



# UMSL's Flexwork Approach: Unit, Position, Person

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# Re-affirming UMMSL's Approach

- The Chancellor's Cabinet recently reviewed UMMSL's approach to flexible work (flexwork), including hybrid/remote work
- The Cabinet remains committed to the "Unit, Position, Person" approach to work arrangements
- This approach allows us to:
  - Recognize the varied needs across campus
  - Recruit and retain top talent
  - Create vitality for our stakeholders
  - Support the morale and work-life balance of our employees

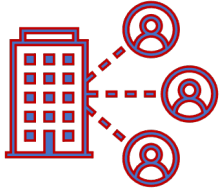
# Clarifying Unit, Position, Person

- In recognition of the unique needs and functions of each unit, this approach allows for unit-by-unit decisions regarding flexible work arrangements, including telework
- Supervisors and employees are encouraged to work collaboratively to develop work arrangements that allow UMSL to excel in the day-to-day transactional work as well as to build upon the culture and experience we are creating for stakeholders
- This approach equips unit leaders to make decisions that best meet the needs of their unit, recognizing that each unit is different even when there are comparable roles

# Being Aware of our Context: Campus Expectations

- We must acknowledge the context in which we work, which is an in-person university serving the needs of diverse stakeholders
- When making decisions about flexwork, leaders must also consider the needs of all stakeholders, including those who are on-site:
  - Offices should be open and staffed during normal business hours and on normal business days
    - E.g., Visitors are greeted and phones are answered
  - Faculty and staff should be engaged during key events on campus
    - E.g., 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations, Commencement, the State of the University
  - Unit leaders should identify ways to engage their faculty and staff in the larger UMSL community
    - E.g., Encourage participation in unit and campus events, conferences, athletics, share information on campuswide activities

# Flexwork



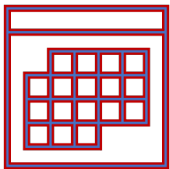
## Hybrid/Remote

Working both in the office and out of the office



## Flexible Hours

Varying start and stop times of the work day (e.g., summer hours)



## Flexible Schedules

Varying the distribution of hours over days (e.g., 4 10-hour days)

# Clarifying Unit, Position, Person

## Unit

Unit goals are met with the same level of performance in terms of quality and quantity of work performed

## Position

Responsibilities of the role can be performed successfully

## Person

Support productivity, engagement, satisfaction, and well-being

### Additional considerations:

- **Campus Context:** Expectations of the campus will be met
- **Supervisory approach:** The supervisor will be able to monitor performance, create a positive team dynamic, maintain appropriate office coverage, and ensure fairness, equity, and transparency
- **Team effectiveness:** The team will be able to function effectively (e.g., maintain productivity and work quality; communicate and collaborate; foster belonging, morale, and cohesiveness)

# Unit Goals/Business Need

The degree to which the same or greater quality and quantity of work is getting accomplished at another time, in another place, or in another way.

- Will this arrangement have a net-positive or net-neutral effect on business results?
- Is the proposed work arrangement in the best interest of the university?
- Would the proposed work arrangement enhance, maintain, or diminish operational efficiencies?
- Will the same or greater quantity and quality of work be accomplished?
- Would the proposed work arrangement enhance the productivity of the department?

# Position Suitability

The degree to which which responsibilities of the role can be performed away from the regular work location or outside of traditional work hours.

- Does the role include face-to-face contact with students, supervisors, other employees, or the public?
- Does role require ongoing access to equipment, materials, and files that can only be accessed on campus or during normal business hours?
- Are the responsibilities and expectations of the role clearly defined?
- To what extent is productivity in the role measurable by objective indicators? And what are those indicators?

Roles with clearly defined tasks, well understood outcomes or metrics, and independent work tend to be more suitable for remote work.

Roles that require physical presence or significant interaction with stakeholders, coworkers, and/or students to perform effectively are generally less suitable for remote work but might be suitable for flexible scheduling.



# Employee Suitability

The extent to which the work arrangement supports the employee's success, productivity, satisfaction, and well-being

- Does this employee's performance history (including performance reviews, disciplinary actions, etc.) indicate that you are well-suited for the proposed work arrangement?
- Does the employee possess the necessary computer skills to complete your job functions outside of the office or outside regular business hours?
- Is the employee able to complete required tasks and resolve issues independently?
- Does the proposed work arrangement help the employee to manage the relationship between work expectations and other external factors and demands (ie. traffic, childcare, etc.)?
- Should this really be an ADA/FMLA accommodation process?

