Aduro

Work Readiness Handbook

Take charge of your "return-to-work" policy

Companies cannot rely on guidance from local, state, or federal governments to formulate a plan for reopening the workplace. Despite a consensus among the scientific community about how COVID-19 spreads and effective mitigation strategies, and despite the fact that data for COVID-19 is aggressively tracked and readily available from multiple sources, institutions both public and private continue to deliver conflicting guidance and contradict their own policies.

For example, the "Guidelines for Opening Up America Again" proposes state and regional guidelines that should be "satisfied before proceeding to phased comeback." These guidelines include a "downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period or a downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period (flat or increasing volume of tests)."

Yet many states that do not meet these "gating criteria" have already started phased reopenings, with the support of many private citizens and public officials, exacerbating perceptions of COVID-19 mitigation strategies as a political issue. Balancing the need to jump-start a faltering economy with the risks presented by COVID-19 is a tough challenge. But the economy can't function without healthy workers, so it's also a catch-22. And gaps between conflicting attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs about the global pandemic make scenario planning for your company even more complex.

Your return-to-work policy is up to you.

Aduro's Return-to-Work Handbook

Aduro created this handbook to help executive management teams create a plan for when and how to allow employees, visitors, and service partners back in the workplace. Aduro's Return-to-Work Handbook not only provides a readiness model, but also provides clear guidance on tools, protocols, processes, and indicators for each stage of the model.

Aduro's Return-to-Work Handbook is based on Aduro's Work Readiness Model™. Our model is a holistic framework that enhances and accelerates individual, team, and company performance by focusing on a comprehensive approach to employee well-being.

In an environment characterized by conflicting guidance from private and public stakeholders, Aduro's Return-to-

Work Handbook offers guidelines and resources backed by science with a primary focus on accelerating your return to peak performance by responding to unpredictable circumstances through the organizing principle of well-being.

It's important to note that the handbook and the model acknowledge the possibility that companies may need to advance and retreat at different moments in the coming months. Circumstances associated with COVID-19 are unpredictable and may be unique to different offices, cities, counties, states, and countries. This will be a long journey with many highs and lows along the way. But, together, we will create a new sense of organizational normalcy.

> **Together we will create a new sense of organizational normalcy."**

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Assessing risk tolerance

The first step for formulating your return-to-work plan is to determine your risk tolerance. Remember, we're talking about a trade-off between organizational normalcy and human well-being. The more we emphasize organizational normalcy, the more people we put at risk. The more we emphasize mitigation, the more we put organizational normalcy at risk (and for some companies, that can have a major impact on company performance).

So, where does your company fall on the risk tolerance spectrum?

