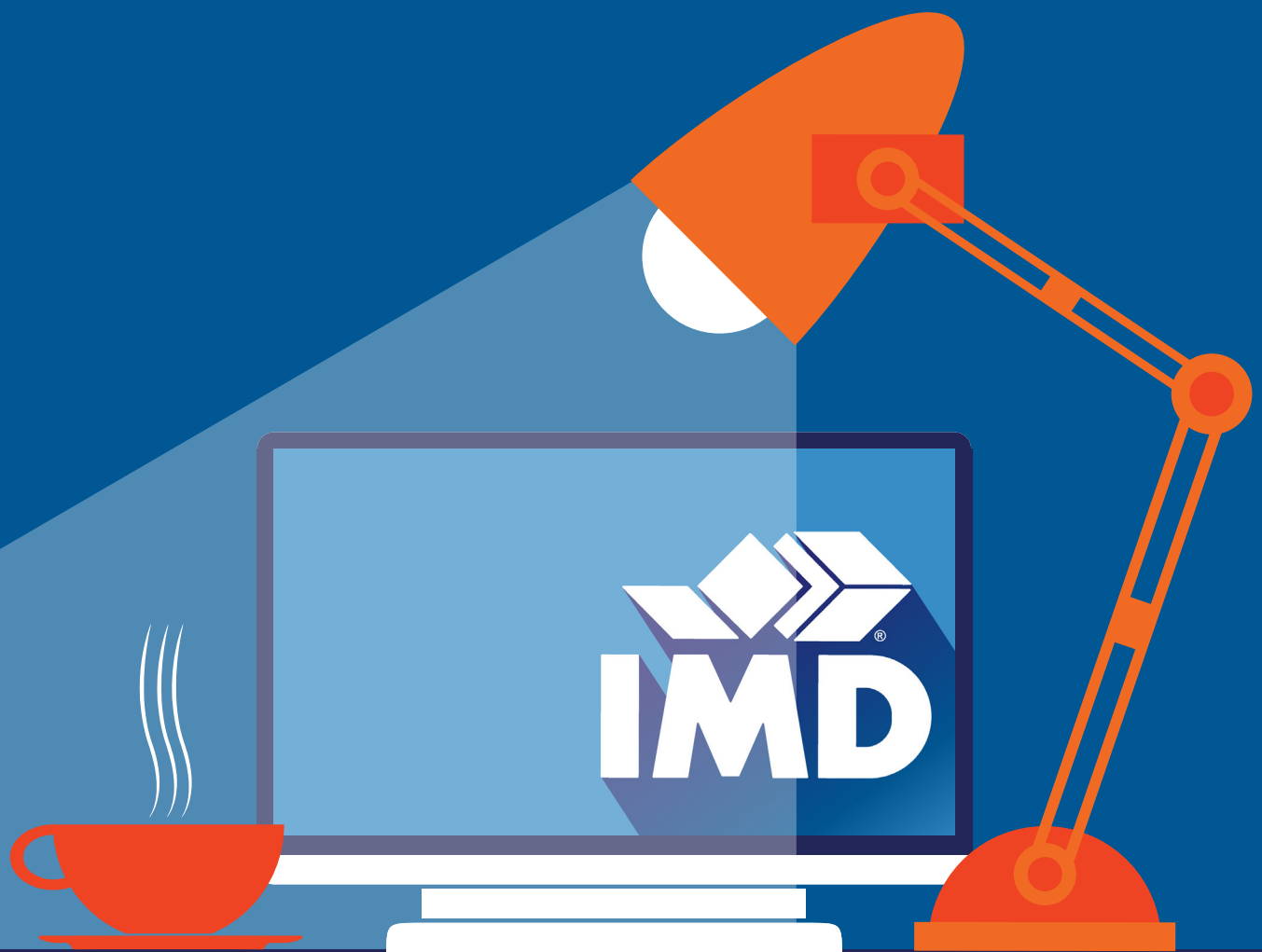


GUIDE TO REMOTE READINESS

Tips for Emergency Preparedness





DEAR READERS

Generally speaking, we're accustomed to a somewhat repetitive way of life, where our daily routines assume a certain level of givens we often take for granted. Sometimes, our world can be unpredictable. At IMD we make an intentional effort to be prepared to the best of our ability, in order to respond with a consistent level of quality service to which our clients are accustomed.

Our remote work readiness policies detailed in this guide were created in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. These policies should serve as a guide for emergency preparedness, for both our company as a whole as well as our team members on a personal level.

While the impact of the Coronavirus in 2020 is unprecedented, we know that emergencies often appear without notice. Therefore, preparing in advance can not only minimize anxiety in a moment of crisis, it can also play a significant role in enabling us to stay safe and maintain as close to "normal" lives as possible.

