GW OFF-CAMPUS FWS PROGRAM

Tips to Creating a Safe Workplace

As we navigate returning to in-person operations it is important to take into consideration employee safety. Based on the information provided by the CDC, below are a few things you can do to create a safer work environment:

1. Install transparent shields or other physical barriers where possible to separate employees and visitors where social distancing is not an option.
2. Arrange reception or other communal seating area chairs by spacing or removing chairs to maintain social distancing.
3. Use methods to physically separate employees in all communal areas.
   a. Use signs, tape marks, or other visual cues such as decals or colored tape on the floor, placed 6 feet apart, to indicate where to stand when physical barriers are not possible.
   b. Replace high-touch communal items, such as coffee pots, water coolers, and bulk snacks, with alternatives such as pre-packaged, single-serving items.
4. Where building requirements allow for it, keep doors and windows open to increase the circulation of outdoor air in the building.
5. Actively encourage employees who have symptoms of COVID-19 or who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 to notify their supervisor and stay home.
   a. Employees who appear to have symptoms upon arrival at work or who become sick during the day should immediately be separated from others, and, if possible, provided with a face mask if they are not using one.
   b. Sick employees should follow the CDC-recommended steps. Employees should not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met, in consultation with their healthcare provider.
   c. Perform enhanced cleaning and disinfection after anyone suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 has been in the workplace.
6. Stagger shifts, start times, and break times where possible to reduce the number of people in the office or a given area at a time.
7. Provide employees with hand sanitizer, disposable wipes, and other cleaning materials so they can take care of themselves and their workspace as needed throughout the day.

For more detailed information and additional steps you can take, review “COVID-19 Employer Information for Office Buildings” on the CDC website. You can also find information in the “Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19” from OSHA.