Let's use the federal government's guidance as a litmus test for risk tolerance. The White House says one reasonable gating criteria before initiating a phased return-to-work is a downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period. So let's start with 14 days of fewer cases as the "moderate" midpoint of our risk tolerance scale (see figure 1).
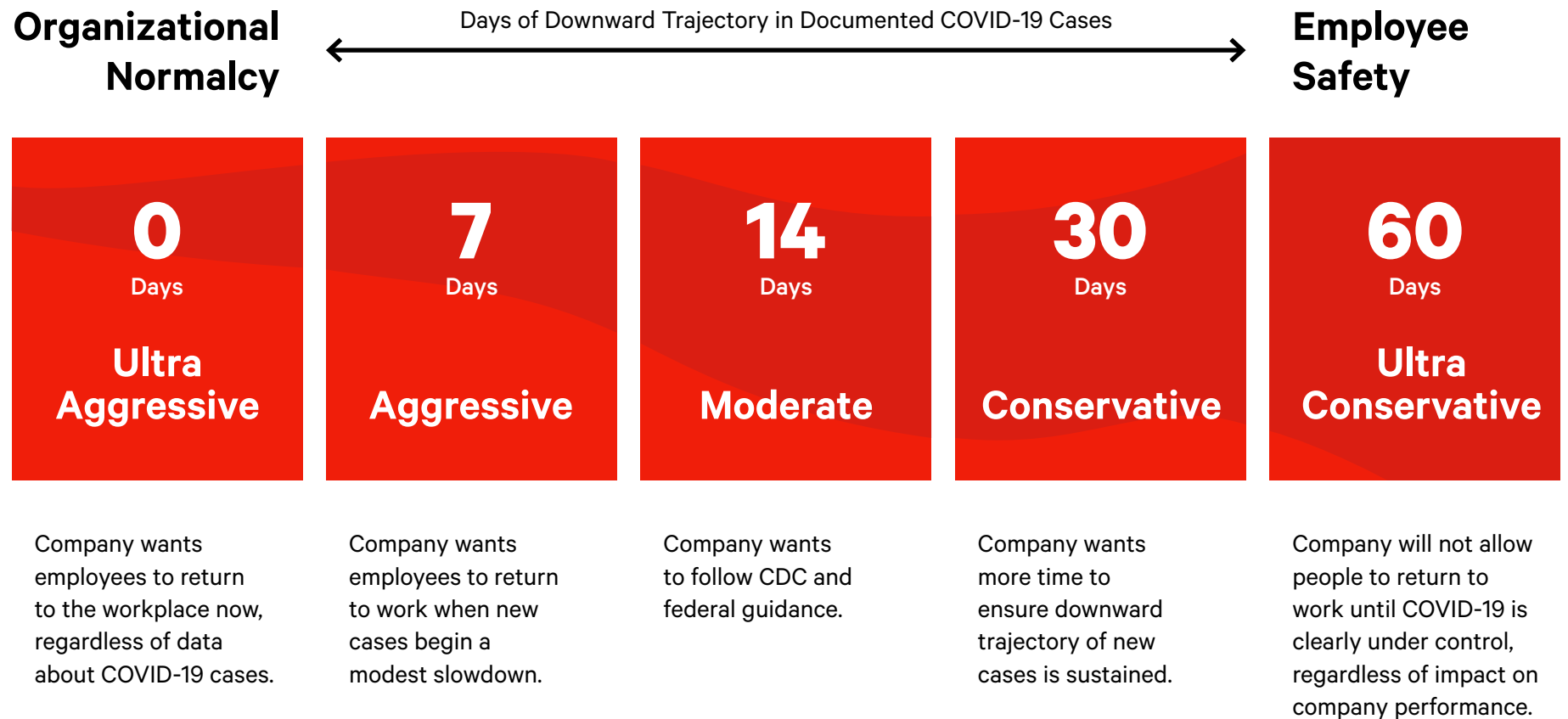
Now, that being said, many states have begun reopening despite the fact that there is an upward trajectory of documented cases in their region. Companies that want employees, visitors, and service partners to return to the workplace "right now" have an "ultra aggressive" risk tolerance.

Finally, there are companies that will not allow people to return to the workplace until COVID-19 is clearly under control, no matter the cost to organizational normalcy. While strong company performance is still possible in this scenario, there are no doubt obstacles that must be overcome. Companies that completely prioritize employee safety over organizational normalcy have an "ultra conservative" risk tolerance.

It's perhaps important to highlight that Aduro's Return-to-Work Handbook is built on a nonjudgmental model. Our model does not recommend one level of risk tolerance over another. It only seeks to gain insight into risk tolerance as a tool for efficient decision-making and for creating the best possible plan for a return to the workplace that is rooted in a comprehensive approach to employee well-being.

(Figure 1)

Risk Tolerance Scale

Organizational Normalcy

Days of Downward Trajectory in Documented COVID-19 Cases ⟵⟶

Employee Safety

0 Days **Ultra Aggressive**	**7** Days **Aggressive**	**14** Days **Moderate**	**30** Days **Conservative**	**60** Days **Ultra Conservative**

Company wants employees to return to the workplace now, regardless of data about COVID-19 cases.

Company wants employees to return to work when new cases begin a modest slowdown.

Company wants to follow CDC and federal guidance.

Company wants more time to ensure downward trajectory of new cases is sustained.

