

Interim Remote Work Policy

Version 21.02.02

This internal policy shall be in effect upon adoption and remain in effect through Phase 4 of St. Petersburg College's Comeback Plan (COVID-19).

I. Intent of the Interim Policy on Remote Work

The intent of this policy is to provide policy and guidance around the process of supporting remote working (employees working from home or remotely) and returning employees, fully or partially, from remote working.

The College continues to monitor the ongoing threat of COVID-19 pandemic while assessing all potential risks to employees. During this time of uncertainty, remote working is a viable, flexible work option in response to the College's plan to return to campus, as well as to mitigate the risk of infection and spread of the virus in our community.

Employees who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are experiencing symptoms, have been exposed to COVID-19 through travel within or outside the College community, or in higher risk categories, should stay at home and work with their supervisor to assess the options for taking leave and/or working remotely. Those with personal concerns about commuting or working in an office environment should work with their supervisor to assess options for taking leave.

Individual departments will develop plans for employees to return to the workplace when most appropriate, and in accordance with the College's Comeback Plan and Continuity of Operations Plan. Temporary and ongoing remote working arrangements may be considered for any period deemed necessary in response to the current pandemic, and where feasible given current business and operational considerations. This policy applies to all employees, including those who may be currently considered essential workers or performing essential functions for the institution. The ability to work remotely is not a right, but must be assigned by the employee's supervisor in accordance with this policy.

II. Eligibility to Remote Work

- A. Supervisors, with the assistance of Human Resources as appropriate, will evaluate the feasibility of a remote working assignment, including which positions and individuals are assigned remote work duties, as well as those returned to campus and administrative sites.
- B. The employee and supervisor will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a work remotely working arrangement. Factors in making such decisions include an assessment of essential campus-based work duties, remote work options for those performing essential duties, the suitability of the

work duties for remote work, and considerations of requests by employees to work remotely or return to the workplace.

Employees may request the assignment of work remotely duties as a workplace adjustment or accommodation due to the presence of a serious medical risk to the employee as defined by the CDC ([Increased Risk: CDC](#)).

- To explore leave options and eligibility under SPC COVID leave policy, employees should consult with their supervisor
- To verify eligibility for, and/or request FMLA, employees should email benefits@spcollege.edu
- To begin the interactive dialogue for a workplace accommodations due to a disability, including work remotely, employees should email benefits@spcollege.edu

III. Workplace Considerations for Remote Work

- A. Scheduling considerations will include consideration of any limitations or restrictions related to working out of a home-based office. Responsibility for fulfilling all employment obligations rests with the employee.
- B. While the employee and supervisor have the freedom to develop arrangements tailored to employee and institutional needs, the following basic requirements must be met:
 1. Employees must be able to carry out the same assigned duties and work obligations at their home office as they do when working on campus or administrative site, unless reassigned work duties and functions.
 2. Employees and their supervisor must be diligent in documenting assigned duties, workday schedules, and recording of work hours.
 3. Hourly employees may not work more than 40 hours a week without the prior approval of their supervisor. Part-time employees must not work more than the schedule of hours assigned unless pre-approved by their supervisor. Salaried employees will work their full-time workweek schedule in accordance with the Board of Trustees Workday Workweek Procedure ([Workday Workweek](#)).
 4. Employees must be available to their supervisors and co-workers during core work hours and available to attend virtual meetings and participate electronically in other required office activities from the home office. The employee must be logged into Outlook and/or Skype/Teams during scheduled work hours. Faculty must be logged in during scheduled work hours outside of the classroom. Any exceptions must be pre-approved by the employee's supervisor.
 5. Evaluation of remote working performance will include regular interaction by phone and e-mail between the employee and supervisor. Evaluation of remote work performance will be consistent with that by employees working at the office in both content and frequency, but may focus on work output and completion of objectives rather than on time-based performance.

6. An appropriate level of communication between the employee and supervisor will be agreed to as part of the discussion process, in a manner and frequency that is appropriate for the job and the individuals involved.
7. In the event an employee is called back to campus/office temporarily during remote working, the supervisor will provide appropriate notice to the employee, take appropriate safety precautions for the employee's return to campus/office, indicate the time the employee will spend on campus or in the office, and confirm the work is essential and unable to be completed using the work remotely option.
8. Employees must report work-related injuries to their supervisor within 24 hours of injury.
9. Employees are required to follow established procedures for requesting and obtaining approval of leave.

IV. Workspace Design Considerations, Equipment and Office Space

- A. The employee and supervisor will review the physical workspace needs and the appropriate location for working remotely. Based on information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (such as computer, software, phone and other standard office equipment) for each remote working arrangement will be assessed. The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes.
- B. The College will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office; such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, costs of establishing and/or maintaining internet access, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space. Equipment supplied by the College will be maintained by the College. The College reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the employee, will be maintained by the employee. The College accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. Arrangements to move office equipment to a home office shall be approved by the employee's supervisor.
- C. Equipment supplied by the College is to be used for business purposes in accordance with the College's Acceptable Use Policies ([Internet Acceptable Use](#) and [IT Acceptable Use](#)). The employee remote working must take appropriate action to protect College equipment from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment, all College equipment will be returned, unless other arrangements have been made. The College will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies, as deemed necessary, and may reimburse business-related expenses, such as shipping costs, that are reasonably incurred in carrying out the employee's job. All anticipated expenses associated with remote working should be discussed with and pre-approved by the employee's supervisor.

V. Security

Consistent with the College's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, remote working employees will be expected to ensure the protection of sensitive data, including, but not limited to, student educational records and other protected information. Steps such as the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment. All employees remain subject to the College's Acceptable Use policies, as well as those related to network and information security, whether working remotely or in the office.

VI. Return or Partial Return From Remote Work Considerations

- A. Supervisors, with the assistance of Human Resources as appropriate, will evaluate the feasibility and timing of returning individuals, who are assigned work remotely duties, to the campus and administrative sites, in accordance with the College's Comeback Plan and Continuity of Operations Plan.
- B. Factors that will be considered in returning employees to campus and administrative sites, when deemed appropriate, will include areas such as:
 1. Whether the employee's essential role requires face-to-face contact with students, employees, or if the employee needs to be onsite to perform his or her job duties;
 2. An assessment of the employee's onsite workspace and the ability to implement social distancing and other safety measures; and
 3. Any requests by an employee to return from remote working or any expressed apprehension by an employee to return from remote working.
- C. When it is determined, after review of the foregoing considerations and factors, that it is necessary for an employee to return from remote working on a full-time or intermittent basis, the supervisor will work with individual employees on next steps.
- D. Employees who are apprehensive about returning from remote working to work in an office environment for any reason, whether full-time or on an intermittent basis, should stay at home and work with their supervisor to assess the options for taking leave and/or working remotely.