Dear Chancellor’s Office Colleagues,

In light of the governor’s recent announcement regarding the planned reopening of California’s economy on June 15, I write today with an update on the Chancellor’s Office repopulation plan.

The Chancellor’s Council met last week to discuss our plan for repopulating the Chancellor’s Office. With careful consideration of employee safety and COVID-19 protocols, we collectively agreed that it is time to begin our phased approach to repopulating our facilities in a responsible manner. The decision is based in large part on the extremely positive milestones our region and state have reached and continue to quickly surpass – from the more than 20 million (and counting) vaccinated Californians (bringing us closer to much-needed herd immunity) to the removal of the state’s COVID-19 tier system.

Having spoken with those who are here daily at the CO and others who have been working remotely for more than a year, I sense that, like me, many colleagues are missing the connection, camaraderie, creativity and synergy that are hallmarks of our organization. That feedback resonated deeply with me, and with others on my Council. Having led large organizations before and studied organizational leadership, I believe that the lack of synergy many of us are experiencing is affecting our overall morale and strategic effectiveness. For these reasons and more, I am pleased to announce our path back to onsite working.

Our current planning approach is closely aligned with the one announced last fall by Chancellor Emeritus White, although some of the timing has been advanced, based on the excellent progress our region has made.

The key repopulation dates are as follows:

**Monday, May 3** – Volunteers who wish to return to working at the CO may do so starting May 3. To gauge your interest and help plan to safely accommodate employees voluntarily returning to work onsite, the Chancellor’s Office Repopulation Task Force will soon distribute a survey to CO staff. That communication will also include information about necessary health and safety measures to ensure your safety. I encourage you to participate in the survey; please know that it will be used to gather information only, and your responses are non-binding.

In addition, if you are interested in volunteering to return on May 3, I ask that you please speak with your supervisor to begin planning accordingly.

**Thursday, July 1** – Employees who cannot work effectively remotely, as previously identified by their supervisor, will return to work onsite, joining the volunteers and essential personnel who have already been “phased in.”

**Monday, August 2** – All employees will return to working at the CO, except for those who have medical conditions or childcare or elder care issues; in these cases, employee needs will be considered on an individual basis.

It is my hope that announcing this timeline now – more than three months before full repopulation – will provide the necessary time and clarity to plan appropriately and make necessary arrangements for child/elder care or other personal obligations. We will continue to monitor hospitalization and case rates, vaccine access and vaccine efficacy against virus variants, and if changing circumstances warrant, we will revisit the dates outlined above to ensure your safety. In the meantime, please stay vigilant, continue to wear a face covering and get vaccinated when you are eligible.

I thank you for your truly remarkable patience, adaptability and steadfast commitment to the CSU mission and its students through the extraordinary challenges of the past 13 months.

And as we continue to make progress in our collective fight against the virus, please take care, be safe and stay healthy.

Sincerely,

Joseph I. Castro
Chancellor