Company will not allow people to return to work until COVID-19 is clearly under control, regardless of impact on company performance.
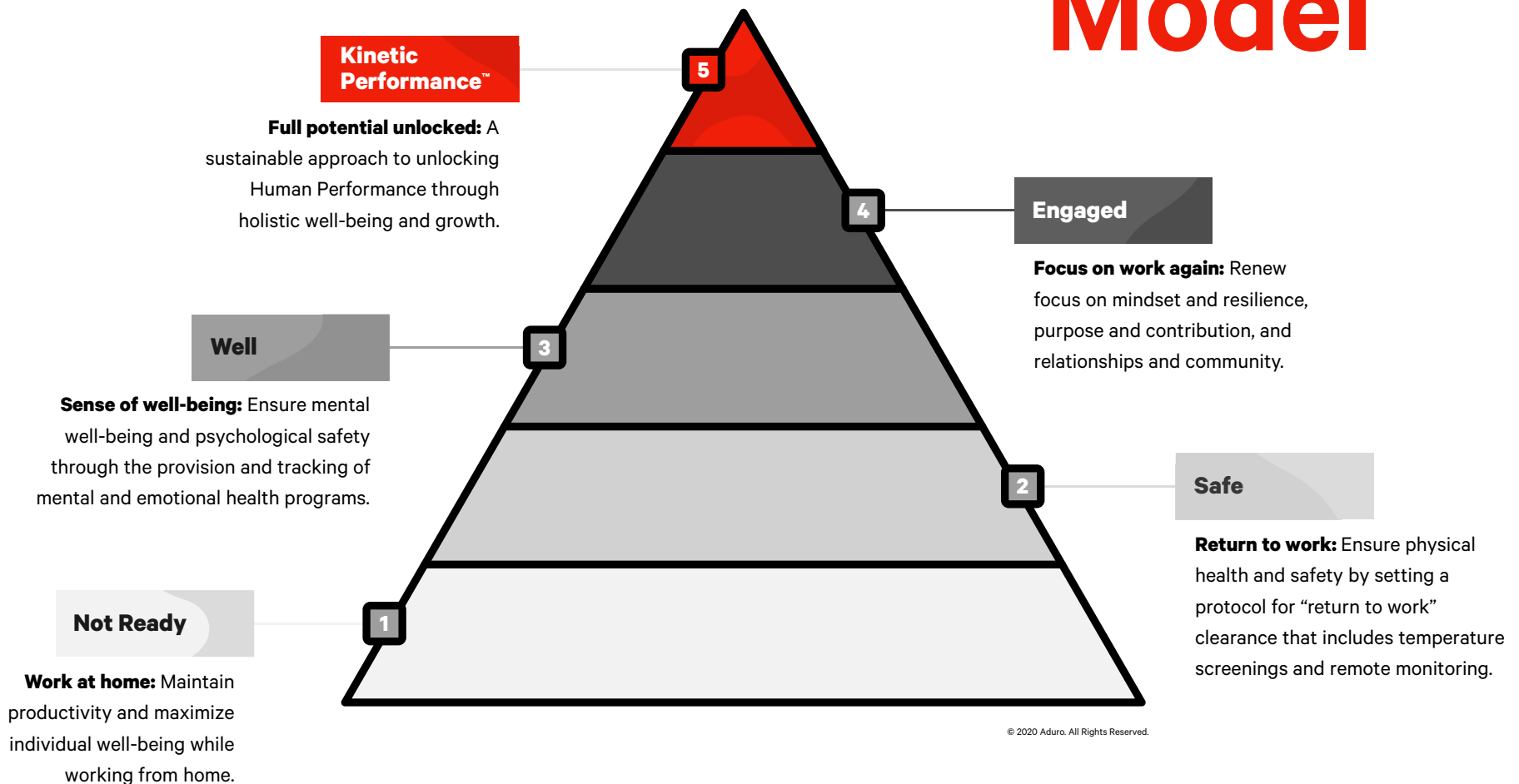
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Aduro's Work Readiness Model™

Starting with a clear understanding of your company's shared position on risk tolerance will help guide many decisions you make when applying Aduro's Work Readiness Model. Our model is a staged process for not only getting back to work, but coming out on the other side of COVID-19 better and stronger than ever.

The Work Readiness Model comprises five stages of "readiness" starting with "Not Ready" and ascending all the way to "Kinetic Performance™," which is a sustainable level of peak performance for individuals, teams, and the company as a whole (see figure 2). We not only provide recommendations for how to manage each stage of readiness, but we also suggest gating criteria, or triggers, for moving from stage to stage. Remember that some companies will need to advance and retreat through different stages based on factors that may be largely beyond their control (such as a new upward trajectory, or spike, in regional COVID-19 cases).

