Flexible Work Arrangement Pilot Program

Stevens recognizes that its staff and prospective candidates value work-life balance through flexible work practices. These flexible work practices support a variety of goals related to efficiency, staff engagement and well-being, recruitment and retention, sustainability, service excellence, cost savings, space utilization and the overall enhancement of the employee and workplace experience. Accordingly, Stevens is implementing a Flexible Work Arrangement Program (“FWA”) for the 2021-2022 academic year, during which this Program will be evaluated.

The FWA has five key objectives:

- Increase the ability of the University to operate virtually at any time, respond quickly to unexpected future events and promote post-pandemic health and safety;
- Increase employee engagement and retention;
- Increase opportunities to attract top talent as the modern workforce prioritizes work-life balance;
- Enhance sustainable ways of working that reduce office footprint and expenses; and
- Maintain student centricity focus.

**The FWA will be a pilot program during the 2021-2022 Academic Year. University leadership will evaluate the success of the program at the end of the academic year and decide if the program (in its current or a modified state) will continue. Continuation of the FWA will be subject to the continuing approval of the President and Cabinet, which reserves the right to cease the program at any time, and may be modified at any time.**

1. **What are the work status designations?**

The FWA contains three work status designations: Remote, Flex and On Campus. These designations are assigned to positions, not individual employees. Whether an employee works remotely and how often is based on the job duties and responsibilities of the position and the University’s operational needs and expectations which are subject to change from time to time.
2. **How were the work status designations decided?**
Divisional Vice Presidents and Deans assigned work status designations taking into consideration the criteria for each position and what was necessary for the area, department and Division to meet its operational and constituents needs.

3. **Could I ask to change my work status designation or my flex schedule?**
Work status designations and flex schedules are driven by the needs of the position and to ensure Stevens’ many constituents, especially students, are receiving a high level of service.

If you need to request a change in your work status or flex schedule due to medical reasons, please contact the Division of Human Resources at benefits@stevens.edu. In reviewing your request, we must consider that Stevens has decided to return to full campus operations for the fall 2021 semester, unlike the previous academic year where most of the university operated virtually. As part of our return to normal University operations, faculty and staff will return to the classroom and their offices on campus. Stevens’s Division of Human Resources will work with faculty and staff to facilitate their return to campus in a manner that is as safe and supportive as possible.

4. **Could I request a flexible time schedule?**
We encourage supervisors to provide flexibility where possible to help staff manage their return-to-work commute during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please speak to your supervisor if you feel you might benefit from adjusting your work hours to start and end earlier or later. Please remember the expectation is you would still work the same number of scheduled hours for the day.

5. **I work remotely, how do I order home office equipment?**
Positions with a work status designation of remote can order up to $500 of home office equipment. This equipment must be ordered through the Kuali ordering system. Please contact the Division of Human Resources at benefits@stevens.edu for assistance.

6. **I work remotely a few days a week, how do I order home office equipment?**
Positions with a work status designation flex are not eligible for the $500 allowance for home office equipment. Employees should speak to their supervisor about using some of their office equipment, such as a monitor, keyboard, etc., at home.

7. **Can I order pens, printer ink, notepads for my home office?**
Employees in positions with a work status designation of flex or remote can order office supplies such as pens, pencils, highlighters, notepads, legal pads, printer ink, etc., for their home office through their department.
8. I am concerned about losing connections with my colleagues as we all have different flex schedules. How do I stay connected?
There are several ways to stay connected with colleagues and the university. Here are a few tips to consider:

- Be intentional about sharing your career goals/aspirations with your supervisor
- Block off time on your calendar to schedule social connections with your team members
- Make asking for and giving feedback a priority
- Over communicate with your team, and know how to manage your presence and accessibility

9. What happens if a meeting, training session or important event is scheduled when I am supposed to work remotely?
There will be events or meetings that cannot be scheduled around each individual’s flex schedule. Discuss changing your flex schedule for the week with your supervisor to accommodate the on campus event.

10. I struggle to disconnect when I work from home. How do I manage this better?
Struggling to disconnect when working from home is common. Learning and implementing strategies, such as better physical boundary setting, setting ‘end of workday’ rituals, and scheduling a lunchtime and intermediate short breaks can all support better work-life balance.

11. I would like to move to a state outside of NY, NJ, PA or CT. What are the next steps?
The FWA limits the remote work location to the following states: NJ, NY, PA, and CT. Employees considering a move to a state outside of the acceptable remote work locations listed above must contact the Division of Human Resources at benefits@stevens.edu.

12. What happens after the pilot year is over?
University leadership will evaluate the success of the program at the end of the academic year and decide if the program in its current or a modified state will continue. Continuation of the FWA will be subject to the approval of the President and Cabinet, which reserves the right to cease or modify the program at any time.

13. My child’s school has moved to distance learning, can I change my work status to remote?
If your child’s school switches to online learning because of a public health emergency such as a COVID-19 outbreak, and you are not able to work from home due to your position duties or the needs of your division, you can submit sick time. If you exhaust your sick time, please contact the Division of Human Resources at benefits@stevens.edu. If you are able to work from home and that is approved by your division leader, documentation from the school will be required.

Please visit the Stevens COVID-19 FAQs webpage for more frequently asked questions related to COVID-19.