



**Return to On-Campus Work  
FAQs for Employees  
Late July, 2020**

**Testing and Contact Tracing**

**Q. Is testing for COVID-19 required before continuing or returning to work on campus?**

A. Yes. Testing is required for all faculty and staff who will be on campus 4 hours per week or more. Harvard requires its own [“baseline” viral testing](#) -- as well as the completion of mandatory training on the Harvard Training Portal and daily self-reporting of symptoms using the [Crimson Clear mobile app](#) or a paper form -- before returning or continuing to work on campus.

Testing is provided by Harvard University Health Services (HUHS), by appointment, with test sites on the Allston and Longwood campuses. Employees may use paid work time for testing, and the testing is free. Plans are underway for unobserved, self-collected testing.

Faculty and staff working on campus will need both baseline and repeat testing, typically weekly; those who are also living on campus and/or working in a residential life role should anticipate they may be tested more frequently. Any essential on-campus worker who has not received a baseline test is encouraged to get one as soon as possible.

**Q. Will Harvard accept a negative COVID-19 test result from an outside provider in order for an employee to continue or resume on-campus work?**

A. Not initially. Right now, HUHS is only accepting results for tests it conducts at one of the on-campus testing centers. In the coming months, they anticipate launching a new web platform that will allow employees to upload negative COVID-19 test results from other qualified medical providers in order to continue or resume on-campus work.

**Q. What if I have been tested or received a positive result for COVID-19 from a medical provider outside of Harvard?**

A. You should notify HUHS at [healthservices@huhs.harvard.edu](mailto:healthservices@huhs.harvard.edu) — even if you do not receive care at HUHS, and even if you were working remotely before you became COVID positive. This helps us assess the impact on our community. You must not come to work on campus until you are medically cleared to return by HUHS. You can take paid sick time. Harvard’s temporary sick time policy during the Coronavirus pandemic allows for the advanced (that is, before it is earned) use of paid sick time for up to 14 days.

**Q. Should I tell my manager that I have tested positive and that other colleagues may have been exposed?**

A. You should tell HUHS, by email at [healthservices@huhs.harvard.edu](mailto:healthservices@huhs.harvard.edu) or via Crimson Clear. Then, if needed, a health care provider or contact tracer will advise others that they may have been exposed to the virus.

You do not have to disclose specific health information to your manager or human resources when you request sick time, but you may choose to do so. Managers and HR should not identify a person who has tested positive or is ill and presumed to have COVID-19, nor should they advise other colleagues of potential exposure. This is considered personal, confidential information.

**Q. Do I have to take part in contact tracing?**

A. Yes, you are expected to cooperate fully with workplace contact tracing by the University or another official entity (such as a town or city, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health or Partners in Health) relating to possible exposure at Harvard. These efforts are designed to be respectful of your privacy; information learned will be treated as confidential by medical and public health professionals. Your contacts will be advised if they have been exposed, but you will not be identified by name. Neither your Harvard manager nor Harvard HR will be informed that you are COVID-19 positive, though you may wish to disclose this information to them or your coworkers.

**Face Coverings and Masks**

**Q. Do I have to wear a face covering while at work?**

A. Yes. It is required by the [Commonwealth of Massachusetts](#) under many circumstances, and by Harvard.

When on campus at Harvard, please note they must be worn when in public and when at work in the presence of others, even if physically distanced, and when in common spaces at Harvard to prevent surface contamination from droplets. Depending on your work environment and job role, [as described here](#), different kinds of face coverings or masks may be required. Additional protective measures may be required in some work environments.

Consequences for not complying may include having access to Harvard buildings or campus revoked, which may result in loss of work and pay, and other disciplinary actions.

**Quarantine and Isolation**

**Q. Do I have to self-quarantine if I have been exposed to COVID-19?**

A. Yes, if you have been in close contact with, or caring for someone known to have COVID-19. Remember that you may use paid sick time for this purpose, even if you are not sick. Use this Harvard University Health Services' (HUHS) [guide for self-isolation/quarantine for less clear-cut situations](#).

If you have symptoms (fever, cough, difficulty breathing), it is best to self-isolate and contact your health care provider for care and guidance. Once you have secured any needed medical care, please notify HUHS of your situation by email at [healthservices@huhs.harvard.edu](mailto:healthservices@huhs.harvard.edu).

**Q. When can I return to work after having had the virus?**

A. You should consult [this CDC guidance](#) to learn more about when it is safe to be around other people. Your health care provider can help determine an individualized return-to-work date for you, as isolation periods may vary based on different circumstances. When you are ready to

return, please seek medical clearance from HUHS and remember to complete the symptom attestation on Crimson Clear in order to obtain an entry pass.

**Q. Do I need to self-quarantine after returning from personal travel or working out of state?**

A. At this writing, Massachusetts is requiring self-quarantine for 14 days for its residents returning from most U.S. states, [as described here](#). Faculty and staff should keep this state requirement in mind when returning to work on campus from work or personal/leisure travel in another state.

**Remote Work**

**Q. I am at higher risk for complications from COVID-19 due to my age and/or an underlying health condition. Can I continue to work remotely?**

A. Harvard is committed to working with faculty and staff to develop reasonable accommodations, formally under the Americans with Disabilities Act (the ADA), or less formally, as job modifications to reduce exposure and risk for [those with greater risk of serious illness from COVID-19](#). In doing so, its aim is to keep all members of our community as safe as possible, while:

- providing essential or required services;
- restarting the research enterprise;
- supporting students and academic programs for the fall of 2020 and beyond; and
- resuming full operations when conditions permit.

At this writing, many staff at Harvard will continue to work remotely for an indefinite period, and at least through summer 2020.

