# Returning to the workplace – a guide for managers

Originally intended to be a temporary solution, working from home suddenly became the new normal, bringing with it new daily life and work routines.

As a manager, you may have found this challenging, as you were suddenly forced to manage your employees remotely. For most teams, it took time and effort to adjust and make it work.

Now, it is finally happening: Denmark is starting to re-open after the corona crisis, and so are physical work-places. This means the start of a new reality – one that may seem familiar but is nevertheless different from before the pandemic hit us and that requires us to once again adapt and acquire new habits and routines.

This may pose a challenge for you as a manager: How do you ensure the best return for your employees, and what should you be mindful of to ensure your team's well-being?

Together with AS3 Stress & Trivsel, we have prepared a guide for managers on how to best support their team in returning to the workplace.

## 1. Set up clear criteria for your re-opening

It is important that you clearly communicate your expectations to your employees during this phase – how you go about the reopening in your team and what you need to consider. The principles behind your decisions must be clear to all employees. Who is to return to the workplace and who will work from home, and why?

## 2. Maintain an open dialogue and consider individual needs

We are not all alike, and some of your employees may need a slightly longer period to adapt. Be considerate of individual needs and allow for some employees to work more from home while others are in the workplace more. An open dialogue makes it easier to consider individual needs and is key to getting your employees' acceptance. If your teamwork is already strained, these problems may be aggravated.

## 3. Keep up the regular dialogue about well-being

To ensure the most positive return to the workplace and to support your employees' mental health, it is important that you as a manager take the time to regularly check in with your employees about any worries or challenges they may have.

Schedule one-on-ones with each other to discuss well-being rather than work. Accept that not all employees will be able to perform like they used to from day one. Just give them time, and things will work themselves out.

## 4. Learn from the crisis

"Never waste a good crisis", as Winston Churchill once said.
 You and your team have probably been forced to experiment with new ways of working. Take the opportunity to learn from the positive insights gained during the coronavirus pandemic, such as processes, collaboration interfaces, meeting structures, etc. Invite your employees to share their perspectives on things that your team:

1) should stop doing that were already not working before the pandemic
2) have introduced during the pandemic and would benefit from continuing to do
3) would benefit from introducing going forward

**Get more inspiration on how best to return to the workplace
after the coronavirus pandemic – Click here**