MarxModa's Guide to Returning to the Workplace

Living & Working Post-COVID-19

August 11, 2020

HermanMiller Certified Dealer

As businesses in Michigan and throughout the nation begin to return to work in the wake of the onset of COVID-19, MarxModa's mission of making a difference for our partners through the creation of supportive spaces has become more important than ever. Through the duration of the state-wide "Stay Home" Order, our team has taken the knowledge gained through conversations with customers and thought leaders, strategy insights from Herman Miller, and our own 35+ years of placemaking experience, to develop this guide for returning to the workplace.

We hope that the insights, protocols, and suggestions shared here can help guide your own thoughts as you consider how to bring your business back to the office. As always, we are here to help, and would welcome the chance to partner with you to transform your space and enable your staff to do their best work, while remaining safe, healthy, and happy.

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01
Client Engagement

We have spoken with over 100 different businesses in our region, holding collaborative working sessions to discuss the challenges presented by COVID-19. While each of our partners' experiences have been unique, and their ideas about how to support the physical and psychological safety of their employees as they return to work differ, each has experienced a massive disruption to their normal work process. Most importantly, every organization agrees that it is not possible to simply return to the way things were.

Common Insights

Across industries, companies large and small, all communicated the following:

Protocols for physical interaction such as handshaking need to be altered

Both personal hygiene and facility cleaning plans need to be developed

Both physical and psychological needs should be considered when making changes to make the workplace feel safe

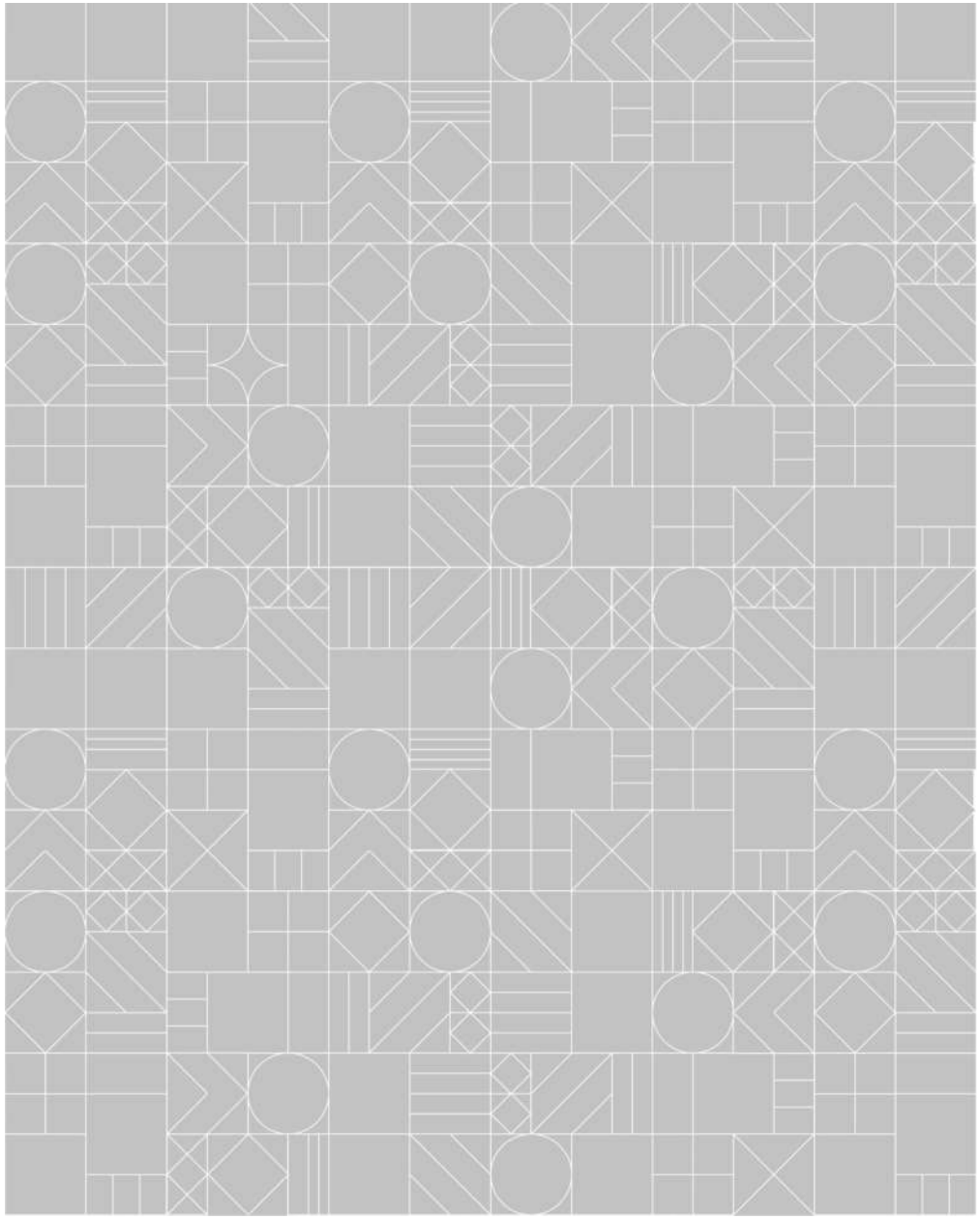
The cleanability of office furniture for both hard and soft surfaces needs to be examined

Rules about physical distancing of at least 6 feet need to be created

The feasibility of working from home needs to be evaluated based on employee roles, performance, and personal preference

Physical & Protocol Changes

Every company is unique, so it makes sense that each business is developing a plan that is specific to the needs of their team. Clients have indicated they will be making changes to the layout of their physical environment as well as instituting new processes and protocols to ensure the safety of their staff.



Physical Changes

Many companies are considering making some of the changes below to their workspace to make it comfortable and safe for returning emloyees.

