

## IAEA Planning for Return to the Premises

Following the guidelines of the Austrian Authorities regarding the COVID-19 Outbreak to slow the spread of the virus within the community, and the recommendations of the Austrian Health Authorities and VIC Medical Service, the following plan provides for a gradual return to work in the Vienna International Centre (VIC) and Seibersdorf Laboratories. The health and well-being of staff, other personnel and visitors, remains the top priority.

With the gradual return to the premises, the Director General expects a return to normal operations.

### **Situation:**

On 30 January 2020, the International Health Regulations Emergency Committee of the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 Outbreak a “public health emergency of international concern” (PHEIC). The virus spreads through person-to-person contact and the potential public health threat posed is high. On 11 March 2020, the WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

To limit social contact and slow the spread of COVID-19, the Director General instructed all staff to work remotely from 16 March to 3 April 2020, with limited access to the VIC or other premises. Instructions on remote working are extended through 14 May 2020.

The transmission of the virus causing COVID-19 has slowed significantly in Austria, and the Austrian Authorities have enabled a managed a gradual return to public life.

### **Gradual Return to the Premises**

The following measures aim to reduce exposure to the potential viral threat while providing for a gradual return to work in the VIC and Seibersdorf Laboratories.

Regional offices and Monaco Laboratories should follow the guidance of local host governments. Department Heads overseeing regional offices will make recommendations to the Director General for decisions on return to work on premises.

### **Duration**

The period of gradual return to the VIC is initially from 15 May 2020 until 30 June 2020. The Director General may modify the period of gradual return to the VIC based on the guidance of the Austrian Authorities and the VIC Medical Service as the situation evolves.

### **Access to the VIC and Seibersdorf Laboratories:**

The Director General will approve an Agency plan on the return to office based on operational needs, bearing in mind, in particular, tasks that can only be performed in the VIC or Seibersdorf Laboratories. In line with the guidance from Austrian Authorities, those who are able to should continue remote working during the first two weeks.

Through 30 June flexibility with continued remote working arrangements will be exercised, in particular:

- Individuals considered [at higher risk for COVID-19 disease](#), those over age 65 and those with underlying health conditions<sup>1</sup>, should continue working remotely;
- Parents who need to care for children while schools and kindergartens are closed;
- Individuals who are responsible for taking care of vulnerable family members and
- Individuals in shared office space where one-meter social distancing cannot be maintained.

The following measures will be maintained through 30 June to limit access to the VIC:

- Non-essential meetings and events with external participation are postponed or deferred;
- Private visitors will not have access to the VIC until further notice;
- Retirees will not have access to the VIC until further notice. The Association of Retired International Civil Servants in Vienna will provide support to its members, liaising with relevant VBO colleagues where necessary; and
- All UN Information Service (UNIS) Visitors Service guided tours and lecture programmes are suspended until further notice.

### **Attendance and leave**

As noted above, during the gradual return to the premises, flexibility will be exercised with regard to remote working,

- Core time will be suspended. Staff and other personnel are encouraged to vary their arrival and departure times to alleviate waiting times at Gate 1 and when using the elevators.
- There is no requirement to clock in or out using the TAMS system during the period of gradual return.
- Attendance will be recorded as “COVID Work from Office” or “COVID Work from Home” through Staff Self Service in AIPS. Staff and other personnel who are working on the premises should submit a request for approval by their supervisors indicating “COVID19 Work from Office” and those working remotely should request “COVID- Work from Home”. Half day arrangements between the two types are possible. Requests do not have to be made on a daily basis and can be for longer periods of time.
- The absence type “COVID Special Leave with Full Pay (SLWFP)” was established for staff and other personnel who, because of their job functions, were not able to work remotely. It will be available for use in exceptional circumstances where staff who are not able to work remotely are not able to return to the premises during the period of gradual return. Supervisors should contact MTHR to apply “COVID Special Leave with Full Pay (SLWFP).”
- Neither Special Compensatory Time Off (SCTO), nor regular Compensatory Time Off, shall apply during the relevant period. This does not affect staff members travelling outside the duty station for 60 days or more per calendar year who are entitled to SCTO or Safeguards

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<sup>1</sup> To ensure privacy, staff and other personnel at higher risk for severe COVID-19 disease should contact VIC Medical Service, who will contact supervisors regarding continuing remote working arrangements. Staff and other personnel should discuss their individual circumstances with their supervisors for continuation of remote working arrangements.

inspectors who are entitled to Inspector Compensatory Time Off (ICTO), which are unchanged and will be handled according to normal procedures.

