

Title: Flexible Work Arrangement Policy

Subject: Human Resources

Applies: University Wide

Issuing Authority: President

Responsible Officer: Chief Human Resources Officer/Vice President

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I. PURPOSE

Rowan University (“Rowan” or “the University”) recognizes the value of flexible work options and will consider flexible work arrangements that allow staff to balance work and personal commitments while ensuring the operational/business needs of the University are met. The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidelines and criteria to be used to determine, review, and manage flexible work arrangements.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

At the direction of the Chief Human Resources Officer/Vice President, responsible managers are required to implement and ensure compliance with this Policy.

III. APPLICABILITY

This Policy is applicable to all employees of the University for whom a flexible work arrangement may be appropriate. As set forth below, flexible work arrangements do not work for every employee or for every position. For example, employees with work performance issues, or employees whose physical presence on site is required to perform their duties, will not be eligible for a flexible work arrangement.

During this inaugural period, Rowan will limit the flexible work arrangements until appropriate review and outcome assessment can be evaluated.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- a. Alternate workplace: A work site other than the employee’s usual and customary worksite (primary workplace). The alternate workplace will most likely be the employee’s home. Student and patient privacy concerns will restrict the approval of other alternate worksites. Prior approval will be required for any worksite other than the employee’s home so privacy and security concerns can be assessed.
- b. Flexible Schedule: Employees who need to complete their job duties onsite may still work a schedule outside of the 8:30am-4:30pm work day if operationally feasible. For instance, an

employee may work evening hours to extend student service hours and then work fewer hours on another day.

- c. Flexible (Hybrid) Work: This schedule provides for an employee to work remotely on one or more days per week.
- d. Primary workplace: A telecommuter's usual and customary workplace.
- e. Remote Work: Employee will work fully remote and will only come to campus for meetings or collaboration. Remote work must be performed from an alternate worksite in New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania or New York. Employees working remotely must still reside in one of these states as their primary residence. Rowan is obligated to withhold payroll taxes based on the state of residence, therefore, even remote work must be completed within the states listed above. Consideration may be provided for visiting faculty or specialized skills.
- f. Telecommuter: An employee who for at least one or more days in a particular pay period works at an alternate workplace.

V. REFERENCES

Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement
Acceptable Use Policy
Access Control Policy
Protected Health Information

VI. POLICY

Managers are in the best position to understand the demands of the work and the capacity of the employee to succeed in a flexible work arrangement. Managers are responsible to manage the work under the flexible work arrangement. Flexible work arrangements will generally be based on mutual agreement. However, the University may establish flexible work as a condition of employment or may require employees to be onsite, based on the University's business needs. In such cases, this requirement should be included when the position is advertised and in the offer of employment.

Employees are not entitled to or guaranteed the opportunity to use a flexible work arrangement. All flexible work arrangements must comply with applicable federal and state laws, bargaining unit agreements (where applicable) and all University rules, policies and practices.

Policy expectations:

- The Flexible Work Policy is being offered on a trial basis and will be evaluated at least annually.
- Fully remote assignments will be limited and will generally apply to a full department based on work-type and space limitations. Approval for fully remote assignment will be limited to those departments that are not student or patient facing and have outcomes that are measurable.

- Clerical and administrative staff should be onsite except in limited circumstances. Flexible work hours may be considered.
- Hybrid schedules should provide for no more than 1-2 days of remote work.
- Although inclusion is strongly encouraged, employees working at alternate worksites may at times be unable to participate in all meetings or events. It is encouraged that meetings be scheduled in advance and be available through webex but emergent situations may require meetings without advance notice. Mandatory meetings will be posted in advance and employees may be required to attend in person.

a. Eligibility

Managers may consider flexible work arrangements for qualified employees in positions for which flexible work arrangements are feasible. At a minimum, candidates for flexible work arrangements must meet the following criteria to be eligible to begin, and to maintain, a flexible work arrangement:

