



## VOLUNTARY REDUCTION IN WORK PROGRAM

As the University continues to review the current circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the Division of Human Resources is implementing a temporary voluntary work reduction and temporary voluntary unpaid leave program (the “Program”) to provide further flexibility to certain employees for personal needs (such as childcare) from June 1, 2020 through August 21, 2020 (the “Program Period”).

The Program allows employees to submit a request to either (1) voluntarily work only 3 or 4 days each week during the Program Period with a corresponding reduction in pay or (2) take a temporary voluntary unpaid leave during the Program Period. This temporary arrangement must be effective for the entire duration of the Program Period.

### **Program Guidelines**

- All full-time employees, excluding union members and Campus Police employees, may request a temporary voluntary work reduction with a corresponding reduction in pay or a temporary voluntary unpaid leave.
- Once a request for a temporary voluntary work reduction or a temporary voluntary unpaid leave has been submitted, the request will be reviewed by the employee’s supervisor, department head, dean (where applicable) and divisional vice president.
  - Supervisors and department heads will consider business needs, the nature of job responsibilities and the staffing situation in the unit or department in determining whether to grant an employee’s request.
  - The Division of Human Resources reserves the right to deny or modify an employee’s request in order to maintain compliance with applicable law.
- Once an employee’s request for a temporary work reduction has been granted, the employee and the employee’s supervisor will collaborate on a new temporary weekly schedule. The employee may only take time off in units of one day and the new temporary schedule must be the same for each week of the Program Period.
- Employees participating in the Program must sign a temporary voluntary work reduction form or a temporary voluntary unpaid leave form.

- Once an employee's new temporary arrangement is in effect, supervisors and employees ***MUST*** adhere to the employee's new work arrangement. Employees with a reduced schedule ***MUST NOT*** be asked to, and ***MUST NOT***, work during their agreed-upon time off. Employees on a temporary unpaid leave ***MUST NOT*** be asked to, and ***MUST NOT***, work during their leave.
- Once the Program Period ends, the employee will return to their normal work schedule.

### Compensation

- Temporary Voluntary Unpaid Leave: Employees who request and are granted a temporary unpaid leave will not be paid during the Program Period.
- Temporary Voluntary Work Reduction for Exempt (Salaried) Employees: The employee's gross pay will be temporarily reduced by the percentage equivalent to the reduction in work. The employee's regular annual salary rate remains unchanged.
- Temporary Voluntary Work Reduction for Non-Exempt (Hourly) Employees: The number of scheduled hours will be reduced temporarily to 21 or 28 hours per week and employees will be paid for the hours worked. There is no effect on the base hourly rate.

### Benefits

- Retirement Contributions: Matching contributions to retirement plans are made based on actual payroll earnings. Accordingly, such contributions will be reduced in proportion to actual reduced earnings.
- Health Benefits: Employees in the Program who are participating in Stevens' group health plans will remain eligible during the Program Period and annual payroll deductions for benefit-related costs will remain the same.
- Vacation Leave: Participation in the Program will result in prorated accrual of vacation leave.



## Stevens

# Voluntary Reduction In Work Program (VRIWP)

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### **What is the Stevens Voluntary Reduction in Work Program (VRIWP)?**

The Stevens Voluntary Reduction in Work Program (VRIWP) allows eligible employees to volunteer for a temporary work reduction or temporary voluntary unpaid leave program to provide for further flexibility for personal needs (such as childcare).

The VRIWP allows employees to submit a request to either (1) voluntarily work only 3 or 4 days each week during the program period with a corresponding reduction in pay or (2) take a temporary voluntary unpaid leave during the program period. This temporary arrangement must be effective for the entire duration of the program period, which is June 1, 2020 through August 21, 2020.

### **Who is eligible to participate in the VRIWP?**

All full-time administrative staff, excluding union members and Campus Police employees, may request a temporary voluntary work reduction with a corresponding reduction in pay or a temporary voluntary unpaid leave. Your eligibility will depend on your job function and whether your work is necessary for continued operations, as determined by your manager and divisional Vice President.

### **How do I apply to participate for the VRIWP?**

Eligible administrative staff who would like to participate in the VRIWP must submit a [request](#) for a temporary voluntary work reduction or a temporary voluntary unpaid leave to their supervisor. This request will be reviewed by the employee's supervisor, department head, dean (where applicable) and divisional vice president.

If approved for the program, you will collaborate with your supervisor on a new temporary weekly schedule. You may only take time off in units of one day and the new temporary schedule must be the same for each week of the program period.

After the schedule has been agreed upon, you will sign a temporary voluntary work reduction form or a temporary voluntary unpaid leave form.

### **Do I need supervisory approval to participate in the program?**

Yes, your request must be reviewed and approved by your supervisor, department head, dean (where applicable) and divisional vice president to ensure that your services are not essential to Stevens' operations during the program period.

**What effect will participating in the VRIWP have on my health and welfare benefits such as medical, dental, vision and life insurance?**

You will maintain full-time status for health and welfare benefits, such as medical, prescription, dental, vision, healthcare FSA, dependent care FSA, commuter, and life insurance. You will continue to be responsible for the employee premiums related to these benefits.

For staff taking a temporary voluntary work reduction, employee premiums will continue to be deducted from your paychecks.

For staff taking a temporary voluntary unpaid leave, you will be responsible for the employee premiums. You can either submit payment directly to the Division of Human Resources at [mouckama@stevens.edu](mailto:mouckama@stevens.edu) or, when you return from the temporary voluntary unpaid leave, the total unpaid employee premium amount will be deducted from your first paycheck.

**What effect will participating in the VRIWP have on my retirement benefits?**

Your employee contributions will be based on your earnings per pay period. Please keep this in mind if you have elected a flat dollar amount for your employee contribution. Employer matching contributions to retirement plans are made based on actual payroll earnings. Accordingly, such contributions will be reduced in proportion to actual reduced earnings.

If you elect a temporary voluntary unpaid leave, you will not be able to contribute to your retirement plan while you are in unpaid leave status. You will not receive the employer match for those pay periods for which you did not receive pay.

**What effect will participating in the VRIWP have on my vacation, sick and personal days?**

Participation in the Program will result in prorated accrual of vacation days and has no effect on sick or personal days.

**Will my position be protected if I participate in the VRIWP?**

Your work as a Stevens employee is valued, regardless of whether you participate in the VRIWP or not. However, all administrative staff are employees at will.

**Will my annual salary be changed?**

Your annual salary rate will remain the same during participation in the program but the amount paid to you during participation in the program will be reduced to reflect your reduction in work or leave.

**Who do I contact if I have any questions regarding the VRIWP?**

The VRIWP is being administered by the Division of Human Resources. Questions regarding the VRIWP should be directed to Warren Petty, Vice President for HR, at [wpetty@stevens.edu](mailto:wpetty@stevens.edu) or Maria Ouckama, Assistant Vice President for HR, at [mouckama@stevens.edu](mailto:mouckama@stevens.edu).