

FLEXIBLE WORK FAQs

In developing a flexible work policy, we have had to consider the needs of the university and our students and patients. We need to consider what is possible as well as what is sustainable. Our goal was to provide as much flexibility as possible while still providing the necessary front line services, teamwork, collaboration and development required for success.

It is critical to understand that a flexible or remote schedule is NOT guaranteed. Decisions will be made based on the operational needs of the unit in conjunction with overall university objectives.

Even if the schedule is approved, it will continue to be assessed and may be changed as operationally necessary.

DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY:

1. Who is eligible to be considered for a hybrid schedule (partial remote and partial onsite)?

Answer: AFT Professional staff are eligible for consideration for a hybrid schedule (1-2 days per week off-site). CWA employees in the C3 and C4 categories may be eligible for up to 1 day of remote work per week. CWA employees in C1 may be only eligible for “compressed” schedules. All hours for C1 and C2 employees must be worked on campus. CWA C2 are onsite employees and are not eligible for hybrid work due to the nature of their jobs and are also generally unable to work a compressed schedule. IFPTE employees and public safety must also be onsite based on the needs of their positions.

2. How do I know who is C1, C2, C3, C4?

C1 (Compressed schedule only) Includes all titles in the series unless otherwise noted.

Accounting Assistant
Administrative Assistant
Agency Service Representatives
Clerks (Senior and Principle)
Library Assistants including Technical
Stock Clerks
Secretarial Assistants (1 and 2)
Payroll Clerks
Technical Assistants

C2 Examples include facilities supervisors, staff nurse

C3	Includes all titles in the series unless otherwise noted.
Assistant Supervisor	
Occupational Safety	
Professional Service Specialist (3& 4)	
Program Assistant	
Secretarial Assistant (3)	
Supervisor Personnel	
Teaching Assistant	
C4	All other titles including Asst. Supervisor and PSS 1 & 2

3. Why can AFT and some CWA employees work remotely while others cannot?

Answer: The decision is based on a combination of the type of job performed and exempt/non-exempt status. Employees in the C1 and C2 are student-facing positions in many cases. These positions are also eligible for comp time and overtime over certain thresholds. Both factors indicate that onsite work is more appropriate especially in this transition period. To be consistent and fair, we are applying this standard across all university employees in that category. For example, even if a C1 employee does not see students, this employee will be scheduled in accordance with all C1 employees.

SETTING THE SCHEDULE:

1. When do the new schedules take effect and how will we know they have been approved?

Answer: Schedules should be set by the start of the new semester, preferably by the week before the start of the semester. Schedules may start sooner if approved to do so by human resources. Approvals will be considered on a departmental or divisional basis. Human Resources will provide notification to the leader of the division. Because the decisions will be considered and made on a departmental/divisional basis, Human Resources will not be in a position to consider an individually-submitted request. This is due to the fact that departmental/divisional and university operational and staffing needs must be met.

2. Could an employee break up the two remote days in to hours, for instance work from home for a few mornings and come in every afternoon?

Answer: Yes. If this is operationally feasible and applied consistently then this flexible schedule can be accommodated. It is also acceptable for an employee (who is generally in the office) to be permitted to work from home to focus on a specific individual, identifiable presentation or a project.

Please note that any such situations are not intended to be a substitute to permitting the employee to continually work remotely if not otherwise approved to do so

3. Is it permissible to rotate the days that are remote?

Answer: Yes. Especially for managers and other professional staff, it probably is more effective to rotate days or to schedule days when there are not meetings scheduled or other events on campus. A box will be added to the existing form to reflect rotation.

4. Does virtual scheduling include part-time employees?

Answer: In almost every instance, the answer is No. Generally, part-time employees should be working onsite. When employees are remote, it increases the risk of a lack of communication or engagement with the team. Since part-time employees are already limited in their interactions, it is best that they be physically present. If there is a specific reason for a part-time employee to work remotely, we will consider it.

5. If an employee is hired to teach on Zoom or Webex, do they need to complete a form?

Answer: No. If the position is remote, as indicated then it is assumed that the work will be completed remotely. However, it is important to note that they must have an address in either New Jersey, PA, Delaware or New York. Although we do not need a flex work form, it is required that employees reside within the states listed above. Employees cannot live in other states because their work location would be considered their home. Rowan would then be required to follow the employment laws of that state, file tax returns and manage unemployment and workers compensation for those states.

6. Can remote work be limited to 1 day per week or none at all?

Answer: Yes. It is recommended that you begin more conservatively, so as a general rule, a 1 day remote working schedule will be more likely to be approved. It is much easier to be more flexible in the future than it is to reduce the amount of remote work time. One day per week will provide flexibility while still providing for appropriate coverage. No one is guaranteed flexible work. It is important that staff be scheduled so that operations and student services are managed efficiently and effectively.

7. Is it possible for managers to allow employees to work remotely sporadically without completing the form?

Answer: It is preferable that a form be completed. However, provided that the remote work is sporadic and is awarded fairly and consistently, it can be managed ad hoc without prior approval.