(Figure 2)

Aduro's Work Readiness Model™

Kinetic Performance™

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Full potential unlocked: A sustainable approach to unlocking Human Performance through holistic well-being and growth.

4 — **Engaged**

Focus on work again: Renew focus on mindset and resilience, purpose and contribution, and relationships and community.

Well — **3**

Sense of well-being: Ensure mental well-being and psychological safety through the provision and tracking of mental and emotional health programs.

2 — **Safe**

Return to work: Ensure physical health and safety by setting a protocol for "return to work" clearance that includes temperature screenings and remote monitoring.

Not Ready — **1**

Work at home: Maintain productivity and maximize individual well-being while working from home.

The stages of work readiness

Returning to work in the COVID-19 era is not an event — it's a process. Aduro's Work Readiness Model™ provides specific guidance and resources for companies managing this process based on four organizing principles:

3
Triggers must be clearly defined for passage between stages.

4
A holistic focus on well-being is the core of matching and surpassing past performance levels.

1
Every company needs its own plan.

2
A company must be prepared to advance and retreat through multiple stages.

In the next few pages, we offer a situation overview and goal for each stage, while also offering guidance on what employees need at different stages, as well as the solutions required to meet their needs.

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Stage 1:
Not Ready

Situation

Many companies (and their employees) are simply not ready to return to work. Perhaps their physical locations are in regions where the trajectory of new cases is still on the rise. Or perhaps they have not experienced significant declines in business performance after transitioning to a distributed work model and choose to remain "closed" out of an "abundance of caution." For most employees, this means working from home.

Goal

Maintain productivity and maximize individual well-being while working from home.

Employee Needs

Working from home during the era of COVID-19 creates major stressors. For many, balancing work with other obligations like childcare and housework leaves little time for self-care. On top of obvious stressors, many families have lost the help of friends, family members, and service workers due to social distancing regulations. And this is, of course, all compounded by the increased friction associated with formerly simple errands like grocery shopping or meal preparation.

Solutions

To navigate this difficult transition to a new working style balanced with the multiple stressors created by working from home, companies must be prepared to offer their employees coaches and resources to help develop functional work environments while maintaining individual well-being. Furthermore, individual well-being must be tracked to identify opportunities for positive interventions. Finally, effective communication to employees (at all stages of the model) is paramount. The best policies are no better than the worst if they are not consistently communicated.

Stage 2:
Safe

Situation

Based on your company's risk tolerance and the triggers that have been established to mark the advance or retreat to a new stage (more on that later), employees will begin to return to work. Most companies should consider allowing employees to return to work in stages, starting with those jobs that are most essential to the physical operations of the business. During the second stage of work readiness, companies must implement baseline safety protocols to ensure that only healthy people enter the office.

Goal

Ensure employee and visitor safety by implementing standard work-readiness protocols.

Employee Needs

Many companies will overlook the fact that coming back to the office will be just as stressful (and perhaps even more so) as being forced to work from home. Companies cannot ignore the fact that people exhibit different attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs associated with COVID-19 linked to their political and philosophical views. This will leave some employees bristling at safety measures, while others will experience extreme anxiety if safety measures are not universally applied and followed.

Solutions

Companies must ensure physical health and safety by setting a protocol for "return-to-work" clearance that includes remote monitoring along with on-site temperature and health screenings and mental health resources. This protocol must be evenly applied to all employees, utilizing on-site screeners to conduct thermal temperature scans, administer health surveys and symptom questionnaires, enforce clearance protocols, and assist with contact tracing, should the need arise. Companies should also consider their stance on personal protection equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves. Ultra-conservative companies are likely to make them mandatory. In the "Safe" stage, effective and consistent employee communication is more critical than at any other stage given the fact that many of these solutions represent significant transformations in the employee experience.

Stage 3:
Well

Situation

People cannot feel psychologically safe if they feel their physical safety is at risk. Moving from "safe" to "well" cannot occur if baseline safety protocols are not maintained for an extended period of time. But when physical safety has been secured, it's time to increase your focus on well-being.

