

# ALA Return to Office Plan

## Frequently Asked Questions Document

December 10, 2021

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These FAQs will be updated and shared on an ongoing basis.

### **In Office Work Assignments**

- Starting Tuesday, January 4th, 2022, and projected through the end of the fiscal year (August 31st, 2022), ALA is adopting a hybrid office strategy. Employees are expected to work two contiguous days per week in the office—for Chicago that will be Monday/Tuesday or Wednesday/Thursday. Department and Division heads at other sites will communicate contiguous day arrangements to their staff in writing and through meetings. Any exceptions to the two-day expectation must be discussed with supervisors, department heads, and HR before approval. (The week of January 4<sup>th</sup>, Group A will come in only on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> and Group B only on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup>. The Monday/Tuesday and Wednesday/Thursday schedules will start in full the week of January 10<sup>th</sup>.)
- Assigned days will be finalized on or before Friday, December 10th. Unit Managers are currently working with Department heads and HR on the most productive deployment that takes distancing and density into consideration.
- ALA will continue to require wellness forms be completed each morning before entry at all locations.
- Employees requesting special permission to enter Chicago headquarters on a day that is outside their assignment will need to first request permission from their supervisor and forward that approval to Lorelle Swader (cc: to Tracie Hall) who will decide based on density in the office that day. Except for special circumstances, the office will be closed on Fridays when everyone will work remotely unless taking PTO.
- Flexible start and end times are possible (e.g., 10-6 or 8-4), as long as they are approved by Unit Managers ahead of time with start and end times forwarded in writing to HR, and as long as the standard number of hours required are worked. ALA's regular posted working hours are 8:30am-4:30pm.
- Employees should take sick and vacation time as usual for either in office or remote office workdays by first notifying their unit managers and notating on their time logs.
- Holidays scheduled on Monday and other holidays will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
- This plan will be reviewed regularly by senior management with the goal of initiating continuous improvement measures necessary to support staff welfare and wellbeing and institutional effectiveness and productivity.

### **Safety and Facilities Protocols**

- ALA will continue to follow state, city, and CDC guidelines related to COVID-19 preventative requirements such as mask wearing in all workspaces with the exception of closed rooms or offices occupied by no more than one person when on a call or videoconference. Employees may remove your mask when drinking at their cubicles or eating in the cafeteria area. All employees are asked to eat meals in the cafeteria area, and not in cubicles or offices.
- What are the procedures for staff who are displaying signs of sickness (e.g., the common cold) but might still be well enough to work? We will each still be required to complete a wellness form in the morning before coming into the office. If you are too sick to work, you will need to take a sick day as usual. Staff who feel unwell but able to work from home, will need handle this with their direct supervisor on a case-by-case basis.
- Any employee that is exposed to someone with COVID should report that immediately to their manager and contact Grisela Rodriguez, in HR.

- Density in Cafeteria and Restrooms: HR will provide advice of caps on how many people are allowed in the cafeteria or bathroom at a time is determined to be necessary.
- Changes to improve ventilation systems have been implemented at 225: The building landlord has implemented protocols that support the CDC's guidelines (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/ventilation.html>) and will be responsible for ongoing changes.
- Are ALA's COVID-19 safety policies tied to President Biden's new OSHA rules ([source](#)), and if so, will ALA's policies change if OSHA's rules change (e.g., as a result of the lawsuit from Texas and other states currently in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals)? The safety policies are tied to a review of the available expert scientific views and the vaccine mandate is firm.
- When will supervisors know if they have someone on their team who has not shown proof of vaccination and does not have an exemption, so they can plan the work? After the December 20<sup>th</sup> deadline when HR has been able to review the uploaded proof of vaccination required.
- ALA will also continue to observe the recommended periods for quarantining in the event of known or suspected COVID-19 exposure or travel to areas deemed COVID-19 hotspots.
- Staff traveling to regions identified by the CDC as COVID-19 hotspots should alert their managers ahead of travel and quarantine for the recommended period upon return.
- The ALA office space in Chicago includes webinar rooms and other smaller spaces with doors that can be used for virtual meetings.
- As the Chicago headquarters office is a new space, there will be onboarding for staff the first week of office return and continuing into the first month. Onboarding will cover use of printers and equipment, meeting rooms, mail drop off and pick up, keycard access, etc. Some of this onboarding information is already created and ready, more is underway, and still more will continue to be developed as staff return and more questions are raised as we start to use the space together. Please keep sharing questions with your supervisor so we can capture them. New staff at all sites should also receive onboarding support upon return to the office.
- Temps will be hired through HR, which is responsible for ensuring that all temps coming to the space follow the same protocols as regular employees. Please contact HR if you need independent contractors to come to the office. In general, visitors are discouraged at this time.

## IT

- What will the IT situation be the first days we're back? IT will provide roving assistance in case staff have issues with hardware or drivers, as is common after office moves.
- How do we sign up for meeting rooms/ focus spaces/webinar rooms? IT and HR are working on scheduling and training for staff, with the goal of having the sign-up system operational in Outlook by January 4<sup>th</sup>.
- The number of people allowed in meeting rooms onsite at the same time will remain limited.
- Printers will be up and running by January 4th. (Most are already operational.) Instructions for using the printers/copiers will be shared with everyone prior to office return.

## Miscellaneous

- Badges: if you don't have a badge yet or you have another issue with a badge, please contact Adriane Alicea or Lorelle Swader to arrange pick-up or resolution.
- Signage and updated floor maps will be in place for the return.
- Is there any reason to sign up for transit passes for coming to the office 2x week? This is an individual decision after reviewing the options and costs. Transit cut off is the 6th of the month for the following month's benefits (so for example if you want transit to start in January, submit the forms by December 6<sup>th</sup>).
- List of local lunch suggestions to come.