

# PTC Return to Work Plan

The following plan for reopening has been developed based on guidance from the South Carolina Department of Administration, SC DHEC, and after consultation with all Piedmont Technical College offices and functional areas. This is a high-level overview of the plan, and each individual functional area should work with their Vice President to implement operational-level procedures to ensure full, effective implementation, while prioritizing the safety and health of our students, our employees, and our campus community.

## Current State

- All non-essential employees work from home. Essential employees on campus.
- Limited number of employees access campus for essential functions like mail pick-up.
- Employees and students accessing campus must be approved in advance.
- No access to campus buildings for the public.
- All classes offered online.
- Mail pick-up several times a week. Staff going into campus for manual processes on a limited basis.
- Facilities staff will implement CDC [disinfecting and cleaning practices](#) in preparation for a move to Phase 1.
- PTC will implement additional safety measures for front-facing offices, including but not limited to building access controls, plexiglass barriers, social distancing procedures, increased sanitation, etc.

## Fall Course Delivery

PTC is currently planning to conduct the fall semester in primarily online and hybrid modalities, and will provide students with a selection of courses that can be delivered face to face, while ensuring social distancing protocols are followed and appropriate safety measures are in place. Courses with a lab, shop or clinical component will meet in person in small numbers as directed by faculty.

Circumstances this Fall will dictate which phase, as detailed below, that the college is in at any given time, and may allow or necessitate changes to the Fall course delivery plan to ensure the safety of the PTC student body, our employees and the communities we serve.

If circumstances allow for a full reopening, we will adjust our schedules accordingly.

## Phase 1—To begin June 1

### College Operations

- Designated employees return to campus on staggered schedules to ensure social distancing. Schedules will be limited to ensure that employees can continue to work from home to the maximum extent possible, while staffing critical business functions across the institution.
- Employees who have been designated to return who are at-risk for COVID-19 as defined by the CDC may request to continue to work from home with appropriate documentation. PTC HR will be the point of contact for this accommodation process.
- All students and visitors to campus will be by appointment only. Students and visitors should communicate directly with the appropriate college offices to make appointments.
- Students, employees and visitors who are sick or who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms should not report to campus. Individuals reporting to campus will be screened with a questionnaire prior to being allowed on campus.
- Faculty, employees and visitors will be required to wear appropriate personal protective equipment while in common areas and when in proximity to others in order to prevent the spread of the virus. Piedmont Technical College will provide appropriate face masks to employees and students who do not have one.
- College credit classes continue in an online/hybrid format.
- Unfinished labs in credit classes from the spring semester will be held during this time. Faculty will schedule these labs with their students.
- Economic and Workforce Development classes will be offered on a limited basis meeting in person only as necessary.
- Social distancing of 6 feet apart will be expected at all times.
- Facility disinfecting and cleaning practices as recommended by the CDC will continue.
- Meetings will continue in an online format in order to maintain social distancing. Conference rooms will remain locked during this time.

**Training:** Before returning employees to the workplace, PTC will provide training to employees on public health guidance, agency specific guidelines, and information about properly donning/doffing PPE and cleaning and disinfection.

**Signage:** Signage will be displayed throughout the workplace reminding employees of guidance from the CDC and DHEC on entering the workplace.

**PPE During Phase 1:** Employees returned to the workplace during this phase, and students who are on campus are expected to wear appropriate face coverings at all times while on campus. The only exception is if an employee is in their office, alone, or if an employee has an HR-approved accommodation for medical reasons.

**Follow Public Health Guidance:** Employees who return to the workplace during Phase 1 should follow the advice of public health officials including:

- Stay home when sick or if you have been instructed by a health professional to quarantine due to close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- Stay at least 6 feet apart.
- Wear an appropriate face covering at all times unless in your private office.
- Frequently wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (door handles, phones, keyboards, desktops, etc.). Wherever possible, remove high touch surfaces such as trashcan lids.
- Regularly wipe down shared equipment including copies, fax machines, and common workspaces before and after use. Conference rooms and shared spaces such as break rooms will remain locked during this phase.
- Meetings will be conducted through conference calls or other remote means even while employees are in the office to maintain social distancing.

**Workplace Modifications to Promote Social Distancing:** PTC will make a number of workplace modifications appropriate to maintain social distancing prior to implementation of Phase 1, including plexiglass shields for front-facing administrative personnel, implementing one-way flow of movement through offices where doing so is feasible, spacing computers in shared lab spaces, and in seating areas. Signage limiting the number of individuals in elevators and stairwells at one time will be developed and posted.

