



## Return to Office



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## 1. SUMMARY

In light of the easing of lockdown measures in the Netherlands, UN-IRMCT is beginning the return of personnel to the workplace after a long period of remote working and telecommuting.

This **Return to Office** plan is based on guidance provided by the host government, the WHO, and the UN. After collaboration between UN-IRMCT principles, it has been decided that UN-IRMCT staff will return to work with 100% capacity in both branches (The Hague and Arusha) on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September 2021.

This document outlines the strategy for the return to office. It provides information and guidance on the context and the actions that have been taken to prepare the building in the safest manner possible.

The health and safety of staff members remains a priority. Most of the health and safety measures adopted to address the pandemic at our premises will therefore remain in place after the return. Staff members with particular health concerns should approach their respective managers or section chiefs for discussion about their individual circumstances.

## 2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles have been adopted by the COVID-19 Group and implemented by General Services Section and Security & Safety Section, after consultation with the Staff Union and the Medical Unit:

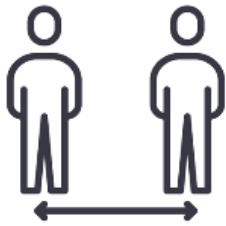
- Protection of Health and Safety: The health and safety of users of the building including contractors, interns, detainees, witnesses and visitors must be considered the driving force behind the return to work strategy.
- Business Continuity: Although the organization has continued its business successfully throughout the pandemic, it is expected that a return to office will improve business continuity in a number of areas and communication will become a lot more fluent.

In meeting these principles, the “Return to Office” plan uses the following guidance:

- a. Implementation date: The return to office will come into force on the **13th of September** with strict adherence to all Health & Safety measures to ensure a safe return.
- b. Communication: In order to facilitate a safe and productive return to working on premises, best efforts are made to communicate effectively through a variety of means to both inform and solicit feedback.
- c. Adapting to “the new normal”: We will not return to “business as usual” but instead we will return to a “new normal” in the office. Precautionary measures, such as physical distancing and personal hygiene standards will continue to be vital. This situation is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

### 3. PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES ON PREMISES

Precautionary measures, such as physical distancing, are simple yet effective ways to prevent the spread of the virus. The following measures need to be maintained by all users of the building:



- Staying at home in case you are showing COVID-19 like symptoms
- Keeping a 1.5 meters distance from each other at all times.
- Maintaining thorough hand hygiene at all times, including frequent hand washing and using hand sanitizer. These are available throughout the building.
- Refraining from physical contact with others, such as handshakes or hugs.
- Avoiding to the extent possible touching surfaces that are frequently touched by others.
- Keeping one's own work area clean and tidy, a disinfectant kit will be made available to each office.
- Avoiding Ad hoc meetings or gatherings in corridors or common areas

### 4. OCCUPANCY STRATEGY

We have analysed the building in terms of density and we have calculated the maximum allowable number of persons per office when adhering to physical distancing requirements (a minimum of 9 square meters per person). As a result, 95% of the originally available individual work stations will be available during this phase. Posters are placed on all corridor entrance doors to remind staff of the requirement to maintain a 1.5-meter distance.

The estimation of 9 sqm per person has been calculated by considering the area of the required 1.5 meters physical distance taking into consideration the secondary circulation typical in an office setting and it is based on the specific architectural features of the existing office space.

FMU has modified the office spaces where necessary by moving desks and removing excess furniture such as meeting chairs in order to discourage intimate gatherings and to make sure each work station is respecting the 1.5 distancing.

In addition, special provisions will be made for service functions with special requirements (e.g., security, interpreters, contractors, etc.), in accordance with occupational safety and health recommendations.

## 5. ACCESS TO PREMISES



The UN-IRMCT Hague building has two entry points which will remain open. Care has been taken to ensure physical distancing of 1.5 meters when entering and exiting through the security screening areas. Floor markings indicating a 1.5 meter distance are clearly marked at both entrances.

Security Officers at these entry points will be shielded from all other users and will be on hand to assist with screening.

### Pedestrian Entry

At the main entrance, pedestrians will enter through the outside security booth as previously.

At the north entrance pedestrians may enter as usual where they will be reminded to keep the 1.5 meter distancing which is clearly marked on the floor. Only one person at a time will be allowed to enter the screening areas.



