

Title: Framework for Staff Hybrid Remote and Fully Remote Work Program

Approved by: Office of the President

Date approved by President: November 10, 2021

Effective date: September 1, 2022

Responsible Official: Vice President of Human Resources

Responsible University Office: Office of Human Resources

Revision History: January 10, 2022

Review Period: 5 Years

Date of Last Review: August 2022

Relates to: Senior staff and staff

Excludes: Executive staff, faculty, and post-doctoral scholars and fellows

1. Purpose of the Framework

Case Western Reserve University is a vibrant residential research university, and intense collaboration and in-person interactions between faculty, staff and students is crucial to the University's [mission](#), including its academic and research excellence. This framework recognizes that remote work opportunities can support that mission while also enhancing staff recruitment and retention and improving staff morale and work/life balance. While the expectation is that most staff will be on campus for the majority of their workweek, this framework provides the opportunity for individual departments to further the University's mission while providing flexibility to their staff. The framework endeavors to have Hybrid or Fully Remote Work opportunities implemented in a manner that enhances the University's overall research and academic excellence, its diversity, equity and inclusion and its community engagement.

2. Scope of the Framework

This framework applies to all administrative and research staff members based in UGEN or an individual School or College, who will work a Hybrid or Fully Remote schedule. Staff members who had existing telecommuting or remote work arrangements prior to the COVID-19 pandemic are also subject to this framework and must submit for approval on a going forward basis. In addition, this framework applies to the hiring of any new staff members, including pre-approvals when posting new positions.

3. Definitions

Hybrid Remote Work is defined as a combination of working from both an on-campus (including satellite campus locations or facilities) and off-campus worksite (typically the employee's residence). This may include working at the off-campus location up to two

days a week on a weekly basis throughout the year, seasonally during certain times of the year and not during other times of the year, or other flexible options that do not involve working remotely from an off-campus location on a full-time basis.

Fully Remote Work is defined as working at an off-campus location generally on a full-time basis (i.e., every day of an individual's work week). This includes individuals who are approved for in-state and out-of-state remote work arrangements. Staff who generally work full-time at an off-campus location but make occasional trips to campus for work-related meetings or functions are still considered to be engaged in Fully Remote Work. Staff who are regularly based at an on-campus worksite but frequently engage in business-related travel to varying locations (e.g., recruiting trips, development trips) are not considered to be engaged in Fully Remote Work.

On-campus, includes a physical location at a Case Western Reserve University location or facility, including satellite campus locations or facilities located outside of Cleveland, Ohio.

4. **Eligibility**

Exempt and non-exempt staff members must meet the following job performance criteria to be eligible for a Hybrid or Fully Remote work arrangement: (1) successful completion of an orientation period; (2) no positive corrective action (PCA) in the 12 months preceding the request for Hybrid or Fully Remote work; and (3) an overall rating of at least "successful" on their most recent performance evaluation review.

If a staff member receives positive corrective action or an overall rating below "successful," after they are approved for a Hybrid or Fully Remote work arrangement, such approval will be withdrawn for twelve (12) months following the PCA or below successful evaluation. Supervisors are expected to notify the Hybrid Work Committee at hybrid@case.edu of such occurrences. Following the twelve (12) month period, approval will only be reinstated after the supervisor (1) advises the Hybrid Work Committee that the performance issue has been resolved and recommends a hybrid or remote arrangement resume, and (2) receives approval for the employee to resume a hybrid or remote work schedule. Performance issues involving staff members with approved out-of-state Hybrid or Fully Remote Work arrangements will be managed separately on a case-by-case basis.

5. **Parameters for Hybrid Remote Work Schedules**

- a. **Standard Number of Hybrid Off Campus Days Permitted for an Individual Staff Member**: An eligible staff member may have up to two (2) days per week of off-campus work days in half-day increments (*i.e.*, one half-day; one day; one day and one half-day; or two days). Only exempt employees may split work days between on-campus and off-campus work locations as part of their Hybrid Work (*e.g.*, a half-day on campus and the other half-day off-campus).
- b. **Exceptions**: Given the importance of collaboration, community engagement and the residential university experience to fulfilling the University's mission, Fully Remote Work should be an uncommon exception to the 2-day remote work allowance rather than the standard. Requests seeking Fully Remote Work for individual staff members or designated positions will need to articulate the exceptional and unique circumstances that allow a department or unit to have staff engaged in Fully Remote Work without compromising the University's overall research and academic excellence, its diversity, equity and inclusion and its community engagement. Such requests will be subject to heightened review during the approval process. Please see Section 9 regarding Fully Remote Work Outside of Ohio for additional information regarding exceptional and unique circumstances.