Meeting & Collaboration Spaces

- Chairs that are within 6 feet of each other will be moved, removed, or cordoned off
- Furniture will be rearranged to support physical distancing
- Capacity limits will be established and maintained
- Directional arrows to guide the flow of traffic into and out of rooms will be created

Workpoints & Workstations

- Screens will be employed to create physical boundaries and provide psychological support
- Workpoints that are not 6 feet apart will be moved, removed, or cordoned off.
- Workstations will be rearranged so that teammates do not directly face each other

Lobbies

- Furniture will be rearranged to support physical distancing
- Screens will be employed to create physical boundaries and provide psychological support for greeters and administrative staff
- Directional arrows to guide the flow of traffic into and out of the building will be created

Protocol Changes

Some of the protocol changes below are being considered by companies as they create their plan for returning to the workplace.

Facility Protocols

- All hard and soft surfaces will be assessed for cleanability
- Any items that are not cleanable will be removed from the office
- Desks will be assigned in place of free address
- Capacity limits for conference rooms will be created
- The use of technology instead of physical meetings will be encouraged
- Cleaning schedules will be created

Employee & Visitor Protocols

- A system for touch-less visitor check-in will be created
- Health certifications and temperature checks will be instituted
- Rules about wearing masks or other PPE while working will be established
- Daily or weekly shifts will be created to stagger the number of people in the building
- Appointments for visits will be pre-scheduled

02
Insights from Herman Miller

Our partner Herman Miller has used the research and knowledge they have gained from over 70 years of workplace design to create the following guidelines. These suggestions are informed by currently available science and data along with recommendations from resident experts, thought leaders, and organizations such as the CDC and OSHA.

Factors to Consider as People Return to the Workplace

Prioritize Holistic Community Measures

Holistic policies like staggering work schedules and limiting the number of employees in a location will be the most effective tactics as your employees return to the workplace.

Don't Immediately Default to Adding Screens

Don't get caught up in the screen hype. While they are important at check-out counters, the science on whether or not they can prevent infection spread in the workplace is inconclusive.

Use Data to Decide Who Goes Back First

An anonymous survey—such as the Leesman Homeworking Assessment—can help you determine which teams can continue working at home and which should return to the workplace.

Support Teams Working Remotely

Provide the ergonomic furniture and technology platforms people need to be productive while working from home. And make sure your workplace is outfitted for collaboration with remote colleagues.

Overcommunicate with Employees

Use your internal social networks to engage employees in dialogues, and use surveys to do regular "pulse checks" to see how people are feeling as they return to the office.

Download and read Herman Miller's full workplace guide here:
https://marxmoda.com/news/2020/embracing-a-new-reality

Stages to Normal

- **Stage 1 Acknowledgement of Situation (March 2020)**

  Companies begin absorbing all initial information released, familiarizing themselves with guidelines from the CDC, WHO, etc.

- **Stage 2 Immediate-Short-Term (3-6 Months)**

  Companies create a process for approximately 20-30% of employee workforce returning to work, but do not necessarily have workspace products or solutions finalized. Work From Home programs are an essential part of this process, short-, mid-, and long-term.

- **Stage 3 Mid-Term (6-9 Months)**

  Companies focus on more than 40% of their staff returning to the workplace. They must consider how new guidelines, data, and procedures inform the design of their space and office protocols.

- **Stage 4 Long-Term (3+ Years)**

  Companies evaluate and adjust their workspace and process to what the new employee experience looks like. A complete transformation has taken place.

03 MarxModa's Return to Work Strategy

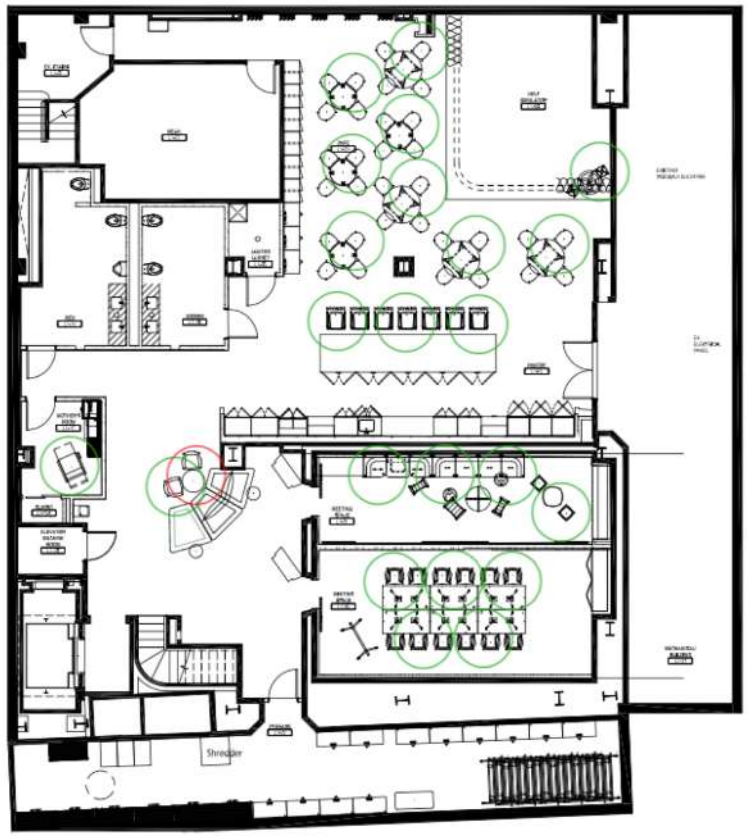
Using the insights garnered from conversations with our partners and industry leaders, along with the suggestions provided by Herman Miller, MarxModa has designed our own plan to transition our team back to working in our Detroit and Lansing offices. We hope that our plan, which involves changes in furniture use, new office protocols, and adjusted work schedules, can serve as a thought-starter for your own procedure.

Furniture Use

Our team made the decision to keep our furniture in its original configurations, but designate certain spaces as usable or not, so that everyone in the building can remain 6 feet apart. For the time being, we are not extending any panels on workstations and are using a limited amount of portable transparent screens to create boundaries and improve the flow of traffic. The floorplans provided show the adjustments we are making to ensure physical distancing and protocol enforcement.