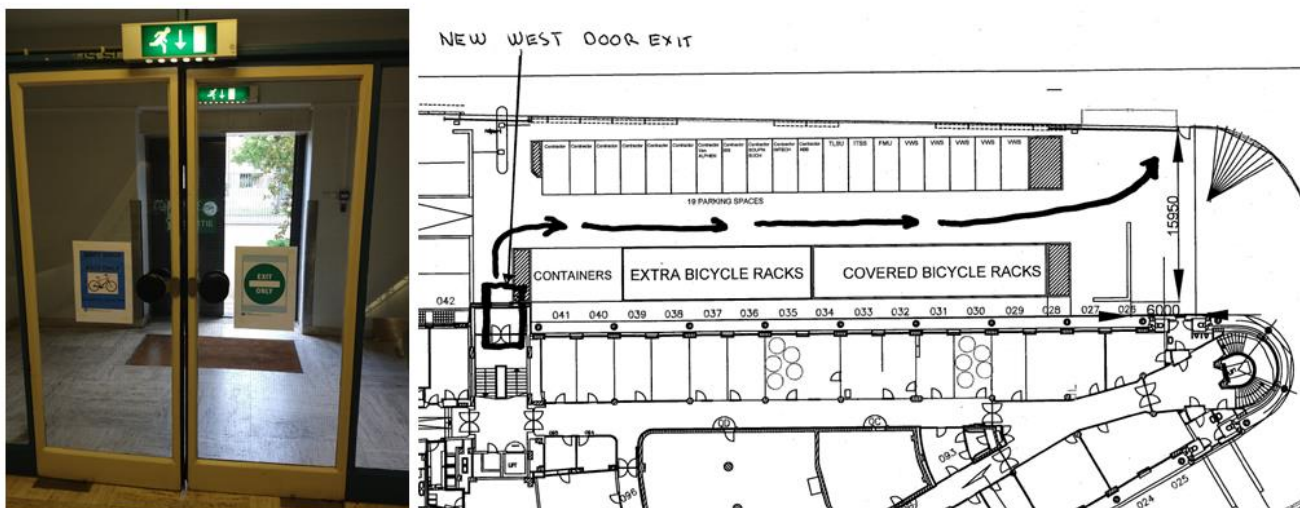
Note: It is compulsory to use hand sanitizer on entering the premises.



## Pedestrian Exit

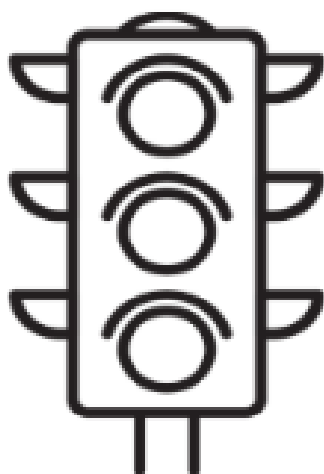
At the main entrance, pedestrians will exit through the turnstile in the perimeter fence as usual.

**Staff will no longer be permitted to exit via the north entrance.** Instead a separate exit has been created at the west door of the building to create a one-way entry/exit system. Pedestrians will exit the perimeter as usual via the north gate.



## Cyclist entry /exit

For cyclists, the normal access and exit at north gate will continue to apply. On exiting the building via the west door, bicycle collection will remain unchanged.



## Vehicle entry

Vehicle entry and exit will remain unchanged.

## 6. TRAFFIC FLOW THROUGH PREMISES

To ensure necessary physical distancing measures throughout the premises, we have implemented the following procedures to guide the flow of foot traffic:

**Entrances:** The entrances are clearly marked in order to guide staff to their offices. In principle, staff will not have moved office and will use the same route to their office as previously.

