



# ROSSLYN READY!

Helping Rosslyn  
businesses return to  
office-based work.

**Gensler**

In collaboration with:  
Bean Kinney & Korman / Hillmann Consulting

# Introduction

How do you get ready to do something that hasn't been done before? That's the question that the Rosslyn BID asked us to help them answer for businesses in the district as they have been inundated with ideas, news, opinions, and noise around planning to return to some level of office-based working in the summer of 2020.

Our hope is that the information and suggested process in this workbook helps you organize your efforts and keep the focus on what matters: your people, your customers, and the success of your organization. Please reach out to us if we can provide further help as you make your way through this challenge now and in the longer term.

*This guide has been prepared for the Rosslyn BID by a team of professionals who specialize in issues such as workplace design and change communications, industrial hygiene, and HR/employment law. None of these companies are experts in public health matters or infectious diseases. This material is intended solely to provide ideas or options for further consideration and ideation. You should make decisions related to your business continuity or preparation plans in collaboration with experts in public health and safety and legal matters. Links provided throughout were current as of final publication but are subject to change and you should verify the timeliness of any sources that you consult.*

✓ Planning	🔗 Resources
 People	
 Place	
 Policy	
 Perceptions	

# Planning Framework



## People

- Who Should Return & When
- Commuting
- Phases & Timing
- Work Environment & Behaviors
- Engaging Your Team



## Place

- Individual Work Spaces
- Shared/Collaborative Spaces
- Circulation & Entry/Exit Points
- Signage & Signals
- Cleaning Procedures
- Restrooms
- Your Building



## Policy

- HR & Employment Considerations for Returning to Office Work



## Perceptions

- Planning & Reaching Out
- Signals & Tone of Voice

## First People & Place...

### What will you do and why?

Every business should consider the steps you want to take in a return to office work initiative through the lens of why you want to return.

- For some people, returning may bring a sense of relief or greater productivity.
- For others, it will create inconvenience, add stress, or pose a real health risk.
- As much as it may seem obvious to a business leader, being able to articulate why you want to enable people to return to the office will make for a smoother process by helping you set priorities and expectations around timing, environmental and policy changes, and communicating effectively.

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Once you have determined your why, you can move on to what you need to do. See the sections on **People** and **Place** for more information.

## ...then Policy & Perceptions

### How will you set expectations and communicate?

As you make decisions about timeframes, space changes and who returns, you will need to establish and communicate new expectations.

- Some businesses are very policy-driven and others rely more on a culture of expectations, so this will be tailored to your specific situation, but it is important to decide what will be documented, enforced, and communicated to your team.
- The context for this moment is centered on a pandemic that's generated a lot of public information and opinions; the way that people perceive your approach to returning to office work may have everything or nothing to do with your business and office space. You want to keep your business moving forward in the most optimal way—putting clear and positive communications in place for your team is essential to helping them understand and hopefully embrace change.

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See the sections on **Policy** and **Perceptions** for more information and references.



# People

**Understanding the various situations and concerns of your people will be critical in your re-entry planning. There are multiple considerations—from who to when to how and how often—that need to be resolved. Engaging and communicating early and frequently is recommended for a smooth and empathetic transition.**

- ✓ Take a survey of your team to help you understand their points of view

**Who Should  
Return & When**

**Commuting**

**Phases  
& Timing**

**Work  
Environment  
& Behaviors**

**Engaging  
Your Team**

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# Who Should Return & When



Understand why people may benefit from coming into the office as well as what their challenges might be, as this can affect your timing and how you reactivate or re-purpose spaces:

- Are they coming in to work with their teams?
- Do people crave some socializing?
- Will it allow them better focus than a work from home environment?
- Do they need to do tasks, use equipment or specialized spaces they don't have at home?

Issues such as childcare availability, commuting, personal health, and local restrictions might factor into your planning and timeframes.

[LINK](#)

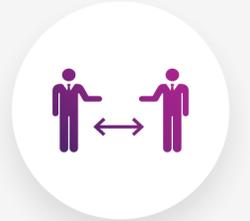
See OSHA's guidance around using OSHA's occupational risk pyramid and related guidance when determining who and when people return.

[LINK](#)

Work with HR/legal resources to address concerns.

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# Commuting



Depending on the way that the following issues play out for you, consider concepts noted in [Phases & Timing](#) to explore adjusted work schedules that may alleviate mass-transit densities and open up other parking options.

[LINK](#)

Some may feel uncomfortable on transit, and reduced routes/schedules may present hardship.

Driving may be prohibitively expensive or inconvenient for some, and parking garages that require valet may introduce unwanted contact for your staff.

