

Flexible Work Arrangement Benefit

As a residential institution, Skidmore College relies on employees' presence on campus to meet students' and operational needs. In addition, the College recognizes a collaborative work environment is often best achieved when employees are in physical proximity, where there is a greater opportunity for increased communication, better teamwork, higher morale and improved productivity. At the same time, the College recognizes that flexibility in the workplace helps employees balance personal and professional responsibilities, and flexible work arrangements may be made when appropriate and consistent with the needs of an employee and the College.

The availability of flexible work arrangements will vary by division, department and position based on business and operational needs. To be successful, flexible work arrangements must not cause any reduction in service, quality of work or productivity. The approval or denial of a request for a flexible work arrangement is at the department or program leader and division Vice President's discretion and must be reviewed and approved by Human Resources prior to implementation.

Available flexible work arrangements include:

- **Hybrid work** is an arrangement that permits eligible staff members whose job duties may be performed remotely and who have demonstrated the ability to perform productively to work remotely to work on campus for a minimum number of days during a work week and from an off-site location for the remaining workday(s).
- **Flextime** is an arrangement that allows for flexible scheduling that permit variations in starting and departure times but does not alter the total number of hours worked in a workweek.
- **Compressed workweek** is an arrangement that permits eligible staff members to vary the length of the workday where the total number of standard weekly hours is completed in fewer than five workdays.

Eligibility

Position Eligibility. The department or program leader and division Vice President are responsible for determining if a position is eligible for a flexible work arrangement based on the department or program's operational and business needs. Some positions may only be eligible for flexible work arrangements during certain times of the year (for example, student-facing positions may be eligible for hybrid work during summer and winter breaks). In making the determination of whether a position is eligible a flexible work arrangement, department or program leaders should consider the following factors:

- Are the position's job duties capable of being performed at an off-site location without causing disruption to performance or service?
- Will a flexible work arrangement still provide coverage during regular business hours for onsite department or program operations?
- Is daily in-person interaction required of the position?

- What is the anticipated impact of a flexible work arrangement on those who depend upon the position's services (e.g., students, faculty, staff, parents, and/or vendors)?
- Does the position require onsite employee supervision?
- Is the equipment, software and other tools needed to perform this position available off site?

Union positions shall only be eligible for a flexible work arrangement to the extent permitted by the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Employee Eligibility. If a position is determined to be eligible for a flexible work arrangement, the department or program leader should next evaluate whether the employee requesting a flexible work arrangement is eligible, taking into consideration the following factors:

- Is the employee in good standing, meaning they are meeting or exceeding performance expectations?
- Does the employee have a clear understanding of their position and expectations? Department and program leaders have discretion to delay eligibility for flexible work arrangements for new employees during their onboarding and orientation period to allow time to evaluate the employee's eligibility for flexible work arrangements.
- Has the employee demonstrated the ability to work independently and without close supervision?
- Does the employee demonstrate prompt responsiveness and collaboration with all constituents?
- Does the employee consistently complete job duties and assignments in a timely and accurate manner?

Requesting a Flexible Work Arrangement

Staff members seeking a flexible work arrangement should submit a written request to their supervisor.

During the fall and spring semesters, eligible staff may request to work one (1) day per week remotely.

During the winter and summer breaks, eligible staff may request to work up to two (2) days per work remotely.

Approval of Flexible Work Arrangements

Supervisors will consult with their department or program leader and Human Resources to develop effective flexible work arrangements that support the functions of their departments or programs, divisions and the College.

Staggered Start and End Times. Where possible, arrival and departure times for employees can be staggered to meet both the needs of the employee and the department or program. Department and program leaders are responsible for ensuring that there is adequate coverage and supervision during the staggered hours. Flextime that involves staggered hours and does not include a significant variation from the employee's normal work schedule may be approved by a supervisor with consultation with their Department Head, Program Chair or division Vice President. Human Resources does not need to approve these types of flexible work arrangements.