- i. Unless otherwise specified upon hire, a newly hired candidate must first successfully complete his/her applicable introductory period and the initial onboarding and orientation requirements before the flexible work arrangement can begin;
- ii. The candidate must be in good standing, must meet all performance standards, and must not be on a performance improvement plan;
- iii. The candidate must exhibit excellent time management and organizational skills and be self-motivated, self-reliant, and disciplined as demonstrated in both past and current work performance/history;
- iv. The candidate must be in a position for which the job duties can be adequately performed and supervised by management remotely. During the flexible work arrangement, the candidate must undergo periodic reviews via 1-on-1 meetings with his or her manager or supervisor (in addition to the University's applicable evaluation process); and
- v. The candidate must adhere to all of the other requirements set forth in this Policy.

Flexible work arrangements do not work for every employee or for every position, and generally will not be considered when the following conditions exist:

- i. The nature of the position requires the employee's physical presence on site and/or the employee's physical presence on site is required during set hours; in most cases, clerical and administrative roles will be performed onsite.
- ii. The position requires access to and use of materials, supplies, or equipment that are not available at an alternate workplace;
- iii. The position requires access to and use of confidential company information that cannot be adequately safeguarded at an alternate workplace;
- iv. The responsibilities of the position require direct, on-site supervision; and/or
- v. On-site staffing requirements cannot accommodate employees working remotely.

b. Flexible Work Arrangements

University departments may implement flexible work arrangements as a work option for certain employees based on criteria and procedures consistently applied throughout the department. Flexible work arrangements include:

- i. **Flexible Work Schedule** – A work period that may vary from the core work hours established for a department or office. A flexible work schedule may include the core hours established by the department/office, with the start and end times varying to ensure a full work week. Sample options for a flexible work schedule, assuming the core hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (with an hour lunch), may include 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (with an hour for lunch); 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (with an hour for lunch); 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (with an hour for lunch); 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (with a half hour for lunch), or 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (with a half hour for lunch). Four (4) ten (10) hour days may also be considered by the manager when feasible for the department and position.
- ii. **Hybrid Schedule** – An on-going arrangement in which an employee is permitted to work at an alternative workplace (i.e., from home) for part of their workweek.
- iii. **Remote Schedule**-An on-going arrangement in which an employee is permitted to work at an alternate workplace except for onsite meetings.

c. Request and Approval Process

Employees interested in any flexible work arrangement should submit a [Request Form](#) to their direct manager. Each request will be carefully considered, and must be approved by two levels of management – the employee’s direct manager and the senior leader of the division. Both levels of management must approve the request in order for the arrangement to go forward. The final determination will be based on business needs and will only be permitted when the arrangement is a mutually beneficial option for both the University and the employee. Human Resources will provide the final approval.

With respect to telecommuting, it will generally be limited to one or two days a week, unless business needs dictate otherwise. Additionally, the telecommuting days or flexible work schedule must be predetermined at the outset of the arrangement and will not vary from week to week unless business needs require it. The employee’s manager has the discretion to approve an employee’s request to alter the telecommuting or flexible work schedule in a given week on an occasional basis if compelling circumstances are present and there will be no adverse business impact.

Exceptions: It is an accepted practice for teaching and research faculty to carry out their work with varied schedules on campus and at alternate locations. Normally, a formal Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement will not be required for faculty unless the normal work assignment is consistently at an alternate workplace (i.e., not the standard primary workplace).

In addition, on occasion, a department may also determine that employees may need to work at alternate workplaces for a short period of time to accommodate unusual circumstances, such as a brief office closing for renovations or relocation. In such cases, the formal Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement is not required, but should be documented for department files by memorandum or email, specifying work expectations and duration.

