Back to Work Checklist

COVID-19 has changed the way we work. Companies will need to consider multiple factors as their employees begin to return to their workplaces. Be prepared by considering the suggestions below and follow what makes sense for your company. Flexibility is going to be key! Your employees will be scared, and an adaptable workplace will be ideal.

A. Workplace Safety: Employers must ensure their workplaces are as safe as possible. Communicate how safety is a top priority to your employees and customers.

Safety measures might include:

1. ☐Implementing employee health screening procedures:
    - ☐Temperature checks
    - ☐Stay-at-home requirements
2. ☐Exposure communications to affected staff
3. ☐Increased signage to encourage social distancing and hand washing
4. ☐Providing personal protective equipment (PPE) (Masks, gloves, face shields, etc.)
5. ☐Personal hand sanitizer
6. ☐Detailing cleaning procedures and procuring ongoing supplies
7. ☐Establishing physical distancing measures within the workplace
    - ☐Consider group areas such as: breakrooms, elevators, lobby, conference rooms, cubicles
8. ☐Staggered shifts and lunch breaks
9. ☐Rotating weeks in the office and working remotely
10. ☐Moving workstations to increase separation distance
11. ☐Implementing one-way traffic patterns throughout workplace
12. ☐Restricting business travel
13. ☐Understanding and complying with OSHA
14. ☐Defining customer and/or visitor contact:
    - ☐Directing customer traffic through workplace
    - ☐Limiting the number of customers in any area at one time
    - ☐No handshakes, stay 6 feet apart
    - ☐Using video instead of in-person client meetings
    - ☐Providing contactless pickup and delivery of products

B. Employee Recalls: Think about how and when employees will return to work/worksite

Things to consider include:

1. ☐Phasing-in employees back into the workplace/office
    - ☐ Have you considered job sharing?
    - ☐What measure(s) will you use for selection? Is this nondiscriminatory?
    - ☐What voids will need to be filled if not all employees return, reduced work hours, job sharing?

2. ☐Determine schedule changes to provide the greatest protection to workers
3. ☐ What measures are available to protect high-risk employees?
   ☐Consider HIPPA issues
   ☐Consider work from home or leave of absence (LOA)
   ☐Determine increased protection when working onsite
   (including isolated workstations, additional PPE, fewer days in the office, etc.)
4. ☐Notifying the state unemployment for employees that are back to work
5. ☐Options for employees who are unable or unwilling to return to work due to:
   ☐Employees who are fearful of returning to work
   ☐Employees who have family/childcare issues
   ☐Employees who remain under quarantine due to COVID-19

C. Policy Changes: Individual policies may need to be revised or created. It is suggested to wait to update your company's full Handbook until 2021 when we know more about the long-term impact of COVID-19.

New or updated policies may include:

1. ☐Paid-leave policies adjusted to reflect regulatory requirements and business continuity
2. ☐Attendance policies relaxed to encourage sick employees to stay home
3. ☐Flexible scheduling options
4. ☐Updated telecommuting policy
5. ☐How to request telework
6. ☐Meal policies adjusted to stagger times to encourage physical distancing
7. ☐Office procedure policies. Consider the following:
   ☐Can breakrooms/lunchrooms be used (# of employees allowed at a time)?
   ☐Can conference rooms be used (#of employees allowed at a time)?
   ☐General hygiene- washing of hands, cleaning community areas (doorknobs, microwave/refrigerator handles, etc.)
8. ☐Travel policies updated to reflect essential versus nonessential travel
9. ☐Information technology policies revised to for remote support
   ☐Roll out employee equipment usage form (if necessary) to manage risk of Company Equipment used in a home office
10. ☐Expense policies revised for home office expenses
11. ☐Updated Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for any relevant changes
12. ☐ Update or implement a business continuity plan, including infectious disease control
13. ☐Amend or create Emergency/Pandemic response
14. ☐Consider creating a pandemic task force to monitor changes, protocols, laws and government orders

D. Remote Work: Is telecommuting a long-term solution for your company?
   Actions to consider include:

1. ☐Consider the long-term cost savings/expense of offering permanent remote work
       ☐Continuing to allow remote work where possible to keep employees safe
       ☐Staggering weeks in office and at home among team members, or part-time remote work on alternate weekdays
2. ☐Updating technology to support virtual workers

E. New-hire/Returning Employee Paperwork: Employees that were laid-off workers or furloughed should follow your protocols for new/rehired employees.

1. ☐ Send a return to work letter detailing:
       ☐If applicable: new title, new compensation, new hours, reporting structure changes etc.
       ☐How unemployment will be affected if employees do not return (document!)
2. ☐Submit new-hire reports for new and rehired workers
3. ☐Notify state unemployment agencies of recalled workers, whether rehired or not
4. ☐Update I-9s for any expired documents (section 3 of original 1-9) or complete a new form
5. ☐Revise onboarding process

F. Communications: Creating a clear communication plan will allow employees and customers to understand how the organization plans to move forward.
   Consider:

1. ☐Employer expectations of employees going forward
2. ☐Training on new workplace safety and disinfection protocols
3. ☐Have exposure-response communications created if/when they need to be distributed to affected employees/customers
4. ☐ Update or write an Emergency/Pandemic Response plan

G. Employee Benefits
   Review issues with your Health Insurance Broker such as:

1. ☐Eligibility for Group Health
       ☐Review any revised eligibility requirements during a layoff or furlough
       ☐Change benefit options with the carrier to best meet the employer's financial needs
2. ☐If employee premiums were paid during leave, determine if the company plans to recover those costs from employees (if allowed under PPP loan)

3. ☐Review Dependent Care Assistance Program with employees to ensure their new or revised elections are correct.
4. ☐ Review 401(k) or other pension plans eligibility issues due to layoff/furlough or reduction of hours
5. ☐Review required leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), ensure employees understand the eligibility requirements
6. ☐Create a way to track time used and collect supporting documentation for tax credit purposes
7. ☐Determine if there will be company PTO policy changes or restrictions in using paid leave
8. ☐Unemployment taxes- Add new states for employees working from their home state

H. Compensation: Review compensation policies going forward
1. ☐How the company will handle any missed annual pay increases
2. ☐Will any pay cuts need to be made?
3. ☐Understand how to reduce salaries for exempt employees without jeopardizing their status
4. ☐How will bonuses be affected, if applicable?
5. ☐Will hazard pay be offered or revoked?
6. ☐Review budgets and consider a HR Audit of compensation

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