- The SCTO and CTO accumulated as of 13 March will remain available to staff until the end of period of the gradual return to the VIC, and the limitation on the use of 5 days of CTO per half year for the second half of the year will be suspended.
- Staff are able to submit leave requests (e.g. annual leave, sick leave, etc.) via AIPS to their supervisors during this period as they would do normally.

The above information will be included in an update to the “Guidelines on the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak version 3 issued by MTHR on 27 March 2020.

#### **Preventive measures:**

All staff and other personnel are reminded to strictly follow the following measures during the gradual return to the premises to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

1. Frequent and correct handwashing with soap and water, or hand disinfection as an alternative;
2. Maintain social distancing (1 m) as much as possible;
3. Practice good cough etiquette;
4. Avoid shaking hands; and
5. Stay home when you are sick with fever and/or respiratory symptoms.

Additional information on personal behaviours to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are available [here](#).

#### **Social distancing in the VIC:**

Social distancing measures should be followed in the VIC during the gradual return to the premises. Individuals should keep a distance of a minimum of one meter from other people and should not be in close contact (less than one meter) for longer than 15 minutes.

While social distancing measures apply generally to all locations and circumstances, the following additional guidance is provided for areas of greater density:

- **Entering and Exiting the VIC:** Individuals entering the VIC should maintain social distancing of at least one meter while entering and exiting the VIC. Further guidelines on the procedures to be implemented at Gate 1 would be provided by UNSSS in due course.
- **Use of office space:** For shared office space, social distancing of 1 meter should be practiced. Most personnel are expected to be able to maintain one-meter distancing in shared offices. If it is not possible to maintain a distance of at least one meter, only one staff member should occupy the office at a time during the gradual return to the premises. Affected staff members should discuss arrangements with their supervisors to determine use of shared offices prior to return to work.
- **Meetings:** Virtual meetings among staff members and other personnel continue to be encouraged during the period of gradual return to the premises. Face to face meetings should be kept to a minimum. Following the guidelines of Austrian Authorities, meeting duration should be kept as short as possible (not longer than 30 minutes); the number of participants should not exceed 10; meeting participants should wear face masks and

maintain a distance of at least one meter from each other, for example, by occupying every other chair around a meeting table and not sitting directly across from one another.

- **Elevators:** Use of elevators will be subject to social distancing guidelines and will be limited to a maximum of 4 passengers at a time. Freight elevators will be available with a maximum of 6 passengers at a time. Queues are anticipated, and staff and other personnel are encouraged to consider staggering arrival and departure times. Staff are reminded of One Up – Two Down use of stairs and are encouraged to consider using the stairs more frequently.
- **VIC Services:** Staff are advised to make use of the online services available. Social distancing should be followed when availing of services such as the banks, cafeteria, pharmacy and the Commissary.
- **Common areas:** Staff are requested not to gather in common areas such as corridors and ground floor areas to enable other colleagues to pass through and to respect social distancing measures.
- **Distance Marking and Signage:** Staff and other personnel are requested to pay attention to floor markings to maintain social distancing. Limits may be placed on the number of people able to queue for services in certain areas to allow for proper social distancing.

### **Face Masks:**

Following the recommendation from the Austrian authorities, staff and other personnel are recommended to wear face masks in common areas (hallways, kitchen areas, restrooms/toilets, staircases, storage rooms, elevators, etc) and when passing through security to enter the building, either by car, on foot or on bicycle.

A limited number of washable, re-usable face masks will be distributed to each staff and other personnel. Details on the procedures for distribution of masks will be provided prior to 15 May. Single-use masks may also be available at other locations such as the Cafeteria and the Commissary, especially for non-staff. Home-made cloth masks may also be used.

Staff and other personnel are reminded to follow Austrian guidelines on the use of face masks in public, including on public transportation.