Detroit

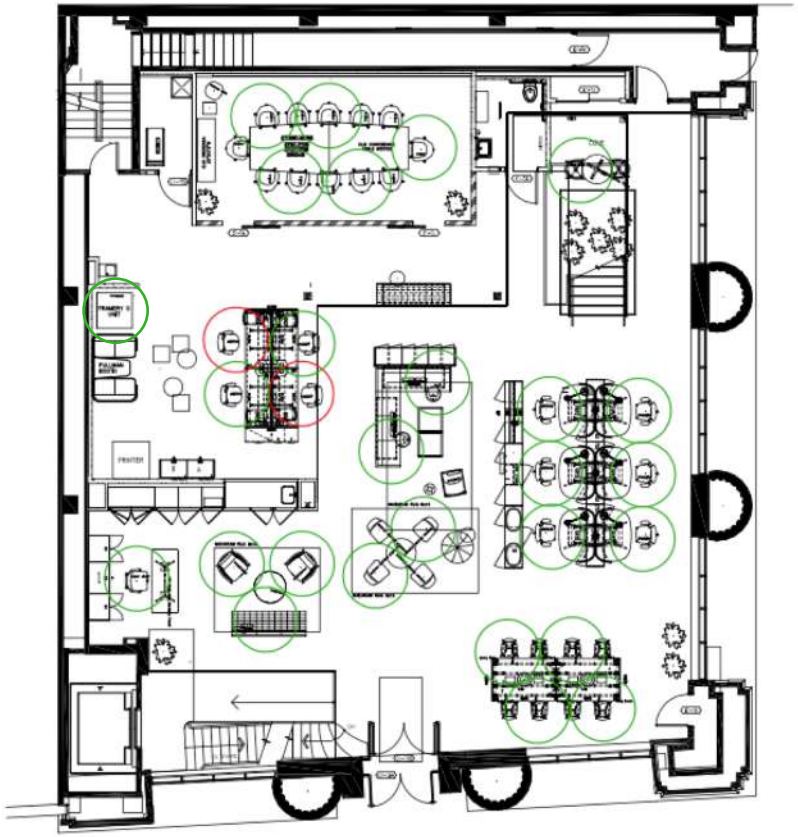
Basement



5 Conference Room Seats
6 Ancillary Seats

Kitchen Max Occupancy: 12

First Floor

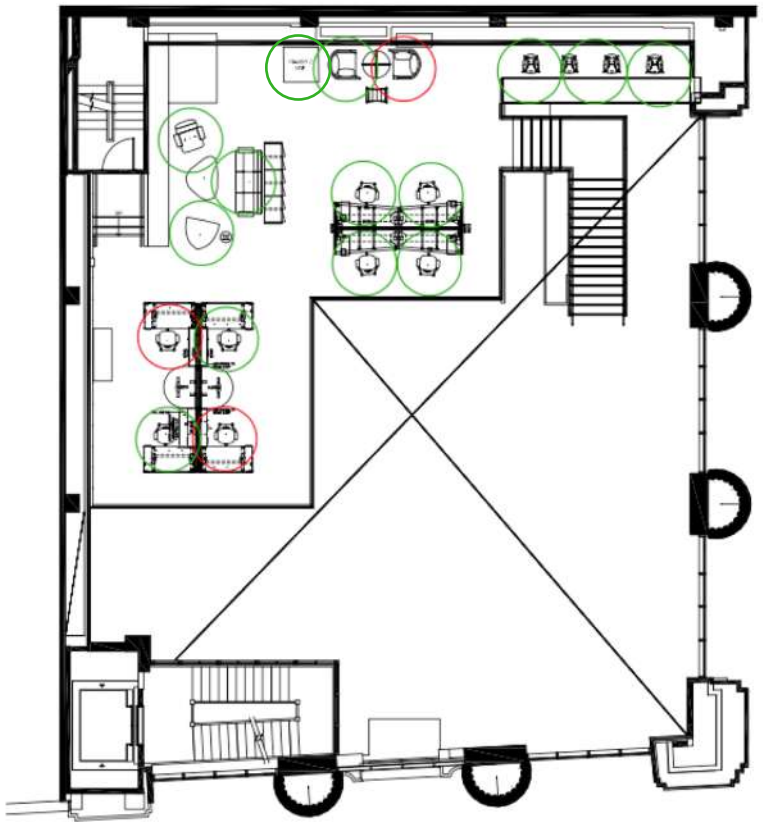


9 Workstations
4 Workpoints
5 Conference Room Seats
9 Ancillary Seats

*Green circle indicates occupancy for one person
*Red circle indicates areas that cannot be occupied

