



## UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

<b>Department:</b> Human Resources	<b>Effective Date:</b> January 1, 2014
<b>Policy Number:</b> _____	<b>Date Approved:</b> December 16, 2013
<b>Policy Description:</b> Staff Flexible Work Arrangements	<b>Approved By:</b> David Hale, Vice President, Business and Finance and Treasurer
<b>Revised:</b> N/A	<b>Reviewed:</b> N/A
<b>Cognizant University Official:</b> Carl Sorensen, AVP, Human Resources	<b>Replaces Policy Dated:</b> N/A

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to describe the types of flexible work arrangements that may be available to certain University staff members, the process for evaluating a request for a flexible work arrangement and the approval process for such a request.

### **SCOPE:**

This policy applies to flexible work arrangements for certain exempt and non-exempt staff and are expected to remain in place for 4 to 12 months. These special arrangements must be reviewed annually. It is not intended to apply to short-term, ad hoc arrangements to meet unexpected needs. Supervisors are free to use their best discretion, consistent with applicable law and University policies, to address such short-term or unexpected needs. New funds will not be added to accommodate a flexible work option, whether through additional hours or through the purchase of equipment by the University.

### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

The University of Richmond must be appropriately staffed at all times in order to effectively pursue our educational mission. In recognition of the wide range of professional responsibilities and duties required of University staff members; there may be special circumstances in which a flexible work arrangement can be implemented so as to optimally balance the needs of the University and an individual staff member and/or work team. This policy outlines the types of flexible work arrangements that may be available to certain staff members and the process by which such an arrangement is developed and implemented. Flexible work arrangements are not part of the University employee benefits package.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

### **Core Hours and Peak Periods**

Core Hours refers to the period of hours each work day or peak workload periods during which a department must be staffed at an appropriate or specified level. Core Hours may also include the requirement for employees to be present during a particular day of the week.

Peak Periods refers to cyclical times of the year when business activity or work volume is high, during which a department must be staffed on site at a specified level. During peak periods employees may be required to work on campus for their regular schedule.

The department head is responsible for determining the Core Hours and Peak Periods for his or her Department ensuring that the University commitment to a high level of service is maintained. The department head may alter Core Hours and Peak Periods from time to time.

### **Flexible Work Arrangement**

The term “Flexible Work Arrangement” as used in this policy refers to “Flextime” and “Flexplace,” as defined below.

#### **Flextime**

Flextime allows for flexible scheduling arrangements that permit variations in starting and departure times, but does not alter the total number of hours worked in a workweek. Examples of Flextime arrangements include the following:

- Fixed starting and departure times that are different from normal business hours of the department. Agreed-upon starting and departure times continue for a specified period with the same number of hours worked each day.
- Pre-approved starting and departure times that may vary daily. With such a personalized work schedule, an employee may arrive at work and leave at a different time each day, provided the number of hours worked each day remains the same.
- Variations in the length of the workday (e.g., a seven-hour day followed by a ten-hour day). This type of schedule may result in a “compressed workweek” where the total number of standard weekly hours is completed in fewer than five workdays.

All flextime arrangements must meet the operational needs of the department and University and must conform to the overtime, record keeping, and meal break provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

#### **Flexplace**

The term Flexplace refers to extraordinary situations when arrangements are made to

allow an employee to work at home or another off-site location, for a specified number of hours per week, and/or for a pre-determined duration. A separate work area must be designated in the off-site setting for the Flexplace arrangement. This area must be conducive to working productively.

## **PROCEDURES FOR ESTABLISHING A FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT:**

### Requests for Flexible Work Arrangements

- Any employee seeking a Flexible Work Arrangement must make a written request to his or her supervisor using the Flexible Work Arrangement Proposal and Approval Form.
- The written request will include:
  - The type of Flexible Work Arrangement being requested;
  - The reasons for the request;
  - The employee's plan for meeting the responsibilities of his or her position;
  - Work schedule (hours, days, commitment) requested; and
  - The proposed start and end date of the Flexible Work Arrangement.

