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**Subject:** Phase 3 for Massachusetts, a new stage for MIT  
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**To:** fisherp@mit.edu

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Information for staff on working from home, pay policies, and child care assistance

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L. Rafael Reif, President

Dear staff colleagues,

As we enter a new phase in our ongoing adjustments to Covid-19, I write to share several important decisions and policies relevant to MIT staff.

Here's the big picture:

Several hundred MIT staff members have continued to work on campus since March. This summer, many more returned as part of our research ramp-up. Thanks to the Institute's protocols and precautions, combined with the care and common sense of the individuals and teams involved, this first stage has proceeded safely. *To everyone who has kept the campus running, everyone who planned the ramp-up and everyone who is making it work: Thank you!*

We take this as an encouraging sign that – if we all continue to be careful and vigilant – we can now bring back the many remaining administrative and research staff members whose work can only be done on campus or at Lincoln Lab. This step is in line with Governor Baker's [guidelines for the state's Phase 3 reopening](#), a gradual adjustment from the overwhelming crisis and high alert of April and May.

In a few weeks we also expect to welcome back some of our undergraduates, and public health guidelines continue to dictate that we sharply limit the overall campus population.

For staff, all these factors together mean that – to reduce the risk of transmission and to make space to enable those with campus-based jobs to return to work – **every MIT**

**staff member who can work successfully from home will need to continue doing so, at least until the beginning of January 2021.**

**At the same time, most staff members whose job duties require them to be on site will need to return to work in person on site this month,** and will need to follow [our careful health and safety protocols](#). In keeping with the public health practices we have field-tested through the research ramp-up, we will provide information on the state of the disease in our community on a regular basis.

Just below, you will find a letter from Provost Marty Schmidt and Vice President for Human Resources Ramona Allen that announces related **changes to the Covid-19 emergency pay** policies we put in place last March. For guidance on how any of these policies may apply to you, please consult your department administration.

A current struggle for many families is child care. Finding and affording safe, reliable child care is a complex challenge in normal times. Now it can seem nearly impossible. To help ease this critical burden, MIT is offering **a new temporary benefit to help employees cope with the costs of child care** in this unusual pandemic period. Again, you will find more detail in the letter below.

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The direct and indirect effects of Covid-19 continue to be wildly uneven. Some members of our community have suffered terrible illness, grief, loss, dislocation and difficulty. And after five months of uncertainty, restriction and sacrifice, all of us are feeling pretty worn out. Adding a pandemic response to the normal demands of your work for MIT is an endurance test none of you asked for.

And yet what I see is that, to a remarkable degree, with grace and mutual support and encouragement, you continue to rise to that challenge. I wish to say to each and every one of you how moved I am by your dedication and patience, and by the care you show for our mission, for our students and for each other. MIT is very fortunate to have such a team.

And on this tough road, I am deeply grateful to have such company.

With gratitude and admiration,

L. Rafael Reif

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Dear staff colleagues,

Along with President Reif, we extend our thanks to you for your efforts to keep the MIT community safe and well, while at the same time providing continuity to our research

community safe and well, while at the same time providing continuity to our research mission.

Beginning in mid-March, we established special pandemic-related pay policies to address a range of pressures many staff members experienced in the first months of the pandemic, such as their own illness or the need to care for children or other family members while working from home. These policies were also designed to support staff members who cannot perform the essential functions of their job remotely.

When these policies first took effect, most MIT staff members who could do so were working remotely, and those who worked on site were paid a premium. These pay policies were scheduled to expire on August 16; to provide greater support, we have extended them through August 30, 2020.

### **Changes to Institute pay policies**

Starting on Monday, August 31, 2020, more employees will be required to return to work on site. There will also be changes to Institute pay policies, including an end to the premium for on-site work. In addition, for those staff members whose work has been eliminated or reduced as a result of the pandemic, or who are unable to do their work because of family responsibilities, we may no longer be able to continue to provide their full usual pay, and they will be placed on unpaid leave. We have structured the new pay policies to provide flexibility and support in this transition, particularly for those with children and those who may be at increased risk of complications from Covid-19 because of underlying health conditions.

### **Temporary additional child care benefit**

An overwhelming message from staff members and postdocs with children is that they are struggling to balance child care and work. To help relieve this burden, MIT is providing a one-time supplement for child care expenses in calendar year 2020. Benefits-eligible staff members, postdoctoral associates and postdoctoral fellows with children ages 0-12 will receive \$2,000 per child, for up to three children. The [application for the subsidy](#) is available on the HR website.

We will also report separately to the faculty soon on resources and other support we are developing to balance teaching and research responsibilities for faculty, particularly junior faculty, with children up to age 12.

### **MIT Staff Emergency Hardship Fund**

Beyond this assistance, we encourage benefits-eligible staff members, postdoctoral associates and postdoctoral fellows to apply to the [MIT Staff Emergency Hardship Fund](#). The fund can provide one-time support of up to \$1,000 if you and your family are experiencing financial distress, or are unable to cover immediate, essential expenses due to additional costs or loss of income during the pandemic. We have been awed by

due to additional costs or loss of income during the pandemic. We have been aided by the generosity of our community in contributing to this fund.

**Free parking on campus extended through December 31, 2020**

We are pleased to continue to offer free parking on campus for all MIT ID cardholders until December 31, 2020. More detailed information is available on the [Department of Facilities parking information page](#).

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We know many of you will have questions about how these policies and benefits may apply in your situation. For example, some of you who will be asked to return to campus soon may have extenuating circumstances that make returning to on-site work difficult or impossible. We encourage you to reach out to your manager, local human resources administrator, or [human resources officer](#) to discuss your questions and concerns in detail. Along with central HR, these local colleagues will work with you to determine how the changes will affect you and to plan next steps.

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we continue to navigate the many changes in our current landscape.

Sincerely,

Martin A. Schmidt  
Provost

Ramona Allen  
Vice President for Human Resources

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