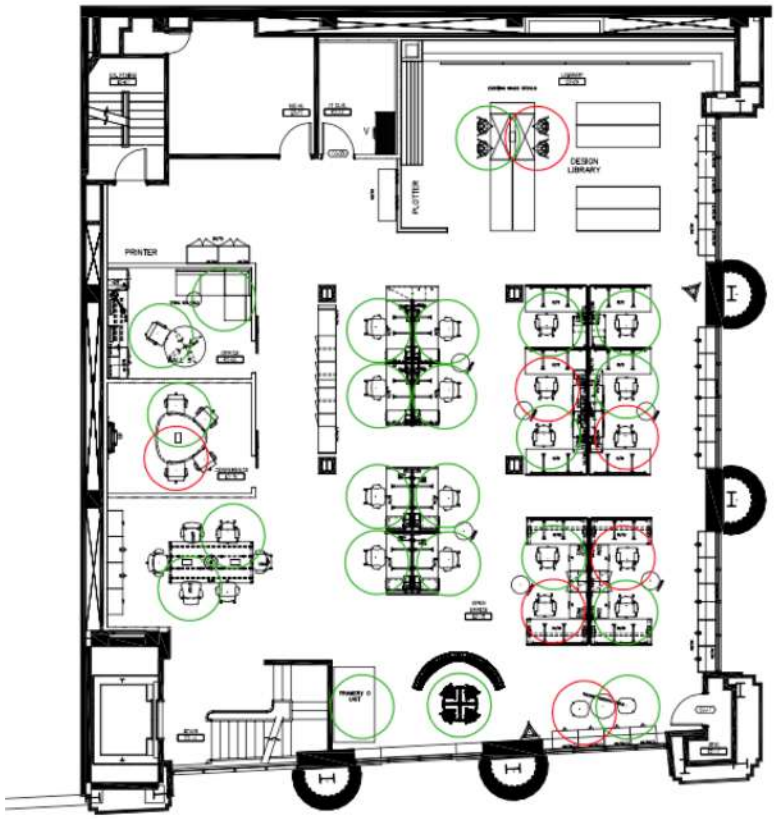
Detroit

Mezzanine



6 Workstations
3 Workpoints
5 Ancillary Seats

Second Floor

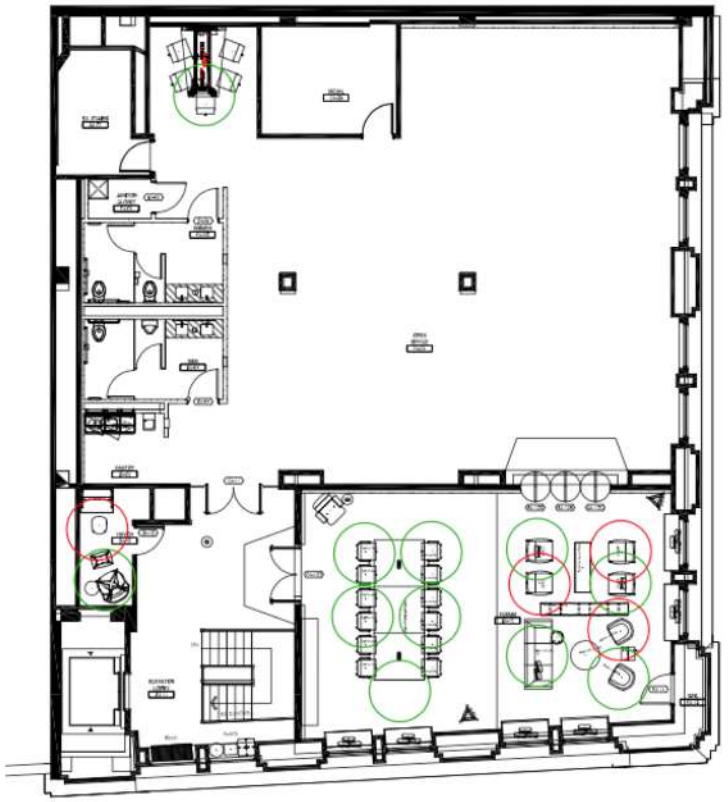


14 Workstations
2 Workpoints
3 Conference Room Seats
4 Ancillary Seats

*Green circle indicates occupancy for one person
*Red circle indicates areas that cannot be occupied

