



Businesses can take steps to support their workforce on their return after lockdown. Use this process to re-engage with staff on a step-by-step basis.

STEP 1 Identify timeline to reopening

Identify what date your business will be able to reopen so that you can work out when your engagement with staff needs to start.

STEP 2 Engagement letters

A great way to start to re-engage with your employees is to send a personal letter or email to them from the CEO / Director advising them of any significant events that took place during closure, planned date for reopening and how they will be communicated with during the preparation phase for re-opening.

STEP 4 Team charter sessions

Set up departmental / team sessions via an online method such as zoom, facilitated by Line Managers. This is likely to be the first time your teams have been in touch with each other for a while and is your chance to get them excited about returning to work. Use the session to put together a team charter that lays out the values that the team will return with, and how they will support each other through what could be an anxious time for some.

These sessions also provide the opportunity to highlight any pre-identified expected changes to customer demographics and how these customers should be engaged with.

STEP 3 Pre-return health questionnaire

In line with best practice, companies should ask all employees to fill out a pre-return health questionnaire. This should aim to cover the following areas:

- If the employee has experienced Covid symptoms or been in contact with anyone that has.
- General wellbeing and identifying any concerns around mental health.
- Identifying any concerns, practical or emotional, around returning to work.
- Identify any new medical conditions that have arisen during the period of closure that the company should be aware of.
- Consent for on-site temperature checks where required.
- Consent for information to be stored in HR Files (following GDPR).

STEP 5 Individual welfare check-in

Line Managers should arrange to have individual virtual welfare check-in calls with each member of their team before they return to the workplace. This call is an opportunity to:

- Engage one-on-one with the employee.
- Address any concerns that were highlighted on the pre-return health questionnaire.
- Advise the employee of any changes to processes and procedures within the workplace.
- Remind the employee of relevant Covid procedures they must adhere to on the return to the workplace.
- Check how the employee is feeling about their return to work and try to address any anxiety.
- Advise the employee of upcoming training sessions that will take place in advance of re-opening.

Individual welfare chats should continue with employees once the business has reopened to ensure staff have reintegrated into the workplace and are getting the support they need.

STEP 6 Risk assessments

Compile a list of any employees who are deemed to be vulnerable or who have caring responsibilities and carry out individual risk assessments ahead of any return to work.

STEP 7 Online training sessions

With many workplaces having been closed for six months or more, some statutory training may have become out of date – e.g. Health and Safety, First Aid. As training is covered during furlough, now is the perfect time to get this training done via online virtual sessions (where possible) ahead of reopening.

STEP 8 On-site training

Any training that cannot be done virtually should be carried out on-site in the days before reopening. Re-training is an essential component to ensuring that staff return to work feeling safe and confident.