

Date: June 3, 2020

To: All ISU Supervisors

From: Kristi Darr, Interim Vice President for University Human Resources

Subject: COVID-19 High-Risk Alternative Work Arrangements

As you begin to develop and finalize plans for safely returning individuals in your units to their normal work location, it is important to recognize that there are members of our campus community who are, or who live with someone who is, at a higher risk to develop severe illness from COVID-19 based on their age or underlying medical condition, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). In order to best support these individuals in limiting their exposure to COVID-19 during this phase of increasing campus operations, we have developed a process to confidentially review and discuss potential options in order for them to safely perform their job duties or responsibilities. This process applies specifically to Faculty, Professional and Scientific (P&S) and Merit employees as well as graduate assistants, postdoctoral scholars and student workers.

As a supervisor, you do not need to take steps to notify employees of this process. All employees will be notified via email regarding the process and the steps they should take if they feel their circumstances apply. Please note that you **should not** single out employees that you believe are high risk. The following process is voluntary for people who identify as high risk as defined by the CDC. For example, a 65+ year-old employee may feel comfortable with mitigation strategies to teach on campus in the fall. This individual is not required to complete the process if they are comfortable with the return to campus plan that has been developed for their particular work responsibilities. If employees have expressed concern or reluctance to return to campus because they believe they are, or live with someone who is, at high risk, please refer them to this process rather than asking them to disclose sensitive information to you and/or attempting to help them determine if they meet the criteria on your own without review and consultation with UHR.

The [current guidance](#) provided by the CDC defines individuals at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 as:

- People 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility

People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)

- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

Faculty, P&S and Merit employees as well as graduate assistants, postdoctoral scholars and student workers who meet one or more of the above-defined risk factors, or live with someone that meets one or more of the above risk factors, may submit a request for an alternative work arrangement. The request is submitted electronically through the COVID-19 High Risk Alternative Work Arrangement portal located on [the UHR COVID-19 website](#). Once a request has been submitted, the individual will receive an email with the additional documentation that may be needed, and the applicable deadlines to submit information, in order to timely review and discuss options. Sensitive documentation regarding an individual's medical conditions will be kept confidential throughout the process and will not be shared with supervisors. It is critical that individuals adhere to the deadlines and the interactive discussions that need to occur in this review process in order for work units to plan ahead, particularly for the upcoming fall semester.

Faculty are to submit their requests and necessary documentation to University Human Resources (UHR) as soon as possible, and no later than July 1 for fall consideration. There may be unpredictable circumstances that arise (such as the diagnosis of a new medical condition) where some faculty will need to submit a request later than that date. For all others eligible for this process, they are to submit their requests as soon as possible but at a minimum, following the notification from their supervisor of their plans to return to their normal work location. Applicable documentation should be provided to UHR no later than five (5) days following the request being submitted.

The health and safety of the Iowa State community continues to be our top priority. We recognize that COVID-19 is still present in our community, and we ask that you to work with us to mitigate the risk to our campus community, particularly for our most vulnerable. Please continue to refer to the [ISU COVID-19](#) webpage for the most current information and resources.

If you have any questions, please email [COVIDHRsupport@iastate.edu](mailto:COVIDHRsupport@iastate.edu).