Directive on Adapted On-Site Operations and Working from Home (Preventing the Spread of Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2) of 3 February 2022

1. Purpose of the Directive

Effective from 3 February 2022, the present directive replaces the Directive on Adapted On-Site Operations of 20 December 2021.

This directive has been issued to ensure the greatest level of employee protection during the special situation that has arisen due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.

2. Validity of the Directive

This directive is only valid for the current special situation and remains in effect until further notice. The Employer will regularly evaluate the directive. If necessary, the validity of the directive can be extended via e-mail.

3. Modes of Working

3.1 Working from Home and On Site

Based on the Federal Council’s decree of 2 February 2022, the Executive Board of the University instructs the line managers of each unit to implement the recommendation to work from home through suitable provisions. Employees shall work from home provided it is possible, reasonable and proportionate. The value and necessity of on-site presence shall be taken into consideration alongside the safety of individual employees and the unit’s ability to maintain operations.

UZH will put in place the appropriate organizational and technical measures to ensure that federal government regulations on hygiene and social distancing can be observed. If the recommended social distancing rules cannot be observed, line managers must take measures in accordance with the STOP principle (substitution, technical measures, organizational measures, personal protective measures). Specifically, these measures include working from home, physical separation, separating teams, or the use of face masks. Measures resulting in additional costs must only be taken if no other suitable measures are available. If the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is required for operational reasons and ordered by line managers, such equipment will be provided by UZH.

Line managers must check and ensure that their employees understand and comply with the University’s basic safety concept and the specific safety concept defined by the management of the organizational unit at all times.

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1 See Art. 25 of the Ordinance on Measures during the Special Situation to Combat the Covid-19 Epidemic dated 23 June 2021 (status on 3 February 2022).
Employees must observe and apply the hygiene and safety rules of the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) at all times.  

Employees are required to comply with an instruction to work on site.

In cases of conflict concerning on-site work or Covid certificate checks, Human Resources must be contacted. If no agreement can be reached, the Head of Human Resources will present the case to the Corona Pandemic Management Leadership and Coordination Group, through which a decision will be obtained from the Executive Board of the University. Human Resources will communicate the decision back down the line.

Line managers will organize the size of their teams, the division of working hours and the ways of working together to ensure that employees are protected to the best possible extent and that adhering to FOPH guidelines is possible on-site and during their commute. The opportunities gained during the pandemic to use digital formats for meetings, workshops, etc. should also continue to be embraced by line managers.

3.2. Working On Site with Covid Certificates Required for Courses and Continuing Education Classes

Ensuring that courses and examinations are held as set out in the course catalogue takes precedence over the instruction to work from home.

Employees, instructors and speakers whose roles at UZH mean they are mostly or always present in on-site courses or continuing education classes requiring Covid certificates must, along with students and continuing education course participants, be in possession of a valid Covid certificate.

For employees who require a Covid certificate in order to carry out their role at UZH, testing options will be provided.

Employees who are not willing to show their Covid certificate when asked will not be permitted entry to events requiring certificates.

4. Obligation to Wear Masks

In principle, masks are mandatory for staff, students as well as for all others in all indoor spaces at UZH and during courses if there is more than one person in the room, regardless of whether those in attendance hold a Covid certificate.

Exceptions to the obligation to wear masks are governed by the Covid ordinance.

All employees have the right to wear a mask at all times in the workplace and during work.

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3 Covid-19 Special Situation Ordinance dated 23 June 2021 (status on 3 February 2022)
5. Procedure for Symptoms of Illness\textsuperscript{4} and Employee Obligation to Provide Information

Employees who display symptoms of illness\textsuperscript{5} must inform their line managers immediately in order to discuss the next steps. Employees must immediately inform their line managers of illness and accidents as usual. If an employee is unable to work for more than one week, they must also submit a doctor's note as usual.\textsuperscript{6}

In order to ensure that UZH can effectively fulfill its obligations for protecting the health of its staff, employees are obliged\textsuperscript{7} to inform their employer/line manager immediately in case of a concrete suspicion of coronavirus infection with symptoms as described by the FOPH, in particular if:

a. They are personally infected with coronavirus.
b. They have traveled to a high-risk area, if the trip was not pre-approved by UZH.

In the case of a. and b., employees are to leave their place of work and the UZH premises unprompted. They should then immediately go into self-isolation (work from home). Any information provided by the employee will be used exclusively for the protection of other employees' health and to avoid additional risk factors. Line managers will ensure that employees are aware of their obligation to provide information and informed about how said information will be used.