In evaluating whether to propose Hybrid Work Arrangement and the number of off-campus work days to be proposed for an individual position or staff member, the supervisor should evaluate the staff member's different weekly tasks in terms of:

- i. whether the staff member's physical presence on campus is required to perform any of those tasks;
- ii. whether the staff member needs equipment, information and/or materials that are only accessible while on campus to perform any of those tasks;
- iii. whether any of those tasks typically require face-to-face interaction with other faculty, staff, or students;
- iv. whether any of those tasks involve work that can be accomplished independently with limited direct supervision; and/or

Hybrid or Fully Remote Work is not intended to be used in place of sick leave, FMLA leave, or other types of leave. Staff seeking leave under those policies should follow the University's applicable process for such a leave. Individuals seeking to work from home

due to medical conditions must reach out to the Office of Equity rather than through this Department Hybrid - Remote Work Proposal Process.

c. **Alternative to Hybrid Remote Work: Compressed Work Week:** This alternative option may be generally based on the supervisor's determination that the use of remote days is not appropriate for the department staff given the nature of their individual tasks or overall department operations. As an alternative to Hybrid or Fully Remote Work, a department supervisor may request an adjusted schedule for the department's exempt and/or non-exempt staff members. This adjusted schedule constitutes a compressed work week of four (4) ten-hour days. The supervisor's proposed on-campus schedule should be guided by the same factors listed below; *e.g.*, ensuring in-person department services are available throughout the work week and enhancement of the University's mission. Supervisors seeking approval for Compressed Work Week schedules for their staff should use the same Department Hybrid - Remote Work Proposal form and approval process. *See* Section 6(a).

d. **Daily and Weekly Scheduling of Department's Staff Member Remote Days:** When proposing Hybrid Work or Fully Remote Work for its staff, a department is expected to structure it so that the department's in-person services are available throughout the work week. Departments proposing Hybrid Work or Fully Remote Work arrangements should also structure their scheduling and staffing to maximize the vibrancy of the in-person campus community on any given day of the week. The overall department schedule should be structured to allow for continuity of training, collaboration, and mentorship among the relevant staff members. Unless the Proposal expressly provides otherwise, Hybrid and Fully Remote Work arrangements do not modify the days of the week or the hours of the day that a staff member works. In addition, non-exempt staff may not work more than their regularly scheduled hours or outside their scheduled hours without the supervisor's written prior approval.

Seasonal Proposals should be submitted ahead of time, not once the season commences, even if the dates do not begin until a specific season.

e. **Implementing Hybrid and Fully Remote Work to Enhance the University's Mission & Staff:** When designing and implementing Hybrid or Fully Remote Work arrangements within a department or unit, supervisors should look for opportunities to help enhance the University's overall academic and/or research excellence, competitive advantage, diversity, equity, inclusion, and/or community engagement. Those enhancements may include the efficiency by which the tasks

are performed by a staff member, the hours when those tasks are performed to expand the scope of customer service, the sequencing of tasks that help optimize department operations, and/or the facility and space needs of the department.

6. Request and Approval Procedures

a. Department Request for Hybrid Remote Work and Revisions

To request a Hybrid Remote Work Arrangement for a department or unit, a supervisor must complete a Hybrid- Remote Work proposal for their department or unit on the Department Hybrid - Remote Work Proposal Form and Staff Work Schedule Spreadsheet Attachment; individual staff members should not directly submit their own individual requests. The supervisor's proposal should address all department staff members on the spreadsheet, both the participating and non-participating staff members. The supervisor should submit the Department Hybrid - Remote Work Proposal form to the applicable Vice President or Dean (or their designee) for their approval. The Vice President or Dean (or their designee) will then submit the form to the Hybrid Committee at Hybrid@case.edu for final review and approval in accordance with this framework. If the proposal is denied in-whole or in-part, the Hybrid Committee and/or the VP or Dean (or their designee) will contact the supervisor to discuss the reasons for the denial and whether any modifications can be made to the proposal to allow for its approval.

