

# WPS Health Solutions: Outlines plan for more workers to return to the office

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**Contact:** DeAnne Boegli, Vice President of Communications, 608-977-7343, [deanne.boegli@wpsic.com](mailto:deanne.boegli@wpsic.com)

**MADISON, Wis** — WPS Health Solutions is developing a plan that envisions how the work environment will change as more people are vaccinated against COVID-19. When the pandemic was declared in March 2020, WPS rapidly deployed remote technology so approximately 93% of employees could work from home to reduce the spread of the virus.

More than 350 employees currently are working on-site in WPS facilities across five states. As of May 1, WPS had a total of 3,586 employees and contract workers.

Now, WPS leaders are talking about the “New WPS Workplace,” which includes a return to the office for some, while others continue working from home or use a combination of the two options. In addition, geographic limitations on new hires have been reduced, allowing for candidates to be permanently remote from many states.

“Our return to using WPS office facilities will be a process, not an event,” says President and CEO Mike Hamerlik. “The safety of our employees remains our number one priority. As more and more people receive the vaccines and restrictions in office settings are relaxed, WPS will start bringing employees back. We are preparing our facilities and working toward the date of Sept. 7 to have operations functioning at new, on-site levels.”

The decision process on who returns to a WPS facility starts with a discussion between employees and supervisors.

“The September date allows the company, you and your supervisor, and your families time to plan whether and how you might return to a WPS office,” Hamerlik said in an April message to employees.

He also urged all employees to get vaccinated. “I ask that you do your part and get fully vaccinated as soon as possible. Even if you continue to work from home, you may at some point be called into the office for meetings or temporary duty. We want to make sure that everyone is as safe as possible in the workplace.”

WPS leaders anticipate that up to 60% of the WPS workforce will be remote after the pandemic. As a result, the company is reducing office space and reevaluating real estate plans. As announced in March, WPS signed a letter of intent with One City Schools for purchase of the Nordby Building located on WPS’ campus in Monona. Leased office space has been reduced or consolidated in other WPS locations.

“We will be changing how we design our offices, with fewer cubicles and more collaborative spaces. There will be more ‘hotel’ desks and offices, which will be available for remote workers who no longer need their own dedicated space,” says Andrew McCready, Director of Facility Operations.

Steps have been outlined for those who are ready to return to the office. Employees start with a conversation with their supervisor to define work schedule, location, and equipment needs. Return-to-office applications are reviewed by various teams, including Human Resources, Facility Operations, and Information Technology.