



## RETURN-TO-WORK PLAN

### Vulnerable Employees

## Covid-19 Prevention and Mitigation Plan

### (Lockdown Phases)

### Human Resources Directorate

V4

#### **THE UNIVERSITY RISK-ADJUSTED APPROACH FOR INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES**

Several steps have been taken to comply with the requisite safety regulations imposed on the University, as an employer and learning institution. These follow amongst others, the Occupational health and Safety Act, the Regulation published on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April and the recently published **guidance on vulnerable employees and workplace accommodation in relation to COVID- 19 (V4: 25 May 2020)**. Since then, a Directive has been issued by the Minister on the 04 June 2020.

**The University should have a clear and transparent policy and appropriate procedures to address the specific needs of vulnerable employees beyond the workplace risk control measures for all employees. These policies and procedures should be based on legislative provisions specific to their sector.**

Despite a variety of views, there is no governmental requirement that vulnerable employees be required to stay at home. Until the alternatives suggested by the guidelines have been exhausted, there is also no basis on which a vulnerable employee can of their own accord, elect to stay at home.

**The individual risk-adjusted approach is guiding the University on how to manage vulnerable employees and workplace accommodation in relation to COVID- 19.**

The management of employees based on their risk assessment will be implemented by line managers, heads of departments, and divisions throughout all levels of the University. This requires that managers must be fully conversant with these guidelines and how they will apply to employees, and make sure that all employees are aware of the risk-adjusted approach and the implications thereof.

Table 2 below outlines this approach for individual employees, according to three sets of criteria:

- The location where the current job can be performed during the University phased-in return period;
- The job risk classification, as determined by the nature of the job; and
- The individual's health risks.

The assessment of an individual's risk across these three sets of criteria will then be used as a guide for taking a risk-adjusted approach to returning an individual employee to work particularly "vulnerable" employees.

**TABLE 2: THE RETURN TO CAMPUS RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX FOR INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES**

WORKING DEFINITIONS		
<u>Location where current job can be performed:</u>	<u>Job risk classification:</u>	<u>Employee Health Risk Category:</u>
Remotely, Partially off site, Only on site	High Risk (note below: this category only applies to employees in direct contact with the COVID-19 virus in their work setting),  Medium/Moderate Risk,  Low Risk	High Risk,  Medium/Moderate Risk,  Low Risk
<b>Remotely</b>	<b>Medium/Moderate Risk</b>	<b>High Risk</b>
Work can be efficiently be done online	Employees that require frequent and/or close contact with (i.e. within 2 metres of) many people and who would be at risk should any of their contacts be infected, as such contacts may not be known or suspected COVID-19 patients e.g. asymptomatic people. These are employees who	- virally unsuppressed HIV - (HIV+ with CD4 count >200 and undetectable viral load are not regarded as high risk) - uncontrolled diabetes mellitus - chronic lung disease such as chronic bronchitis

	<p>have contact with the general public and many students, visitors, employees from other areas – e.g. visitor centres, reception and security desks, library employees.</p>	<p>or poorly controlled asthma - unstable or complicated cardiac disease - on immune-suppressant therapy (e.g. chronic oral steroids or biologicals) - chronic liver disease with impaired liver function - chronic renal disease with impaired renal function - cancer, and receiving chemotherapy or radiation therapy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- bone marrow or organ transplants - morbid obesity (body mass index <math>\geq 40</math>) - pregnant women, post-delivery for 6 weeks, breastfeeding women - anyone &gt;60 years of age</li> <li>- &gt;28 weeks pregnant (and especially with any of co-morbidities listed above).</li> </ul>
<b>PARTIALLY OFF SITE</b>	<b>LOW RISK</b>	<b>MODERATE RISK</b>
<p>Less than 50% of the job tasks can be done at work.</p>	<p>Employees that do not require contact with people known to be or suspected of being infected, nor frequent close contact with (i.e. within 2 metres of) the general public.</p>	<p>People who have chronic disease such as high blood pressure, heart problems, asthma, or chronic bronchitis, diabetes, but is well controlled. Employees are</p>

		functioning well. People > 60 years of age.
<b>ONLY ON SITE</b>	<b>HIGH RISK</b>	<b>LOW RISK</b>
More than 50% of job tasks need to take place at work; would be inefficient to work remotely.	People working with infected Covid-19 patients or involved with research that requires contact with Covid-19 patients or the virus in a lab environment.	None of the conditions above. If any doubt, please contact occupational health.