Once a department's initial Hybrid Remote Work Proposal is approved, the department should not submit a new form for re-approval based on minor adjustments of the existing structure. Minor adjustments include changes in the off-campus days (*e.g.*, Mondays and Wednesdays to Tuesdays and Thursdays), or the hiring of a new employee into a position previously approved for hybrid or remote work. Revisions to previously approved department work arrangements that require a revised department proposal include new hires in positions not previously approved for hybrid and major changes to department hybrid work arrangement structure, such as, a hybrid arrangement to a compressed work week.

Supervisors must ensure that work arrangements allow for an adequate number of staff to be present on-campus throughout the week.

b. Request for Hybrid Remote Exception for Individual Staff Persons

To request an exception to the standard parameters for Hybrid Remote Work for a staff member within a department, a supervisor must complete a Hybrid- Remote Exception Staff Proposal Form on behalf of the staff person seeking the request. The supervisor

must submit the Hybrid Remote Exception Staff Proposal Form to the applicable Vice President or Dean (or their designee) for their approval. The Vice President or Dean (or their designee) will then submit the form to the Hybrid Committee at Hybrid@case.edu for final review and approval in accordance with this framework. If the proposal is denied in-whole or in-part, the Hybrid Committee and/or the VP or Dean (or their designee) will contact the supervisor to discuss the reasons for the denial and whether any modifications can be made to the proposal to allow for its approval.

If supervisors are submitting an initial department request for Hybrid Work or a revised request that includes an exception, then the exception request should be submitted in addition to the department request.

c. Job Postings

When advertising job postings, it is the department's responsibility to specify in the job description whether the position qualifies for some form of remote work based on what has been approved under this Framework. Changes in the number of days remote or expansion of Hybrid or Fully Remote work to a person/position not previously approved must be resubmitted to Human Resources for approval.

d. Eligible New Hires in Positions Previously Approved for a Hybrid Work Arrangement

In cases where a new employee has successfully completed orientation in a position previously approved for Hybrid or Fully Remote Work, the supervisor should email the staff member's name, employee ID, and days remote, along with the prior staff member who was approved, to Hybrid@case.edu. The supervisor or supervisor's department is responsible for maintaining the Staff Member Hybrid - Remote Work Checklist Certification Form. Please do not submit Staff Member Hybrid - Remote Work Checklist Certification Forms to the Hybrid Committee or HR.

e. Enforcement

If the Hybrid-Remote Work Proposal is approved, the supervisor shall be responsible for ensuring that the Proposal is implemented in accordance with applicable CWRU policies, including but not limited to non-exempt time recording and overtime policies, recording and approval of vacation and sick time, the University's [Acceptable Use of Information Technology Policy \(AUP\)](#), and policies or processes for maintaining or use of confidential files and information.

7. Periodic Review of Approved Hybrid and/or Fully Remote Work Arrangements

a. Individual Review

A supervisor should review any approved Hybrid or Fully Remote Work arrangements with individual staff after the first ninety days to ensure the arrangement works as envisioned. Thereafter, the supervisor should review the approved Hybrid or Fully Remote Work arrangement at least annually to confirm that the arrangement continues to support the University's mission. For each staff member engaged in Hybrid Work or Fully Remote Work, supervisors must indicate on the Salary Addendum Form submitted with the staff member's Annual Performance Evaluation Review whether the Hybrid or Fully Remote Work arrangement should continue. The supervisors and/or the applicable Vice President or Dean (or their designee) have the discretion to amend or revoke an approved Hybrid or Fully Remote Work arrangement at any time upon 30 days' notice based upon operational needs and/or other policy considerations. Any revocation or amendment by the supervisor will need approval by the applicable Vice President or Dean (or their designee) and notification to the Hybrid Committee at Hybrid@case.edu.

In addition, as needed to meet operational needs, the supervisor may temporarily adjust a Hybrid or Fully Remote Work schedule for any given day or longer time period. The supervisor should give notice of the need for unanticipated on-campus presence or temporary suspensions of Hybrid or Fully Remote Work arrangements as soon as reasonably practicable, but no minimum notice period is required.

b. Operational Review Based on Metrics

Every department or unit that is approved to have any Hybrid or Fully Remote staff members will be expected to identify and measure an objective productivity metric for its operations. Objective metrics on productivity should reflect the impact of remote work on a department's operations, with the expectation that productivity should improve and not decline. Such objective metrics could include, for example: measurement of the number of client appointments completed with the implementation of remote work compared to client appointments completed without remote work; number of requests/inquiries processed to completion with remote work compared to without remote work (i.e., payment requests, approval requests, admission inquiries, room change requests); turnaround or completion time on recurring tasks or projects with remote work and without remote work.