You may feel that public transportation exposes people too much to allow them into your workspace.

Arlington Transportation Partners offers complimentary commuter resources to help your employees navigate their commute back to the office, including customized transportation information for your worksite, commuter benefit program assistance, employee surveys, and more.

See the [Resources](#) section for links.

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## Phases & Timing



A phased approach that helps people get accustomed to different behavior and environments can be helpful, as will clear policies and an active communications program.

Some companies are establishing Day 1 / Day 2 groups that allows you to initiate a plan, monitor, and adapt.

You can set up an advance team of leaders and implementers to set up new office arrangements and work with contractors in the couple of weeks ahead of your planned re-opening date.

[LINK](#)

Think about shifts such as 1-2 weeks in office/1-2 weeks WFH, working every other day or M-W/T-F. Find the approach that works for your office density and cleaning needs.

Consider shifts within a given work day to allow for less people and spread out circulation within the building and workplace itself.

Understand what other tenants may be doing and collaborate to even out high traffic times in public areas.

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# Work Environment & Behaviors



## WORK ENVIRONMENT

Reducing or eliminating gathering spaces, increasing cleaning protocols, resetting individual and shared workspaces are a few of the changes you need to have in place before opening the doors again.

See the [Place](#) section for more information.

## BEHAVIORS

Continuing to observe distancing and similar measures as people start to move out and about is expert-recommended as a way to control virus spread and reduce health system burdens as treatments and vaccines are developed.

You will need to set expectations for people’s behavior in this regard in your workplace, such as:

Use of individual/shared work spaces.

Observance of cleaning procedures, work schedules, communications processes.

Reporting personal health, travel, and similar.

Wearing a mask or other personal protective gear.

Communicate CDC-endorsed personal health and quarantine procedures.

See the [Policy](#) section for more.

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# Engaging Your Team



## WHAT ARE PEOPLE CONCERNED ABOUT?

This is a great moment to put your people first and ask them about their concerns and ideas around transitioning back to office work. Some questions you could ask in a survey:

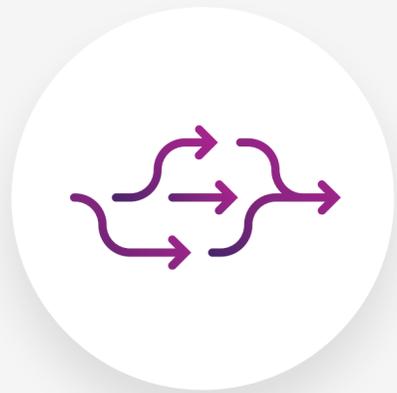
- What are you most concerned about in a return to the office?
- If you were running the office, how would you decide who should return and when?
- How do you feel about measures such as temperature checks at entry? Wearing masks?
- What situation/conditions will make you feel more comfortable returning?
- Do you have a great idea for helping people stay at least 6' apart while in the office?

## NEVER WASTE A GOOD CRISIS

Disruptive change is uncomfortable but can offer the opportunity to adapt cultural norms or business process for the positive.

Think about how you can put new attitudes around working from home, communications lessons learned through virtual meetings, overcoming challenges together and similar as a way to evolve for the better.