Goal

Ensure mental well-being and psychological safety through the provision and tracking of mental and emotional health programs.

Employee Needs

Employees are likely to have suffered many anxieties and hardships while transitioning to and from working at home. For example, separation anxiety, grief, and depression may accompany the early stages of returning to work for many people. Our ability to focus and be effective may be greatly compromised as our mind wanders to and worries about all the many things beyond our control, from what's going on at home to what's happening around the world.

Solutions

Well-being trackers, behavioral health coaching, health screeners, mental health programs, and on-site coordination become even more important in the "Well" stage as companies work to hold the line on safety protocols while also addressing the underlying issues that may be impacting an employee's well-being and therefore their performance.

Stage 4:
Engaged

Situation

No company should ever lose their focus on the safety and well-being of their employees. But at some point in the future, we will have settled into a "post-COVID-19" environment. Whether that looks like a return to normal or the settling in of a "new normal" is difficult to predict. Regardless, in Stage 4, companies will need to bring performance into focus alongside safety and well-being. After all, when individuals, teams, and companies are not performing, they put jobs (and the broader economy) at greater risk.

Goal

Return to previous levels of individual, team, and company performance.

Employee Needs

People will need help developing a productive mindset and building resilience before they can become engaged in their work again. They will also want to feel a sense of purpose and their unique contribution to the vision, purpose, and goals of the company. Remember that COVID-19 has caused all of us (in ways both big and small) to evaluate what matters in life. The global pandemic has left many feeling isolated. So people will also need to re-establish their work relationships and feel a sense of "belonging" both at work and in their communities.

Solutions

While maintaining a focus on safety and well-being, companies will need to create an environment for enhanced performance by launching a more formal and holistic approach to wellness that includes solutions for lifestyle and health, mindset and resilience, money and prosperity, development and growth, relationships and community, and purpose and contribution. To be clear, this will require an investment in software and services focused on holistic well-being.

Some companies will view this emphasis on well-being as "soft." These are probably the same companies that felt that way about well-being before COVID-19, and addressed the bare minimum well-being needs of their employees during the peak of the crisis. But consider this question: "Can an employee become truly engaged in their work again without rekindling their hope for a better future?" The science says, "No." These six dimensions of well-being mentioned above are critical to people returning to previous levels of performance. The last question you want an employee to ask is, "What's it all for, anyway?"

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Stage 5:
Kinetic Performance

Situation

In Stage 5, the critical issues presented by COVID-19 have now been addressed and the spread of the virus has been contained. Regardless of progress on treatments or vaccines, at some point in the future we will know with greater certainty what we are dealing with and how we must adapt in both our personal and professional lives. At that time, there will be a significant shift from crisis management to performance management. Companies and workers alike will say, "We are through the worst of it and we now have the opportunity to emerge better and stronger than before."

Goal

Unlock the full human potential of your company through a sustainable approach to well-being and growth.

Employee Needs

Stage 5 represents a full restoration of the aspirational energy that drives great performance. People will crave resources and guidance to unlock their full potential, both in their personal and work lives, and will need help shifting gears to an optimistic outlook.

Solutions

Companies that are committed to building a culture of sustainable peak performance (what we at Aduro refer to as Kinetic Performance™) must stop thinking about well-being as a loose category of "nice to have" tools and techniques (like meditation apps and weight loss programs) that may improve employee engagement. Rather, companies must embrace the philosophical and cultural shift that peak performance is rooted in holistic well-being.

That means elevating the conversation within your company from wellness interventions focused on individuals to a peer-connected network focused exclusively on maximizing human potential by empowering managers to deliver effective coaching alongside a mix of well-being tools that address every dimension of work-life satisfaction.

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Triggers

Now that we have described the five stages of Aduro's Work Readiness Model™, it is critical to understand that your company must establish in advance quantitative and qualitative triggers (see figure 3) to guide the advance and retreat from stage to stage. Without pre-established triggers derived from the examination of your organization's risk profile, two outcomes are nearly certain:

- The temptation to advance (or retreat) through stages prematurely will be too great for many companies to ignore

- The amount of time spent debating criteria as your company contemplates movement from stage to stage "in the moment" will divert valuable resources and delay important decisions

The triggers that drive your decisions may be very different from other companies. But these differences will likely be due to different risk tolerance profiles or insufficient scenario planning. By creating a plan and sticking to it, you will outperform many of your peer companies that succumb to uncertainty and conflicting guidance from private and public institutions.

