

NYU Steinhardt Flexible Workspace Arrangements Policy

Effective Date: September 9, 2015

Supersedes: none

Issuing Authority: NYU Steinhardt Office of Administration and Finance

Responsible Officer: Roger Ho, Senior Director, Human Resources

Purpose: NYU Steinhardt provides flexible work arrangements, when it is reasonable and practical to do so, to help employees balance personal and professional responsibilities while ensuring institutional and department goals are met.

Definition: A flexible workspace arrangement is any work arrangement that differs from the standard work location. It is not a permanent arrangement; it is a privilege that must be monitored and can be revoked at any time.

Scope: This policy applies to Administrators (formerly known as code 100s) in the Steinhardt School.

Eligibility: Administrators who have completed at least one year at the Steinhardt School, and whose job duties and responsibilities are appropriate to a flexible work arrangement. Full time administrators who teach outside established work hours are ineligible.

Note:

Flexible workspace arrangements are not to be made to accommodate teaching during normal business hours by administrators at any time during the calendar year. Administrators who teach may only do so after regular business hours, and may only teach the equivalent of one course (three or four points) in any given semester. Administrators who do teach are not members of the adjunct union and their rate of pay is to be determined in consultation with the Dean's Office.

Responsibilities: It shall be the responsibility of both the Supervisor and the Employee to consider, assess, and evaluate the potential business implications of implementing flexible work arrangements, the potential impact on costs, supervision, staff, services and the department's ability to meet its objectives. Nothing in this policy is intended to alter an employee's responsibilities, which are determined by an employee's supervisor.

Responsibilities of Employees:

- Fully understand the nature and impact of the flexible work arrangement
- Report to work on-site, when requested by your Supervisor

- Maintain a continuing dialogue with your Supervisor
- Attend regular meetings with your Supervisor to review and confirm expectations and performance targets

Responsibilities of Supervisors:

- Maximize resources and utilize staff talents
- Be prepared to manage the work under the conditions of the arrangement
- Personally model balanced work practices
- Focus on individual's suitability to work in a flexible work arrangement
- Measure performance by results rather than through direct observation
- Hold regular meetings with your Employee to review and confirm clearly stated expectations and performance targets, recognize Employee's contributions, achievements and address any problems/obstacles Employee may be experiencing
- Change the plan if it is not serving the unit's needs

NOTE: ALL FLEXIBLE WORK AGREEMENTS ARE REVOCABLE AT ANY TIME

Flexible work arrangements must be agreed to by the Supervisor, Department Administrator and Unit Head. They are not an automatic arrangement upon employment in the University. Circumstances may exist where the work is not suitable for flexible work arrangements. In addition, circumstances may change in a work unit causing a flexible work arrangement to change or be discontinued.

NYU provides technology tools to make working away from the office more effective. If you are participating in a Flexible Workspace arrangement, please contact Steinhardt Technology Services via email: steinhardt.it@nyu.edu

It is not the responsibility of Steinhardt to provide computer equipment, telephone, or web access.

Attachment:

Guidelines for Flexible Work Arrangements

Guidelines for Flexible Workspace Arrangements

We recognize that with changes in technology, not all job duties need to be performed from within an office or cubicle. Some may even be performed better from somewhere else. We are therefore introducing Flexible Workspace Arrangements, which allow employees to satisfy their work commitment from alternative locations.

Since not all positions are appropriate for Flexible Workspace Arrangements, they will be granted on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the current needs and limitations of the department and the employee. This guideline outlines the restrictions that apply and the issues a supervisor should consider in deciding whether to grant an employee's request for a Flexible Workspace Arrangement.

Flexible Work Arrangements and Teaching

Flexible time arrangements are not to be made to accommodate teaching during normal business hours by administrators at any time during the calendar year. Administrators who teach may only do so after regular business hours, and may only teach the equivalent of one course (three or four points) in any given semester. Administrators who do teach are not members of the adjunct union and their rate of pay is to be determined in consultation with the Dean's office.

Flexible Workspace Arrangements are available on a regular and as-needed basis and can include a mix of full and partial days -- Flexible Workspace Arrangements do not, however, change an employee's *work schedule*. In emergency situations, the employee should make the request as soon as circumstances allow.

Upon granting or changing a request for a Flexible Workspace Arrangement, supervisors should communicate the change to all affected employees.

Requesting a Flexible Workspace Arrangement

Employee-supervisor dialogue is a key component of an effective Flexible Workspace Arrangement program. Employees meeting the minimum requirements (see below) who would like a Flexible Workspace Arrangement should initially discuss it with their immediate supervisor.

If the immediate supervisor supports the request, the employee should complete and submit the formal request form to the immediate supervisor who will share it with the Department Administrator. The Department Administrator will consult, if necessary, with the Unit Head and/or Steinhardt HR, make a determination, and respond to the employee and employee's immediate supervisor within five business days.