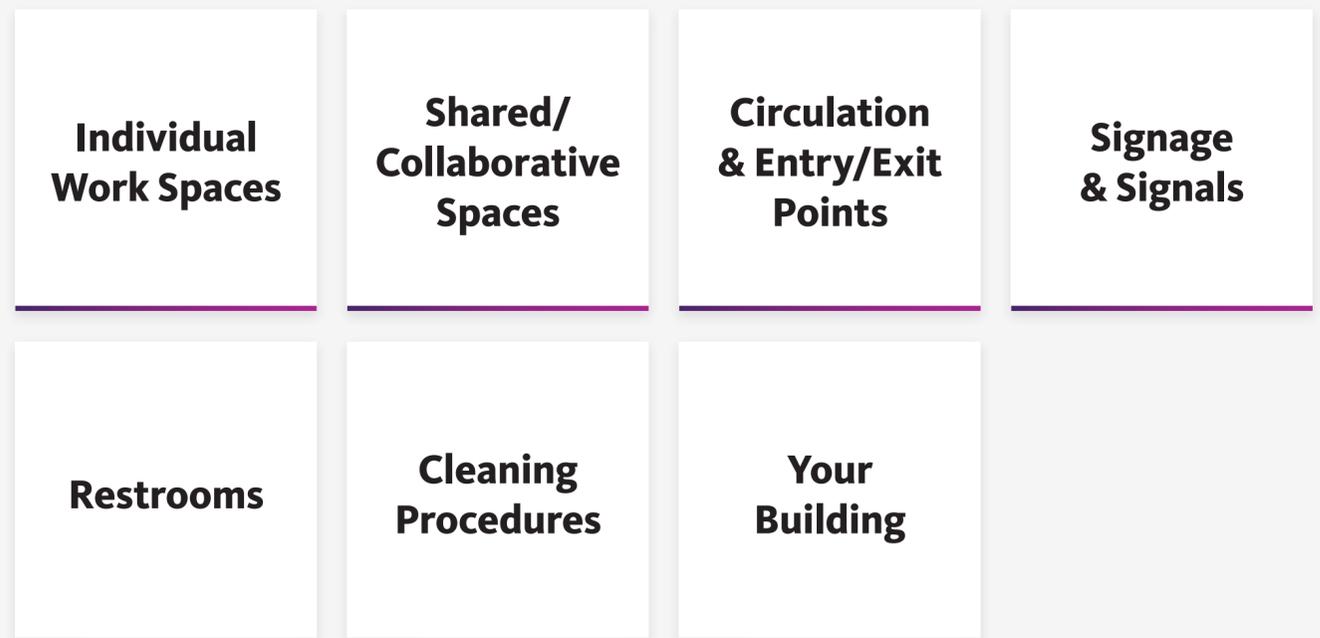
See the [Perceptions](#) section for more information.



# Place

**Expert advice points to a need for 6' or more spacing between people throughout the workspace, whether individual or shared work spaces.**

- ✓ Do an in-person or plan-based “walkaround” to identify high-traffic areas, high-touch areas, crossing paths, and tight spaces.



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# Individual Work Spaces

[LINK](#)

You may want to use some or all of these measures to re-plan individual and shared work spaces around the recommendations of health organizations like the CDC.

One approach is to assign everyone a seat on a schedule that allows daily or more frequent cleaning.

Another approach is to continue using dynamic seating to reduce desk clutter that gets in the way of cleaning.

Using physical barriers between desks or other seats may make people feel safer.

Consider sharing private offices on a set schedule with known cleaning protocols.

Factor in proximity of individual spaces to circulation or high usage areas when re-planning space.

Consider having individuals use their own supplies such as stapler, writing instruments, and other work accessories. Allow for supply restocking procedure.

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# Shared Spaces



These ideas for shared spaces might apply to meeting rooms, cafe/pantry, or support space like printers/supplies depending on your configuration.

Consider continuing virtual meetings and not having in-person gatherings.

Configure seating in accordance with distancing and remove furniture to limit the capacity of shared spaces.

Remove or disallow shared use of phones, computer, keyboard, etc.

Redeploy meeting rooms as shared work spaces if the size allows for adequate distancing.

You might disallow personal food & beverage storage until further notice to minimize gathering and added cleaning burden, but consider available neighborhood options for meals.

Identify areas with tight space, difficult circulation, or shared equipment.

Place cleaning supplies near appliances, controls for light, AV, HVAC, window coverings if not automatic. [LINK](#)

If a shared space can't be reconfigured safely and remain useable, take it out of use until you can determine a solution.

Limit capacity and communicate through signage. Consider creating a schedule for reserving use of the space.

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## Circulation & Entry/Exit Points



Designate in/out-only doors to reduce cross traffic.

[LINK](#)

Use a tool for pushing entry/exit buttons or handles if a clothed elbow or foot can't be used.

Remove excess furniture if needed to create extra space for passage.

Switch to sensor or auto-open, or to key card/fob over touchpad/punch locks if possible on heavily used doorways (ensure code/ADA compliancy if you substitute egress hardware).

Mark one-way lanes or other paths of travel to help guide people and minimize too-close interactions. (Test out heavy duty tape or vinyl on your surfaces to see if they create damage.)

Consider how your business will be handling visitors, vendors and deliveries; one approach might be restricting the workplace to employees only as a phase 1 scenario with all deliveries placed in a specific location outside the physical workplace environment.

Use signage to indicate capacity limits for areas with dead end circulation.

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# Signage & Signals



Signage should be well-designed for clarity and simplicity, but balance directness with a human voice.

See the [Perceptions](#) section for an overview of how to have a clear and helpful tone of voice.

Signage can easily be overused until it's ignored or confusing; “signals” such as removing furniture can be a clearer method that keeps actual signage effective.

Save ALL CAPS for truly important things, if at all.

Floor markers may be needed to show circulation paths or distancing circles—have some fun with tape colors or patterns while you're at it.