This guide is meant to first serve our team by providing preparedness planning tips and things to consider. In addition, this guide may serve to inform our customers, network and greater audience of the steps taken by IMD to care for our staff while avoiding interruption of service to our customers during challenging times.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider the following action steps. Wishing you health, safety, and prosperity in both good and challenging times,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Florencia Bialet'.

Florencia Bialet

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ESTABLISHING A SCHEDULE

The best way to set clear expectations for your housemates, yourself, and your employer during a period of extended remote work is to establish a routine you adhere to every work day. To get started, review this basic schedule to build upon. Customize it to a routine that best suits your working style.

- Wake up at the same time every day.**
Set an alarm if you need to.
- Shower and get dressed.**
This simple action will help you focus on the work that lies ahead.
- Eat breakfast.**
A healthy meal will give your mind and body the energy it needs for the day.
- Grab a drink.**
Fix your coffee, tea, smoothie, etc like you would in the office. Keeping patterns similar to a day in the office can help focus your mind.
- Schedule breaks.**
Use these times to stretch, walk, and give your mind a rest.
- Make time for lunch.**
If you're used to eating with coworkers, phone a friend and have lunch virtually together. Try to eat somewhere other than your desk or workspace to help break up the day.
- Rock out.**
If you have favorite music stations or podcasts you listen to on a normal day in the office, keep those part of your new routine if they were helpful to you before.

WORKSPACES

Imagine a personal, national or even global emergency has just occurred and you find yourself working from home indefinitely. Now what? Are you ready? Try these steps to make your new at-home workspace work best for you and keep you as productive as if you were still in the office:

- Pick a spot.**
 A single, designated workspace allows for more focused attention on your work. It also helps establish boundaries for family members or housemates who share living spaces with you.
- Get the right equipment.**
 Acquire appropriate equipment to use at home to boost productivity, relative to your role in the company. Stores may be closed, so prep in advance under normal conditions to gather these as quickly as possible. See our “Equipment” section for more detailed suggestions.
- Establish boundaries.**
 Define the parameters of your workspace and working hours and share these with children, spouses, and other housemates to limit distractions. At the same time, allow for flexibility. Children, spouses, or pets may walk in on a virtual meeting. Especially during an emergency situation, let’s show ourselves and others grace and compassion.
- Decorate your space.**
 Having a few comfort items or meaningful photos nearby can help us relax and smile throughout the day. Ensure the decorations do not impede your work space.
- Define video conferencing space.**
 Ensure backgrounds are clean and not distracting. If you don’t have a blank wall, be sure to straighten up any areas that will be visible during the call. Do a test run before joining the meeting to see what is visible in your camera’s frame.

EQUIPMENT

Having the proper equipment to effectively work in a long-term remote situation is vital to managing an emergency such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Before an emergency occurs, consider stockpiling the following items for your personal use at home or to loan out to your employees.

- Itemize it.**
 There are several items that go into making a comfortable work station. Make a list and work your way through items such as: desk/table, office chair, desktop computer or laptop, additional monitors, external mouse and keyboard, headphones, printer, web cam, power strip for additional outlets, etc. The goal here is to replicate your usual equipment at the office in order to maintain consistent performance on a day-to-day basis.

- Back it up.**
 Having a battery backup can help protect your equipment from power dips and outages as well as buy you precious time to save your work in the event the power does go out.

- See double.**
 If working on a laptop, specific adapters and cables may be necessary to augment the plug-in capacity for multiple monitors.

- Think comfort.**
 When working from home, ergonomics can easily fall by the wayside and lead to pain and discomfort. A laptop stand can help get the monitor height to a comfortable position and an external keyboard can keep the keys to a comfortable typing level.

VIDEO CONFERENCING

While video conferencing has been a feature of the business world for years, we understand it might be new in our at-home environments. These tips can help the transition from a conference room to independently managing an at-home conference space.

- Add it to your calendar.**
Record the meeting in your calendar with a link to the virtual conference center and set alerts to remind you of the meeting before it happens. If you receive an invite to a meeting there will be an option to automatically integrate these features to your preferred online calendar. Be sure to accept the invite with “yes” or “will attend.”
- Turn on your camera.**
This will increase face time and enable remote workers to pick up on body language. If you are new to a company or if your corporation is large, this allows employees to put faces to names, voices and contributions.
- Dress appropriately.**
This should be standard for all virtual calls just as if you were in the office, particularly with clients and prospective clients.
- Be professional.**
Maintain professionalism and proper business etiquette at all times during a video conference call.
- Choose a quiet spot.**
Background noise is disruptive. Wearing headphones during the meeting helps to cut back on some of the external distractions.
- Mute your microphone.**
When you aren't speaking, mute your microphone to help reduce additional background noise.



COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is key in business under normal circumstances, but under special circumstances that result in everyone working from home in individual spaces, it becomes a necessity. Follow these suggestions to help keep communication accurate, clear and flowing seamlessly.

- Choose a platform.**
IMD uses Google Chat to communicate within the company in an efficient and quick manner. Make sure the application is installed, that you remain logged in, and that the volume and notification settings are set appropriately so you receive alerts when someone messages you.
- Discuss availability.**
All employees are expected to be available by chat during normal business hours. If you will be unavailable longer than the standard break/lunch times please let your manager know in advance.
- Check in with your team.**
If you are a manager, check in with your team at least once a day to establish work loads and expectations for the day. This allows the team to redistribute workload between each other if needed.
- Try it out first.**
Test communications in the application prior to your first time using the platform. This ensures you will have enough time to correct the issue before the first virtual meeting with your team.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

A properly composed and detailed email is important for maintaining the clarity of a message. All employees need to become comfortable with providing as much information as possible in email format. One challenge of remote work versus in-person work is that the tone of communication is lost. To avoid this, we have compiled some guidelines to assist you in composing both your internal and external emails.

- Be clear.**
Use concise and detailed verbiage. Avoid one word or single-line responses that require follow up emails asking for more information.
- Provide set deadlines.**
If your correspondence requires a response or action from the recipient, include a date in the email body or subject line letting them know by when you need their response. It's best practice to pad that date by a few days to allow for late responses.
- Include attachments.**
Include all relevant information or reference materials as attachments when necessary and be sure to mention in the email which files are attached so the recipient is aware of them.
- Pick up the phone.**
If you're ever in doubt, or if the subject matter is too complex for an email and risks causing confusion, you can always pick up the phone to ensure clear communication.

MENTAL SELF-CARE

When it all feels overwhelming, find ways to circle back to focusing on the present. Here is a list of self-care practices that can help you channel some inner peace in a world that feels out of control.

- Meditate.**
Play calming music and find a quiet space. Take five minutes to focus on and slow your breathing. Download a free mindfulness app like Headspace if you need guidance with this practice.
- Journal.**
A great way to reduce the physical symptoms you might be experiencing as a result of anxiety is to write your worries down in a “worry journal.” Once your worries are physically documented, your body can more easily let it go. If the written word isn’t your thing, try sketching!
- Color.**
Coloring has proven to have a calming effect on the mind, helping you to block out the noise that comes with worrying. It also helps us improve our vision and fine motor skills.
- Connect.**
Is isolation getting you down? Schedule times to video call friends and family using services like Zoom, Facetime, Facebook Messenger, Google Hangouts, Go To Meeting, etc. This virtual face-to-face interaction is a great way to stay connected to our loved ones and to fight off those lonely feelings creeping in. Celebrate birthdays, milestones, weddings, etc with these options.
- Tackle projects.**
Do your hands need to stay busy? How about creating something new, or getting back to a project you already started but never had time to finish. Always wanted to try a DIY project you saw on Pinterest? This is a great time to let those creative juices flow.

PHYSICAL SELF-CARE

Taking care of our bodies is just as important as caring for our minds. Here are some simple things on which we can all focus to ensure we are caring for our physical selves in the best way. While we can't always control what is happening in our environment, we can control how we treat our bodies.

- Make healthy food choices.**
 We've all heard this before, but now is the time to really do it. Healthy foods like fruits and vegetables are rich in natural sources of vitamins our immune system needs to keep us healthy.
- Get sleep.**
 With as much stress as we're all under during these uncertain times, getting plenty of good rest is one of the most important things we can do for ourselves. Here are some of the many ways sleep can help us: improves our mood, reduces stress, lowers blood pressure, enables our body to fight infection.
- Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate.**
 It is commonly recommended that the average adult body needs 64 ounces of water per day to maintain optimum hydration. Why is this important? Proper hydration helps to regulate body temperature, prevent infections, deliver nutrients to cells, and keep organs functioning their best. It also helps improve cognition, sleep quality and mood. Drink up!
- Get moving.**
 Turn your lunch break into a 30-minute walk around your neighborhood. Walk quickly to get your heart rate up, or take it slow and pay close attention to what your senses are experiencing.



CONVERSATION STARTER

This guidebook is meant to contribute to the global conversation as we all tackle a new reality in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. We make ourselves available to continue the conversation and not only welcome your feedback on our guidebook, but also invite you to share your own coping and management strategies during COVID-19.

We welcome you to contact us with your feedback and/or comments on this guide.

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