### Considerations for Evaluating Flexible Work Arrangements

- Every proposal for a Flexible Work Arrangement will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. That evaluation will include a discussion between the supervisor and the employee seeking the Flexible Work Arrangement regarding the reasons for the request and the needs of the department in which the employee works. The evaluation will take into account the following factors:
  - Operational needs of the specific department and the University along with the impact of the request on students, faculty, parents, and staff;
  - Ability for a department to maintain appropriate staffing levels during Core Hours and Peak Periods;
  - Impact on other staff members both within the department and those who may work regularly with the department; and
  - Past performance levels of the employee.
- In addition to the factors outlined above, the following factors will be considered with respect to a proposed Flexplace arrangement:
  - Whether the position has clearly defined work that can be accomplished off-site;
  - If there are position requirements that cannot be met from an off-site location;

- Whether the employee's results/productivity can be measured effectively through offsite supervision;
- Whether the department can continue to meet its standards for service and staff availability;
- Whether the employee proposing the Flexplace arrangement has a demonstrated record of excellent time-management skills and satisfactory, independent work performance;
- Whether there are effective methods for communicating between the employee and supervisor;
- The frequency and schedule for the employee being on-site to meet with the supervisor, co-workers, and customers;
- How the proposed Flexplace arrangement may affect cross-training initiatives, team-based approaches, and other similar strategies; and
- Expectations for availability during the work day.

#### Approval of Flexible Work Arrangements

- Upon receipt of a Flexible Work Arrangement proposal, the supervisor receiving the request will discuss the request with the employee. While each department and division is structured differently, the supervisor must discuss the request with the relevant department or division leader prior to consulting with an HR Business Partner.
- The appropriate President's Cabinet member must approve any Flexible Work Arrangement in his or her respective division, in consultation with the employee's supervisor and/or department head.
- If approved, the employee will receive a copy of the Flexible Work Arrangement Approval Form specifying the terms and conditions for the Flexible Work Arrangement.
- If a request for a Flexible Work Arrangement is not approved, the supervisor will inform the employee of the reasons for such decision.

#### Piloting Flexible Work Arrangements

- If a request for a Flexible Work Arrangement is approved, the approval will be for a designated pilot period only. The pilot period will be specified in the written approval of the Flexible Work Arrangement. The pilot period will normally be at least 30 days.
- At the end of the pilot period, the Supervisor will re-evaluate the arrangement considering the factors set forth in this policy as well as the performance and productivity of the employee during the pilot period and the impact that the arrangement had on the department and other employees.
- Based on the results of that re-evaluation, and with approval of the appropriate

cabinet member, the Flexible Work Arrangement may be renewed annually for a designated period of time, modified, or terminated.

### Modifying or Terminating Flexible Work Arrangements

- Once approved, the employee may not modify the Flexible Work Arrangement without the written consent of his or her supervisor.
- A supervisor may modify an approved Flexible Work Arrangement if the supervisor or relevant vice president or academic dean determines that such modification will better meet the current needs of the department and/or the University. Any modification will be specified in writing.
- A supervisor, after consulting with the department head and the HR business partner, may terminate a Flexible Work Arrangement if the supervisor determines that the arrangement is no longer consistent with the department's obligations or if the performance of the employee is not meeting performance expectations.
- If a Flexible Work Arrangement is terminated, the supervisors shall make every effort to provide the employee with at least 30 days prior written notice.
- If the Flexible Work Arrangement is terminated for poor performance the arrangement may be terminated immediately.

### Benefits and Applicable Employment Laws

- An employee working under a Flexible Work Arrangement will, for the most part, be entitled to the same University benefits as a similarly situated University employees working on campus. Leave time must be submitted based on the hours that the employee is scheduled to work on the day(s) they are sick or taking vacation.
- In addition, all Flexible Work Arrangements are subject to applicable employment laws, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, Virginia state employment law, and the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act.
- The University of Richmond has insurance coverage to protect its property. This insurance will not cover any personal property that is used at home, and will only cover university equipment brought to a defined Flexplace work site if it has been listed with the Office of Safety and Risk Management or Information Services.