d. Documenting the Flexible Work Arrangement

The goal of a flexible work arrangement is to ensure that both the employee and manager have a shared understanding of the flexible work arrangement. Thus, as a condition of a flexible work arrangement, an employee will be required to enter into a Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement, that sets forth the terms and conditions of the specific flexible work arrangement that has been designed for the employee. A template Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement, which will be modified to reflect the specific circumstances of each arrangement, can be found [here](#). Once a Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement has been signed, the direct manager should maintain a copy of the Agreement in departmental records and should send a copy to Human Resources at hr@rowan.edu. If necessary, the manager should advise Information Resources & Technology (IRT). The content of the agreement will generally include, but is not limited to, a work schedule that specifies the flexible work arrangement, such as telecommute days, location and hours; the duration of the flexible work arrangement; responsibility for telecommuting equipment; and relevant policy acknowledgments of responsibility.

e. Conditions of Employment

For individuals telecommuting, the conditions of employment remain the same as for non-telecommuting employees. Employee salary, benefits, and employer-sponsored insurance coverage will not change as a result of telecommuting. Telecommuting employees will be held to the same expectations regarding the execution of their job duties, assignments, and other work obligations that they would be held to if working at their primary workplace. This includes the obligation to comply with all University Policies and Procedures.

Employees that enter into a flexible work arrangement also agree not to conduct personal business while in official duty status at the alternate workplace. Telecommuter must not report any period of time at home or elsewhere spent in activities other than work as work-time other than regular brief breaks employees would likely take if onsite. Failure to record time appropriately may constitute falsification of time records to receive pay for time not worked (theft of services) and would be subject to disciplinary action.

Telework arrangements for employees on leave must be coordinated and approved by Human Resources.

f. Hours of Work

The amount of time an employee is expected to work shall not change as a result of a flexible work arrangement unless otherwise set forth in the Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement. Employees who are telecommuting must be working and available by email, via their University phone extension, and any other means of communication as agreed to in the Agreement, during the employee's standard office hours Monday through Friday (or approved flex time schedule, as applicable). Additionally, telecommuting employees must be available to attend scheduled meetings and to participate in other required office activities in person as requested by their manager.

Non-exempt employees must obtain advance written approval from their manager prior to working overtime.

g. Workspace

Telecommuters must establish a dedicated workspace in their alternate workplace that is quiet, clean, and safe. The workspace must be maintained in a condition that is free from hazards and other dangers to the employee or others.

The University reserves the right to make on-site visits (with 24 hours advance notice) to the alternate workplace for the purposes of (1) ensuring that the workspace is free from safety hazards, (2) ensuring that the IT environment is adequate to safeguard against security breaches, to maintain the confidentiality of company information and to promote business efficiency, (3) maintaining, repairing, inspecting or retrieving any Rowan-owned or issued equipment or information, and (4) investigating any cases of injury, theft, loss, or liability related to the flexible work arrangement.

h. Equipment and Materials

The University may provide equipment and materials needed by employees to effectively perform their duties; however, the University will not duplicate resources between the primary workplace and the alternate workplace.

Hardware, such as laptops, must be purchased by following the Hardware & Software Ordering Process in the [IRT support portal](#). If applicable, telecommuters may take Rowan-issued laptops home for their telecommuting schedule. However, Rowan-issued desktops, printers and scanners must remain on campus.

University-owned equipment shall only be used for legitimate University purposes. Telecommuters are responsible for protecting University-owned equipment from theft, damage and unauthorized use. The University will maintain, service and repair University-owned equipment used in the normal course of employment. **Any damage to, theft of, or problems with University-owned equipment should be immediately reported to the employee's manager and/or IRT.**

The Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement may also permit or require telecommuters to use their own equipment at the alternate workplace. When employees are authorized to use their own equipment, the University is not responsible for the cost, repair or service of

the employee's personal equipment, nor for repairs or modifications to the alternate workplace.

Materials and supplies needed for remote work should be coordinated with your supervisors. Materials must be acquired through Rowan and must be used solely for Rowan business.

i. Information Security and Access to Information

All telecommuters are responsible for maintaining confidentiality and security at the alternate workplace, as the employee would at the primary workplace. The employee must protect the confidentiality, privacy and integrity of data, information, paper files, and access to University computer systems. All University policies on information technology, internet and technology use apply to telecommuting, as they would in the primary workplace (including but not limited to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#)). Please refer to the [Access Control Policy](#) for Rowan University for additional information on establishing controls necessary to safeguard the University's electronic information and information systems. In addition, RowanSOM employees must adhere to the Protected Health Information: [Destruction and Disposal policy](#).

