

Googlers can start returning to work July 6, but on limited basis

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Search giant Google will start welcoming employees back to offices beginning July 6 but on a volunteer and limited basis.

"This will give Googlers who need to come back to the office—or,

capacity permitting, who want to come back—the opportunity to return on a limited, rotating basis (think: one day every couple of weeks, so roughly 10 percent building occupancy)," wrote Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai on a Tuesday blog post. Alphabet is the parent company of Google.

"We'll have rigorous health and [safety measures](#) in place to ensure social distancing and sanitization guidelines are followed, so the office will look and feel different than when you left. Our goal is to be fair in the way we allocate time in the office while limiting the number of people who come in, consistent with safety protocols."

In the interim, Pichai sweetened the pot to make it easier for remote workers, by offering \$1,000 to expense necessary equipment and office furniture for home offices.

Tech firms have been grappling with how to handle the return to work scenario in the wake of the coronavirus. Both Facebook and Twitter recently said they expect employees to be able to work from home for the near future.

Google and Facebook, most notably have built giant campuses in the San Francisco Bay Area with free perks like gyms, outdoor volleyball courts, free meals and massages in a bid to keep employees on campus for as many hours as possible.

Leaders have said having workers together on campus leads to better collaboration, but in the wake of the coronavirus crisis, workers were sent home, and spending more time communicating with one another via video conferencing tools like Google Meet, Webex, Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

Moving to September, Pichai said he will bring in more Googlers, to

allow 30% capacity in buildings. That means that most people who want to come in "could do so on a limited basis, while still prioritizing those who need to come in."

Currently, Google employees are working at home, and Pichai said only a "limited" number of Googlers are physically needed in the office this calendar year. "For everyone else, returning to the office will be voluntary through the end of the year, and we encourage you to continue to work from home if you can."

Many employees have requested to work at home permanently, and Pichai said Google is weighing how to keep the in-person collaboration and community with the online work experience.

"We continue to study all the data and feedback you're sharing on your current experience. I believe that ultimately these insights will lead to more flexibility and choice for employees as they consider how to work in the future."

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