Approved request forms must then be filed with Steinhardt HR and the details of the Flexible Workspace Arrangement must be made known (posted on office door/somewhere visible in cubicle).

Once approved, employees are still required to report to their supervisor on a daily basis via email or phone, even if only to update the supervisor on work in progress. The same policies for sick days and vacation or other forms of leave apply regardless of workspace arrangements.

Proper notification must be made via email bounceback and voicemail messages when employees are unavailable to work regardless of workspace arrangement.

The granting of a Flexible Workspace Arrangement may be revoked at any time.

Supervisors will conduct an evaluation at the end of the first month (or sooner) and not more than every three months thereafter to determine whether the arrangement should continue or should be modified or revoked.

Deciding Whether a Flexible Workspace Arrangement is Appropriate

The supervisor must determine whether such a request will adversely impact the standard of service to all of those served by the department, both internal and external customers. The supervisor should then take into consideration the following:

- Employee Status: Minimum Requirements
 - The employee is an Administrator
 - The employee has at least one year of service in Steinhardt
 - The employee has demonstrated satisfactory performance in their current role
 - The employee is capable of self-discipline/self-motivation
 - The employee requires a level of supervision that will still be possible under the proposed arrangement

- Employee's Position: Minimum Requirements for Job Duties and Responsibilities
 - Productivity and progress metrics are still measurable under the proposed arrangement
 - Quality of service to internal and external customers would be sustained
 - Required face-to-face contact would be sustained

- Other Considerations:
 - Are these roles that can be performed out of office?
 - Is the employee's job satisfaction and morale sustained or improved?
 - Is the overall work group's performance, job satisfaction, and morale sustained or improved?
 - Is there adequate team coverage in the workplace, especially during peak service or demand times?
 - Will the employee have equipment and secure system access to perform all responsibilities (refer to Technology Guidelines for Flexible Workspace Arrangements)?
 - Is the employee's proposed alternative workspace in a location that allows for adequate privacy and security?
 - Are we following prescribed criteria to make fair and consistent determinations?

- Are we ensuring that all employees, regardless of work location, are pulling their own weight?
- Are we focusing on the employee's productivity and the quality of their work results rather than the number of hours worked?
- Are we maintaining a high level of contact by encouraging a two-way flow of communication between supervisor and employee and employee and their colleagues?
- Are we maintaining a collegial environment with opportunities for unit members to have shared hours and constructive interactions?
- Are we leveraging technology to increase the effectiveness of communications (eg, video conferencing via Skype, FaceTime, or GoToMeeting)?
- Have we taken into account intermittent job demands that may make it necessary for specific workers to be in the workplace at certain times, for certain tasks or projects?
- Are there issues that may affect comfort in the workplace or ability to do the work off-site, such as access to necessary information or support for work tasks?
- Do Flexible Workspace Arrangements previously granted to others impact your ability to grant the current request?

Unit Heads have final approval authority for beginning and continuing Flexible Workspace Arrangements. They may delegate that authority to their Department Administrator.

Trial Period and Three Month Evaluations

The first month of a Flexible Workspace Arrangement is a trial period. At that point (or sooner if deemed necessary), the supervisor should conduct an evaluation of the arrangement.

The supervisor and employee should meet to discuss how the arrangement is going:

- Are expectations clearly understood?
- Have turnaround times been adversely impacted?
- Is productivity being maintained?
- Are the unit's needs still being met?
- Are there benefits that can be identified?
- Are there adjustments to the arrangement that might be desired by either party?

If continued thereafter, the Flexible Workspace Arrangement must be evaluated at least every three months after the initial trial period evaluation. Either party may end the arrangement if it does not meet organizational or personal needs.

If an evaluation is not made within the three month period, the employee will revert back to regular workspace conditions and report on site until the evaluation is made with a decision to resume a flexible workspace arrangement.

The Supervisor's Role

Supervisors are responsible for maximizing resources and utilizing staff talents. They are best positioned to understand the demands of the work and the capacity of individual staff members to succeed in Flexible Workspace Arrangements. Therefore, the initial decision to implement a Flexible Workspace Arrangement belongs to the supervisor. Supervisors must be prepared to manage the work under the conditions of the arrangement. Flexible Workspace Arrangements succeed when supervisors:

- assess the organizational benefits derived by supporting Flexible Workspace Arrangements, including reduced absenteeism and turnover and increased productivity and commitment
- focus on the individual's suitability to work in a Flexible Workspace Arrangement
- support the concept through personal modeling of balanced work practices
- communicate clearly defined tasks and expectations
- work through problems and/or obstacles that may arise
- measure performance by results rather than through direct observation
- apply everyday management skills, such as ensuring resources are available for the tasks at hand, supporting professional development, managing performance issues, and offering clear concise communication of organizational goals and expectations and their relationship to the overall mission of the University
- provide regular feedback on performance
- are willing to change a plan if it is not serving the unit's needs

If you have any questions regarding Flexible Workspace Arrangements, please do not hesitate to reach out to Steinhardt HR for guidance.