Detroit

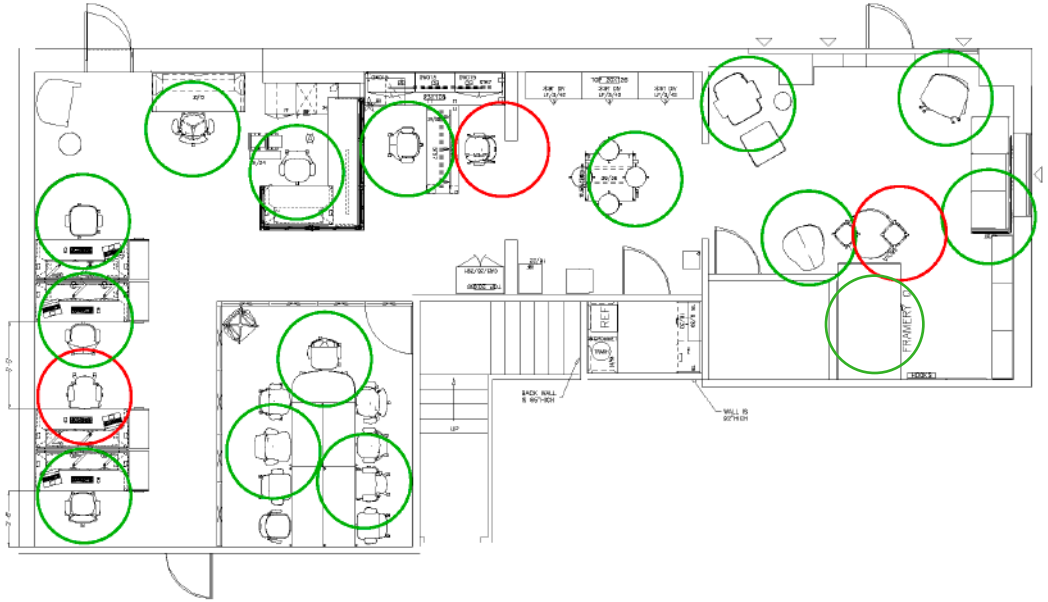
Fourth Floor



2 Workpoints
5 Conference Room Seats
4 Ancillary Seats

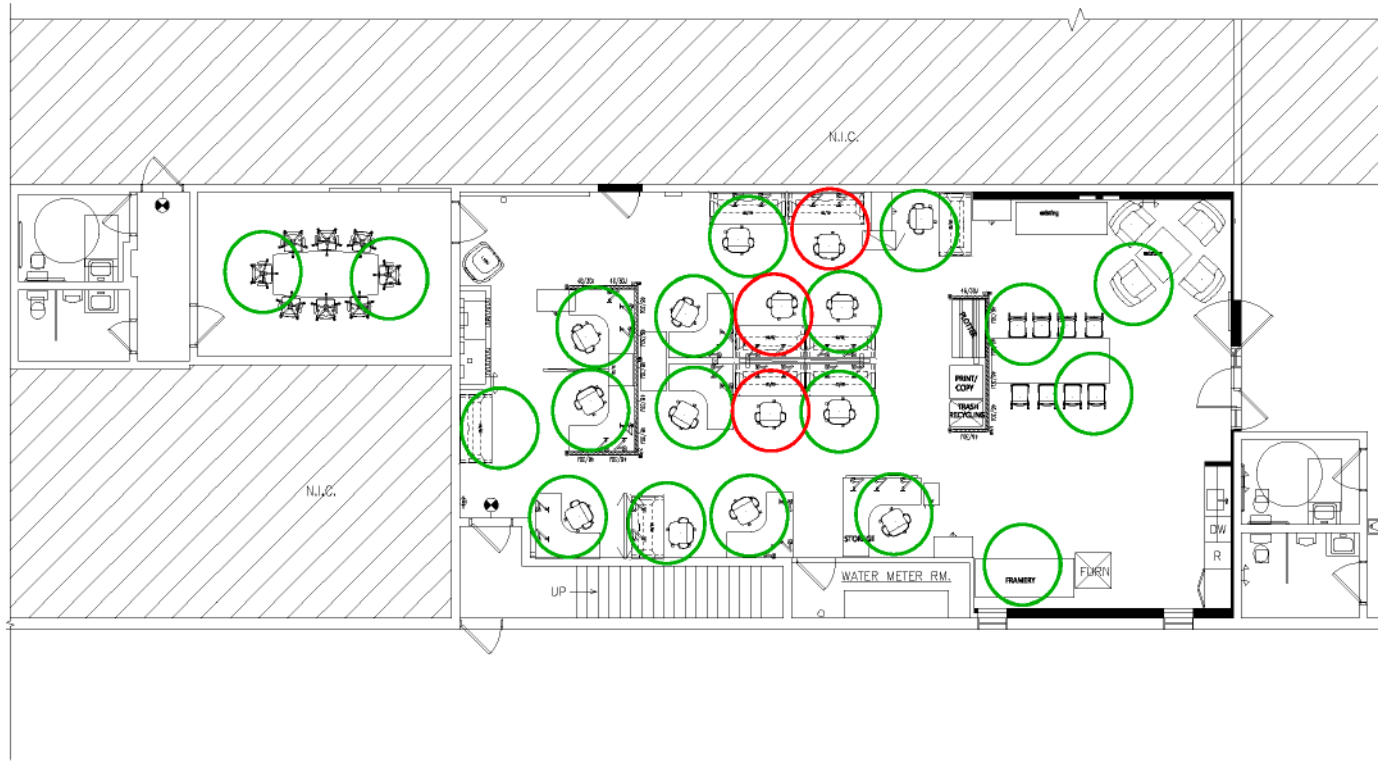
*Green circle indicates occupancy for one person
*Red circle indicates areas that cannot be occupied

Lansing



6 Workstations
6 Ancillary Seats
3 Conference Seats

Livonia



12 Workstations
2 Conference Room Seats
1 Workpoint
4 Ancillary Seats

*Green circle indicates occupancy for one person
*Red circle indicates areas that cannot be occupied

Office Protocols

We have instituted the following protocols that our team members must follow when they enter any MarxModa facility.

Office Access

- Team members who are feeling sick or presenting any symptoms of a cold, flu, or COVID-19 are asked to stay home and/or seek medical attention.
- Those exposed or infected with COVID-19 must report this information to their supervisor and HR, and are asked to stay home until they have been symptom free for 72 hours.
- A daily self-assessment and temperature check before coming to work is required and should be personally recorded and maintained.
- Random temperature checks throughout the facility will be established.
- Bringing lunch to work and avoiding exiting and reentering the building whenever possible is encouraged.

Personal Hygiene

- Face masks are required upon entering the building, when walking around, and in situations where 6’ distancing is not possible. Removal is allowed when working alone in a workstation and 6’ physically distant.
- Avoid touching face, eyes, nose, and mouth while at work.
- Follow appropriate respiratory etiquette including covering coughs and sneezes.
- Wash or sanitize hands often throughout the day especially:
    - Immediately upon arrival
    - Before, during, and after preparing and/or eating food
    - Before and after treating a cut or wound
    - After using the bathroom
    - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
    - After using high-touch furniture (work surfaces, chair arms, etc.) and facility elements (door handles, light switches, etc.).

Office Protocols (Cont.)

Workstation & Facility Sanitation

- Clean personal tools and equipment (phones, keyboard, mouse, etc.) regularly.
- Clean shared tools (printer, copier, stapler, etc.) before and after every use.
- Clean assigned workstation upon arrival and departure with special attention given to high-touch areas (work surface, chair arms, etc.).
- Keep personal items at assigned workstation or locker.
- Communal or shared food is prohibited.
- Food may not be stored at the office overnight.
- Avoid touching shared surfaces with hands and instead use tissues or disinfectant wipes.
- Clean shared surfaces (conference tables and chairs, lunch tables and chairs, etc.) before and after use.
- Accessories and certain ancillary pieces have been removed from facilities to facilitate cleaning.
- High-touch spaces, surfaces, and tools (doors, bathroom, elevator, plotter, storage room, etc.) will be cleaned 3 times per day.
- A deep cleaning of the entire facility will take place once a week with special attention paid to high-touch surfaces (light switches, doorknobs, railings, etc.).

Physical Distancing

- Physical contact (handshakes, hugs, elbow bumps, etc.) is not allowed.
- Remain 6’ apart whenever possible.
- Workstations and lockers are assigned and not shared.
- Standing is temporarily eliminated at workstations.
- Each conference room has a capacity of 50% or less.
- Virtual collaboration and meetings using Teams is encouraged.
- Follow designated stair usage rules (front stairs are down only, back stairs are up only).
- Certain seating or surfaces are labeled as unavailable for use to ensure proper physical distancing
- Only two people are allowed in the elevator at a time on opposite sides of the KTS Shield.
- Each facility has a capacity limit.
- Signs with information regarding COVID-19 protocols are posted throughout the facility.