Gensler's pre-designed signage package encompasses multiple workplace needs for entry/exit, space-limited areas, and personal habits like hand-washing.

See [Resources](#) section for more links.

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## Restrooms



Explore touchless fixtures, automatic door opener/closer, soap/sanitizer dispenser.

Provide ample sanitizing/cleaning supplies at sinks, counters and within stalls if feasible.

See **Hillmann Consulting** in the [Resources](#) section.

Consider “occupied” door tag or signal for multi-stall facilities (like a hotel or airplane) to limit capacity.

Place cleaning supplies near controls for light if not automatic.

You could add trash receptacle locations near restroom entry doors in case people want to use paper towels or gloves to open doors.

Some experts are recommending discontinuing use of blower hand driers to minimize airborne particle circulation.

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## Cleaning Procedures



Provide surface cleaning and hand sanitizing supplies at every seat or every other seat; at doorways; at support spaces; at pantry areas.

Schedule additional cleaning protocols during day; visibility may support positive perceptions and behavior

Be aware of hazardous, non-recommended or ineffective chemicals and cleaning supplies.

Refer to [Resources](#) for a link to detailed office cleaning procedures and information provided by **Hillmann Consulting**, certified industrial hygienists.

For disinfecting, focus on high-touch objects and areas, including door knobs, door handles, railings, light and air-control switches, faucets, and toilet flush levers.

If you do not already have one in place, create a COVID preparedness, response and control plan. A starter check list can be found at the **Hillmann Consulting** [LINK](#).

Place additional waste receptacles around your space to collect discarded hand sanitizing wipe and other cleaning supplies.

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# Your Building



Ask your property management about their procedures and planned changes around building entry, elevator/stair use, delivery procedures, signage, parking garage (if present) and cleaning.

Understand any new approaches for usage of shared spaces on multi-tenant floors and amenity areas.

Follow the guidance that your property manager provides; if you wish to follow more stringent approaches, communicate with them about your approach and whether they can support you.

[LINK](#)

Consult with ASHRAE or a qualified MEP consultant for review/recommendations around HVAC systems. AE Works is a BID member who is available to provide services.

Think about collaborating with your floor neighbors to set a circulation pattern, signage, or other measures on a shared floor. #InThisTogether



# Policy

**The return to office path that you choose may have cultural, business, and potential legal implications.**

- ✓ Consider hiring a professional in HR and employment law to review your existing policies and advise on possible changes.

**HR & Policy  
Considerations**

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# HR & Policy Considerations



Based on considerations outlined by **Bean Kinney & Korman**, regulatory requirements from agencies such as OSHA and ADA will be important to review as you evaluate what you put into your policies. These can include questions like:

[LINK](#)

- What can I ask my employee about their health?
- Can I require my employees to have their temperature taken?
- Can I require my sick employee to stay home?
- What can I disclose to other employees if a colleague becomes ill?
- Do I need to provide my sick leave if my employee becomes ill?
- What documents and record-keeping are required?

Will you set strict rules and enforcement or issue guidelines and ask for personal responsibility—or a hybrid of the two? In some cases, rules may be set for you by the state or county government and you should be up to date on those requirements. The pandemic has put everyone into new territory and the landscape is continually evolving.

[LINK](#)

Consider your position on how far you want to go in establishing expectations and related enforcement around these areas:

- Personal health screening or reporting
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) such as face masks
- Items/services provided by employer vs. employee
- In-office behavior (eg, observing distancing, cleaning protocols)
- Observing established schedules
- Observing established communications
- Procedures if/when someone in the space becomes sick



# Perceptions

**As you're planning and after you have decided on a path, engaging and communicating early and frequently with your team helps make for a smooth and empathetic transition to office work.**

- ✓ A video tour of your changed space for your team before they return can help them see what's going to be different.

**Planning &  
Reaching Out**

**Signals and  
Tone of Voice**

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## Planning & Reaching Out



Create a communications plan that highlights the methods and messages you will use to share the return to office approach with your team.

Make sure you have a good contact network via email, phone, text if you don't already.

If your budget allows, provide a welcome back kit with cleaning/office supplies, a snack, customize a water bottle with your logo and supportive messaging.

See the **Resources** section to contact a Rosslyn business about what they have to offer.

Host a webinar for your first returners to ask specific questions and update them right before your target date.

Host a webinar for *everyone* that highlights timing, process, who is involved, what will change, and new policy/expectations.

Do a video tour of new office conditions so that people see what to expect before they show up.

