

University Policy: Schedule and Work Modality Policy

Policy Category: Personnel

Subject: This policy applies to full time and regular part-time staff. This policy outlines the University's work schedule, hours of work, and work modalities for full and part-time staff positions.

Responsible Executive: Chief of Staff to the President

Responsible for Review of this Policy: Human Resources

Related University Policies: Out of State Staffing Policy, Procedures for Disability and Accessibility Accommodations for Faculty and Staff, IT Asset Management Policy, Information Technology Security Policy, Code of Business Ethics

A. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy applies to full time and regular part-time staff.

The university operates 24 hours a day throughout the year. Each department head of the university, in consultation with Human Resources, establishes the work modality, workdays, and work shifts for staff positions within the department based on the University's academic, administrative, and/or operational needs. The university work modalities for staff include options to foster a highly desirable and productive workplace for staff, to ensure retention and recruitment, and to promote employee engagement. Those modalities include an option where physical presence is required when a staff member is performing their university responsibilities, as well as several hybrid options that allow staff members to perform their responsibilities at remote locations at varying levels.

This policy outlines the university's work schedule, hours of work, and work modalities for full and part-time staff positions. Staff are expected to abide by this policy when engaged in work activities at a university office location and at any non-university office location. Employees who work from a remote location must comply with all university policies including attendance, performance, code of conduct, confidentiality, leave and data privacy and security.

B. DEFINITIONS

- Work Modality – A work schedule designation made for each university full and part-time staff position that indicates whether a position, based on business need and position duties, delivers services on campus at all times or is eligible for a form of remote work. Modalities include physical presence required or hybrid work.

- Hybrid Work – An arrangement where an employee performs some of their job duties on campus and others at an alternate location such as a home office.
- Core Day – A day within the work week during which a department or unit of employees is expected to work on campus for in-person collaboration and teambuilding. Core days are designed at the discretion of the department head.
- Flex Schedule Options – Various flexible schedule options that staff may request including flex time, compressed work week, and reduced work schedule that may be approved in conjunction with any work modality.
- Department Head – The executive, dean, assistant vice president, or equivalent who has oversight for a school or department.

C. POLICY

1. University Schedule

The university operates 24 hours a day throughout the year. In consultation with Human Resources, each department head establishes the work modality, workdays, and work shifts for staff positions within the department based on the university's needs. The university's standard work schedule includes working 7 hours a day, a total of 35 hours per week, with 1 hour for lunch. Department heads may designate positions to either a twenty-eight or forty-hour work week because of operational needs or contractual requirements. Deviations from the standard work schedule require the approval of the University Budget and Human Resources Offices to ensure adequate funding and benefit provisions.

From time to time, it may be necessary for employees to work hours in excess of their normal work schedule. Please refer to the *Staff Personnel Policy Manual, Section 5.9 Compensation for Hour in Excess of Normal Work Hours* for more information.

Most departments operate during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Eastern Standard Time. Employees in those departments follow this work schedule. However, some departments, as mentioned above, maintain extended hours or operate 24 hours per day with staff working in shifts to cover the operating hours.

Employees should be advised of their work modality, including normal workdays and work shifts, before they are hired or when they are changed. Department heads may change the established workday or shift according to the business needs of the department.

2. Work Modalities and Schedules of Employees

An employee's work modality and work schedules are determined based on the university's academic, administrative, and/or operational needs. All employees are expected to report for duty on time and to work the full number of hours each day required by the terms of their jobs.

However, during an individual's employment, the scheduling needs of the department and/or the employee may change. When such needs arise or changes occur, the university has the right to establish a new work modality and/or work schedule for an employee. An employee may also request, but is not entitled, to change to their work modality and schedule.

Department heads, in consultation with Human Resources, assign a work modality to full- and part-time staff positions in their unit. A position's work modality are based on university needs, the operational requirements of the department and job functions.

- A. *Physical Presence Required Modality*** – Positions requiring all work duties to be completed on campus. Staff who hold these positions will come to campus to perform their job duties. This person may be a part of a hybrid team, where some staff may be remote.
- B. *Hybrid Work Modality*** – Positions eligible to work a set number of days a week on campus with the remaining work completed remotely. Individual schedules are set based on university needs and job functions to ensure that AU has adequate onsite staffing to support its operations, student services, customer support, and to promote a sense of community and cultural cohesion. Hybrid work helps to balance employees' needs for flexibility but are not without structure.