Visitor Protocols

MarxModa has developed the following protocols based on CDC reccomendations to ensure the safety of our staff and guests.

Please wear a face covering when visiting our office

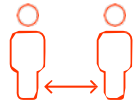
All visitors entering our offices are required to cover their nose and mouth with a face mask, which has been shown to decrease the spread of Coronavirus. If your nose and mouth are not covered, unfortunately, we will not be able to welcome you into our offices at this time. We have a very limited supply of homemade cloth masks that will be available for guests while supplies last, however, we strongly encourage you to bring your own face covering.

Handshaking is not encouraged at this time

For the wellbeing of our customers and employees, we have instituted a No-Handshake Policy. Please do not take offense if you are not greeted with a handshake.

Hand sanitizer is available throughout our facilities

Upon entering our offices please use the hand sanitizer provided to disinfect your hands. If you would like to wash your hands with soap and water, or use more hand sanitizer at any point during your visit we will be happy to accommodate you.



Please practice physical distancing

Please allow for six feet of space between you and any other individual. Barriers and signs have been deployed throughout our facilities to assist you in maintaining the proper distance.

Temperature checks have been instituted

MarxModa personnel will scan your forehead with a no-touch thermometer to check your temperature before entering our facilities. If your temperature is above 100.4 degrees, we will be unable to welcome you into our office at this time.

Adjusted Schedules

Along with many other businesses, MarxModa has discovered that some team members are able to do their job effectively and efficiently from home. Team members will be brought back to the physical office in phases depending on their roles. Additionally, to ensure proper physical distancing, employee schedules will be altered so that building capacity limits are not exceeded. Throughout the entire process of returning to the office MarxModa Leadership will ensure that team members working from home receive the same support as those working in the building and the entire team will continue to collaborate using the digital tools we have grown accustomed to over the past few months.

Team members who do not need to interact with customers or colleagues will continue to work from home.

Team members may work from home on certain days to maintain building capacity limits.

Personal schedules may be adjusted so that team members enter and occupy the office in shifts.

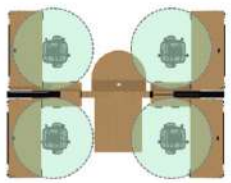
All visitors must schedule appointments in advance and drop-in visits will be temporarily suspended.

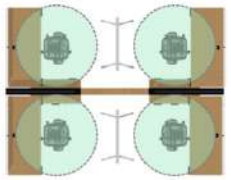
Breaks and lunch may be scheduled to limit the number of people in the cafeteria at the same time.

Space Planning & Product Solutions

Living and working in a post-COVID world may mean that in the long-term, entire office environments need to be redesigned. We are happy to help you institute the following design solutions or work with you to create a custom solution for your floorplate that will ensure every member of your staff is able feel safe in their space.