However, if you have been advised to return to work on campus, and you are concerned about your risk and exposure due to your age and/or an underlying health condition (or that of a household member), please consult with HR about your options.

One option may be a temporary job modification. For example, you could be re-located to a more physically isolated workspace with minimal exposure to others, assigned to a small team with fewer coworkers, moved from front-of-house or front office operations to back-of-house or back office operations. You may be able to change your schedule so that you work fewer days per week on campus, or change your hours so that you are not commuting when streets and public transportation are more crowded. You may decide to begin driving to work.

However, if you and your department are unable to come up with a mutually agreeable modification of your on-campus work, you have these options.

1. Use personal days or vacation days to maintain your pay while taking time off
2. Voluntarily reduce your time commitment
3. Apply for an unpaid personal leave of absence, subject to manager approval. Please be aware of the effect taking an unpaid leave can have [on your benefits](#) if you exercise this option.

Once these benefits have been exhausted, you may need to get a different job that permits remote work, resign or retire.

To learn more about the option to request a formal disability accommodation under the ADA, please consult this [page](#).

**Q. Can I work out of state if my work can be done remotely?**

A. Yes, for the rest of 2020, due to the current public health emergency, and assuming you are available to return to on-campus work when called or as needed. Please keep in mind that returning to work may be more difficult if Massachusetts is still requiring self-quarantine for its residents returning from some other states, as is the case at present.

Harvard is not registered to do business or employ workers in states other than Massachusetts and California. Therefore, if you wish to continue to live and work outside of these states after the end of 2020, and your manager agrees to this arrangement, you may need to resign and become employed by an outside, third-party payroller. This company would provide your compensation and benefits for your work for Harvard. Benefits offered to payrolled workers are not the same as those provided to those directly employed by Harvard.

**Q. Will Harvard pay for my internet to work remotely?**

A. No. Harvard's business expense policy does not permit reimbursement for household utilities including internet service. However, many departments are allowing staff to borrow their desk chairs and peripherals (such as large screens) to make long-term remote work more comfortable and ergonomic. Contact your manager or departmental administrator to arrange a specific time and way to collect these items, along with any needed office supplies and personal belongings.

**Return to Work**

**Q. What if I am not at high risk of serious illness due to my age or an underlying health condition, but am fearful of catching the virus if I return to work?**

A. Consider the steps you can take (such as hand washing, social distancing and mask wearing), and those that Harvard is taking (such as universal training, large-scale testing and contact tracing, enhanced cleaning and ventilation, reduced workplace density and universal symptom monitoring) to reduce your exposure and risk.

If you remain concerned, consult with local HR on temporary job modifications (such as a change of schedule, location, or duties) that could be made to further reduce your exposure and risk at work. You may wish to change your commuting method or the timing of your commute. If these measures do not address your concerns, your options can include taking paid time off, applying for an unpaid leave, resigning or retiring.

**Q. Can I ask my coworkers if they have COVID-19?**

A. You should not pressure anyone into revealing personal and/or medical information. What they choose to disclose will depend on your relationship. You can ask your colleagues how they are feeling in general, but should not inquire about a specific illness.

**Q. Can my manager require me to go home (or stay home) if I have received a pass through the Crimson Clear process, but they think I am sick or have symptoms?**

A. Yes. Even if you have self-reported that you are symptom free and obtain a Crimson Clear pass, if you are showing signs of respiratory illness, you can be asked to leave the workplace and stay at home until you are medically cleared to return by Harvard University Health Services.

**Q. If I request an accommodation for a disability, do I have to submit medical or health information to Harvard to determine if I qualify?**

A. Yes, you must submit a [request](#) and engage in an interactive process, typically involving local HR, to identify and implement reasonable disability accommodations that enable you to work.

**Q. I am on a staggered schedule; how do I know I will not overlap with the next shift?**

A. Harvard managers are encouraged to construct staggered schedules that allow 30 minutes between shifts when possible. You must make every effort to arrive and leave on time, so that there is very little chance of overlap between shifts. To enable greater social distancing at work, you may be asked to change your schedule to allow for staggered on-campus work shifts.

**Q. Will Harvard pay for my parking?**

A. Existing annual permit holders who extended their hang tags will receive a 3.5 month credit on an FY21 permit when they become available for sale later this year. Employees who typically commute via transit or occasionally drive to campus and are now driving more regularly are eligible for no charge daily parking through July 31, 2020 at select Harvard facilities in Cambridge and Allston. Visit [transportation.harvard.edu/parking](https://transportation.harvard.edu/parking) for the most up-to-date information.

**Time Away from Work**

**Q. My manager sent me home sick but I have no accrued sick time left. What should I do?**

A. The temporarily enhanced sick time policy allows for the advance (before it is accrued) use of paid sick time for up to 14 days. It can be used for illness, to meet self-isolation or quarantine requirements stemming from exposure, or for the active care of dependents when they are ill or because of a disruption in their schooling or care related to COVID-19.

**Q. What happens when I reach -14 days of sick time?**

A. You will need to work with local HR to explore other options depending on your circumstances. Options may include using of other kinds of paid time off (e.g., vacation, personal), applying for short-term disability or unpaid leave, reducing your time status, or taking Time at Own Expense. Harvard's extensive and flexible benefits are designed to provide as much support as possible during the pandemic, while being consistent and equitable to all employees, and helping the University recover and resume operations.

**Q. What can I do if I cannot work due to childcare demands?**

A. Harvard recognizes that school closures and lack of other childcare is a major stressor for working parents. [Resources and supports that may be of help are summarize here](#). If none of these solutions work for your family, talk to local HR or your manager about options such as:

- reducing your time commitment or using paid time off;
- altering your regular work hours so that you may share child care responsibilities with others when they are not working;
- taking a leave of absence.