**Vehicle Travel:** If employees must travel in vehicles to perform their job duties, the number of employees in a vehicle should be limited to the maximum extent possible and whenever possible only one employee should be in a vehicle at one time. If the job duties of an employee require traveling with a crew in a vehicle, vehicle occupants will wear face coverings, use hand sanitizer and allow for the circulation of outside air.

**Non-Essential Travel:** Non-essential travel continues to be prohibited during this phase. All travel to be approved by leadership.

**Interactions with the Public:** PTC will continue to limit face-to-face interaction with the public to the extent possible while still maintaining critical business operations. Minimum protective guidelines where face-to-face interaction is required will be established as appropriate to each functional area. For example, it is strongly recommended that:

- Both the employee and member of the public should be encouraged to wear appropriate face coverings throughout the interaction.
- To the extent possible, PTC will identify one area within each functional area where all face-to-face meetings with members of the public will be conducted.
- Areas where face-to-face meetings are being held should have clear social distancing markings and agencies should consider adding a sneeze guard or similar barrier between the employee and member of the public.
- Agencies are strongly encouraged to only see members of the public by appointment and not accept walk-ins during Phase 1. A member of the public should be instructed to call a designated number upon arrival for the meeting.

- Areas where face-to-face meetings are held should be wiped down with disinfecting solutions or wipes after each meeting is concluded and before another meeting is held. Areas should be thoroughly cleaned each evening.
- Separate employee and student restrooms to be designated in each building as feasible.
- Writing utensils and other items such as clipboards used by the public should be sanitized.

**Employee Exposure Protocols:** Employees who have tested positive or who have been exposed to individuals who have tested positive should self-disclose to their supervisor, who will notify the HR Department to ensure the safety of their co-workers and our students to the greatest extent possible.

If an employee who has returned to the workplace contracts COVID-19, PTC will notify fellow employees using the exposure communications prepared by Admin and found at the following link: <https://www.admin.sc.gov/sites/default/files/Employee%20Exposure%20Notice.pdf>

The PTC Human Resources Department will be the primary point of contact for employee questions related to COVID-19. The HR Office will ensure all appropriate privacy and confidentiality procedures and regulations are followed. Communications regarding exposure should not be initiated or directed by front line supervisors.

Employees exposed to a co-worker with confirmed COVID-19 should monitor themselves for symptoms and may be recommended for a 14-day quarantine based on the DHEC Epidemiology team's risk assessment. The area where the infected individual worked should be isolated for 24 hours and then cleaned and disinfected whenever it is feasible to do so. If it is not possible to delay access to the area, the workers who perform cleaning/disinfecting should wear appropriate PPE for protection against the cleaning materials and the virus. CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines will be employed. For additional information: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html)

If an employee has a member of their household who tests positive for COVID-19, the employee should notify their Human Resources department before reporting to the workplace to allow the agency time to develop a plan before the employee enters the workplace. If the household member tests positive for COVID-19 after the employee is back in the workplace, the employee should not return to the workplace until they have discussed with the DHEC Epidemiology team whether they need to quarantine for 14 days.

**Student Exposure Protocols:** Students who have tested positive or who have been exposed to individuals who have tested positive should self-disclose to their faculty to ensure the safety of their fellow students and PTC employees to the greatest extent possible. Faculty who learn of an exposure should report it to the Office of Academic Affairs and submit an Early Alert for the student to ensure the student is provided with appropriate support resources.

If a student who has returned to campus contracts COVID-19, PTC will notify potentially exposed students and employees, while protecting the privacy of the student who has been infected. An adjusted version of the exposure communications prepared by Admin for employees will be utilized

for the notification.

The PTC Office of Academic Affairs will be the primary point of contact for student questions related to potential or verified exposures to COVID-19. The Academic Affairs Office will ensure all appropriate privacy and confidentiality procedures and regulations are followed. Communications regarding exposure should not be initiated or directed by faculty or front line supervisors.

Students exposed to another student or PTC employee with confirmed COVID-19 should monitor themselves for symptoms and may be recommended for a 14-day quarantine based on the DHEC Epidemiology team's risk assessment. The area(s) where the infected individual conducted coursework or interacted with staff and/or faculty should be isolated for 24 hours and then cleaned and disinfected whenever it is feasible to do so. If it is not possible to delay access to the area, the workers who perform cleaning/disinfecting should wear appropriate PPE for protection against the cleaning materials and the virus. CDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines will be employed. For additional information: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html)

If a student has a member of their household who tests positive for COVID-19, the student should notify the Office of Academic Affairs before reporting to the campus to allow the college time to develop a plan before the student comes to campus. If the household member tests positive for COVID-19 after the student is back on campus, the student should not return to campus until they have discussed with the DHEC Epidemiology team whether they need to quarantine for 14 days.