Any actual or threatened data breach, unauthorized access to the University's network or equipment, or any other potential compromise of the University's network or equipment must be reported immediately to IRT.

j. Printing

Due to security concerns about printing Rowan data in non-Rowan locations, employees may not print at alternate worksites.

k. Monitoring and Termination of Flexible Work Arrangements

Offering the opportunity to work at an alternate workplace (i.e., employee's home) or according to a flexible work schedule is a management option and is not an employee right. Further, an employee's participation in a flexible work arrangement is entirely voluntary (unless it is a condition of employment or a requirement of the job description). The University, including an employee's manager(s), administration and/or Human Resources, will periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the flexible work arrangement. If an arrangement is not working or business needs change, the flexible work arrangement may be ended at any time, for any lawful reason with or without cause, in the University's sole discretion.

l. Liability/Workers' Compensation

For those flexible work arrangements that include telecommuting, the employee's alternate workplace when used for telecommuting is an extension of the primary workplace. An institution's liability for job-related accidents will continue to exist during the approved work schedule and in the employee's designated alternate workplace. The telecommuter is covered under the State's Workers' Compensation Law for injuries occurring in the course of the actual performance of official duties at the alternate workplace. However, the University

assumes no liability for damages to an employee's real or personal property resulting from participation in telecommuting.

If an injury occurs during telecommuting work hours, then the employee shall immediately report the injury to the manager. The employee and manager should follow the University's policies regarding the reporting of injuries for employees injured while at work.

The State of New Jersey and Rowan University are not responsible for any injuries to family members, visitors, and others in the employee's alternate workplace. The telecommuter may not have business guests at the alternate workplace.

To the extent permitted by law, the employee will not attempt to hold the University or the State responsible or liable for any loss or liability in any way connected to the employee's non-work related use of his or her own home or alternate workplace.

The telecommuter is responsible for contacting the telecommuter's insurance agent and a tax consultant and consulting local ordinances for information regarding home or alternate workplaces.

m. Child and Dependent Care

Telecommuting is not a substitute for childcare or dependent care. The telecommuter shall continue to make arrangements for child or dependent care to the same extent as if the telecommuter was working at the primary workplace.

n. Additional Guidelines and Requirements

- i. Managers must provide for appropriate onsite coverage when considering telecommuting arrangements. This also includes the need for continuity of service for students who may need to speak to an employee multiple times to resolve their concern. Any employee who is not onsite should include the name and contact information of the onsite representative in their email and voicemail.
- ii. The telecommuter must remain accessible during work hours (phone, email and video) and should establish effective communication and workflow. Managers should establish expected response time and employees should be accessible through means such as Jabber for instant messaging.
- iii. Managers should be prepared for video conferencing if members of the team are remote. Employees must allow for the possibility managers may occasionally require that everyone be physically present.
- iv. Performance expectations and outcomes will be determined at the commencement of the work arrangement. A review of performance will be completed at the 3 month, 6 month and 12 month period. After the first year, semi-annual evaluations must be completed. An evaluation tool will be available on the HR website with instructions.
- v. Managers must complete a Remote Work Management Training program.
- vi. Employee calendars must be kept current and indicate the days on which they will be working remotely so meetings and other events can be appropriately scheduled.

- vii. Employees who are working from alternative sites are responsible for keeping email and voicemail current. Voicemail should be automatically transferred either through a call forward or through email notification. Both email and voicemail should indicate if the employee is working at an alternate site.
- viii. Fully remote work will be provided in very limited circumstances and will generally be for a full department such as a call-center.
- ix. Employees scheduled to work from an alternate worksite 3 or more days per week will be reassigned to shared office space. The Facilities Planning Department will assess the space needs of departments based on the alternative work schedules.