

College of Biological Sciences

Flexible Work Guidelines

This is a working document and will be updated periodically in accordance with University guidelines. Questions related to the CBS Flexible Work Guidelines can be directed to cbsdeans@umn.edu.

Guiding principles

We believe ...

- All CBS staff and faculty should expect trust and respect in their employment and autonomy and flexibility in performing their work.
- The work and our collective organizational goals, not personal preference or convenience, drive decision making.
- What we create, deliver and discover is not confined by where the work takes place.
- Our work, and nature of work, will continually evolve. We will proactively identify and address equity gaps between work environments.
- Our community is collaborative, dedicated and creative, and will continue to be within and beyond the University. CBS' commitment to community is not limited to in-person interactions.

Implementing flexible work

- Meeting deliverables, output and employee engagement are of high priority.
- CBS will endeavor to provide the possibility for virtual participation in meetings and events.
- CBS will not implement universal “in-person-only” policies. Similarly, not all work can or should be done remotely.
- Units will determine, in consultation with CBS leadership, how work and services are expected to be delivered (in-person, remote etc.). Flexible work options will support those efforts.
- Flexible work will be an iterative process. Departments and units should plan for a “test period” of implementation in order to remain nimble in adapting guidance and/or policies.
- All units are expected to operate during University business hours (8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.). CBS meetings and events should be scheduled during core hours (9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.) to accommodate for schedule variations among employees.



- Office suites with public facing reception will be physically staffed during University business hours by 2+ employees.
- Virtual services will be clearly posted online, in email signatures and on office doors.
- Individual schedules will vary but should be set such that work hours (8hrs/day) largely overlap with core hours (i.e. 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. or 10 a.m.-6:30 p.m.).
- Individuals are encouraged to specify their flexible work location/schedule and contact information on Google calendar and in email signatures.

Work modality decisions will be made at the department/unit level. A variety of options will be available to employees and supervisors with the goals of ensuring consistency, equity, adaptability and flexibility. Decisions should be made based on the “typical” work week.

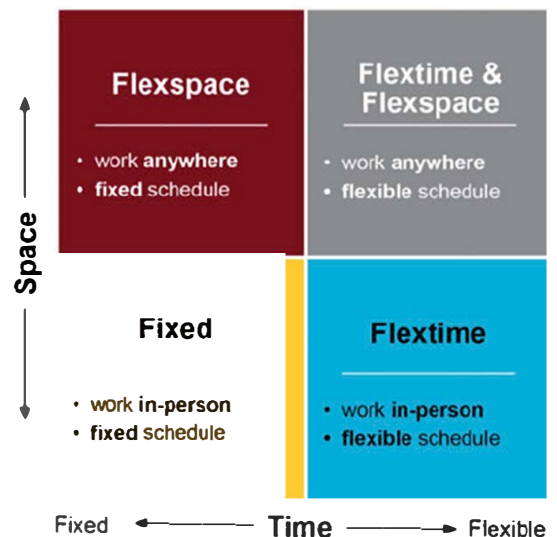
- Office based (>80% of time in UMN office)
- Hybrid
- Remote (<20% of time in UMN office)

Per the UMN flexible workplace arrangements outlined to the right, CBS further delineates:

Flexspace and Fixed would be the “rule”.

Flextime & Flexspace and Flextime arrangements that significantly deviate from core hours would be the “exception.”

Decisions regarding office closings should continue to follow [University policy and CBS guidelines](#).



Space

- Over the coming academic year, in consultation with departments and units, the College will explore spaces to establish touch-down workstations for those working hybrid or remote modalities.
- Collegiate communications will encourage employees to go paperless and reiterate training and expectations for safe data practices and appropriate document destruction.



Transportation (Work. With Flexibility. Preliminary Guidelines)

- University employees are responsible for costs to commute to their primary campus or office location.

