

How Businesses Should Consider Employee Health When Returning To Work



As some states are reopening businesses, normal functions are not going back to as they were before the pandemic -- including how businesses work with employees.

Fox 40 spoke to Binghamton University Philosophy Professor Nicole Hassoun on how businesses should consider employee health and finances when making that transition back to work.

Hassoun says businesses have obligations for all their stakeholders.

"They need to consider the public health, as well as the economic consequences of going back to work, both for their employees, their supply chains, and their larger communities," said Hassoun.

Along with businesses providing personal protective equipment, Hassoun says they should get creative with providing ways to social distance. For example, creating a night shift or having all employees social distance together.

"I think it's important to think about those employees that are particularly vulnerable as well," said Hassoun. "So if you have, you know, older employees or those who have older family members living with them or something like that then it might not be ethical to ask them all to come back to work right away."

But some people are itching to go back to work or need the income.

"If stimulus checks and so forth aren't sufficient for people, employers might have to help provide assistance to employees who can't work. In some cases maybe customers can share those costs with those companies, especially if companies can provide certain services as well," said Hassoun.

With the [Paycheck Protection Program](#), employers cannot reduce their full-time employee headcount or their loan will not be fully forgiven.

Hassoun says the United States tends to be liability focused and employers should take the needs of their employees to heart if they need to adjust to conditions of the program.

As for gaining customers' trust, Hassoun says protecting one's brand may not be to shut down, but to open up and make it clear that the business is taking necessary precautions for workers and the community.