This objective metric data and analysis shall be provided by the departments on an annual basis for review, evaluation and reporting purposes, but the Committee may make

periodic inquiries On-going approval for departments to allow Hybrid or Fully Remote will be contingent on department cooperation with this operational review.

Participating departments may also provide subjective metric information based on client surveys.

In addition, annual reviews for staff participating in Hybrid or Fully Remote work will include a component for evaluating the staff member's remote work performance.

8. Fully Remote Work Outside Ohio

Any approved Hybrid or Fully Remote Work generally should be performed by the staff member in the State of Ohio.

In exceptional circumstances, the University will consider approving out-of-state remote work arrangements in circumstances where it is necessary to:

- (1) retain an existing staff member with a strong performance record who has a highly specialized and/or unique skill set that cannot be reasonably replaced; or
- (2) fill a position requiring highly specialized and/or unique expertise that is critical either to the University's core academic and research mission or a significant strategic initiative where the existence of qualified candidates with the requisite expertise is scarce and recruitment to work on campus is unlikely to be successful.

In situations falling within the second circumstance, a determination of whether the position will be eligible for remote work outside Ohio shall be made before the position is posted. In any Fully Remote Work arrangement outside Ohio, the work must be capable of being performed remotely. Areas within the University where such circumstances are most likely to arise include research, UTech, and marketing / communications. Consideration of exception requests for out-of-state remote work is limited to exempt staff positions only.

Prior to any employee engaging in a remote work arrangement outside Ohio, the department must request and obtain approval for the out-of-state work arrangement. The fact that an employee has already relocated out-of-state or a supervisor has offered a remote work arrangement to someone located out-of-state before obtaining approval under this Framework will not be considered a reason warranting approval of a request.

To obtain approval for out-of-state remote work arrangements, in addition to submitting the Department Hybrid - Remote Work Proposal form, the supervisor and requesting department need to have designated outside counsel qualified for the relevant jurisdiction conduct a compliance review with them to identify the applicable legal, tax, registration, reporting, and other regulatory requirements for the jurisdiction where the staff member will be performing that remote work. Jurisdictional requirements outside of Ohio should include consideration of applicable requirements at the state, county and/or city level. Representatives from Human Resources and/or Office of General Counsel will assist requesting departments with identifying the designated outside counsel and outlining the scope and content for the compliance review.

If, based on the compliance review, the department determines it is feasible and consistent with the University's needs and interests to manage the remote work arrangement in a compliant manner, they are expected to prepare: (1) a compliance plan to meet those out-of-state requirements; (2) a Remote Work Agreement; and (3) a Remote Location Addendum for the staff member. The department is responsible for the attorneys' fees associated with the compliance review/plan, as well as costs for filing fees, registration fees, remote work expenses, paid leave or other benefits that go beyond existing University leave allowances, or other costs necessary to maintain the remote work arrangement.

The proposed compliance plan, Remote Work Agreement and Remote Work Location Addendum should be forwarded to hybrid@case.edu for University review and approval, which includes a review by the Office of General Counsel, Human Resources, and Payroll. Not all positions and/or out-of-state locations can or will be accommodated and approved.

Supervisors and their departments are responsible for managing the remote work arrangement in compliance with the local jurisdictional requirements. Such responsibility includes, for example, arranging for and verifying that all mandatory training for the state in question is completed; ensuring that Payroll, Human Resources and the Office for Equity are aware of the staff member's location when asked to assist with matters related to that employee; and providing any leave or other benefits required.

If the University determines that the out-of-state remote work arrangement cannot be or is not being managed consistent with the jurisdictional requirements, the out-of-state arrangement approval may be withdrawn. Any personnel issues or other determinations that terminate the approval for the out-of-state remote work arrangement will result in termination of employment with the University if the staff member is not willing and able to work at the physical location of the employing CWRU department.