Triggers worth considering for your plan are:

- Downward trajectory of new COVID-19 cases reported within your region(s) for a predetermined number of days

- Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within your region(s) for a predetermined number of days

- Availability of testing within your region(s)

- Availability of safety supplies for your office location(s)

- Availability of child care in your region(s)

(Figure 3)

Aduro's Work Readiness Triggers

1
Not Ready
Public regulation, stated risk tolerance, or strong employee sentiment makes return to workplace illegal or unacceptable.

2
Safe
Public restrictions lifted, risk tolerance criteria met, ample inventory of personal hygiene products and PPE, and access to professional screening.

3
Well
Majority of workforce returned, basic health and safety stable, and access to professional well-being tracking, coaching, and program coordination.

4
Engaged
Company-wide well-being and employee satisfaction scores increase for predetermined period of time.

5
Kinetic Performance
Individual, team, and company performance have improved for predetermined period of time.

Policy Decisions

Triggers should also be accompanied by policy decisions. Here is a list of policy decisions to consider for each phase of your work readiness plan:

- ☐ Percentage of workforce allowed in office per day
- ☐ Clearance protocols
- ☐ On-site screeners
- ☐ Thermal temperature scans
- ☐ Health surveys and symptom checks
- ☐ Contact tracing
- ☐ Well-being trackers
- ☐ Social distancing requirements
- ☐ Visitor limitations
- ☐ Travel restrictions
- ☐ Meeting capacity restrictions
- ☐ Bathroom capacity restrictions
- ☐ One-way foot traffic policies
- ☐ Office layout
- ☐ Personal protection equipment (PPE)
- ☐ Personal hygiene products

- ☐ Cafeteria, break room, lobby, and other communal area restrictions
- ☐ Office cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation
- ☐ Flexible work modalities
- ☐ Training on healthy hygiene practices
- ☐ Plan for responding to sick employee
- ☐ "Vulnerable worker" policy
- ☐ Signage promoting safety practices
- ☐ Physical barrier installation
- ☐ Event participation
- ☐ Public transportation usage
- ☐ Absenteeism monitoring

Sample Plan

Stage 1
Not Ready

Work Readiness Plan

Acme Corporation
May 22, 2020
Risk Tolerance: Conservative

Triggers

- Upward trajectory of new COVID-19 cases within our region(s)
- Upward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests
- Insufficient availability of testing
- Insufficient availability of safety supplies for our office
- Insufficient availability of child care for non-essential workers

Policies

- Only essential workers allowed onsite, but in any case, no more than 10% per day
- Onsite screeners administering thermal temperature scans, symptom checks and health surveys
- Well-being trackers for all employees
- Social distance requirement of 10 feet in office at all times
- No visitors allowed in office
- No business travel allowed
- Only one person allowed in bathrooms at a time
- No physical meetings
- No use of conference rooms
- No use of communal areas
- Mask must be worn at all times
- Office cleaned and disinfected every day
- "Vulnerable workers" not permitted in office
- No workers utilizing public transportation permitted in office

Solutions

- Onsite screeners
- Biometric screening
- Health Surveys
- Coaches
- Well-being resources
- Clearance protocols
- Onsite coordination

Sample Plan

Stage 2
Safe

Triggers

- Downward trajectory of new COVID-19 cases for 30 consecutive days within our region(s)
- Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests for 30 consecutive days
- Sufficient availability of testing for all people with symptoms
- Sufficient availability of safety supplies for our office
- Sufficient availability of child care for non-essential workers

Policies

- No more than 50% of employees allowed on site per day
- Onsite screeners administering thermal temperature scans, symptom checks and health surveys
- Well-being trackers for all employees
- Social distance requirement of 10 feet in office at all times
- No visitors allowed in office
- No business travel allowed
- Only one person allowed in bathrooms at a time
- No physical meetings
- No use of conference rooms
- No use of communal areas
- Mask must be worn at all times
- Office cleaned and disinfected every day
- "Vulnerable workers" not permitted in office
- No workers utilizing public transportation permitted in office

