenient scheduled window for office equipment pickup at employees’ homes
• Social distancing process to avoid entry into your employees’ homes
• Complete inventory of employee equipment and contents
• Delivery back to the office with reconnections, cable management and connectivity testing
• Cleaning workstations prior to employees’ return
• General on-site assistance to support employee moves back in

WAREHOUSING AND TEMPORARY STORAGE

Don’t waste time and money improperly storing workstations and assets. With more furniture product knowledge than other providers, Suddath’s advanced technology paired with our expertise means we can make sure your assets are properly stored and ready for use when needed. Our innovative tier-1 warehouse management system, HighJump™ makes the process automated and easier by giving you full visibility to view and manage your inventory in real time through a user-friendly portal. This means if a vaccine is created or your business grows, it will be easier to get stored furniture back into your office.
CLEANING AND OFFICE SERVICES

Suddath is taking every effort to help keep your employees safer by offering our cleaning and ongoing office services after hours to limit personal interaction.

- Return to work workstation wipe-down services
- Panel cleaning
- Chair cleaning
- Relocation wipe downs

DECOMMISSIONING

If your in-office structure has changed, you may need decommissioning services to get rid of unneeded furniture, equipment, files and more. When you partner with Suddath, you receive support from us to determine the best ways to reuse, recycle, liquidate or dispose of your assets. We also make sure you systematically protect confidential information to avoid costly exposure. Services include:

- Furniture and electronics valuation, liquidation, donation, recycling and disposal
- Removal of surplus furniture, fixtures, equipment and data cabling
- Cleaning, repairs, painting and signage removal

Learn more about our COVID-19 specific services.
NATIONAL REACH

With locations around the nation, we offer local presence with global reach. We can service small offices with just one location to global businesses with campuses around the nation. Whatever the scope, we deliver competitive solutions using cutting-edge technology and a standardized process that can be applied consistently across the country and around the world.

Talk to our experts to make it safer for your employees.

CONTACT US TODAY