Occasional Remote Work Arrangements. Occasional, infrequent remote work is permitted when an employee's work can be performed remotely and when approved by an employee's supervisor. This type of situation may arise when an employee is needed at home to care for a sick child or is unable to come to work because of a school delay or closure, and similar circumstances when occasional personal commitments render a remote work arrangement the most effective solution for the employee and the College. Please note it is not the employee's prerogative to decide to work remotely without supervisor approval. In addition, remote work is not intended to be used as a substitute for ongoing caregiving needs. Supervisors may approve or deny an employee's request at their discretion, and the supervisor and the employee are each responsible for ensuring that the employee works productively while remote. Human Resources does not need to approve occasional remote work arrangements.

Emergency Remote Work Arrangements. In the event of an emergency such as a weather disaster or pandemic, the College may allow or require employees to temporarily work from home to ensure business continuity. Employees who are required to work remotely during an emergency will be notified by the College. Human Resources does not need to approve emergency remote work arrangements. Employees should not assume any specified period for emergency remote work arrangements, and the College may require employees to return to regular, on-site work at any time.

Other Flexible Work Arrangements. Requests for flexible work arrangements that involve a regular deviation from the employee's normal work schedule or work location must be approved by the Department Chair or Program Director, division Vice President and Human Resources. If a request for a flexible work arrangement is not approved, the supervisor will inform the employee of the reason(s) for the decision. The College reserves the right to approve or deny any flexible work arrangement and to modify or revoke such arrangements once approved.

To ensure appropriate coverage, requests for remote work should not result in a staff member working less than four days per week on campus during the fall and spring semesters or less than three days per week on campus during the winter and summer breaks. If an employee takes approved personal, sick or vacation day(s) in any given week, the employee will generally be expected to work on campus the other days of the week to maintain this level of on-campus presence. This does not apply to business-related travel.

Expectations for All Hybrid Work Arrangements

Employees who work remotely must establish an appropriate work environment within their home for work purposes. An appropriate work environment includes one that is free from everyday distractions, includes a suitable desk or table, has access to internet service, and does not pose any health or safety risks. Please understand that remote work is not intended to be used as a substitute for ongoing caregiving needs.

The College will not be responsible under remote work arrangements for operating costs, home maintenance, rental fees, or any other incidental costs (e.g., utilities, internet fees, etc.). The College will also not reimburse remote employees for any set-up expenses. While the College does not guarantee access to equipment for remote work arrangements, it may, in its sole discretion, elect to provide remote employees with certain telecommuting equipment, such as an office phone and/or VPN equipment. Employees' use of equipment, software, and any other resources provided by the College is limited to the purposes of remote work and is not intended for employees' personal use.

Consistent with the College's expectations of information security for employees working on campus, employees working remotely are required to ensure the protection of proprietary and confidential information accessible from their home office.

Like all other employees, employees working remotely must always maintain satisfactory job performance, including, among other requirements, continuing to work normal work hours, responding to all work-related calls, emails and other messages on a timely basis, completing all work assigned on a timely basis and complying with all College policies. Employees must be available for meetings as deemed necessary by their supervisor and may be required to be physically present on campus for in-person meetings or events even if they occur on a day that they normally work hybrid.

Remote employees are responsible for tax and insurance consequences, if any, of their remote work arrangements, and for conforming to any local zoning regulations. The College suggests discussing remote work arrangements and associated tax implications with a tax advisor.

In the event the College determines that a flexible work arrangement is not in the best interests of the College for any reason, including but not limited to performance and productivity, the College may end the arrangement.

Application of Policies and Procedures

The College's policies and procedures, including those set forth in the Employee Handbook apply to all employees regardless of work location. Non-exempt employees who are authorized to work remotely must accurately record hours worked, including start and stop times and meal periods. Non-exempt employees cannot work over their approved hours unless they have supervisor pre-approval. Exempt employees must accurately record absence time.

Regardless of work location, employees must report any job-related injuries that occur in the course and scope of employment must be reported to their supervisor immediately.

Reasonable Accommodations

Under certain circumstances, an employee may require a remote work arrangement to accommodate a medical condition, pregnancy-related condition or for another protected reason. Requests for accommodations should be made to Human Resources pursuant to the College's *Accommodation of Individuals with Disabilities* policy.

Any questions about this policy can be directed to Human Resources.