



## Returning to Work During COVID-19

In response to the current coronavirus crisis, most state and local governments required the closures of non-essential businesses and schools, and prohibited large gatherings to encourage social distancing. Most states also declared mandatory stay-at-home orders for all but non-essential workers. These measures were taken to prevent the spread of coronavirus; however, this action may have led to increased loneliness, depression, anxiety, distress, low self-esteem, and in some cases, higher rates of substance abuse. As you prepare to return-to-work, it is important to address how this social distancing and now the return to work will affect your mental health and well-being.

As you return to work, managing your emotions while accomplishing your tasks could feel overwhelming. Do not feel that mental health issues are not important. If depression or anxiety surrounding the current pandemic are not interfering with your performance, perhaps you are managing your emotions well. If your performance is suffering or you are overly concerned and anxious about daily events related to the coronavirus or returning to work, speaking with your supervisor may provide mutual understanding as to why you are struggling. When you speak with your supervisor try to be honest, authentic and sincere. Start by sharing your concerns and acknowledge the uncertainty and the stress it causes.

Your supervisor may be able to assist you with managing your workload, provide reassurance as to the company's goals and safety policies, or provide clarification with job security. Whatever our circumstance, this outbreak will have an impact on how we think and feel about the world we live in. Taking care of and being responsible for your mental health will ease symptoms related to the adjusting environment.

**Call your BHS Care Coordinator at 800-245-1150. They can arrange for an appointment with a licensed professional who can provide free and confidential assistance for issues including work-related stress, anxiety and distress.**



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