

Gartner for IT Leaders

# Returning to the Workplace Checklist



As organizations recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, their focus will shift to ensuring a smooth transition back to the workplace.

This checklist outlines key actions that IT leaders must take to drive an effective “return to the workplace” strategy.

# Implications for the Chief Information Officer



## Short-term implications

- Technology use (e.g., thermal temperature monitoring, check-in apps, social distancing beacons, hygiene use sensors) to ensure employee safety when returning to physical locations
- Technology adoption and potential resistance toward technologies used to measure, monitor and comply with employee safety
- Risk considerations for office access during staggered employee shifts, team rosters and non-work hours such as weekend access (e.g., employee ID system access)
- Technology evidence (database records, etc.) to safeguard employee safety in case litigation ensues
- Ability to notify others quickly if infection is detected (contact tracing at workplace)
- Engagement and collaboration tools for a mix of on-site and remote workers



## Long-term implications

- Continued investment and cash-flow risks
- Examine all touch-based interfaces at the office for possible replacements to gesture, facial recognition and voice-based technologies
- Mobile app functionality (e.g., office system access) to replace ID cards. Considerations for further automation of business processes
- Time frame or length of technology use/disablement or permanence
- Alternative technology solutions to further disinfect the work environment, such as autonomous robots that emit UV rays
- Extended Wi-Fi perimeter access to parking lots while enforcing stricter cybersecurity measures
- Re-exit strategy and implications for heavier/bulkier equipment to be returned to the office and then redistributed to home environment
- Retraining of IT skill sets



## Things to do now

Assess technology solutions, such as thermal temperature monitoring (adhering to privacy and local regulations), beacons for social distancing and sensors to track hygiene compliance (alcohol spray use) to ensure employee safety.

Work with real estate/facilities if deploying beacons or cameras for social distancing in terms of placements and locations, notification methods and reconfiguration of office space if required.

Ensure compliance to stagger employees with ID badge system access as well as considerations for disabling access for those not on the roster and non-work hours such as weekends.

Work with HR to assess if existing HR systems and processes are able to handle the additional oversight on personnel and requirements for COVID-19 employee practices.

Establish channel for feedback, contact and notification (e.g., in case of employee infection).

Work with legal to determine what data is needed to ensure corporate compliance to safeguard employee safety in the future event of a lawsuit against the company.

Consider utilizing disaster recovery site to be functional in order to separate IT teams.



## Things to plan/prioritize

Identify and automate additional tasks and checks required to ensure a safe work environment.

Consider IoT solutions that can aid in a safe employee environment, such as HVAC sensors to replace HEPA grade air filters, sensors for social distancing, disinfection robots, etc.

Examine all touch-based interfaces at the office for possible voice, facial or gesture-based technology replacements (e.g., AI assistance in conference rooms to start projector, calls etc.).

Identify job functions that can be supported for permanent remote work and reassess business processes to enable this.

Assess technologies to foster better engagement and collaboration for a mix of on-site and remote employees in activities such as product development, R&D, etc.

Assess IT skill sets to support the new work environment.

# An Executive's Guide to Returning to the Workplace

Visit [gtnr.it/return-to-work](https://gtnr.it/return-to-work) for overarching insights to guide your organization as it brings employees back to the workplace safely and effectively, at the right time, and in the right way.