Staff and other personnel required to have close and continuing contact as part of their job functions will follow Austrian guidelines regarding the use of face masks, such as for security personnel, medical personnel, drivers, cooks and other workers in the Seibersdorf Cafeteria, and retail workers. Distribution of face masks for these purposes will be handled by the VIC Medical Service; supervisors of staff members in these areas are requested to contact VMS head nurse ([k.sequeira@iaea.org](mailto:k.sequeira@iaea.org)) or VMS under [medical-admin.contact-point@iaea.org](mailto:medical-admin.contact-point@iaea.org)

### **Notifying the VIC Medical Service of Cases or Suspected Cases in the VIC**

Staff and other personnel are requested to contact the VIC Medical Service if they have tested positive for COVID-19 or if they have been identified through contact tracing by the Austrian Authorities as a suspected case. If staff and other personnel develop symptoms while outside of the workplace, VIC Medical Service can facilitate testing with the Austrian Authorities. If staff and other personnel develop symptoms while at the workplace, they should call VIC Medical Service who will respond with appropriate actions.

## **Privacy and personal data protection**

Supervisors should refrain from asking staff and other personnel reporting to them about their medical condition, whether in relation or not to COVID-19. Any such medical information is confidential and the above mentioned notification procedure is to be followed.

## **Testing and Health Screening:**

- **Health Screening:** At this time, health screening such as temperature checks will not be conducted to enter the VIC, consistent with Austrian guidelines and the advice of the VIC Medical Service.
- **Pre/post travel screening:** Pre-travel and post-travel medical screening will continue to be conducted by VIC Medical Service, for essential travellers until further notice.

## **Cleaning and disinfecting protocols:**

During the closure, cleaning of offices and common areas was maintained. Enhanced cleaning protocols, including regular disinfection of 'hot touch' surfaces consistent with protocols for the flu season, will be maintained after return. 'Hot touch' surfaces are those that are used often by multiple individuals, for example door handles, light switches and buttons in the elevators.

'Hot touch' surfaces in MTCD-managed meeting rooms will be disinfected between meetings, and in multipurpose rooms with water delivery.

Staff are encouraged to keep their desks clean at all times to allow for surfaces to be cleaned.

Hand sanitizers remain available throughout the premises in high traffic areas and at the elevator bays on all floors.

## **Seibersdorf Laboratories**

The measures described in this document apply also to Seibersdorf laboratories. In addition, staff and other personnel who make use of the bus service between Vienna and the Seibersdorf laboratories are requested to practice social distancing (i.e. by leaving vacant a seat between riders) and to wear face masks. Seating on the shuttle vans may be limited to enable social distancing measures to be practiced.

Social distancing guidelines should be maintained in the laboratories. Staff and other personnel working in negative air pressure conditions in some laboratories may not need to wear face masks while working at one-meter distance.

Social distancing guidelines are to be followed in the Seibersdorf Cafeteria.

## **VIC Cafeteria:**

The VIC Cafeteria will re-open on 15 May 2020. Social distancing guidelines are to be followed in the Cafeteria and face masks are to be worn entering the food serving areas. Seating will be limited and arranged to allow for social distancing. Access to the Cafeteria will be limited and managed to enable social distancing guidelines to be followed. To ensure uni directional traffic flow, entry to the Cafeteria

will be as usual through the front doors and exit through the restaurant/bar area. All menus prepared in the Cafeteria are also offered as 'take-away'. The coffee corners will also open for take-away menus.

Staff are requested to:

- Use hand sanitiser before entering the Cafeteria
- Maintain social distancing of one meter
- Wear face masks
- Use contactless payments

### **Restaurant/Bar**

The Restaurant and Bar will remain closed until further notice.

### **Commissary Operations:**

The Commissary will re-open on 15 May 2020. The number of shoppers allowed into the Commissary at any time may be limited.

Staff are requested to:

- Limit visits to the Commissary
- Use hand sanitiser before entering the Commissary
- Maintain social distancing of one meter
- Wear face masks
- Use contactless payments as much as possible
- Wash their hands after shopping.

### **VIC Child Care Centre:**

The VIC Child Care Centre plans to re-open on 15 May. Parents will receive the applicable guidelines by email prior to the reopening of the Child Care Centre.