

Flexible Work Plan Policy

Ithaca College believes in and is committed to the promotion of healthy work/life integration. In support of this commitment, Ithaca College invites employees and supervisors to consider Flexible Work Plans (FWPs) when feasible, to meet individual and business needs while maintaining quality services and productivity.

Flexible Work Plans (FWPs) enhance Ithaca College's ability to attract and retain the best people. In addition, FWPs typically result in increased productivity, employee engagement, morale, and job satisfaction, and improved health and wellness.

Flexible Work Plans (FWPs) offer creative and innovative approaches to completing work. FWPs include a variety of possibilities that expand options for where and when work is completed.

FWP options include:

- **Flex Time:** Work start and end times differ from the standard. The number of scheduled work hours per work week remains the same. Work weeks run Monday – Sunday.
(Example: Shifting start and end times from 8:30am – 5:00pm to 7:30am – 4:00pm.)
- **Compressed Work Week:** Alternative schedule that compresses a normal work week into fewer than five days. The number of scheduled work hours per work week remains the same. Work weeks run Monday – Sunday.
(Example: Working four 10-hour days instead of five 8-hour days.)
- **Hybrid:** Work from a remote location (not on campus) one or more days per week. The number of scheduled work hours per work week remains the same. Work weeks run Monday – Sunday.
- **Fully Remote:** Work from a remote location (not on campus) full-time. The number of scheduled work hours per work week remains the same. Work weeks run Monday – Sunday.

Eligibility

FWPs must make business sense. Approval is based on the type of work needed to be performed, the needs of the college, and employee performance. The supervisor and respective Vice President make the final determination on whether a FWP request will be approved. Ongoing eligibility to maintain a FWP requires there to be no negative change in productivity or level of service provided. Staff members covered by a collective bargaining agreement may have benefits different from those described here and should refer to their current agreement.

Request Process

FWPs should support the goals of Ithaca College, the department, and the employee. Not all positions at the College are conducive to a flexible work plan. The employee and supervisor must work together to develop an effective FWP including evaluating privacy issues, equipment availability, distribution of workload, and communication strategies. A request for a FWP must be initiated by the employee with as much advance notice as possible and follow the steps below. The supervisor, with approval from the respective Vice President, may request for a position to be fully remote when the position is vacant and PRIOR to the position being searched. Once the position is filled, a FWP request must be completed.

- ❑ Review the FWP policy.
- ❑ Discuss with supervisor and respective Vice President, providing as much advance notice as reasonably possible to ensure adequate time for consideration.
- ❑ Consult with the Office of Human Resources to ensure understanding of process and requirements.
- ❑ Submit the FWP Request Form.
- ❑ The Office of Human Resources will review all FWP request forms and consult with the employee, supervisor, and respective Vice President as appropriate. FWP's may not begin until the FWP request form has been submitted and approved by the supervisor, respective Vice President, and the Office of Human Resources.

Review and Non-Continuation of the FWP

All FWPs are approved in one-year increments and must be reviewed by the employee and their supervisor every 6 months. However, more regular check-ins are recommended throughout the approved FWP period to ensure the plan continues to meet the needs of the department and of the college.

FWPs may be suspended or cancelled at any time by either the supervisor, respective Vice President, or the employee. The Office of Human Resources must be notified in writing of the end date of the FWP. Employees on approved Flex Time, Compressed Work Week, and Hybrid FWPs must be given written notice of at least 2 weeks prior to the non-continuation of the FWP. Non-continuation of an approved Fully Remote FWP must be communicated in writing at least 3 months prior to the date of non-continuation.

Travel Policies for Hybrid and Remote FWPs

Hybrid FWP employees are not compensated for travel between campus and their remote work location.

Employees on a Fully Remote FWP are not expected to work on campus. In the event the supervisor, with approval from the respective Vice President, requires the employee on the Fully Remote FWP to come to campus, the department is responsible for the non-local travel costs associated with the trip and should budget accordingly. See Ithaca College Policy Manual 2.23 for the College's [Travel Policies](#).

On-campus Short-Term Housing is available for stay by employees on a Fully Remote FWP when they are required to be visit campus and availability should be confirmed prior to booking a stay at non-Ithaca College affiliated lodging. Employees on a Fully Remote FWP choosing not to stay in on-campus short-term housing, may be required to pay for their own lodging.

On-campus short-term housing is available for a maximum of five nights at a rate of \$50.00 per night and will be charged to the department. There is a 5% service charge for cancellations or changes requiring a refund. Individuals seeking special accommodations should contact extendedhousing@ithaca.edu.

On-campus short-term housing feature a shared kitchenette, shared (single-gender) bathrooms, complimentary laundry facilities, and wireless internet. All rooms include bed linens (sheets, pillows, and a blanket). Employees must supply any other amenities or toiletries that they may need. Rooms include a desk, dresser, and a twin bed for each occupant. Rooms are not air conditioned.

To check availability, employees must complete the form request form here:
https://ithacaedu.formstack.com/forms/fac_staff_short_housing

FWP Position suitability

A position suitable for hybrid or remote work is one that has responsibilities that can be conducted off-site, using technology at home without affecting service quality or college operations.

