All courses will be offered online through December. Register through the OPD calendar.

SAFELY RETURNING TO THE WORKPLACE

**What Supervisors Need to Know about Return to Work (RTW)** — Informational video that answers supervisors’ most frequently asked questions about return to work situations. This video was recorded by the Division of Human Resources, Employee Relations Office.

[Return to the Workplace](#) resource page.

**HOW TO REMIND SOMEONE TO BE SAFE AT WORK (for managers & employees)**

People will forget until it becomes habit. Joseph Grenny, author of Crucial Conversations says, “It’s Kind to Remind: Don’t be afraid to speak up!” when it comes to COVID and safety. Follow these steps.

**Speak up**

- Do not dwell on what their reaction might be - just speak up! Address it at the incident level before it becomes a pattern of perceived acceptable behavior.

- Kindly remind with a “ready phrase” or “back-pocket” response at hand. *(polished, prepared, and practiced statements you can pull from)*
  - Ex. “We are asked to wear face coverings in common spaces.”
  - Ex. “We are asked to only have 5 in the conference room.”

**Let go**

- Let them have their own reaction. Do not make it a stand-off. Their reaction may look like resentment but is most likely embarrassment. Let it go.

**Take responsibility for your own safety**

- Move away from them, leave if needed. Ex. We are asked to have meetings of this size through MS Teams.Want me to send out a Teams meeting request? (walking away)

**Escalate**

- If unsafe behaviors continue, inform your manager.

**Video:** [How to Ask Someone to Wear a Mask: Speak Up and Let Go](#)

**HOW TO KEEP YOUR TEAMS SAFE (for managers)**

**Create Collective Agreements:** Collectively discuss face coverings, public spaces, physical distancing, hand washing, cleaning visitors, etc. Don’t assume the team understands the requirements and their responsibilities to one another, clearly define.

1. Identify all spaces in which you are required to wear a face covering. How you will clean up after yourself in public areas. Which meetings will continue virtually. Visitor expectations. Etc.

2. Post reminder signs and publish guidelines.

3. Choose a “ready phrase” that works for everyone on the team to remind people about your agreement. “Ready phrases” equip people who are uncomfortable with difficult conversations. *(see article to left)*

4. Set clear guidelines and expectations and communicate any updates or new info.
   - What if I forget my face mask?
   - Which face coverings are allowed?
   - Who is exempt from face coverings?
   - What about visitors? Students?
   - What about other departments near us?

5. Communicate how you will address non-compliance of these agreements.
   - Create and communicate your process. What will trigger escalation? Who should they speak to? How will it be addressed? **Consistently apply and enforce.**

**Get help preparing for difficult return to work conversations:** OPD will hold virtual office hours over the next few weeks to help you prepare your difficult conversations. To reserve a 30- or 60-minute appointment, email Nathan Strong *(STRONgN@mailbox.sc.edu)* or Kim Pruitt *(kpruitt2@mailbox.sc.edu).*