

**WORK**  
*Reimagined*

**PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES**

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## INTRODUCTION

UCI will be establishing a reimagined work environment, one that emphasizes *how* we work regardless of *where* we work, while supporting core in-person service hours and days to maintain a thriving campus. This will create new dynamics for staff and leaders to navigate requiring different skills, mindsets, and behaviors. UCI's culture, community, and technology will need to keep staff connected regardless of the physical distance between them. People, processes, and technology will need to be coordinated in unison to create a successful, sustainable, and flexible work environment. Work Reimagined, UCI's approach to flexible work, addresses these new needs and helps to prepare and plan for space utilization needs in our future.

Flexible work is multi-dimensional. It extends beyond work location and includes alternative schedules and appointment types. Outcome-driven flexible work can expand services, support staff wellbeing, save space and money, and enable the university to compete for and retain talent. Work Reimagined will be one of the most impactful paths we lay toward Our Brilliant Future and the achievement of our strategic plan.

While these actions will prepare UCI to navigate current and future staffing needs, the dynamics are complex. We anticipate challenges throughout implementation and adoption. There will always be tension as we balance serving the needs of our students, patients, faculty, and community, while aspiring to meet the expectations of existing and future staff. Not all jobs can be offered the same level or type of flexibility, although we can apply standardized criteria and processes. There will always be higher personal expenses, or "cost-of-work" for staff that are required to be on-site. Every staff member is in a unique situation and has diverse needs and expectations, so the focus of the approach will be to achieve fairness of process, not sameness of outcomes.

This document highlights the actions schools, units, leaders, and staff will take to establish a flexible work environment and maintain a vibrant community across UCI.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles for flexible work offer a foundation for specific procedures and implementation decisions. Moving forward, we must ensure that our flexible work practices:

- Balance needs of the organization and staff
- Align with evolving workforce trends to attract and retain talent
- Increase a culture of community and belonging

Flexible work provides an opportunity to support our academic mission, student success, and patient care while encouraging a people-first approach across our culture. Principles and guidelines governing flexible work are set at the enterprise level. Specific decisions about guideline application and implementation are made at the school and administrative unit level.

The process by which flexible work arrangements are made will be consistent. The outcomes, however, will differ because the needs of each unit, and the function of each job, differ across the enterprise. Options offered to represented staff will be determined by collective bargaining agreements.

Flexible Work Arrangements ARE:	Flexible Work Arrangements ARE NOT:
Varying in when, where, and/or how work is done	The same for every type of job
Aligned to student, faculty, patient, and staff needs	An entitlement, guaranteed, a reward, or a replacement for dependent care
Consistently applied within units using standard criteria	Based on leader preferences, secret arrangements, or special deals
Focused on the long-term rather than the short-term	Applicable only during crises

Taking the guiding principles into account, UCI will be implementing core in-person service hours across the campus (excluding the UCI Health clinical departments) during the academic year to ensure customer needs can be fulfilled while offering staff flexibility.

**Core in-person hours are at minimum Monday through Thursday from 9am to 4pm Pacific, with an hour closure for lunch.**

During the academic year, departments with walk-in service desks/windows, welcome and reception areas, and other customer-facing facilities should have staff present on-site during core in-person service hours. Departments should have staff present beyond the minimum core service hours in alignment with their customer’s unique needs and expectations. For example, units should have in-person hours on Friday if that is a reasonable expectation of their client/customer base. Units with a main reception area for an entire building can leverage that

one reception area, versus requiring all department reception areas to be staffed during core hours. Units with multiple reception/service desks may consider consolidating them into one location, when possible, (e.g., the Dean's office.) If the unit does not provide in-person services, departments should provide clear instructions on how to contact the appropriate staff member(s), with multiple contact methods available (e.g., phone, email, website).

It is important to note that core in-person service hours are not a reduction of the workweek or hours. The workweek remains at forty (40) hours per week. Individual start and end times may vary to meet business coverage and personal needs. Unit leaders are responsible for determining coverage and staffing schedules.

