

Tips for transitioning back to the workplace

When companies ramp up their plans for returning to work, you may have mixed feelings about the situation. You might be happy to go to the office and see your colleagues, while at the same time have anxiety about safety issues and managing changes to your routine.

Anxiety is a normal reaction

It is perfectly normal to be nervous, and it is important to be patient with yourself and those around you during this uncertain time. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation's March 2021 COVID-19 vaccination monitor, nearly half of American adults continue to suffer from the pandemic's negative mental health effects associated with worry or stress. 60% of younger adults and women, including mothers with minor children, are among the most likely to have a negative impact on mental health.

How to prepare for your return to work

Visualize your routine—Imagine what your day might look like, go through the details to get a full picture of what to do. Know how you want to feel when you do it. You will be able to identify challenges and think about what you can do to face them.

Make self-help a priority—This is easier said than done but remember that physical and mental health are closely intertwined, and there are several small things you can do to feel better overall. In times of transition, it is important to get enough sleep, eat a healthy diet, exercise, and avoid substances to deal with negative emotions.

Manage your safety concerns—Safety is key. Read your employer's safety policy. Speak up if you have concerns, but remember that you don't want to be combative, you just want to be clear that safety is important to you and you don't need to apologize for it.

Practice or learn how to deal with everyday stress—Pause before responding to a situation. Take small breaks to clear your head or take a few slow, deep breaths to center yourself. Set yourself small goals to do something that will help you recharge your batteries, such as going for walks, meditating, keeping a gratitude journal, working on a hobby, listening to music, or any other activity you enjoy.

Know when to seek help—Watch for symptoms that persist for more than two weeks, such as feeling nervous, anxious, tired, overwhelmed, burnt out, depressed, or lack of motivation. If you find that mental health problems affect your quality of life, consider talking to a mental health professional.

For more information and tips, visit MagellanHealthcare.com/COVID-19.

Source: Cleveland Clinic

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