ANDERSON TECHNOLOGIES

RETURN TO WORK CHECKLIST

Companies are beginning to bring employees back to the office, but are you ready? Do you know what your employees need? What your business's technology needs are? Are your policies in place to weather whatever challenges the future holds?

PREP FOR RETURNING WORKERS

When preparing the office, remember to take the following into account:

✓ **Communicate with your employees often.**

The best way to make your employees feel comfortable in the office is to the listen to their needs. Are all ready to come back? Do they know who to contact and how? Clear communication is essential to a successful return to work.

✓ **Provide appropriate cleaning supplies.**

Increase cleaning of workstations and commonly used surfaces, and make sure everyone knows the proper supplies to use on technology to avoid any damage to hardware.

✓ **Stay up to date with local law and health guidelines.**

Health directives vary state by state. Keep your employees comfortable in the office by following all guidelines apppropriate to your business.

REVIEW IT INFRASTRUCTURE

Due to COVID-19, businesses had to quickly adapt to the majority of their workforce working from home. Now that employees are returning, changes may need to be made to your IT infrastructure.

Assess hardware or software bought to facilitate working from home. ✓

Many businesses were unprepared for a remote workforce and had to purchase new hardware or software licences in a hurry. Take time to assess these with an IT expert to determine if you need to maintain them .

Check bandwidth and data needs. ✓

Working from home requires a lot of bandwidth and you might have had to increase your internet plans to compensate. With employees are returning, consult an IT expert to determine if you still require these data rates.

CREATE A WORK-FROM-HOME POLICY

If your business didn't have remote workers before COVID-19, it's likely you never had an official work-from-home policy. Now's the time to create one so you can be prepared for a hybrid working environment or any future remote working needs.

✓ **Be aware of any regulations your business is subject to.**

Any time you have employees remote into your systems, a point of vulnerability is introduced. Different fields, such as healthcare, have regulations on the security measures required. Make sure you coordinate with your IT experts to make sure you're currently following those rules, and if you aren't, that needs to be remedied.

✓ **Consider changing remote access software.**

What worked at the start of the pandemic may have been a great short term fix, but now you have time to assess the long term viability of your remote solution. If you don't meet regulations or your IT experts determine better solutions are available, it's time to switch directions and document it in your policy.

✓ **Set clear guidelines on who has remote access and its proper use.**

A work-from-home policy is more than technical details. Set up clear rules for how remote access should be used, such as avoiding unsecured internet or family use of a work computer. If you are bring workers back, what would be the conditions for future work from home activities? Are only certain jobs allowed to work from home? Consider everything when creating an offical policy.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE & BUSINESS CONTINITUTY

The sudden changes required by COVID-19 probably revealed holes in your Emergency Response and Business Continuity plans. Take advantage of this opportunity to use the lessons learned and create comprehensive plans to help you weather future events.

Review what did and didn't work during the shutdown. ✓

If you found yourself scrambling to stay running, use this time to determine what worked or didn't work in a time of crisis. Ask what you needed but didn't have and what you had that didn't work as well as you thought. Create a plan for any possible emergency, so you won't be caught unprepared again.

Determine the best way to keep your business running outside of the office. ✓

A thorough business continuity plan is essential to recovery. Use your experiences to solidify what you need to stay open, how to deliver goods or services, how to handle vendors, and so on. You'll never have a clearer sense of what you need for business continuity than you do right now.

Consult with your IT staff or MSP. ✓

Some of the conclusions you reach in creating your Emergency Response and Business Continuity plans will require IT support to seamlessly transition from working in the office to working under unusal or emergency conditions. Review your IT infrastructure with your IT team and set up the techonology you will need **before** you need it.