

Guidance from the Office of Human Resources on COVID-19

March 9, 2020

Flexibility Regarding Working From Home

Stevens advises its managers to exercise flexibility with regards to employee requests to work from home or time off during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This flexibility will help control for the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus. Employees should be offered every opportunity to work from home. Once a determination is made that a flexible work arrangement is feasible, supervisors should determine:

- The job duties that will be performed during flexible work arrangement hours;
- The expected work schedule and work hours including availability for calls, if needed;
- How necessary communications will be maintained;
- Potential problem areas and plan for how to handle those problems;
- How safety and security of sensitive data are to be maintained.

Extreme flexibility should be afforded to high risk employees, such as those that are pregnant, have compromised immune systems or underlying medical conditions or older adults. These employees should be prioritized for flexible work from home arrangements or, if they are unable to work from home, they will be placed on administrative leave.

A flexible work arrangement may be discontinued by the supervisor or the employee with or without notice. The arrangement will be reviewed when the University determines that the emergency has come to an end.

Employees Unable to Work From Home

If the employee cannot work from home because of the nature of their job and are at high risk of infection and complications from the COVID-19 based on CDC guidance, the employee will be placed on “Administrative Leave” and continue to receive their pay. Faculty will follow their current practice regarding time out of the classroom.

If You or A Family Member are Sick

Please stay home if you are ill and inform your supervisor.

An employee who is experiencing a serious health condition or who requires time to care for a family member who is experiencing a serious health condition may be entitled to job-protected leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or the NJ Family Leave Act (NJFLA). Employees should contact the Division of Human Resources for more information.

Accounting for Time Away from Stevens

1. Employees will continue to account for absences in accordance with existing policies and practices for the use of sick, vacation, personal or all-purpose days (Union employees only), also known as “allocated time off.” Employees do not need to provide

a doctor's note for absences of three or more consecutive days, as required by current policy.

2. Employees are expected to notify their supervisor prior to any absence in accordance with University policy and departmental procedures.
3. Supervisors are encouraged to support an employees' decision to stay home if they are sick, thereby minimizing the spread of illness.
4. For high risk employees with an identified threat in their local area, such as pregnant employees, employees with underlying medical conditions or compromised immune systems or older employee, supervisors are encouraged to support flexible work from home arrangements. If the employee cannot work from home due to the nature of their job duties, the employee will be placed on "administrative leave" and continue to receive pay until further notice.
5. If an employee needs to take time off to care for a child whose school or childcare provider is closed due to a public health emergency, the employee can use sick leave to account for their absence.
6. If all available allocated time off is exhausted, an employee can request an advance of up to two weeks of vacation by submitting a request (with supervisor approval) to the Division of Human Resources. Once those two weeks have been exhausted, employees can request for approved unpaid leave by submitting a request to the Division of Human Resources.