Characteristics of positions that DO NOT lend themselves to hybrid or remote work

- Job duties require access to specific personnel, onsite files, or specialized space/equipment/technology in order to effectively perform the job.
- The position had regular in-person client/customer/student interaction pre-COVID which became less efficient or effective when COVID required operations in the remote environment.
- Job duties require participation in regular onsite meetings or presentations.
- Hybrid or remote work would incur additional cost to the employer. For example, duplication of office equipment, dedicated office space.
- Hybrid or remote work by the employee negatively impacts team performance, including additional duties that may need to be assumed by onsite employees.

Characteristics of positions that DO lend themselves to hybrid or remote work

- Job duties can be conducted outside of the primary worksite (Ithaca College campus).
- Hybrid and remote work does not affect the service quality or college operations.
- Hybrid or remote work does not add additional cost to the college.
- Hybrid or remote work does not negatively impact team performance.

Employee suitability

Hybrid work suitability criteria

Some employees may be better prepared than others to manage the unique requirements of hybrid work. When evaluating a new hybrid FWP request or a request to extend an existing hybrid FWP agreement, managers and supervisors should consider whether the employee has a record of satisfactory performance and has demonstrated the ability to:

- Prioritize work to meet deadlines.
- Display self-discipline and accomplish job duties with minimal supervision/direction.
- Consistently follow college policies and team norms regardless of work location.
- Understand their role and expectations.

- Be organized, highly disciplined, and self-motivated.
- Communicate and coordinate effectively with clients, stakeholders, students, and team members over phone, email, and Zoom/Teams.
- Manage time effectively.
- Meet work performance and/or productivity levels whether onsite or offsite.

Before approving a hybrid FWP request (or the continuation of a hybrid FWP request), consider any changes needed to ensure your team continues to meet its objectives. Ensure that the employee and work product will be as effectively managed as their onsite colleagues.

Additional considerations include:

- Whether the employee has space that supports and is conducive to successful offsite work.
- Whether regular onsite meetings or in-person client/customer/student interactions preclude a hybrid arrangement may depend on the frequency and degree to which they need to be onsite (e.g., a consultant or trainer may be able to schedule sessions for days they are onsite, whereas an advisor whose students “drop in”, or an employee at a customer service window cannot).

Remote work suitability criteria

In addition to considering the worker criteria above for hybrid work, evaluate the employee’s performance based on the following additional criteria:

- ☐ Did the employee’s work performance and/or productivity during COVID remote work remain stable or improve?
- ☐ Is this a key employee to retain because of significant institutional knowledge or unique expertise that is hard to replace/replicate?
- ☐ Does the cost of recruitment for and training of a new employee outweigh the impact to team culture and any challenges with remote work?
- ☐ Will the employee’s continued remote work jeopardize the performance of the team? Does the employee manage a large or complex team?
- ☐ Does the employee’s continued fully remote work allow them to effectively engage with the campus community?

Responsibilities

Employee

- Complete appropriate paperwork and forms, as necessary
- Consult with HR throughout the process
- Develop and maintain a strategy/plan for communication and evaluation
- Maintain frequent and timely communication with supervisor
- Follow pre-approved schedule regarding start/stop times each day
- Follow FWP/telecommuting standards
- Respect and adhere to timelines, work productivity goals, and accomplishment of tasks
- Maintain accessibility and communicate schedule as needed
- Work with IT for data compliance and security related issues

- Safeguard all IC property (i.e. equipment) and intellectual property (i.e. policies, documents)
- Discuss any FWP concerns/challenges with supervisor as soon as identified
- Restrict the use of college resources and electronic equipment to college business only
- Return college equipment, resources, etc. upon request and/or termination of the FWP or termination of employment

Supervisor

- Review FWP requests objectively (avoid judgment around employee reasons for requesting a FWP)
- Apply FWP policy consistently in similar situations
- Complete appropriate forms as necessary, including written response to employee regarding approval or denial of the proposed FWP
- Consult with respective Vice President and HR throughout the process
- Maintain an environment that invites open dialogue
- Ensure timely communication with employee to keep them up to date, on track, and aware of any concerns
- Commit to FWPs and trouble-shooting issues, aiming for resolution
- Develop and maintain a strategy/plan for communication and evaluation
- Make reasonable efforts to provide employee with resources needed for success
- Positively work with employee to evaluate the FWP, with a focus on work goals and completion
- Work with IT for data compliance and security related issues
- Notify Human Resources if approved arrangements for a FWP are changed
- Collect any college equipment, resources, etc. upon termination of the FWP or termination of the employee's employment

Human Resources

- Be an unbiased, objective party
- Act as a resource for ideas on best ways to accomplish setting up a FWP for an employee
- Provide coaching for supervisors when evaluating appropriateness and feasibility of a FWP whenever possible
- Act as intermediary for issue resolution
- Interpret IC policies
- Complete and keep forms
- Maintain metrics and reevaluate the FWP policy as necessary