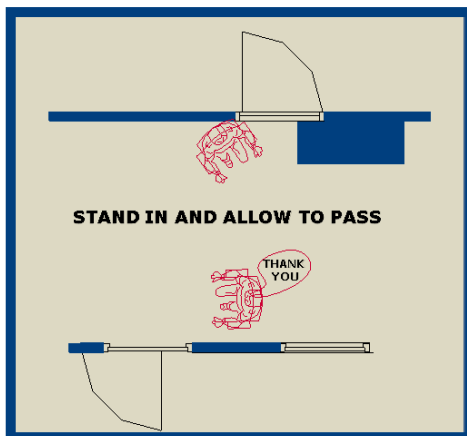
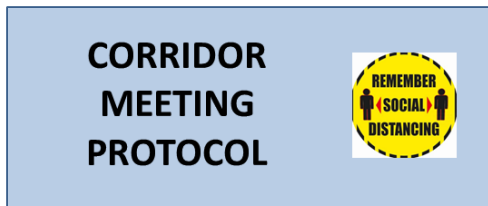


**Elevators/stairwells:** The use of elevators is discouraged, unless necessary. In buildings with no more than 5 floors such as UN-IRMCT, people are requested to use the stairs. Priority to use the lifts should be given to persons with a mobility impairment. If you must use the lift, 2 persons maximum are permitted at a time.

The stairwells are clearly marked and again the principle idea is to maintain a 1.5 meter distancing and remain vigilant of oncoming colleagues.

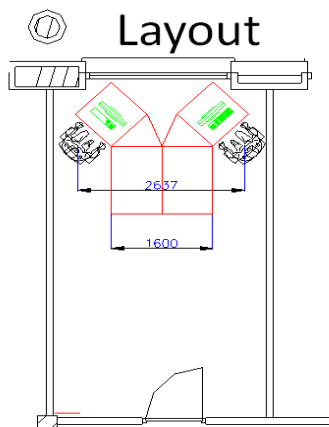


**Corridors:** People will need to maintain the required 1.5 meters of physical distance from each other at all times when walking in hallways. Users are requested to stand in and allow colleagues to pass so maintaining the distance.



**Within offices:** All workstations have been verified to be compliant with safe distancing. Users should avoid visiting their colleagues in their individual offices. Excess meeting chairs have been removed to discourage gatherings. Below is a sketch of a standard office in our organization. For single offices, distancing is not an issue and one visitor per office is allowed. Within open areas, work stations and furniture have been reconfigured to comply with social distancing and safe circulation. In the standard office as in the drawing below it is clear that keeping 1.5 meters between staff is easily maintained. With this in mind extra plexi glass screens between staff is **not** required.

## Standard office Layout





**Toilets:** One person at a time is permitted to enter the toilet. A lock has been placed on the outside door demonstrating if the room is occupied or vacant. Posters on each door will remind you to lock the door behind you on entry. On leaving there is a hand sanitizer on the wall outside which you are requested to use.



**Communal areas:** Protective measures have been implemented in communal areas, such as the lobby, the cafeteria etc.

Markings on the floor remind everyone of the requirement to keep the required 1.5 meters of physical distance when queuing and protection has been provided to service personnel.

Furniture has been reduced to ensure adherence to physical distancing requirements.

The recreation rooms in the basement have unfortunately been closed until further notice.

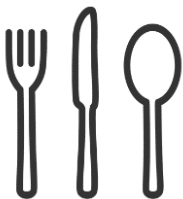
## 7. CLEANING AND DISINFECTION MEASURES



The adequate cleaning of exposed surfaces remains a crucial measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. FMU have reviewed the cleaning protocols to ensure adherence to strict hygiene standards. The following measures have been implemented:

- Regular cleaning of all areas of the buildings has been resumed.
  - During the regular cleaning, restrooms and other common areas (e.g., elevators, cafeteria, seating areas, etc.) are sanitized daily or more often depending on density of traffic.
  - Cleaning and sanitizing of frequently touched surfaces (e.g. door handles, elevator buttons, stairway rails, etc.) will be carried out several times throughout the day, ensuring that all surfaces are sanitized at a maximum of 4-hour intervals.
  - Hand sanitizers are made available on every floor near the elevators, toilets and corridors and at building entrances.
  - Conference rooms and interpretation booths, including earphones, surfaces of tables, desks pads, chairs, armrests and other equipment are thoroughly cleaned and sanitized before and after usage.
  - A deep-cleaning and sanitizing protocol will be followed in case of suspected COVID-19 case among personnel who have been on the premises.
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- A cleaning kit has been provided to each desk to allow staff members to clean their personal working area.

