How to Support Employees during the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. **Show empathy and be available.** Understand employees are feeling overwhelmed and anxious about sudden changes happening in the workplace in addition to circumstances regarding the pandemic. Take time to discuss with your staff members any concerns, answer questions, and reaffirm their value to the organization.

2. **Stay connected with technology or other meeting tools.** Use virtual meeting options available to you via UAB IT, such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams, for routine check-ins and to connect face to face.

3. **Recognize the impact of loneliness and isolation.** Working from home can create feelings of loneliness and isolation. Encourage communication by checking in often to find out how everyone is doing. Do not make every conversation about work. Remember, loneliness can lead to depression and other mental health concerns. If you notice changes in work productivity, this may be a sign the person is having a difficult time.

4. **Encourage online training.** Now is a great time for employees to explore online training opportunities to enhance and sharpen skills. Learning can be a good distraction versus focusing on the worries of tomorrow. Find online education to share with your team.

5. **Check-in with your employee assistance program.** The UAB Employee Assistance and Counseling Center (EACC) has counselors available for supervisor consultations regarding employee concerns, both personal and work-related. Also, remind your staff of the confidential and comprehensive services available through the EACC. Please encourage them to reach out for all their mental health, emotional health and well-being needs.

UAB
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE & COUNSELING CENTER
The University of Alabama at Birmingham

uab.edu/eacc
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