



Flexible Work Options Pilot

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1 Why is it called a pilot?

We are conducting a pilot to find out what works best for Seattle University, work units and staff colleagues. Learning from the pilot will inform a formal program.

Q2 How much notice will be we be given to return to campus?

Staff colleagues were notified on July 22nd, 2021, that a flexible work pilot program was approved. Details about the program were be released on July 28th, 2021. The pilot website with process, tools and resources is now available. Work units are asked to begin transitioning back to campus throughout August and September in advance of the fall academic term to enable Seattle University to achieve full readiness for campus activities. Timing may change based on the work unit's role in service to our students.

Work units are defined College, Schools, and Divisions.

Q4. Can I change my mind? Is there a trial period?

Supervisors and staff colleagues will meet regularly to discuss how the arrangement is working throughout the pilot. Staff colleagues are encouraged to meet with supervisors if any modifications are needed. Supervisors may also approach staff if service level modifications are needed.

The workplace flexibility taskforce will collect feedback about the program at the end of the fall quarter and a formal evaluation will be conducted at end of the pilot (end of winter quarter).

Q5. How will I be included in campus or department events?

Everyone should play a part in staying connected and creating a vibrant campus life. Campus-wide events should enable both in-person and virtual attendance. Supervisors should encourage staff colleagues to be on campus for key events. Staff colleagues should watch recorded videos when available if they are off campus on the day of the event.

Q6. Are supervisors and leaders participating in the pilot?

Yes, supervisors, work unit leaders, and even Cabinet leaders may participate in the pilot. As with everyone else, supervisors will spend time with their next level supervisor to discuss their interests in a flexible work option, plans will be formally approved by the Senior Cabinet Leader.



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Q7. If officially approved to work off campus will SU pay for my office set up, supplies, equipment?

No. ITS will provide one laptop or desktop computer for each staff in a role that requires one, along with one webcam and headset. Staff members are responsible for all other remote work office needs (internet, printing, home furniture, etc.). Each division, school, or college will decide how best to distribute their other physical office equipment (e.g., additional monitors).

Q8. What about breaks and lunch?

Non-exempt employees will continue to follow federal meal and rest breaks that are required the same as they are when working onsite.

Q9. Will SU offer flexible parking options?

Seattle University offers competitive daily parking rates, monthly passes, and carpool options for staff colleagues. Please review these options in the [permit store](#).

Q10. Does flex work impact benefits, vacation accrual, holidays, sick time, etc.?

If there is no change in work hours, there should be no change in a staff colleague's benefits, vacation accrual, holidays, sick time. However, if a staff colleague is approved to work less than 37.5 hours per week, pay, benefits, vacation accrual will be prorated. Working a condensed schedule such as 37.5 hours in a 4 day work week may have an impact on vacation, holiday and leave calculations and HR should be consulted to understand the full impact.

Q11. What if my supervisor does not approve of my flex work arrangement?

If your supervisor does not approve of the flex work arrangement you propose, seek clarity on why and discuss other viable options. If your request is still denied and it is not clear why or what criteria was used to decline your request, you could seek out your work unit leader (Dean or Division Leader) or Human Resources to gain greater clarity. It is important to keep in mind that not all flex work requests will be approved based on your role in service to our campus community.

Q12. Can part-time employees participate in the flex work pilot?

Part-time employees can participate in some flex work options such as working at home for a day or having stop and start and stop times outside core 8am – 4:30 pm working hours and would engage in the same dialogue with their supervisor regarding work unit operations.

Q13. Can temporary employees and student workers participate in the flex work pilot?

The pilot program is primarily for regular employees who have an ongoing relationship with Seattle University. However, supervisors may use their discretion when establishing the temporary or student worker assignment. Q14. Will I lose my workspace if I have an approved flex work option?



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During the pilot period office space will be prioritized for those who work 3 or more days on campus.

It is possible that full-time dedicated spaces may not always be available for those staff who are in roles approved to work 3+ days remotely. Campus leaders will need to address this when establishing their staffing plans for the fall.

Q15. Can I work fully remote and never come on campus?

A small number of roles may work fully remote due to the nature of the work and needs of the work unit. The supervisor, work unit leader and the Cabinet leader will determine which roles are suitable for fully remote work during the pilot period. A role approved to work remotely full-time may still be expected to be on campus for key events or meetings.

Q16. Can I work out-of-state?

Seattle University is currently developing a policy related to out-of-state workers. A working group has been formed to review the current status and make a policy recommendation to the Cabinet. This may result in changes for some colleagues working out-of-state currently.

Until such time, supervisors may **not** hire any additional staff who are currently out-of-state and do not have plans to move to the Puget Sound region as there are employment, financial and legal implications to consider.

Q17. What is the best way to notify others that you are working off campus on a particular day?

Firstly, we want to recognize that working remotely is still working, and staff colleagues can be contacted via email, phone, zoom or MS Team. However, it may be helpful to add a message to your email signature, post a sign in your work area stating who is on campus which days or updating the contact list on the website asking folks to make an appointment.

Q18. Are there any norms or courtesies that should be considered when some colleagues are off campus on a particular day and others are working on campus?

As we work through the pilot, we will establish norms of behaviors and courtesies. For instance, it is probably not okay to ask essential workers who must be on campus to perform activities of a work group that is not working on campus.

Q19. Is there a best practice for connecting with staff colleagues to handoff information that is important for all to be aware of?

There are likely many best practices. The Taskforce will be scheduling supervisor Talk Circles in the fall to share learnings. Here are a few options that might be helpful. Consider scheduling a daily huddle at set time each workday. Use the huddle as a time as a check-in on the group, rebalance workload and to share key information. Some work groups that work very collaboratively might leverage the chat feature in MS Teams. They open a chat window at the beginning of the day and leave it open in the background each day to exchange useful



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information. Others who work on a particular project might create a group in MS Team and post important information to the channel.

Q20. Is there a rule about giving notice on days when everyone needs to be on campus?

There is no rule, however, out of courtesy, we recommend that supervisors provide staff as much notice as possible. However, there may be times when notice cannot be given, such as a colleague calling in a student-facing role calling in sick.

Q21. What guidance has been provided about mapping work areas for social distancing?

If supervisors have questions about social distancing requirements in their areas, they can email Lara Branigan, Director of Design + Construction in the Facilities Department.

Q22. What should I do if my staff colleague is concerned about returning to campus due to the evolving Delta variant?

The first thing the supervisor should do is determine if the work group can support the staff colleague's flexwork request. If yes, you can consider it without necessarily needing a medical accommodation as a reason since it is part of how we are working now. On the other hand, if the supervisor needs to reject the request and the person responded by saying that we need to accommodate them due to a medical condition, then you should work with Human Resources. HR will document the request and work with the supervisor to determine if it requires reasonable accommodation.