## 8. CATERING SERVICES



The following measures have been put in place in the Cafeteria to comply with COVID-19 guidelines:

Markings on the floor to ensure the required 1.5 meters of physical distance is maintained while queuing.

A glass screen has been installed to ensure safe interaction between personnel and customers.

Contactless payment is advisable using means of credit/debit card.

Spacing of tables and chairs in the eating area has been carried out to comply with physical distancing and circulation requirements. In order to maintain distancing, the furniture must not be moved, and the space must not be used for meetings.

Signage has been posted in strategic locations to remind people of the need to maintain physical distance, hand hygiene etc.

It is mandatory to use the hand sanitizing gel placed in the Cafeteria.

Cafeteria staff will wear face shields at all times.

The cafeteria will remain open and serving food from 8:30 until 15:00 Monday to Friday.

The balcony will be open as usual and 1.5 meter distancing rules apply.

## 9. MEETING ROOMS



Internal meetings and gatherings on premises should only take place if the requirement of 1.5-meters physical distance can be adhered to.

If a face-to-face internal meeting is necessary, please select a large enough meeting room.

All meeting and conference rooms have been evaluated in terms of their maximum safe capacity adhering to physical distancing requirements.

The table below shows the maximum permitted occupancy for each meeting room. Within the conference rooms, participants will be asked to occupy the furthest possible seat only, which will minimize the number of times one needs to pass a colleague. Likewise, closest to the exit door should be first to leave.

### Occupancy Table

- CR3 Meeting room: 30 persons
- PG3 Meeting room: 7 persons.
- Room 177: 6 persons
- 256: 8 persons
- 031: 5 persons
- Press briefing room (fishbowl): 18 persons



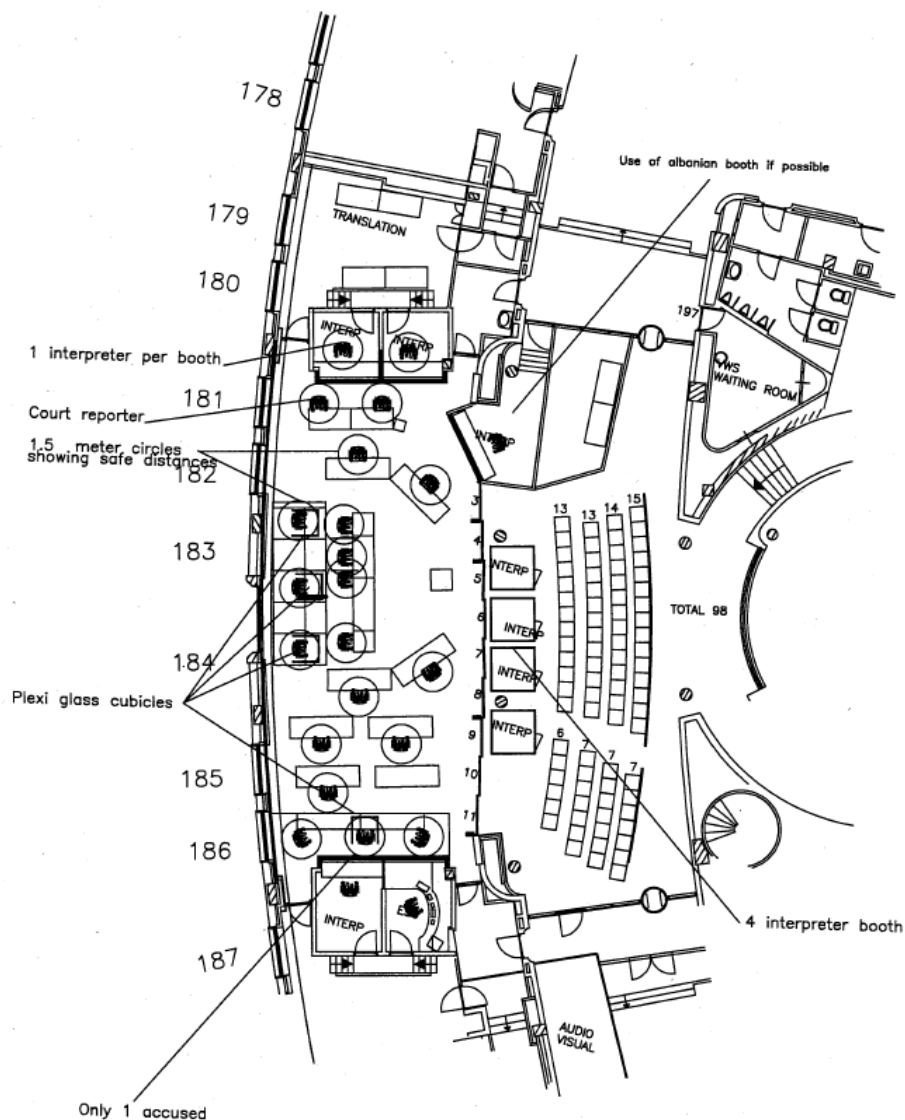
**Note on booking a meeting room:** Please book an extra 30 minutes after each meeting to allow airing and cleaning of the room between meetings. Rooms are still available for booking through Lotus notes