## DEFINITIONS

<p><b>Work Locations</b></p>	<p><b>On-Site:</b> A UCI-controlled property. On-site locations include dedicated and other available space (e.g., hotel space, collaborative space, etc.).</p> <p><b>Remote:</b> A non-UCI-controlled property.</p> <p><b>Assigned Workspace:</b> Workspace that is assigned to and actively occupied by a specific staff member.</p> <p><b>Hotel Space:</b> Unassigned workspace that is available for use on a temporary basis.</p>
<p><b>Operating Hours</b></p>	<p><b>Standard Business Hours:</b> Monday to Friday, between 8am and 5pm Pacific Time.</p> <p><b>Non-Standard Business Hours:</b> Operating hours beyond the traditional business week and hours (e.g., evening, weekends).</p> <p><b>Core In-Person Service Hours:</b> Core service hours for units with in-person services are Monday - Thursday from 9am to 4pm Pacific Time.</p> <p><b>Extended In-Person Service Hours:</b> Service hours offered beyond core in-person service hours (e.g., early morning or evening service hours).</p> <p><b>Seasonal Hours:</b> Alternate operating hours for a short duration of time (e.g., half-day Fridays during summer and end of the calendar year).</p> <p><b>Workweek:</b> A workweek for non-exempt staff is generally a fixed period of seven consecutive 24-hour periods. A workweek for a full-time exempt employee is generally considered to be 40 hours.</p>
<p><b>Individual Work Arrangements</b></p>	<p><b>Standard Schedule:</b> A work schedule aligned to the regular operating hours for the school or unit.</p> <p><b>Flexible Schedule:</b> An alternative work schedule that differs from standard start and stop times for the unit (e.g., 6am – 3pm, 9am-6pm, or split schedule).</p> <p><b>Compressed Work Schedule/Workweek:</b> An alternative work schedule that equals 40-hours/week (e.g., 4 days-40 hours, 9 days-80 hours).</p> <p><b>On-Site Staff:</b> Primary job functions are performed at a UCI-controlled location due to the proximity to students, patients, faculty, facilities, equipment, or resources.</p> <p><b>Remote Staff:</b> Primary job functions are performed at a remote work location.</p> <p><b>Hybrid Staff:</b> Primary job functions are performed at on-site and remote locations.</p> <p><b>Out-of-State Staff (domestic):</b> A type of remote staff who resides and performs job functions outside of the state of California, within the United States.</p> <p><b>Job Sharing:</b> A split of job responsibilities and compensation between two individuals.</p>

## REIMAGINE THE WORK EXPERIENCE

UCI has leveraged the lessons learned throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and practices developed during the Future of Work pilot to establish the principles and guidelines for Work Reimagined.

Work location is just one dimension of flexible work arrangements. Advances in technology have enabled staff to communicate and connect without being tethered to immobile office equipment and a dedicated workspace. The same technology has allowed staff to perform their duties outside of normal business hours. Increasing emphasis on staff physical and mental wellbeing allows both staff and employer to strike a better balance between work and life commitments.

Such a multi-dimensional view of where work is performed, when it is performed, and how it is performed provides UCI the opportunity to offer flexible work options to all staff members.

### Criteria for Determining Flexible Work Arrangements

UCI's work strategy depends on many factors, including school/unit mission, objectives, services, service hours, clients, and university policies, procedures, and guidelines. Schools and administrative units will make decisions about flexible work implementation according to the guidelines set at the enterprise level. The guidelines and criteria for determining flexible work arrangements are defined in the [Toolkit for Remote Work Guidelines and Checklists](#) website along with a range of relevant resources.

- Schools and administrative units will apply flexible work practices consistently across their organizations. Work Reimagined processes and materials are to be used to document factors considered and how flexible decisions are made.
- The supervisor determines if flexible work is a viable option for the staff member and the position by considering factors including, but not limited to, the mission of the unit/department, job responsibilities, flexible work arrangement practices established by the school/unit, access to equipment necessary to perform the work, cost effectiveness, scheduling, space allocation, staff status and performance.
- Updates to [Remote Work Agreements](#) are only required when there is a change in a staff member's work location or termination of arrangement. Changes in schedules or location frequency may be agreed upon between a staff member and supervisor and do not require an updated Remote Work Agreement. Any changes to represented staff work location or schedule should be reviewed by Workforce Relations.
- Staff location and off-site location frequency will be documented in a centralized database provided by Human Resources via ServiceNow at the launch of [Work Reimagined](#). Updates will be needed when changes to work location or location frequency occur.