Technology

- Equipment, including computer workstations and software, will be provided by the University.
- Regardless of modality, computer workstations and software shall be used exclusively by the employee and only for the purposes of conducting University business.
- Work must be performed from a University-owned computer.
- Work environment must meet [University Information Security standards](#) at the [medium level](#) outlined for devices conducting University business.
- Printing should be conducted on-campus.
- CBS will update computer subsidy eligibility from 4 years to 5 years and will prioritize laptops over desktops for faculty and staff. The subsidy will continue to cover the cost of a laptop, [see the CBS subsidy web page for more information](#). Departments will be responsible for the remaining workstation items listed below.
 - CBS permanent staff and faculty members will be equipped with the following equipment to outfit one workstation:
 - 1 laptop
 - 1 keyboard
 - 1 mouse
 - 1 docking station
 - 2 monitors
 - CBS expenses (UMN purchasing guidelines)
 - Laptop, monitor, external keyboard and an external mouse, cords/adapters
 - Specific ergonomic mice and beyond-basic keyboards. Ask your supervisor first.
 - Necessary office supplies. Out-of-pocket expenses for supplies normally available in the office will not be reimbursed unless pre-approved by the employee's supervisor.
 - Duplicate items cannot be purchased with University funds to have full work stations at home and on campus.
 - Laptop, keyboard, mouse, dock should be purchased with the ability to move between locations.
 - Monitors could stay in one location or one at home, one at UMN workstation.



- Technology inventory will be included as part of the flexible work arrangement approval between supervisor and employee. Inventory practices will be designed and coordinated with CBS-RLT.
- Employees are responsible for establishing, paying for, and maintaining an adequate remote workspace that minimizes interruptions and distractions that would affect work performance.
 - Employee expenses for remote work (UMN purchasing guidelines)
 - Seating (stools, chairs, etc.)
 - Desk
 - Additional workstation items as preferred (i.e. headphones)
- The employee is responsible for Internet and phone connection when working remotely. (Work. With Flexibility. Preliminary Guidelines)
 - Employees who regularly answer phone calls are encouraged to consider switching to the University's remote telecommunications option, [Clearspan](#). This option will maintain your University phone number.

Documentation and approval

- Supervisors should work with their employees to evaluate the nature of work, discuss preferences and limitations of flexible work arrangements, and review stakeholder needs and expectations.
- It is expected that flexible work productivity levels will match on-campus expectations.
- Flexible work arrangements should be documented and approved by the supervisor and signed by the employee.
 - Documentation should specify the flexible time and/or space agreement, expectations related to performance and communication, any changes needed to workstation technology, and a timeline to review the flexible work arrangement.
 - Departments/units are encouraged to use the templates provided by the Office of Human Resources or a department-specific form.
 - [Non-exempt/Hourly flexible work template](#)
 - [Exempt/Salaried flexible work template](#)
 - [Teams - flexible work tracking template](#)
- Job descriptions will be reviewed annually and updated to include flexible work language.
 - Requests to hire will include a review of flexible work options and options will be explicitly stated in the job description.



- CBS expects employees to reside in Minnesota or neighboring states, exceptions may apply. Colleges and units will be required to request an exception for new hires and existing employees who wish to reside out of state or beyond neighboring states. (Work. With Flexibility. Preliminary Guidelines)
- The University's Work. With Flexibility. Guidelines will inform CBS practice and dictate:
 - Working outside of Minnesota
 - Employment law
 - Unemployment
 - International work
 - Worker's compensation
 - Flexible work and disability accommodations
 - Fair labor standards and timekeeping
 - Care-giving considerations

Questions

Questions related to the CBS Flexible Work Guidelines can be directed to cbsdeans@umn.edu.

Questions related to workstation technology can be directed to cbs-rlt@umn.edu.

University Resources

z.umn.edu/WorkWithFlexibility

- [Work. With Flexibility. Preliminary Guidelines](#)
- [UMN Purchasing Guidance](#)
- [Disability Resource Center](#)
- [Non-exempt/Hourly flexible work template](#)
- [Exempt/Salaried flexible work template](#)
- [Teams - flexible work tracking template](#)