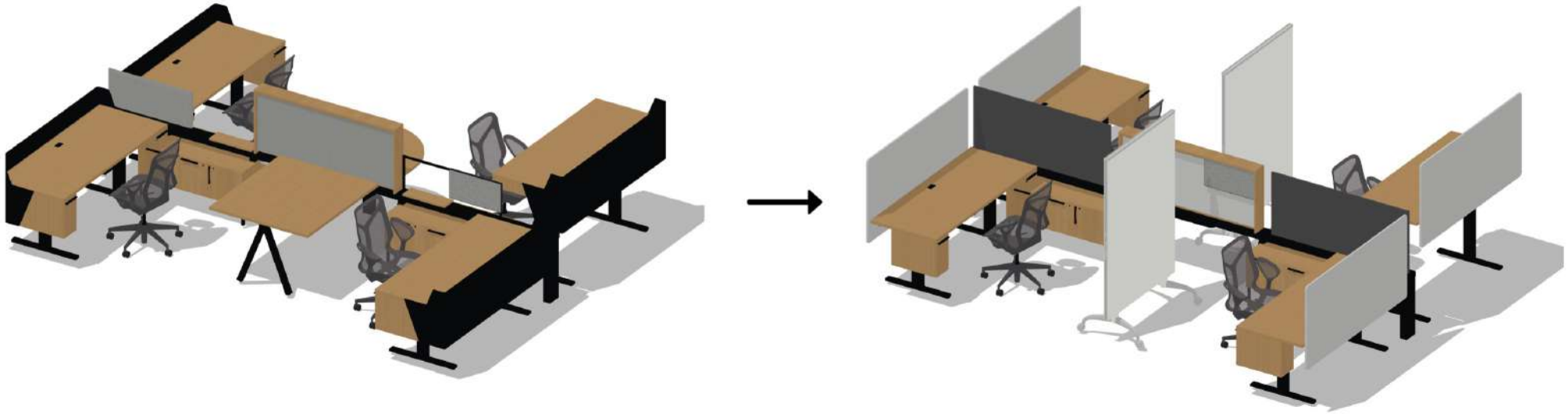
Workstations





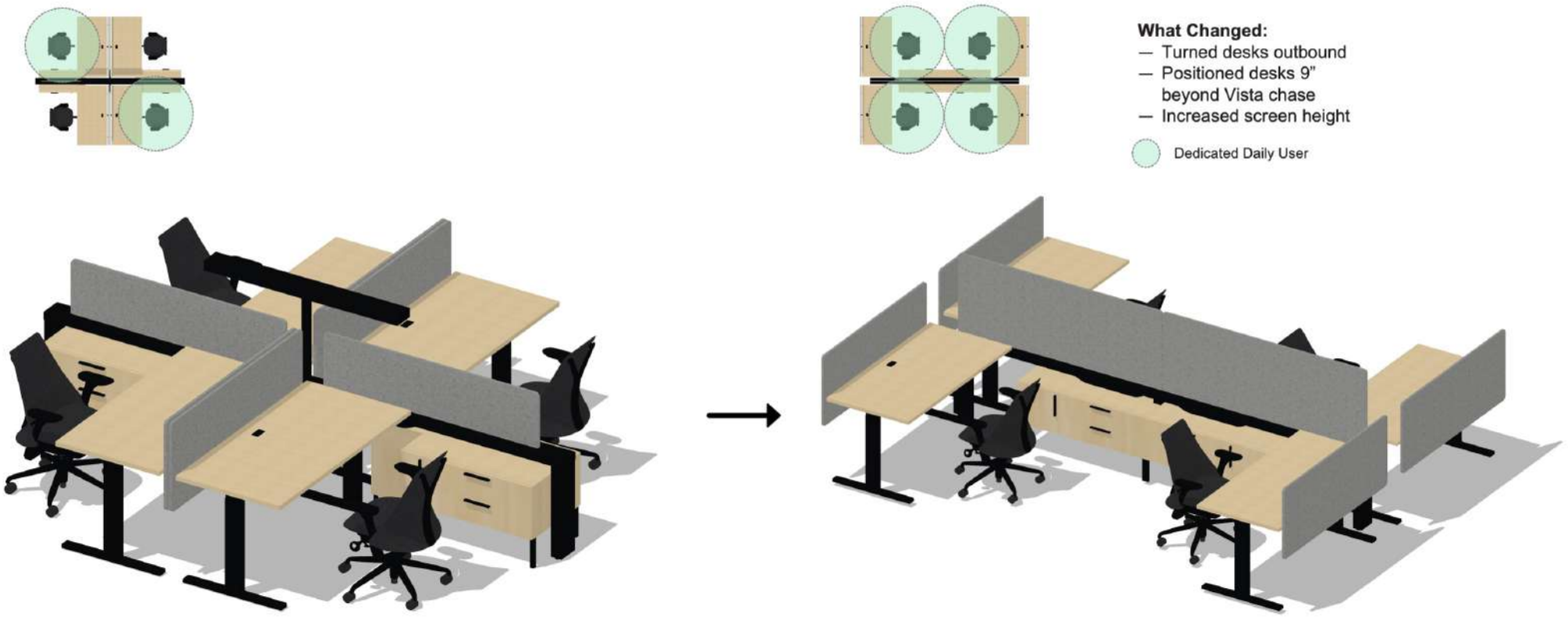
What Changed:
— Removed collaborative tables
— Added mobile whiteboards

Dedicated Daily User (6' / 2m spacing)



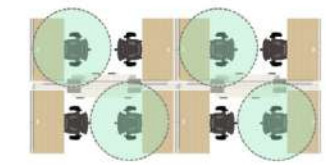
Credit: Herman Miller

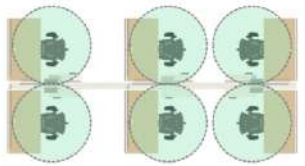
Workstations



Credit: Herman Miller

Workstations



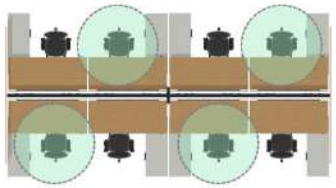


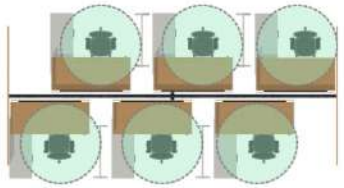
What Changed:
— Removed 2 desks
— Increased spacing between seats to 6 ft (2 m)

Dedicated Daily User

Credit: Herman Miller

Workstations



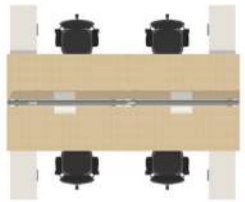


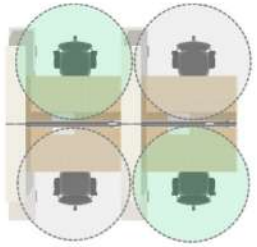
What Changed:
- Increased spacing between seats and staggered desks
- Added boundary screens

Dedicated Daily User

Credit: Herman Miller

Workstations



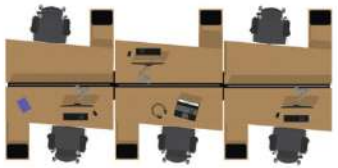


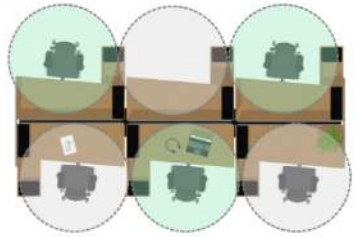
What Changed:
- Added gallery panels for circulation boundaries
- Added storage cubbies for increased boundaries

Day 1 User Day 2 User

Credit: Herman Miller

Workstations





What Changed:
- Added gallery panels and screens for circulation boundaries
- Added Ubi Organizers for side boundaries

Day 1 User Day 2 User

*to mount monitor arms or power and surface screens, a scallop must be present on the surface.

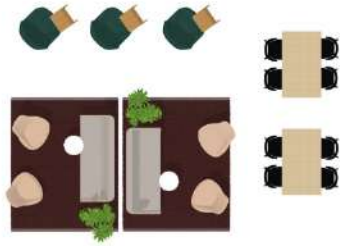
Credit: Herman Miller

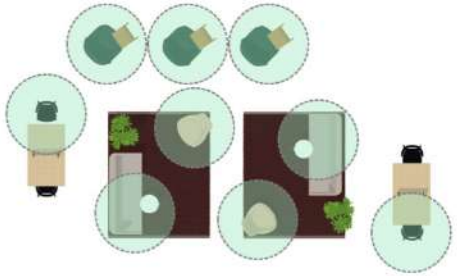
Workstations

What Changed:
- Rearrange furniture into individual workpoints
- Space workpoints for distancing