- If a staff member disagrees with a remote work decision, they may seek a reconsideration process to review the process and criteria that a school or administrative unit used to make their decisions. The reconsideration process will first be handled through a local review process (e.g., local Human Resources and local leadership). If after reconsideration, the staff is still seeking further review, HR Policy and Compliance may review the decision for any issues of process consistency and equity.

## Work Locations

Some job functions can only be performed on-site due to proximity to students, patients, faculty, facilities, equipment, or resources, as well as restrictions within bargaining agreements. Other types of work can be performed on-site or at remote locations.

*There have always been out-of-pocket expenses incurred by staff associated with work, regardless of work location. This was not a situation created by the pandemic. Thus, we will maintain our current expense and reimbursement policies [Business and Finance Bulletin G-46 Guidelines](#).*

Staff who regularly work one or more days remotely are required to have an approved remote work agreement in place. [CA Staff Remote Work Agreement](#)

Exempt staff may work remotely outside of California (within the United States) after review and approval from unit leader and HR Policy and Compliance, and completion of Out-of-State checklist and Agreement. [Out of State Work Toolkit](#)

*Non-exempt staff working out-of-state on an approved flexible work agreement prior to October 1, 2022 may continue working out of state at the discretion of their supervisor and HR. After September 30, 2022, non-exempt staff who are not already working out of state will not be allowed to work out-of-state.*

Exempt and non-exempt staff are not permitted to work internationally.

All job postings will need to include information about the work location and available flexible work arrangement options.

## Operating Hours and Staff Schedule Options

Each school and unit will revisit their client’s evolving needs and attempt to realign their in-person services and operating hours accordingly. Staffing core in-person service hours (Monday – Thursday, 9am – 4pm Pacific) and looking beyond traditional business hours may lead to better service through more engaged staff and may be an opportunity to provide flexibility for staff who must perform their work on-site. Schools and units have the autonomy to establish staffing models and schedules that cover core in-person service hours and additional operational hours.

*Schools and units with multiple in-person reception or service areas may consider establishing a unit-wide welcome desk that operates during core in-person service areas.*

Flexible schedule options should be considered for those with limited workplace location flexibility. Options include:

- Compressed work schedule/workweek
- Flexible schedules or split shifts
- Implementing seasonal operational hours
- Providing coverage utilizing different appointment types (e.g., part-time, job sharing)

Units are encouraged to consider exploring different appointment types defined within PPSM-3 to attract talent that might otherwise not seek employment at UCI (e.g.; more part-time staff, job sharing).

## Redesign the Workspace for Connecting

Units are encouraged to work with Space Planning and the Office of Information Technology to design workspaces for flexibility and short-term use in mind, not stationary office technology like physical phones and desktop computers. Aim to design space that promotes collaboration and connectivity (e.g., open floor plan, meeting areas) while providing room for individual space and sensitive conversations (e.g., huddle rooms, alcoves).

*Staff who work less than 3 days per week on-site are not assigned dedicated workspace. Hotel spaces and other communal workspace should be made available to those who work primarily off-site.*

- Consider “neighborhood-based” workspace layouts that include shared workspace for collaboration, some cubicles for individual time, and some fully enclosed huddle rooms for personal or sensitive conversations. Include both modular elements like whiteboards, tables, and chairs on casters and fixed furnishings.

- Include additional flexible space that can be used to promote staff wellness and inclusiveness (e.g., stretch breaks, quiet time, etc.).
- Some hotel spaces should be equipped with special ergonomic features (e.g., adjustable height desk, desk chair with lumbar support, adjustable keyboard trays, good lighting).  
[Requirements for Hoteling and Shared Workstations](#)
- Refine recently implemented technology to improve the in-person and remote experience:
  - Upgrade to Smart Conference Rooms and modular non-mounted controls for Zoom Rooms.
  - Add multiple screens in meeting rooms for visual flexibility.
  - Make additional investments in 360-degree cameras, connected whiteboards, and additional virtual workspace platforms.
  - Maximize collaborative technology, such as Microsoft Office 365 and Teams while implementing additional collaboration and work planning applications.

