

# MEMORANDUM – POST-PANDEMIC OFFICE



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## The New Reality

The purpose of this memo is to outline the office TI design, retrofit approach, and programmatic constraints in light of new reality of global pandemic, uncertainty of commercial real estate valuations, and demand.

## 'The Form Follows Infection'

“Remote is a much harder way to work for anything that requires a personal relationship. And as a consequence, I think we’re going to find that we maybe not go back to 100% in the office all the time. Because remote work clearly works for many things, but I think we’re going to find that being together delivers value in productivity and creativity and relationships that is irreplaceable.”

[Arne Sorenson](#)

CEO of Marriott International Inc.,  
at WSJ's 2020 Future of Everything event

## OFFICE REDESIGN ONLY BEGAN: LANDLORD & TENANTS DESIGN SEMINAR

### A. REIMAGINE WORKPLACE FOR THE PANDEMIC-RATTLED WORLD

Calamities change office design- it is a historical pattern. 9/11; superstorm Sandy; great fires of London and Chicago. Seismic COVID-era shifts in our built environment to the long-awaited demise of the 9-to-5. The pandemic has accelerated our move towards the modern office. The typical American workday is already radically different than it was in February: The percentage of employees in the US working remotely full-time rocketed from just [5.2 percent](#) before the pandemic to roughly [50 percent](#) at its peak in May. Below is a summary of the experts in management, design, and cognitive science about workplace trends.

COVID showed us that we do not need the office and how much we miss the office

Health and well-being as focus of office design. Open offices aren't just unproductive, they're unhealthy.

- a. Overtime mutation of office space from high-to-medium-to-low contamination risk
  - i. space adaptation via FF&E; movable partitions etc.

- ii. PRE-VACCINE TO POST-VACCINE TO NEW NORMAL TO FUTURE THREATS
- iii. Distancing scenarios: day1 high risk; gradual densification
- b. Spatial Intelligence Tool (Graph): plug-in desired distance; obtain space impact results
- c. Year 2022:
  - i. Hybrid model of working
  - ii. 72% of employers allowing up to 30% of the staff to work from home some portion of the week
  - iii. 37% of US workers could plausibly work from home according to National Bureau of Economic Research
- d. Hybrid model of working in action might look as
  - i. Focus work at home
  - ii. Collaboration at office café
  - iii. Office as a restaurant with conference rooms
- e. Ventilation systems as unitary proposition: horizontal climate control system
- f. Flexibility of the office is key to future success
- g. the biggest change to the office will be the number of people working in it at any given time. 30% capacity seems to be a new norm

## 1. Governmental Framework:

- I. Updated strategies and recommendations for employers responding to COVID-19, including those seeking to resume normal or phased business operations:
  - . Conducting daily health checks
    - a. Conducting a hazard assessment of the workplace
    - b. Encouraging employees to wear cloth face coverings in the workplace, if appropriate
    - c. Implementing policies and practices for social distancing in the workplace
    - d. Improving the building ventilation system
- II. A table outlining the engineering controls, administrative controls, and personal protective equipment (PPE) that employers may use to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace

## B. TOOL KIT

- 2. Touch-tech: temperature-thermal scan; virus-containment fever-scanning products; space tracking of workers (buzz within social distancing zone)
- 3. Contact tracer device: in-office contract-tracing—smartphone apps or permanently installed terminals

## 4. THE LOBBY

- a. The lobby of the future likely will resemble an airport security checkpoint with facial recognition, touchless entry, and health screenings creating “a kind of no-fly list.
- b. [Kastle Systems](#), a 48-year-old Falls Church, Va., company that designs, installs and monitors security systems for several thousand commercial buildings, recently began marketing the product called [KastleSafeSpaces](#) to its corporate office clients

- c. [multilayered approach to entry screening](#) could help reduce risk for employers and create a safer working environment

## 5. The Elevators

Since coronavirus [particles can stick around](#) for hours or days, vendors are rushing to repurpose technologies to reduce the spread of the droplets. Kastle said it was modifying an app that can automatically open office doors to allow employees to call an elevator and indicate which floor they want to go to without touching any buttons.

Jennifer Burns, senior vice president of property management and operations at [Monday Properties](#), a commercial real estate owner, operator and developer, said her company has limited elevator capacity to four people at a time, asked employees going to higher floors to go to the back while riding and installed markers showing where people should stand. As an interim measure, she said, Monday Properties has installed self-cleaning antimicrobial covers, made by a Virginia company called [NanoTouch](#), on elevator buttons for additional protection. [Kastus](#), a company in Dublin, is also marketing its antimicrobial coatings to combat the spread of coronavirus.

- 6.
7. Access to outdoor space
8. Indoor Air Quality (IAQ):
9. More exchanges
10. Frequent outdoor air intake
11. Filtration through MERV-13; HEPA or UV-light retrofit
12. Business café- reversal of public-private office space balance
13. Plexiglass Shields
14. One-way hallways
15. Cohort planning with units of 9
16. Touchless entries and doors
17. Office Zones: guests and employees' separation
18. Sanitation Room- Isolation Room
19. Movable furnishings on casters- minimize fixed elements. Morph pods from 2 to 4 people not facing each other
20. Reconfigurable booths
21. Wider stairs

### I. PLUMBING FIXTURES & RESTROOMS REFRESH:

- Installed as designed per IBC 2018 Chapter 29 requirements.
- Proposed enhanced hygienic measures:
  - Permanently mounted hand-sanitizer dispenser
  - Add touch-free paper towel dispenser
  - Auto flush; touchless faucets
  - Hand dryer with HEPA Filter
- Remove-block out air transfer grills above doors. S/A provided. Exhaust through environmental fan: adjust to low velocity; keep on during normal business hours.
- 22.

### C. DESIGN TOOLS

- i. workplace floor-planning app [that generates social-distancing layouts](#) for desks and other office furniture.

#### D. DESIGN STUDIES

1. Pre-pandemic office- original design layout
2. Day one- office reopening adjustments: low hanging fruit
3. Foolproof anti-bacterial environment
4. Gradual density increase
5. Typical exhibits with notes:
  - i. Work Stations side-by-side
  - ii. Private office side-by-side
  - iii. Communal space options

*Please contact us to begin a conversation about how these tools and consulting services can support you now and into the future.*

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**END OF MEMORANDUM**