

# COVID-19: Returning to Work

Returning to work during these uncertain times may affect us in many ways. You might feel a sense of anxiety, excessive worry or even have difficulty concentrating or sleeping as you make this transition.



The following tips can help calm anxious thoughts as you return to work.

**Find out what your employer is doing for the health and safety of employees.** Having more information can help you feel more calm and in control. Reach out to your HR department to understand your company's policies or for specific questions.

**Accept the discomfort of uncertainty.** Reframe distressing thoughts with constructive ones like, "This is the reality of this coronavirus pandemic, it will not last forever, and I can find ways to get through this uncomfortable time."

**Rely on calming outlets in your off hours.** When anxiety rises, resist the urge to reach for unhealthy snacks or an alcoholic beverage. Instead, make your go-to reaction something like drawing, working on a puzzle, yoga, walking, meditating or putting on music and dancing your socks off! Moving your body is one of the best ways to dissipate stress hormones.

**Respect that everyone copes differently.** You may feel that others are over- or underreacting to the pandemic, for example. And remember, faced with uncertainty, some people will need more time alone while others need more interaction time.

**Keep finding ways to connect with others including those returning to work.** Make a phone call just to check in with a friend or loved one, or text them a song or video you find uplifting. Even a brief connection can be deeply meaningful during this time.

**Consider a family meeting to discuss new routines.** You might review what changes you could make in your family to keep everyone calm and feeling less overwhelmed.

**Remember the positives.** It can be uplifting to once again share the camaraderie of coworkers, for example.

**Recognize an adjustment period as you return to work.** Accept it will take time to adjust to the "new normal" way of doing things.

**Stay informed, but limit endless COVID-19 news.** Get the facts about the pandemic and virus from trusted national sources like the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).  
Go to: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html)

**For information about COVID-19 in your state, search your state's health department:**  
<https://www.cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/healthdirectories/healthdepartments.html>

## Seek Support

If you are feeling overwhelmed, reach out to a licensed professional counselor for coping techniques to help you feel more calm and in control.