

# Returning to the Downtown Office

Facilitate a smooth transition  
back to in-person work

Keep employees engaged, support them through the transition, and help build stronger teams. Here are some tips and considerations for transitioning your employees back to the downtown office:

## Focus on community.

Create a “people-first” environment in the workplace to encourage safe socialization, connection, and belonging.

- Host a “welcome back week”.
- Run contests.
  - Downtown Winnipeg Gift Cards accepted at over 170 downtown businesses are ideal prizes!
- Share neighbourhood information like events happening downtown, safety resources and places to eat or grab coffee on your company’s intranet or internal communications channels.
  - Visit [downtownwinnipegbiz.com](http://downtownwinnipegbiz.com) or contact Downtown Winnipeg BIZ for more info.
- Organize a team lunch catered by a downtown restaurant.
- Provide opportunities for safe socializing.
- Build an internal recognition and appreciation program.
- Take part in a community initiative such as a downtown clean-up event.

## Support your teams.

Act in support of a positive physical, mental, and social workplace.

- Your team’s well-being needs to be a top priority.
- Provide a safe place to provide feedback.
- Talk to your employees about safety.
  - Contact the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ to arrange a safety presentation.
  - Share safety tips and resources with your teams.

Having the team back to the collaborative hub of the office fosters organizational community and culture.

According to the Stantec Workplace Transformation survey (April 2020), the two top reasons employees would like to get back to the workplace include:



The ability to collaborate face-to-face



Interaction with coworkers

- Maintain sanitation and cleanliness protocols.
- Provide easy access to mental supports like EAP programs, and/or apps like Headspace for Work, and Calm for Business.

## Provide flexibility.

Meet your team where they’re at, offering a workplace that includes freedom, creativity, and a casual yet intentional approach.

- Explore flexible options regarding work start and end times, pet days at work, and more.
- It’s not acceptable to go to work while sick. With this in mind, it may be time to re-evaluate your sick time policy.
- Host meetings off site and in the community.
  - In the summer, the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ’s outdoor workspace, RE: Workspace is a great option.
- Encourage employees to get outdoors and experience events designed for workers to enjoy on their breaks:

- [Fitness in the Park](#) offers free fitness classes everyday over the lunch hour from June-August at various parks downtown.

- [Downtown Sounds Concert Series](#) features live music performances on Tuesdays from noon - 1:00 P.M.

- [The Downtown Farmers’ Market](#) runs on Thursdays all year round from 10:00 A.M. - 2:30 P.M.

- Encourage your employees to [subscribe to The Mingle](#), a weekly newsletter that features a round-up of events happening downtown.



## Why encourage in-office work?

When employees are together under one roof, they can:

- Participate in valuable in-person meetings with colleagues where body language, tone, and personality aren't interrupted by poor internet connections, technology challenges, and at-home distractions.
- Experience improved opportunities for mentorship and professional development.
- Build relationships outside of work time (i.e. on their lunch breaks) that improve their working relationships.
- Engage in and contribute to the organizational culture.

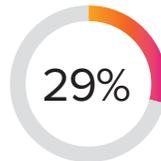
Here are more reasons to bring the team together:



of employees report communication and connectivity with their team in a virtual work environment is a significant challenge.<sup>1</sup>



of remote workers feel they're operating on autopilot. 54% feel mentally exhausted and 44% have trouble focusing.<sup>2</sup>



of remote workers agree they don't receive as much recognition as on-site colleagues.<sup>2</sup>



When workers feel appreciated, thanked, and valued they're 3x as likely to see a path to growth in the organization.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> PwC Canadian office worker survey 2021, Sept. 2021

<sup>2</sup> The Workhuman iQ, Spring 2022 International Survey Report

Our downtown is on Treaty No. 1 territory and the traditional homeland of the Métis Nation.

Need something else?  
Contact Downtown Winnipeg BIZ for resources, ideas, and more to support your team in their return-to-the-office experience.

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