Credit: Herman Miller & National Office Furniture

Collaborative Setting



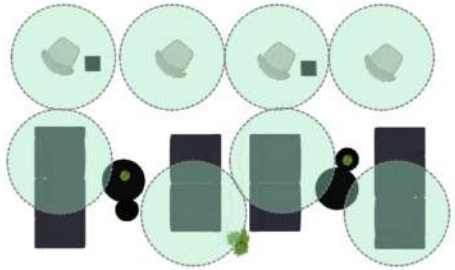


What Changed:
- Removed lounge and side seating
- Increased spacing between high-back sofas
- Changed position of seating at tables to increase spacing

6' (2 m) Spacing

Credit: Herman Miller

Collaborative Setting

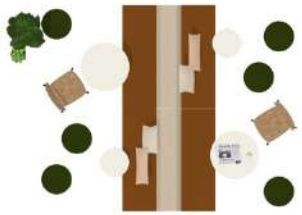


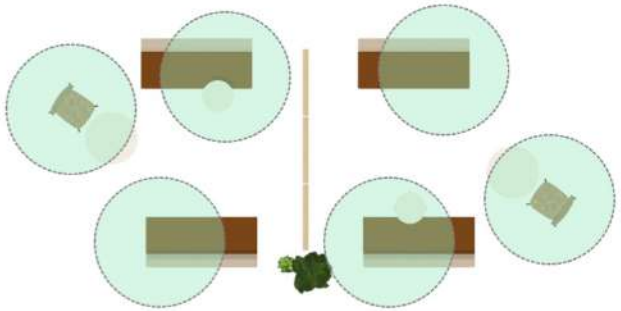
What Changed:
- Removed pillows and accessories
- Separated modular sofas to increase spacing
- Added boundaries
- Moved lounge chairs to create individual focus settings

6' (2 m) Spacing

Credit: Herman Miller

Collaborative Setting



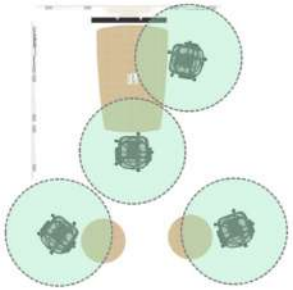


What Changed:
- Repositioned furniture to increase spacing and add single seat options
- Added boundaries
- Removed pillows, accessories, and poufs

6' (2 m) Spacing

Credit: Herman Miller

Collaborative Setting



What Changed:
— Adjusted quantity and spacing of chairs
— Added standing-height tables

6' (2 m) Spacing

Credit: Herman Miller

Collaborative Setting

What Changed:

- Divider Panels have been added between modular furniture
- Modular furniture has been reoriented and rearranged to increase distancing

Credit:National Office Furniture

Waiting Room Setting

What Changed:

- Partitions added for spacing
- Corner tables added to increase distancing
- Mix of arm and armless chairs to reduce touchpoints
- No magazines, brochures, etc.
- Sanitation products and waste recepticals added

Credit:Stantec

Product Solutions for the Office

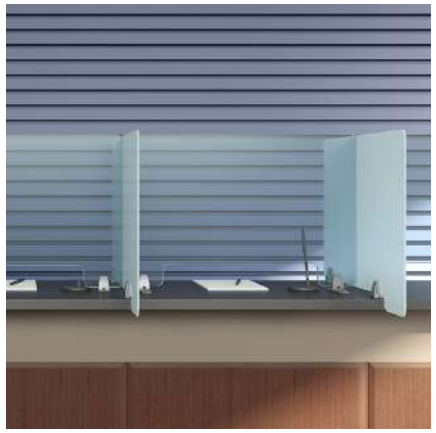
As you adjust your office design to create a safe working environment for your staff you may need to create boundaries to aid in traffic flow or create psychological safety, and utilize tools to support sanitizing protocols. Using our strong relationships with over 500 furniture and technology vendors our team can help you select the proper products to support your needs.

Mobile Boundaries Screens

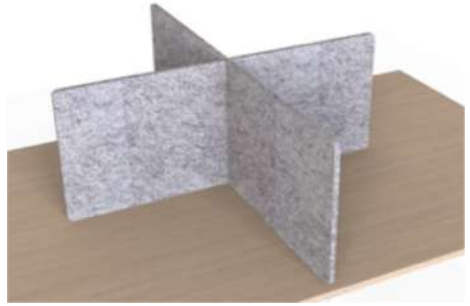
Freestanding Boundaries

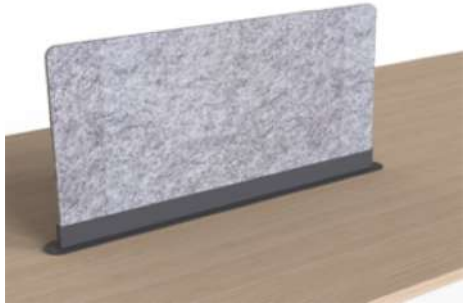
Metal Surface Attached Boundaries

Glass/Acrylic Surface Attached Boundaries



Fabric Surface Attached Workstation Boundaries





Fabric Surface Attached Workstation Boundaries

Laminate Surface Attached Workstation Boundaries

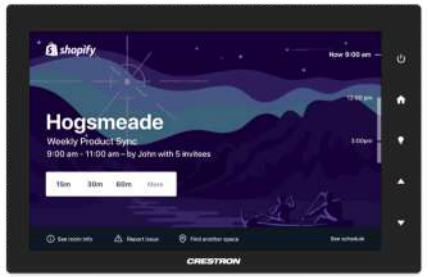
Up Mount Workstation Boundaries

Sanitization Tools

Sanitization Tools

Technology - Collaboration

Technology - Collaboration



Screening & Social Distancing

Product Solutions for the Home Office

Many companies are choosing to bring their employees back in phases, while team members continue to work from home. Some, are even making the decision to transition entire teams to remote work permanently. Our team can help you select products to create supportive home offices that will allow your staff work comfortably and efficiently.

Seating

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Tables & Desks

Accessories & Technology