## 10. COURTROOM

The courtroom has been modified to comply with social distancing and COVID-19 expert advice as follows;

- Excess furniture has been removed and the maximum occupancy has been reduced.
- Plexi glass cubicles have been placed to protect the judges and accused.
- 4 extra interpreter booths have been constructed in the public gallery to allow changeover of interpretation personnel during hearings.
- Extra bins have been placed outside the courtroom for the removal of waste such as cups, surgical gloves, PPE etc.
- Security officers and the court usher will wear PPE during hearings.
- A special cleaning regime has been put in place to facilitate the sanitization of the courtroom before and after hearings.
- ITSS have removed all surplus equipment leaving only the designated stations in use taking 1.5 meter distancing into account.
- Ventilation has been enhanced to provide safe circulation.

Total Recommended Participants: Max 21  
Social distancing respected



## 11. VENTILATION



To ensure optimal safe ventilation in all areas, the Mechanism follows recommendations from the Federation of European Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (REHVA).

All filters for outside air have been replaced and maintenance of filters is strictly monitored. In the context of COVID-19, the measures recommended by REHVA are to run the ventilation systems with no air re-circulation and to run the ventilation units consistently to ensure that 100% fresh air is injected into the ventilated space.

This measure reduces the spread of all air-borne viruses and bacteria.

## 12. EXTERNAL VISITORS /CONTRACTORS /INTERVIEWEES



It is recommended to limit external visits. It may therefore be preferable to hold a meeting virtually, or at an off-site location. For necessary on-site visits, the usual procedures through SSS should be followed and all physical distancing and hygiene measures must be respected.

Guided tours have been suspended until further notice.

## 13. WHAT TO DO WHEN FEELING UNWELL ON PREMISES



If a staff member becomes unwell while on premises with COVID-19 like symptoms (fever or feverish feeling, cough, sudden loss of sense of smell and taste, muscle aches), they should leave the building immediately taking the shortest route possible avoiding contact with other staff. Once outside the building, they should contact the medical unit at [medicalunit@un.org](mailto:medicalunit@un.org) so they can offer advice and begin contact tracing. If a staff member should become unwell and is not able to leave the office, they should contact SSS immediately on ext: 5200 and await further instructions.

If a staff member should become unwell off-site with COVID-19 like symptoms, they are requested to email the medical unit as soon as possible for further advice.



#### **14. WEARING OF MASKS**



It remains compulsory to wear a face mask at all times while using common areas within the building. This requires all users to wear a mask on stepping outside of your office into the corridor and continues until you are outside the premises. You are not required to wear a mask while seated in your own office, the cafeteria, on the balcony or while attending a meeting in one of our official meeting rooms.

#### **15. COMMUNICATION**

Personnel will be informed of the return to the workplace plan through multiple means of communication including tribune and broadcast messages, briefings for managers and personnel, virtual Town Hall meetings, broadcast messages and team meetings. They will also be reminded and encouraged to follow the required preventative measures through visual communication around the premises, such as posters and floor markings.

#### **16. WE RELY ON YOU**

**After such a long time away from the office, it is great to finally welcome you back. We understand it will take some time to fully adjust. We hope you can feel safe in your place of work.**



**UNITED NATIONS  
International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals**