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Correspondence Memorandum

Date: December 3, 2021

To: Employee Trust Funds Board
Teachers Retirement Board
Wisconsin Retirement Board

From: Pam Henning, Assistant Deputy Secretary
Office of the Secretary

Subject: COVID-19 Pandemic Update

This memo is for informational purposes only. No Board action is required.

Since the September board meeting, ETF has been preparing for its eventual return to a hybrid work environment, set to begin in the new year.

ETF Onsite Services Continue

Since July 6, ETF has been providing onsite front desk and quick service functions, allowing members to drop off forms or address simple benefit-related questions in person. Onsite one-on-one individual counseling sessions in private counseling rooms also continue with eight appointments four days per week. Plexiglass and additional ventilation were installed in private counseling rooms and at the front desk for member and staff comfort and safety. Virtual appointments continue to be well attended, in addition to offering a weeknight and daytime group counseling session monthly to provide flexibility for our members. Unvaccinated members visiting the Hill Farms State Office Building (HFSOB) and ETF suites must wear a mask. Vaccinated customers are strongly encouraged to wear a mask in state office buildings.

Return to Office Transition

ETF's official new hybrid working schedules for staff will take effect in full on January 3, 2022. A phased approach to return to the office was implemented from November 1 through January 3. This was due to the current state employee mask mandate, as well as Public Health Madison and Dane County's mask mandate, which have been extended until January 3, 2022.

Board	Mtg Date	Item #
EXC	12.8.21	3A
BUD	12.9.21	3A
JM	12.9.21	4E

At the September board meeting, ETF indicated the delayed the return of staff onsite to November 1 for many of the same reasons cited above. Then as the November 1 date was approaching, we instead determined a transitional phase to the office was more reasonable given the length of time staff have been working from home. This allowed the time needed for staff to acclimate to the many changes within the ETF work spaces. Staff were asked to visit ETF occasionally prior to January 3 to understand the use of new technology, floor and cubicle assignments, and other health and safety measures.

As always, we continue to monitor guidance from federal, state, and local health experts that may warrant changes to our return onsite in January 2022. ETF's first priority is the health and safety of our staff and the members we serve.

Vaccination and Testing Updates

As reported in September, the Department of Administration (DOA) required all state employees (permanent, project, and limited term) and contractors to report their vaccination status by September 9. As of this memo, about 93% of ETF staff are vaccinated. In addition, DOA required any unvaccinated staff or those not reporting vaccination status to begin weekly testing in mid-October. ETF has about 24 staff testing weekly.

Next Steps

ETF is prepared for staff to begin their new hybrid work schedules in January 2022. ETF has developed onboarding informational guides and videos, created a hotel office/cube scheduling process, distributed sanitation items and social distancing guidelines throughout ETF spaces, and prepared or purchased IT equipment and tools to meet individual and conference room needs for both onsite and virtual meetings. In addition, we continue to work with DOA to reduce ETF floor space within the HFSOB resulting in some construction on the two remaining floors. DOA will begin construction and make other needed changes in the late spring.

I will be available at the December 9 Board meeting to answer any questions.