## **Phase 2—To begin between June 15 & July 1**

- Employees return to campus on staggered schedules to ensure social distancing as determined by department supervisors. Schedules and personnel from Phase 1 will be expanded to ensure more extensive office coverage and student access, while maintaining and standing up critical business functions across the institution.
- Summer labs will begin. Unfinished labs in credit classes from the spring semester will also be held during this time. Faculty will schedule these labs with their students, with priority given to Spring students.
- Social distancing of six feet apart will be expected at all times.
- Small groups of students brought onto campus for other key functions, i.e. placement testing.

**Screening:** As during Phase 1, employees who are directed to return to the workplace full or part-time in Phase 2 should be regularly reminded to not report to the workplace if sick and/or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, as should students. PTC will continue to utilize the questionnaire for all campus visitors

**Public Health Guidance and Workplace Modifications** During Phase 2, employees should continue to be directed to follow all public health guidance outlined in Phase 1 including social distancing, regular handwashing, cleaning high contact surfaces, etc. All workplace modifications, display

signage, and practices related to PPE and cleaning that were implemented in Phase 1 will be continued in Phase 2.

**Non-Essential Travel:** Non-essential travel continues to be cancelled. All travel continues to require supervisor approval.

**Appropriate Face Coverings:** Employees returned to the workplace during this phase, and students who are on campus are expected to wear appropriate face coverings at all times while on campus. The only exception is if an employee is in their office, alone, or if an employee has an HR-approved accommodation for medical reasons..

**Employees in Vulnerable Populations:** If an employee who is asked to return to the workplace, full or part-time during Phase 2, indicates he or she is within a high-risk or special population (e.g., pregnant) or does not have child care due to school/child care centers, agencies should engage in a one-on-one conversation with the employee to evaluate the appropriate time and manner for the employee to return to the workplace. Some employees may request a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act to not return to workplace due to an underlying condition which makes them more vulnerable to COVID-19 or a mental health condition exacerbated by COVID-19. PTC's human resources department and management will treat the request in the same manner as any other request for accommodation.

**Employees Impacted by Child Care Availability:** If child care availability is limited during all or part of Phase 2, supervisors will work to develop flexible schedules as feasible.

**Conducting Meetings:** Internal meetings will continue to be conducted through telephone or video conferencing to the maximum extent possible to promote social distancing. In person internal meetings only resume to the extent that social distancing is possible, and PPE is available.

**Interactions with the Public:** PTC employees may resume face-to-face interactions with the public when they are deemed necessary for continued operations, and when a feasible remote alternative is not available, but should rigorously manage those interactions to promote social distancing and reduce opportunities for transmission of the disease. For example, it is strongly recommended that:

- Both the employee and member of the public should be encouraged to wear appropriate face coverings throughout the interaction.
- To the extent possible, functional areas should identify one area within the office where all face-to-face meetings with members of the public will be conducted.
- Areas where face-to-face meetings are being held should have clear social distancing markings and agencies should consider adding a sneeze guard or similar barrier between the employee and member of the public.
- Areas where face-to-face meetings are held should be wiped down with disinfecting solutions or wipes after each meeting is concluded and before another meeting is held. Areas should also be thoroughly cleaned each evening.

**Employee and Student Exposure Protocols:** All processes and procedures for handling a positive case in the workplace that were established during Phase 1 should continue during Phase 2.

## Phase 3

**Phase 3 will commence based on the advice and guidance of the State of SC.** During this phase, PTC will return to normal operations. All employees should be returned to the workplace except for those who have been identified as appropriate for working from home permanently and those allowed to work from home as a temporary accommodation.

- The ability of PTC to move to Phase 3 is contingent on the advice of the DHEC and the State of South Carolina.
- During Phase 3, it is expected that only those employees that were already working from home before the COVID-19 health emergency or those identified as being appropriate to remain on work-from-home status permanently due to the nature of their job duties and related cost savings will continue telework. All other employees will be returned to the workplace full-time unless an accommodation is granted on a case-by-case basis.
- Recommendations regarding the use of PPE in the workplace during Phase 3 will be made at that time in consultation with DHEC.
- PTC will continue to regularly direct employees to not report to the workplace if they are sick or otherwise exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.