

Access

A publication of the Advocate Aurora Employee Assistance Program

2020 | Issue 2

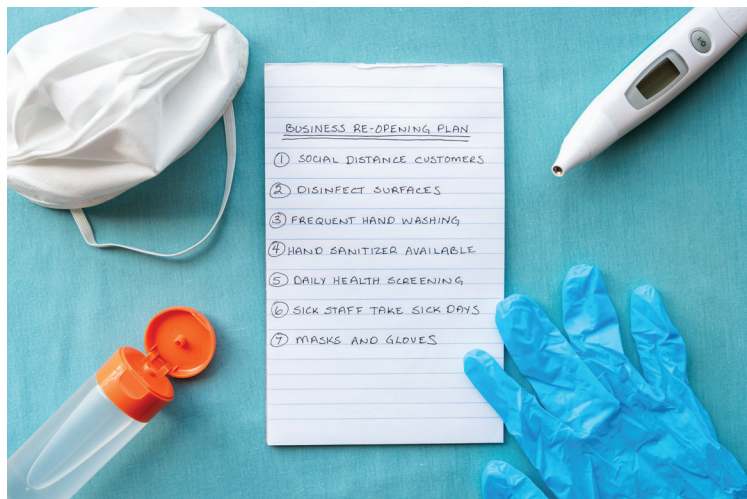
Returning to work: Adjusting to a 'new normal'

These are stressful times for everyone. Employees are anxious about many things... their health, their loved ones, the economy, job security and other unknowns.

Now that many stay-at-home orders have been lifted, people may have mixed feelings about returning to the workplace. Some are happy while others may be dreading it. Some people might miss working from home. Employees might be afraid of getting sick at work or are fearful about commuting on crowded public transportation.

Workers may be stressed thinking about...

- What am I going to do with the kids?
- Is public transportation safe?
- What if I get COVID-19?
- Will the workplace be clean?
- What about social distancing in the workplace?



**Advocate Aurora EAP:
800-236-3231**



The workplace might look a bit different

The unknown can be scary. Sometimes our mind fills in the blanks with the worst case scenario. Try to fill in the gaps of the unknown with solid information gathered from reliable sources (example: www.CDC.gov) and information from your employer.

People may find themselves struggling with:

- impaired sleep
- failing to maintain self-care routines
- new or increased family caregiving responsibilities
- having upsetting thoughts or memories of stressful COVID-19 experiences

All of these challenges may contribute to:

- anger, depression, mood changes
- forgetfulness, difficulty in focusing, sense of uneasiness
- increased irritability and becoming easily upset

While these emotional responses may seem confusing and frustrating, they should be considered normal reactions during such an abnormal time.



Grief and emotions

We've all experienced different types of losses during the pandemic. There's been a lot of loss, but not a lot of time to grieve. We have lost much of our freedom, normal life, contact with friends and family, finances and job security. Some people have lost so much more. Feelings of anxiety, fear, sadness and grief are to be expected.

Keep yourself on track

- accept and validate your feelings
- communicate openly on how you are feeling
- try to maintain a healthy perspective
- take media breaks and avoid overdosing on "bad" news
- stay connected with those you love
- get support, if needed

Self care – more important now than ever before

Don't put too much pressure on yourself to maintain normalcy while transitioning back to the workplace. However, it's important to focus on yourself — making sure you are eating, sleeping, exercising and practicing positive self-care routines.

Remember your EAP

During these stressful times, please remember you have access to no-cost, confidential support and help through Advocate Aurora Health EAP. It's free to you and members of your household. This benefit is not connected to your insurance. **Calling Advocate Aurora EAP is confidential.** Trained EAP counselors are available to help with:

- relationship conflicts
- parenting or aging parent issues
- grief and loss
- depression and anxiety
- balancing home and work
- alcohol and/or drug abuse
- financial, credit and debt problems
- child care concerns

Schedule an EAP appointment

- Call 800-236-3231
- counseling options include in-person, telephonic or "Zoom" counseling
- day and evening appointments are available
- access the EAP 24 hours a day, seven days a week

Everyone wants to get back to business or school and for things to be back to normal. Living through COVID-19 and adjusting to its aftermath will be an ongoing process of learning how to accept those things we can't control and adjusting to a new "normal." Over time, we'll adapt and get used to the changes and challenges we are faced with. **For now, it's important for us to model healthy, optimistic behavior as we transition back into the workplace during these rapidly changing, stressful times.**



For assistance, please contact Advocate Aurora Employee Assistance Program: 800-236-3231