6. Employees at Especially High Risk

Special safety measures apply for employees who are at especially high risk in accordance with Art. 27a of the Covid-19 Ordinance 3.\textsuperscript{8}

7. Handling of Covid Certificates – “3G” Rule (Vaccinated, Recovered or Tested Negative)

Covid certificates document that a person has been vaccinated against or recovered from Covid-19, or that they recently tested negative.

UZH strongly recommends that employees get vaccinated, in accordance with the FOPH's vaccination recommendation; however, UZH employees are not obligated to get vaccinated.

As a general rule, employees may not be asked directly about their immunity status (Covid-19 vaccination or recovery), or whether they have tested negative for Covid-19. Information regarding the basis on which a Covid certificate has been issued (vaccinated, recovered, tested negative) is information that is given voluntarily.

Employees whose roles at UZH mean they are mostly or always present in on-site courses and continuing education classes requiring Covid certificates may be asked by their line managers to demonstrate their Covid certificate. They are only required to demonstrate immunity, and not how they have such immunity (i.e. whether through vaccination, recovery or a negative test).

Further exceptions may be made if, despite protective measures being taken, there is a concrete, relatively high risk to the employees themselves or third parties (e.g. patients, clients, colleagues) in the event of non-vaccination.

\textsuperscript{4} See also \textit{Fact Sheet for UZH Staff: Procedure for COVID-19 Infections}.
\textsuperscript{5} Current list of symptoms
\textsuperscript{6} § 100 VVO.
\textsuperscript{7} Based on an employee's duties toward their employer as set out in § 49 of the \textit{Employment Act} (in German) dated 27 September 1998 (LS 177.10), employees have certain obligations to provide information, and this also relates to coronavirus. The employer requires this information in order to fulfill its duty to protect the lives and health of its staff with appropriate measures. This obligation of an employer toward its employees is anchored in § 39 of the Employment Act and outweighs the personality rights of the employee(s) concerned.
\textsuperscript{8} \textit{Covid-19 Ordinance 3} (SR 818.101.24).
Collecting data on immunity status or a negative Covid test (“3G” status) is not permitted except in the cases noted. Line managers or HR managers of the organizational unit must communicate transparently to the persons concerned regarding any such data collection, including about the purpose of the data collection, what data is being collected and how long it will be kept.

In the case of events to which access is restricted to those with valid Covid certificates, the staff working on site must also be able to provide a certificate.

8. Work-Related Travel and Stays Abroad

Work-related travel on behalf of UZH is permitted in principle if the relevant travel recommendations of the FDFA, the provisions issued by transport companies as well as the general rules of hygiene and social distancing can be observed.

9. Working from Abroad

Working for UZH from abroad is not the same as working from home. For periods of one month or more, each case must be evaluated separately with the involvement of Human Resources to clarify the implications regarding social insurances and, if applicable, withholding taxes.⁹

10. Regulations for Working from Home

a. Working Hours

No bonuses will be paid for work done from home (with the usual exceptions of on-call duty and mandatory overtime).

Employees working from home must be reachable during their usual office hours.

Employees who are required to record their working hours must do so in the usual manner using the employee time sheet provided by Human Resources.¹⁰ Employees must submit a completed time sheet (final version) to their line manager at the end of each month. The line manager is to reply to the e-mail with a formal confirmation. Line managers may also request time sheets on a weekly basis. Regarding working extra hours, the general provisions of employment law apply.

b. Work Equipment and Costs

Whenever possible, work equipment already made available by UZH should be used for working from home.

Since the instruction to work from home is a temporary measure, no expenses will be reimbursed to employees who perform their work duties from home based on this directive.

c. Security and Use of Telephones

All devices used in an employee’s home office must be password protected. Business data and backups are to be accessed/made via the UZH server.

Employees must make sure that all files and devices are secure, both when transporting them and using them at home. All files and devices must be protected from unauthorized access and theft.

⁹ See also the Fact Sheet on Transnational Social Insurance.
¹⁰ Some organizational units use special systems for recording their employees’ working hours.
In cases of absence or exceptional unavailability, UZH office landlines will be forwarded internally or to an office voicemail that informs callers about said office’s availability/contact details, if possible. The latter applies in particular to employees who deal directly with clients. Forwarding calls to private (mobile) phones should be avoided if possible\textsuperscript{11}.

d. \textit{Collaboration and Affiliation}

Line managers shall take an active role in shaping the way employees work together remotely to sustainably promote the quality of the work performed, team spirit, and the well-being of the employees working from home.\textsuperscript{12} They shall also ensure efficient and effective collaboration between employees working from home and those on site at UZH.

\textsuperscript{11} Calls forwarded from UZH phones are subject to charges.
\textsuperscript{12} See \href{Staying Fit and Healthy Working from Home}{Staying Fit and Healthy Working from Home}.