Solutions

- Onsite screeners
- Biometric screening
- Health Surveys
- Coaches
- Well-being resources
- Clearance protocols
- Onsite coordination

Sample Plan

Stage 3
Well

Triggers

- Downward trajectory of new COVID-19 cases for 60 consecutive days within our region(s)
- Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests for 60 consecutive days
- Widespread availability of testing for all people with symptoms
- Sufficient availability of safety supplies for our office
- Sufficient availability of child care for all workers

Policies

- No more than 75% of employees allowed on site per day
- Onsite screeners administering thermal temperature scans, symptom checks and health surveys
- Well-being trackers for all employees
- Social distance requirement of 10 feet in office at all times
- Visitors allowed by special permission
- Business travel allowed by special permission
- Normal bathroom utilization
- Physical meetings limited to 4 participants
- Conference rooms disinfected after each use
- No use of communal areas
- Mask must be worn at all times
- Office cleaned and disinfected every day
- "Vulnerable workers" not permitted in office
- Workers utilizing public transportation permitted in office

Solutions

- Onsite screeners
- Biometric screening
- Health Surveys
- Behaviorial health coaching
- Well-being resources
- Clearance protocols
- Onsite coordination

Stage 4
Engaged

Triggers

- Downward trajectory of new COVID-19 cases for 90 consecutive days within our region(s)
- Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests for 90 consecutive days
- Widespread availability of testing for all people in region
- Sufficient availability of safety supplies for our office
- Sufficient availability of child care for all workers

Policies

- 100% of employees allowed on site per day, but teleworking is highly encouraged
- Onsite screeners administering thermal temperature scans, symptom checks and health surveys
- Well-being trackers for all employees
- Social distance requirement of 10 feet in office at all times
- Visitors allowed by special permission
- Business travel allowed by special permission
- Normal bathroom utilization
- Physical meetings limited to 6 participants
- Conference rooms disinfected after each use
- Use of communal areas with social distancing restrictions
- Mask must be worn at all times
- Office cleaned and disinfected three days per week
- "Vulnerable workers" permitted in office, but teleworking is highly encouraged
- Workers utilizing public transportation permitted in office

Solutions

- Onsite screeners
- Biometric screening
- Health Surveys
- Behaviorial health coaching
- Well-being resources
- Clearance protocols
- Onsite coordination
- Holistic well-being platform

Sample Plan

Stage 5
Kinetic Performance

Triggers

- Downward trajectory of new COVID-19 cases for 120 consecutive days within our region(s)

- Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests for 120 consecutive days

- Widespread availability of testing for all people with symptoms

- Sufficient availability of safety supplies for our office

- Sufficient availability of child care for all workers

Policies

- 100% of employees allowed on site per day

- Onsite screeners administering thermal temperature scans, symptom checks and health surveys

- Well-being trackers for all employees

- Social distance requirement of 6 feet in office at all times

- All visitors allowed

- Business travel allowed

- Normal bathroom utilization

- Physical meetings limited to 10 participants

- Conference rooms disinfected every morning

- Use of communal areas with social distancing restrictions

- Masks are optional

- Office cleaned and disinfected according to normal schedule

- "Vulnerable workers" permitted in office

- Workers utilizing public transportation permitted in office

Solutions

- Onsite screeners

- Biometric screening

- Health Surveys

- Behaviorial health coaching

- Well-being resources

- Clearance protocols

- Onsite coordination

- Holistic well-being platform

- Peer-connected well-being network

- Manager-led coaching support

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Conclusion

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues around the world, business leaders are struggling with when and how to reopen their physical locations. These decisions are made more difficult by constantly shifting guidance from public and private institutions.

Ultimately, the responsibility for when and how to reopen your physical locations to employees, visitors, and service partners rests almost entirely with your executive management team. And it will be one of the most consequential business decisions you ever make. We created Aduro's Return-to-Work Handbook to offer practical guidance on what should be considered when deciding when and how to reopen your offices.

We hope you find it to be one valuable source among many to help guide your decisions during one of the most challenging times in world history.

Learn more about Aduro's return-to-work solutions at adurolife.com/solutions/return-to-work