

PTC Return to Work Plan

Updated February 2021

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.

Summer 2021 Course Delivery

PTC is currently planning to conduct the summer 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.

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

Fall 2021 Course Delivery

With vaccine distribution ramping up and accelerating throughout the U.S. and throughout South Carolina, we are anticipating a return to a more normal operational stance beginning in the Fall 2021 term. While ensuring that we continue the best practices learned during the pandemic, PTC is planning for a full return to face-to-face instruction in Fall 2021.

Phase 2 - Current State

- PTC locations are open to the public. Appointments are recommended. Some employees are working remotely, and we are encouraging virtual meetings to the greatest extent possible. We are also available to assist students via D2L, by phone, email, and other communication channels.
- Employees are working on campus on staggered schedules to ensure social distancing as determined by department supervisors, and to provide office coverage.
- PTC is providing a mix of course options for the spring semester, including face-to-face classes and expanded hybrid and online options. Courses with a lab, shop or clinical component will meet in person in small numbers as directed by faculty.
- Small groups of students are brought onto campus for other key functions, i.e. placement testing.
- Social distancing of six feet apart remains expected at all times and properly worn face coverings are required for entry to all campus locations.

Screening: 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 (below) 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. Properly worn face coverings are to cover the nose and the mouth. The only exception is if an employee is in their office, alone.

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 childcare 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, with VP approval, 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.

- Both the employee and member of the public will wear appropriate face coverings throughout the interaction. Properly worn face coverings are to cover the nose and the mouth.
- 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 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. Employees should use the [Employee Exposure Reporting Form](#) to report the information to the college.

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.

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. Employees who receive a report of a student exposure should use the [Student Exposure Reporting Form](#) to report the information to the college.

The PTC Office of Student Affairs will be the primary point of contact for student questions related to COVID-19. The Student Affairs Office will ensure all appropriate privacy and confidentiality procedures and regulations are followed.

PTC will follow the procedures outlined in the college's Student and Employee Exposure Protocols after being notified of an exposure, of symptoms, or of a positive case.

Phase 2a

Phase 2a is scheduled to begin on April 1. The following adjustments will be made to Phase 2:

- Employees will begin working two days on site a week. Each Division's VP will work with supervisors to set appropriate schedules.
- Provisions are made for walk-in student services, including placement testing, and staffing should be visible in all student and public-facing offices.
- Single points of entry will be maintained.
- Social distancing of six feet apart remains expected at all times and properly worn face coverings are required for entry to all campus locations.

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, with VP approval, and PPE is available.

Interactions with the Public: PTC employees will resume face-to-face interactions with the public, but should rigorously manage those interactions to promote social distancing and reduce opportunities for transmission of the disease.

- Both the employee and member of the public will wear appropriate face coverings throughout the interaction. Properly worn face coverings are to cover the nose and the mouth.
- 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.

Common Spaces: Use of common spaces including break rooms and meeting rooms should remain limited. Signage will be posted indicating the number of occupants allowed in any given space.

Events: PTC will continue to limit in-person events involving more than a few people to the extent possible, and will set maximum attendee limits based on the size of the space when an event is hosted on campus. All event preparations should include plans to manage social distancing, to inform attendees of campus protocols regarding screening and face coverings, and for space sanitization after the event. [A standard document with protocols will be provided to each attendee.](#)

Employee and Student Exposure Protocols: All processes and procedures for handling a positive case in the workplace should continue.

Phase 2b

Phase 2b is scheduled to begin after the PTC community has had the opportunity to receive a second dose of the vaccine, and the appropriate amount of time has passed for the vaccine to provide immunity. The following adjustments will be made to Phase 2a:

- Employees will increase the amount of time they are on campus during this phase to three days a week. Each Division's VP will work with supervisors to set appropriate schedules. All divisions and departments should review internal procedures to ensure protocols are in place to continue to mitigate spread of the virus with increased staffing and increased public access.

- All doors are open. Provisions should be made to encourage screening prior to entry, and to check that students and members of the public have been screened when they reach their destinations.
- Employees should transition to in-person meetings with students, or may continue virtual meetings depending on a student's preference.
- Social distancing of six feet apart remains expected at all times and properly worn face coverings are required for entry to all campus locations.

Common Spaces: Use of common spaces including break rooms and meeting rooms should remain limited. Signage will be posted indicating the number of occupants allowed in any given space.

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, with VP approval, and PPE is available.

Interactions with the Public: PTC employees will resume face-to-face interactions with the public, but should rigorously manage those interactions to promote social distancing and reduce opportunities for transmission of the disease.

- Both the employee and member of the public will wear appropriate face coverings throughout the interaction.
- 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.

Events: In-person events may be planned and hosted. Maximum attendee limits based on the size of the space will remain in effect. All event preparations should include plans to manage social distancing, to inform attendees of campus protocols regarding screening and face coverings, and for space sanitization after the event. [A standard document with protocols will be provided to each attendee.](#)

Employee and Student Exposure Protocols: All processes and procedures for handling a positive case in the workplace should continue.

Phase 3

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.

- 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.

Previous Phases

Phase 1—To begin June 1, 2020

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.

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. Employees who receive a report of a student exposure should use the [Employee Exposure Reporting Form](#) to report the information to the college.

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