All hybrid schedules include one ***Core Day*** requirement. In fall 2021, the core day does not need to be in-person if space does not allow. Beginning in the spring 2022, the core day will be a day of the week when all members of the unit (or smaller subgroups, teams, etc.) are together in the office in person. The core days are determined by the department head and multiple core days may be scheduled in a single week. For example, one core day may exist for the whole unit while another core day exists for a specific subgroup, team, or other smaller group of employees.

Three hybrid work modalities exist:

- ***Hybrid 1*** – Position is mostly on campus with 1-2 days of remote work each week. Hours of work may vary based upon service and space needs. Staff will work on campus on regular staggered schedules (e.g., Tue/Thu) or alternating schedules (e.g., vary by week or month). This schedule includes one Core Day, a day of the week where all members of the team are in person for collaboration.
- ***Hybrid 2*** – Position has 3 days of remote work each week and 2 days of in person work each week. This schedule includes one Core Day, a day of the week where all members of the unit need to be in person for collaboration of some type.
- ***Hybrid 3*** – Position is primarily remote with one Core Day of campus presence each week.

Work modalities and schedules may be modified as needed to ensure that the arrangement does not negatively impact the department operations. Staff will be given at least a two week notice of a change in modality or regular schedule.

Employees who hold positions with a Hybrid-eligible designation must complete the *Hybrid Work Agreement*. Hybrid Work Agreements will be reviewed annually by departments.

An employee may request reconsideration of their modality in writing to the Department Head with a copy to their supervisor and HR. The request should include the reasons supporting the reconsideration and desired resolution. The Department Head in consultation with Human Resources, will respond in writing to the staff member's request within 10 working days. There are no further appeal rights.

3. Other Flexible Schedule Options

With the prior approval of a department head or designee, staff may be provided with other flexible schedule options if consistent with university needs, the operational requirements of the department, and job functions. Flex schedule are work hours or work weeks that vary from the standard schedule of the department in which the staff member works. Flex schedules may be offered in conjunction with any Work Modality.

Flexible Schedule Options include flex time, compressed work week, and reduced work schedules. For instance, an employee's agreed-upon starting and departure time may differ from the standard schedule for the department. The schedules may be fixed for a period or can vary from day to day. Compressed work week involves regularly scheduled hours that are fixed over fewer than five days a week. Supervisors should consult with Human Resources when implementing the compressed work week option for guidance on recording time on timesheets and impact on leave.

Staff may request a reduction in their regularly scheduled hours to 28 hours per week, or a partial year appointment to either a 9, 10, or 11-month appointment. The partial year permits a block of time off during a non-peak season for the department. In a reduced work schedule, the employee maintains full-time status and salary and leave accruals are earned on a prorated basis. When considering a request for a reduced work schedule, department heads should consider the workload of the department and the impact an employee's reduced work schedule will have on other employees, student services and those the employee assists or serves.

Staff requests for Flexible Schedule Options are made to their department head through the *Hybrid Work Agreement*.

4. Out of State Staffing During Remote Work

American University is a Washington, DC-based employer. Employees, including those on hybrid work schedules, are expected to work on the University's premises. While remote work from the District of Columbia, State of Maryland and Commonwealth of Virginia are permissible under university policy, employees seeking to deliver services on remote workdays from other states must obtain approval at least 30 days in advance of the employee working out of state and adhere to the *Out-of-State Staffing Policy*.

5. Employee Guidelines for Remote Work

Employees are responsible for their performance wherever they work and must comply with all university policies including, but not limited to attendance, performance, code of conduct, confidentiality, leave, and data privacy and security. Hybrid schedules must conform to the overtime, record keeping, meal break and other provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act and other relevant laws and university policies. Lunches and/or scheduled rest period are never eliminated, regardless of work arrangement.

Remote employees must be available and engaged in work activities during the schedule agreed upon in a Hybrid Work Agreement. Staff are expected to attend all mandatory meetings and regularly check in with their co-workers and managers. With as much advance notice as reasonably possible, staff may be required to report to campus on a scheduled remote workday.

If a staff member wishes to change their established work modality or schedule, they must obtain written approval from their department head. To maintain appropriate productivity and performance, remote employees should choose a work environment that is free from distractions, has a reliable internet connection, and supports the staff member's ability to dedicate their full attention to their job duties during work hours.