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# Signals & Tone of Voice



For signage and other communications, tone of voice matters. Whether your company’s voice is more formal or informal, think about how language can set a sense of cooperation and shared purpose rather than alarm:

**Alarming & stressful**

**Reassuring & helpful**

STOP! MAXIMUM 4 PEOPLE

This space is too small for more than 4 people – please wait until someone else leaves.

DID YOU WASH YOUR HANDS FOR 20 SECONDS?

I like to sing Bohemian Rhapsody when I wash my hands – what’s your 20-second favorite?

NOTICE: STOP COVID-19! PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING.

Let’s keep our distance just a little longer to stop Covid-19.

The other aspect of communications is the environment itself. Taping off areas or covering up furniture may be quick and practical, but a place that feels like a crime scene may make people want to keep working from home.

Think about colorful tape (but perhaps not red and yellow that seem alarming). Some specialty providers can make tape with your logo or inspirational sayings.

[LINK](#)

Well-designed signage that’s appealing and in the right tone of voice will have greater impact.

# Resources



## GENSLER LINKS



**What Happens When We Return to the Workplace?**

April 03, 2020 | [gensler.com](https://www.gensler.com)



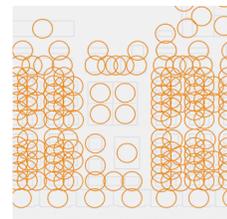
**An Architecture of Optimism for a Post-Pandemic Society**

May 04, 2020 | [gensler.com](https://www.gensler.com)



**A Day in the Life: Going Back to Work in China**

April 22, 2020 | [gensler.com](https://www.gensler.com)



**10 Considerations for Transitioning Back to Work in a Post-COVID-19 World**

April 20, 2020 | [gensler.com](https://www.gensler.com)



**Tips for Signage and Wayfinding in a Post-COVID-19 World**

May 06, 2020 | [gensler.com](https://www.gensler.com)



**How to Build Culture in a Virtual World**

March 26, 2020 | [gensler.com](https://www.gensler.com)



**Fostering Casual Collisions—and Creativity—in a Virtual World**

April 07, 2020 | [gensler.com](https://www.gensler.com)



**Understanding the Touchless Workplace**

April 15, 2020 | [gensler.com](https://www.gensler.com)

# Resources



HR & EMPLOYMENT POLICY-RELATED



## Bean, Kinney & Korman, Attorneys COVID-19 Resources

Wages & Benefits Questions During The  
Coronavirus Business Downturn

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

Documentation and Recordkeeping: COVID-19 Paid  
Leave and Employer Paid Leave Tax Credits

<https://www.beankinney.com/publications-articles-documentation-and-recordkeeping-covid19-paid-leave-tax-credits.html>

What Can Employers Ask and Do About Their Employee's  
Health During the Coronavirus Crisis? *Answers from the EEOC*

<https://www.beankinney.com/publications-articles-what-can-employers-ask-and-do-about-their-employees-health-during-the-coronavirus.html>

Bean, Kinney & Korman website for additional resources

<https://www.beankinney.com/covid-19-coronavirus.html>

CLEANING-RELATED



## Hillmann Consulting Rosslyn Ready Toolkit

[https://www.rosslynva.org/\\_files/docs/occupancy-exposure-control-plan.pdf](https://www.rosslynva.org/_files/docs/occupancy-exposure-control-plan.pdf)



## Hillmann Consulting Covid-19 Resources

<https://hillmannconsulting.com/coronavirus-covid-19-services/>

METRO



## Covid-19 Service Information

[wmata.com](http://wmata.com)

# Resources



## ROSSLYN BUSINESSES



### Custom Ink

Imprinted items like opener tools and welcome back items from a Rosslyn business. Contact Rebekah or Devon about your needs:

[rebekah.coughlin@customink.com](mailto:rebekah.coughlin@customink.com)

[devon.mctavish@customink.com](mailto:devon.mctavish@customink.com)



### AE WORKS

We design spaces with purpose to enable your purpose.

[ae-works.com](http://ae-works.com)

## IMPORTANT AGENCIES



### Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Virginia

[virginia.gov](http://virginia.gov)



### Coronavirus (COVID-19)

[cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)



### Businesses and Workplaces: Plan, Prepare, and Respond

[cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)



### Arlington Transportation Partners (ATP)

Arlington County's business-to-business transportation consulting organization, providing commuter assistance and expertise since 1998. ATP is a program of Arlington County Commuter Services (ACCS), a bureau of Arlington's Department of Environmental Services.

<https://arlingtontransportationpartners.com/services/telework-services/>

<https://info.arlingtontransportationpartners.com/coronavirus-updates-for-businesses>

<https://arlingtontransportationpartners.com/services/corporate-capital-bikeshare/>