The department will be responsible for updating its compliance plan annually, by July 1, which are to be submitted to hybrid@case.edu. Annual updates should be done in consultation with and include review by qualified legal counsel. Costs for legal fees for the annual updates are the responsibility of the department.

Requests for remote work arrangements in foreign jurisdictions (i.e., outside the United States) are generally not permitted. Any personnel or department with questions or needs regarding employment or remote work in foreign jurisdictions should contact the Office of General Counsel.

9. Safety and Health

Staff engaged in Hybrid or Fully Remote Work must maintain a safe and secure off-campus workspace free from hazards. Unless the University is informed otherwise, a staff member's off-campus workspace is understood to have a work surface (desk or table), seat, computer and accessories, telephone, and, if applicable, a designated location for storing hard copy records.

Staff must report any work-related injuries that occur during remote work to their supervisor and the [Office of Risk Management](#) within 24 hours.

10. Expenses

Staff approved for Hybrid or Fully Remote Work will not be reimbursed for home office equipment (*e.g.*, personal computers and furniture) or services (*e.g.*, internet and phone service), unless otherwise required by law. This does not preclude the department from providing and/or allowing staff to use department laptops at the staff member's home. The University is not responsible for the operating costs, maintenance, property or liability insurance, or other expenses for a staff member's home or other off-campus work location. University insurance does not cover staff members' personal property used for remote work. Commuting costs to a staff member's on-campus or remote work locations are not paid by the University. Grant or contract funds may not be used to purchase remote work equipment or reimburse remote work expenses unless such purchases or expenses are explicitly budgeted and approved in the award agreement.

11. Workspace, Technology/Equipment, and Data Security

A department requesting a Hybrid and/or Fully Remote Work arrangement must ensure that the applicable physical space, technology, confidentiality, and data security

requirements are met. The supervisor is expected to be familiar with data privacy and security requirements applicable to remote work and to share them with staff who engage in any remote work. The supervisor is encouraged to consult with and must confirm any security requirements with [UTech](#) and the [Compliance Office](#) to ensure the off-campus work site and/or networks meet evolving security requirements.

12. University Property

All equipment the University provides to a staff member, whether used on campus or in connection with a Hybrid or Fully Remote Work arrangement, remains the property of the University and must be returned upon separation from employment or at any other time upon request from the University. This requirement applies regardless of whether the equipment was purchased with University operational or grant funds.

Employees leaving the University who are working a Hybrid Work schedule must be on campus for their last day at work to return all university property.

13. Nature of Employment

Neither this framework nor the approval of any type of Hybrid or Fully Remote Work arrangement alters the at-will nature of employment for any staff member. In addition, except as required otherwise by law, the staff member's job description and terms and conditions of employment shall remain the same. As a result, the staff member's compensation and benefits generally will not change as a result of a Hybrid or Remote work arrangement. In addition, campus parking expenses generally will not change for the staff member except as expressly modified by the University.

14. Comp (Flex) Days

Employees who work in positions that are not eligible for Hybrid or Remote hybrid arrangements based on operational or business needs and would otherwise be eligible will be provided three (3) Comp (Flex) Days per fiscal year. The Comp (Flex) Days can be used at the employee's discretion, but they require pre-approval from the supervisor. Comp (Flex) Days may be used in half or full day increments. Employees will not receive compensation for unused flexible days and days must be used within the applicable fiscal year. Tracking the use of Comp (Flex) Days is the responsibility of the supervisor and employee.

If a staff member who is not eligible for Hybrid or Remote Hybrid arrangements receives positive corrective action or an overall rating below "successful," they may not use any

Comp (Flex) Days for three (3) months thereafter. After three (3) months, if the supervisor determines that the performance issue has been resolved, the supervisor may approve Comp (Flex) Days at their discretion, on a pro-rata basis.

15. Time Recording When Remote

Employees working Hybrid Work arrangements are required to use the appropriate time code in their HCM timesheet to reflect hours worked at their on-campus location and hours worked at their remote location. This means that Hybrid Work employees are required to enter remote work time in [HCM](#) as set forth in the UTech resources [Employee Salary Time Sheet for Hybrid Work Program](#) and [Employee Hourly Time Sheet for Hybrid Work Program](#).

Supervisors are responsible to ensure that staff use the correct TRC code when employees work remotely. Internal audits will be conducted periodically to assess whether supervisors are retaining proper documentation and remote work hours are being entered and approved correctly.