In accordance with the *IT Asset Management Policy*, the university will provide employees with one AU-issued workstation every four years. Employees are to use this equipment for business purposes only and are expected to take appropriate steps to keep this equipment safe. When working remotely, staff must abide by the *Information Technology Security Policy*. Staff should take the appropriate steps to minimize exposure to cybersecurity risks and protect confidential and proprietary data. Connecting to AU's VPN service periodically is required to receive the latest software or security updates.

If an AU-issued workstation requires physical repair or troubleshooting, the staff member will be required to bring it back to campus and schedule an in-person consultation. Staff must work directly with their internet service provider regarding network connectivity issues relating to their home network or their cell phone provider for issues relating to their smartphone service.

Employees who may need a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential duties of their positions should submit a *Workplace Reasonable Accommodation request* to the Office of Human Resources.

6. Other Activities During the Workday

- A. Participation in Educational Activities** – With prior approval of the supervisor, a member of the staff may be employed in a teaching capacity that is not part of the position assignment. Such teaching assignments should not be undertaken during the employee's normal working hours without prior approval of the supervisor. The approval of the provost is required before a staff member can be appointed to a teaching assignment. This approval is required each semester that the employee teaches. If, under special circumstances, an employee is authorized to teach a course during regular working hours, a staff member may make a written request for flex hours to accommodate a class schedule. Attendance at programs offered through human resources is considered part of the position assignment

and is not charged against earned leave. However, employees should obtain approval from their supervisors before planning to attend.

- B. Attendance at University Classes** - Employees of American University receive a highly valuable benefit in the form of remitted tuition. Educational benefits must be used in a manner that does not interfere with the operation of the university's offices and programs. Accordingly, employees are not permitted to take courses during their regularly scheduled workday and hours. With prior approval, a staff member may make a written request for flex hours to accommodate a class schedule. The employee's immediate supervisor will review the request. If the supervisor supports the request and is satisfied that the required conditions are met, he or she will recommend it for approval to the department head. The department head will determine whether the request will be granted. Notwithstanding exceptions granted according to this policy, employees are reminded that if a conflict occurs between work and a class, work takes precedence. Attendance at programs offered through human resources is considered part of the position assignment and is not charged against earned leave. However, employees should obtain approval from their supervisors before attending.
- C. Outside Consulting** – In accordance with *Code of Business Ethics*, a conflict of interest occurs when there is a conflict or an appearance of conflict between an employee's private, financial, or business activities and the requirements of the position they occupy at the university. Such conflicts are prohibited. The university permits a full-time staff member whose on-campus performance is otherwise satisfactory to use their accrued annual leave on outside consulting, provided that such activity does not diminish the staff member's total contribution to the university or create a conflict of interest.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES

Several groups are responsible for setting and managing the work schedules of staff.

- Department heads, or their designees, are responsible for determining and communicating the Work Modality and schedules for the full and part-time positions in their unit, and for establishing the unit's core day(s) for in person collaboration. They are responsible for approving, monitoring and discontinuing flex work schedules as outlined in this document. Department heads are also responsible for identifying and budgeting for any supplemental technology equipment, beyond what is provided by the Office of Information Technology, that is needed to support hybrid work and coordinating with OIT to arrange for the replacement of eligible workstations at the end of the four-year replacement cycle.
- The Assistant Vice President of Human Resources is responsible for the design and implementation of this policy in accordance with the general management philosophy of the university. The Assistant Vice President of Human Resources is responsible for developing and delivering strategies aimed at continually communicating, educating, gathering feedback and refining the policy as necessary to meet the needs of the university. The Assistant Vice President of Human Resources is responsible for reviewing the program to ensure fair and consistent application in accordance with the University's commitment to inclusion and equity as well as EEO policies.

- The Office of Information Technology (OIT) is responsible for evaluating feedback and proposing technology solutions to support and improve the hybrid employee experience. OIT is also responsible for assigning workstations to AU staff, based upon the standards defined in the *IT Asset Management Policy*, and maintaining an accurate IT asset inventory. Additionally, the OIT Help Desk provides remote assistance and support to staff regarding AU-supported applications, tools, and hardware.
- The Office of Risk Management and Safety Services is responsible for consulting with staff members and management requesting information about safety guidelines and ergonomic setups in the off-site workplace, conducting telework site inspections, when necessary, and consulting on insurance requirements of telework arrangements.

E. EFFECTIVE DATE AND REVISIONS:

This Policy is effective as of August 1, 2021.

This Policy was last revised on July 28, 2021.