We want to provide flexibility when needed. For example, an employee (if eligible) can be provided the opportunity to work remotely because they need to be home for a delivery or they have a project due and they need time away to concentrate. Similar to the situation described in question number 2 of this section, this is not intended to be a way in which to routinely or permanently permit an employee (who has not otherwise been formally approved) to work remotely.

Please be specifically aware of the foreseeable negative optics of misapplying this type of provision. As a caution, when providing this option, the manager is subject to claims that the manager may be favoring or disfavoring certain employees. This may only be used sporadically. Consistent scheduling or a pattern of use will require the completion of an approval form.

8. Can employees work a “compressed” schedule?

Answer: Yes. This option is especially helpful for those who need to work onsite. Employees may work the 35 hours over fewer days provided that the day off is not always Monday or Friday. **The compressed schedule is not to provide for a three-day weekend.** Employees must also schedule at least 30 minutes for lunch. Employees cannot work through lunch to shorten their work day.

Please also specifically note that a compressed schedule may only be permissible if all departmental/divisional operational needs are fully met and staffing is at operationally acceptable levels at all times. Please also further note that having employees “work” at departmentally unnecessary times simply to permit a compressed schedule for an employee is not an acceptable practice.

9. Please explain the restriction on scheduling on Monday and Friday?

Answer: Rowan is open for services Monday through Friday. In addition to students, we support patients, research and the community. It is important that offices have appropriate onsite staffing for all days. Although working remotely on Monday and Friday is a preferred schedule, we need to be physically present for necessary service delivery. Monday and Friday can be included as a remote day but both days should not be scheduled as remote. Employees working the compressed schedule should not be regularly scheduling Monday or Friday.

These are popular days to remain home but they need to be awarded fairly while still providing for the needs of the university. Consideration needs to be given in advance to how these days will be awarded as remote work days.

10. Can employees request to work fully remote?

Answer: No. Please remember that for qualifying employees, the 1 day weekly remote schedule will be generally expected, at least in the beginning of the return-to-campus. Should an employee be provided (at any point) an expanded use of remote work, the employee will be expected to be on campus at least 3 days per week and preferably 4 days per week. If an employee (at any point) is

approved for more than a 2 day remote schedule, the Facilities Planning Division will reassign office space. Employees who are not onsite 60% of the work week will be provided shared work space.

11. If an employee is already working a different schedule such as 6:00am to 2:00pm does the employee need to complete an approval form?

Answer: Generally no. Previously approved schedules do not need to be reviewed. Please note that this exemption does not apply to an employee who otherwise would work a “traditional schedule” if the employee’s non-traditional schedule is the result of the vaccination incentive or any other temporary situation.

MANAGING FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES:

1. Can or should employees work remotely during inclement weather?

Answer: Flexible scheduling does not change the essential personnel policy. Employees who are deemed to be essential must still be on campus. Others, including C1 employees, may work remotely if there is inclement weather, with approval from the department or division

2. Can or should employees work remotely if they can work but generally do not feel well?

Answer: In limited circumstances this can be permitted. This needs to be managed closely and be applied fairly and consistently. This is for occasional use only and should only be utilized if the employee has the resource-capability to work at home and is physically able to do so. Otherwise, the employee is required to utilize personal leave time to cover those hours.

3. Does the employee need to complete the form if any remote work will occur even if there is no change to the work schedule?

Answer: Yes. Any hybrid work arrangements must be documented and approved.

4. Please address information security for off-site records.

Answer: Employees working remotely should sign out records that are being removed from the campus. The employee’s supervisor should be aware of what records are being removed and verify that they are returned. Employees should also be working on a Rowan-issued laptop and may not print documents. Please contact IRT with questions related to FERPA, HIPAA or other confidential information questions.

5. Are employees required to forward their phones or to send voicemail to email during remote work?

Answer: Employees are expected to work in a manner that is least disruptive to the departmental operations. For student-facing departments, it might be best to forward calls to the onsite representative. For others, forwarding messages to voicemail might be most effective. In all cases, the voicemail should indicate whether the person is onsite or offsite. Calls are expected to be returned promptly. Employees working remotely are expected to be responsive during all hours of the work day in accordance with departmental policy. Please also specifically note that an employee who is working remotely at any time is fully expected to work in the same reasonable manner as if the employee is working on-site. As such, remote work does not anticipate nor imply that the employee will be distracted or performing other tasks during worktime. Further, the employee is required to be available and responsive to work e-mails, calls, last-minute meetings, etc. in the same fashion as when working in on-site.

6. How does time off such as vacation or holidays inter-relate with remote work? Employees ask if they can work remotely over the holiday, what do I do?

Answer: Remote work is the same schedule and expectation as if the work was being accomplished onsite. Remote work, during the pandemic, was in some cases making certain that minimal level of service was maintained. The flexible work policy assumes a full workload. Employees need to schedule vacation, holiday or comp time when they are not fully engaged with work.