Generally, employees who reliably meet and exceed expectations and who work effectively in a self-directed manner are more suitable for flexwork arrangements

# Supervisory Approach

The extent to which the supervisor will be able to monitor performance; create a positive team dynamic; maintain appropriate office coverage; and ensure fairness, equity, and transparency, etc. under the work arrangement

- Will you be able to communicate effectively with the employee under the proposed arrangement?
- Will you be able to monitor the employee's progress and performance under the proposed arrangement?
- Are you able to coordinate and manage multiple schedules for employees?
- Do you possess the necessary computer skills to supervise employees working outside of the office or outside regular business hours?
- Are you willing to adapt, learn, and grow to best meet the needs of your team?
- Are there ways to address your concerns?
- Who can help you with these things?

# Team Effectiveness

The extent to which the team will be able to function effectively (communicate and collaborate; foster belonging, morale, and cohesiveness; maintain productivity and work quality) and under the proposed work arrangement.

- Do all team members have the equipment and skills to communicate effectively under the proposed work arrangement?
- Can the team foster belonging and sustain engagement under the proposed work arrangement?
- Would the team members support and embrace a work environment with a combination of different work arrangements?
- Is the team willing to work together to coordinate and create a cohesive overall flexible or hybrid team work schedule and to be flexible when needed in order to ensure adequate office coverage?

# Implementing Flexwork as a Supervisor

- Consider the business need, position suitability, employee suitability, etc. and come to a logical decision
  - HR provides training and tools to support leaders and employees
  - The campus will commit to using the Telework form for both flexwork and telework
  - Think cohesively about your supervisory approach and your team
- Confirm your unit's ability to meet campus expectations
- Be able to provide concrete rationale for your decisions to ensure equity
- Re-visit arrangements, adjusting when necessary

# Case Study 1

## Evaluating a Flexwork Request

Employee A is business support specialist for a unit that is currently understaffed and actively working to fill two recent vacancies.

As a business specialist, Employee A performs a variety of independent, specialized business support duties, including initiating payroll; website, social media, and newsletter maintenance; assisting with purchasing procedures; assisting with travel and event planning; assisting with hiring and procurement; providing budget advice and updates; etc.

Last year employee A received a 1.5 performance rating due in part to excessive tardiness. The employee consistently comes in 30-45 minutes late, even after multiple, documented conversations about the expectation of being in the office by 8am.

Employee A is requesting a flexible work arrangement that includes a 9 - 5:30 work schedule with a 30-minute lunch and 2 days per week working remotely.

**Consider the factors discussed in this session:**

- What do you notice about business/unit needs?
- What do you notice about position suitability?
- What do you notice about employee suitability?
- What else stands out to you?

**How might you respond to the request?**

# Case Study 2

## Adapting to address performance concerns

Six weeks ago, you worked collaboratively with Employee A to create a flexible work arrangement. Per the arrangement, the employee has been working four 10-hour days Monday-Thursday, working remotely on Mondays and onsite Tuesday-Thursday.

In the past Employee A has reliably met expectations and sometimes exceeded expectations. However, since implementing this flexible arrangement you've noticed Employee A has started to fall behind on some work. Employee A has an important deadline approaching in two weeks and is not on track to complete the project by the deadline.

**How might you respond?**

# Resources

## UM System Website

<https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr500/hr522>

- HR-522
- Link to Required Telework Form
  - Please complete this form for all types of flexible work arrangements (ie. remote work, four 10s, varied start/end times, etc.) but not for ad hoc or one-off adjustments
  - A flexible work arrangement & the telework form is not a substitute for the ADA accommodation or FMLA leave process

## UMSL Website

<https://www.umsystem.edu/services/hrs/managers/hiring-toolkit.html>

- UMSL specific policy language (forthcoming)
- Optional Flexwork Toolkit (forthcoming)
  - Request form
  - Request evaluation form
  - Template letter
  - FAQs



# Questions & Discussion



# Up Next in this Series

## Third-Party Conflict Resolution Process for Supervisors, Managers, and Leaders

Wednesday, October 11

12 – 1 pm CT

It is estimated that supervisors and managers spend up to 40% of their time dealing with different types of conflict between or with their employees. There are real costs to unresolved conflicts including wasted time, opportunity costs, burnout, and employee turnover. On the other hand, conflicts that are resolved effectively can add real value to the team and organization. In this session, participants will learn about a 5-step process for helping to resolve conflict between employees, including:

- Understanding when to use the 3rd party resolution process
- Framing the conflict as business issue rather than a personal one
- Planning the context for the conflict resolution discussion
- Understanding the primary tasks of the 3rd party in the conflict resolution process