

To: Faculty and Staff

From: The Division of Human Resources

Subject: COVID-19/Coronavirus Human Resources Update – Operations Continuity

As the information related to our current COVID-19 health crisis continues to evolve, Human Resources is working in tandem with the College’s leadership and CUNY to keep the campus informed of the measures being implemented to ensure operational continuity.

During this time, college employees should know that CCNY and CUNY are working to provide working conditions that are as safe as possible, while at the same time understanding that we need to be extremely flexible and creative as the situation evolves. Part of that means closely following guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New York State Department of Health (DOH). But we are especially sensitive to the ways that coming to work and spending time on campus may heighten the risk for employees. We are therefore implementing policies designed to help insulate you from contagion as we work together to support the needs of the College.

The campus remains open for business, and we want to make sure that our essential functions (e.g. teaching, advising, helping students secure financial aid, operational matters such as but not limited to payroll and the maintenance of campus facilities) take place as normally as possible. However, we want to create as many opportunities as possible for employees to work remotely. In this context, the definition of an “essential staff member” takes on a slightly different meaning. It is someone whose physical presence on campus is necessary to discharge a function. This is unlike a snow day in which only designated staff in the Public Safety and Facilities Departments are required to work. In our current situation, everyone is expected to work. However, those who are designated “essential” must work all or part of their time on campus. The designation of essential and non-essential staff members will be worked out explicitly in agreements between staff members, supervisors and their division heads. Telecommuting arrangements will be designed in as much as possible for employees who are deemed non-essential. Staff members who are deemed to be essential can work out flexible schedule arrangements, with the approval of their supervisors and division heads, designed to limit their potential exposure to others and create more social distance on campus. Such arrangements include modified or flexible work schedules and a condensed work week so that employees can commute to and from work during non-peak hours. **To be clear, formal agreements laying out these arrangements must be executed, in consultation with a supervisor and the approval of the applicable Dean or Vice President, no later than Wednesday, March 18, 2020**.

When preparing these arrangements, supervisors should communicate clear expectations around both options to their employees. Additionally, supervisors must provide HR with a list of employees in their department who will be telecommuting and/or adopting a flexible work schedule. Employees and supervisors are required to complete a Telecommuting/Flexible Work Schedule Request Form, which is available on the HR website at <https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/2020-03/Telecommuting%20Flexible%20Schedule%20Request%20Form.docx>.

Many of the College’s Research Foundation (RF) employees report to supervisors who are College staff or faculty. RF employees who work for City College are expected to follow the College’s telecommuting and flexible work hours process outlined here, unless it can be demonstrated that the College’s policy is in direct conflict with a specific provision of a RF employment rule related to their position and job duty.

For your guidance, the following are some important points to keep in mind:

**Flexible Scheduling**

Flexible hours involve modifying starting and ending time of regular daily hours, while a condensed work week involves working the same number of hours per workweek or per pay period as required but in fewer days, similar to what is implemented during the summer.

**Telecommuting**

The College can permit an employee to work at home or at an alternate CUNY location for all or part of their regular workweek, and in the current circumstances we are encouraging everyone to be as creative as possible in moving as many of us as we can into these kinds of arrangements. This type of alternative work arrangement is known as “telecommuting” or “teleworking” and may not be appropriate for all positions or employees. The supervisor will determine if the individual’s essential functions can be effectively performed remotely or could be temporarily modified for the duration of the recess. Access to necessary hardware and systems is also a factor in determining if a remote arrangement can be granted, and supervisors should consult with IT and as applicable with HR.

**Expectations for Managing Alternative Work Arrangements**

Requests for flexible scheduling and/or telecommuting will only be approved for one-week intervals and subject to review and renewal on a weekly basis should CUNY extend the timeframe that the College can offer these alternative work arrangements. Additional documentation may be required.

Those granted a telecommuting arrangement will be subject to the same performance standards for their position that were in place prior to telecommuting. Supervisors should clearly communicate expectations for work assignments, check-ins and any other parameters relevant to supporting a remote arrangement. Common items for discussion include:

• Frequency of communication with supervisor

• Frequency of checking email / voicemail

• Other communication expectations (i.e., team members, external contacts)
• Hours of availability

• Areas of focus during remote work (i.e., projects, milestones, etc.)

**Possible Alternative Work Arrangement Scenarios**

• Combination of remote and on-premise work days (i.e., 2 days remote and 3 days on site)

• Combination of remote and on-premise work weeks (every other)

• Condensed work week (in line with current guidelines for “Summer Fridays” where employees work 35 hours over Monday-Thursday with Friday off)

• Full time remote

**Framework for Flexible Work Arrangements**

• Schedule start times must be between 7am-10am

• Schedule end times must be between 3pm-7pm

• Condensed work week (35-hour week over a minimum of 4 days, with varying day off)

• Establishment of minimum on premise staffing requirement by department/area

Employees who seek additional arrangements based on CDC or DOH guidelines should contact HR. Please be advised that other options may be subject to applicable time and leave guidelines.

Additionally, employees always have the option, as applicable and as per CUNY Policy (<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/reasonable-accommodations-and-academic-adjustments/i-policy-statement/>), to apply for a reasonable accommodation for a permanent or temporary disability\*. A reasonable accommodation for a disability is a modification to the workplace or how a job is performed that allows an employee with a disability to perform their essential duties. For more information about CUNY’s Reasonable Accommodation Policy, please go to the link provided above. **The process starts with HR.** As part of the application process, an employee and their healthcare provider will need to complete the (1) Request for Reasonable Accommodation Form and the (2) Reasonable Accommodation – Health Care Provider Assessment Form. These forms can be found on the College’s HR website at <https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/hr/forms>.

*(\* Reasonable accommodations may also be requested for religious practices and status as a victim of domestic violence, sex offense or stalking.)*

**Payroll Direct Deposit**

New York State payroll will run uninterrupted according to the usual payroll process and schedule. However, given the uncertainty of the virus’ progression and the potential for a prolonged campus closure, we urge employees without direct deposit to consider establishing a direct deposit account to avoid any delay in obtaining their pay checks. Direct deposit request forms can be found on the HR website at the following:

For Tax Levy Payroll –

<https://www.osc.state.ny.us/payroll/files/ac2772.pdf>

For Non-Tax Levy Payroll – <https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/hr/upload/DirectDepositFormForNon-TaxLevyPayroll.pdf>

**Employees who are paid via Tax levy and Non-Tax Levy sources must complete both direct deposit request forms. Completed forms should be submitted to Shepard Hall, Room 92.**

**Anti-Discrimination**

Employees may exhibit fear for reasons that are unrelated to coronavirus and are based solely on national origin and/or race.  With this in mind, when we are communicating with colleagues about coronavirus, its symptoms, and the proper workplace precautions, we should be aware that national origin discrimination and/or harassment is inappropriate and has no place at the City College of New York.

Finally, we reiterate that we receive new information and guidance throughout the day. We will continue to provide you with information and guidance as it becomes available and ready for sharing.

Your HR representatives remain poised to assist you always.

**Human Resources Representatives**

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