To assist future efforts to understand our space utilization, departments will be required to perform a one-time update of staff location and remote work frequency values within ServiceNow. Subsequent updates are only needed when there are changes to work location or location frequency. Instructions will be provided to department leaders and Human Resources.

*Ensuring accurate tracking of staff work location frequency will enable us to observe trends, estimate space impacts, assess flexible work progress, and adjust program recommendations going forward as the hybrid workforce evolves.*

## The On-Site/Remote Experience

Leaders are expected to adopt additional team management best practices regardless of their team’s operating schedule. It is up to leaders to ensure that if requiring on-site work, it is to promote interpersonal interactions and moments that are best suited for when people meet in person.

### When Staff are On-Site

- The on-site schedule for department/unit leadership needs to match or exceed the schedule of on-site teams, colleagues, and students.
- On-site time should be focused on in-person collaboration and interactions. Incorporate elements of staff recognition and team building.
- Avoid on-site days filled with Zoom calls or individual tasks that can be performed just as effectively remotely.
- Restructure meetings by hosting stand-up huddles to keep meetings short; walking meetings to get outdoors. These are particularly useful for one-on-one or two-on-one meetings.
- On-site staff should not be alone or feel isolated when on-site.
- Units with non-traditional operating hours or limited on-site staffing should work with Public Safety to address concerns about staff and property security and safety.

### For Hybrid and Remote Staff

- Establish and plan for anchor days when leaders designate days when most staff are expected to work on-site. Ensure anchor days include in-person meetings, collaboration, recognition, and networking opportunities.
- Find ways to connect with hybrid and remote staff to grow team relationships regularly. For example, build social activities into your regular workweek, (e.g., team coffee breaks, games, professional development).
- Optimize task assignments and work schedules to help improve work-life balance.
- Create mindful meeting calendar schedules. Schedule meetings that create short breaks (e.g., 25- or 50-minute meetings), keep the lunch hour free, and allow for start-up and wrap-up time at the beginning and end of the day. Consider establishing meeting-free Fridays for professional development, project work, catch-up on tasks, etc. Provide reminders to take breaks and schedule time off.

## CREATE A PEOPLE-CENTRIC CULTURE

In an environment where staff and colleagues are distributed across multiple locations, a people-centric and inclusive culture is what keeps staff connected and performing. Leaders will need to make the culture of their teams a priority as with any important business goal. They set the tone and expectations for cultural shifts. They should role model behaviors that reinforce an inclusive approach to leading and an authentic sense of caring about staff wellbeing.

### Intentional Culture Change

In addition to guidance provided in the prior section, leaders are expected to incorporate additional strategies to ensure staff feel included and engaged.

#### Additional Strategies for Leaders

In addition to guidance provided in the prior section, leaders are expected to incorporate additional strategies to ensure staff feel included and engaged.

- Create more opportunities to listen to staff and ensure they feel heard. Schedule more frequent informal one-on-one meetings to check in.
- Leaders of non-represented staff are expected to complete three [ACHIEVE check-ins](#) per year with each staff member.
- Give staff opportunities to vent frustrations in a safe environment. Bring in HR or Ombuds to listen, as needed.
- Hold skip-level meetings (one-on-one meetings that managers hold with staff other than the people they manage directly), if applicable.
- Provide opportunities for unscheduled connections with staff by offering regular office hours (both in-person and virtually).
- Sponsor virtual gatherings that pull staff from different units or outside the department.
- Share information with staff about resources and activities available as a UC/UCI employee, including tools and resources for hybrid and remote staff: [Resources for Staff](#).
- Create more opportunities to recognize and communicate broadly with employees by regularly sharing business, operational, and people updates (e.g., anchor days).
- Ensure everyone gets an opportunity to speak and contribute to meetings.
- Review how work is assigned to ensure certain projects are not designated only for on-site workers.
- Implement work and task management tools to manage outcomes instead of monitoring staff activity and actions.

Additional Tools and Resources for leaders can be found here: [Resources for Leaders](#).

## Focus on Staff Wellbeing

Leaders should demonstrate a commitment to staff wellbeing by clearly supporting wellbeing programs and flexible work arrangements. Leaders should encourage team members to become wellness ambassadors, sign up for wellness emails and practice self-care.

To help leaders foster a culture of wellbeing, UCI HR Wellness has created the [Manager Wellbeing Toolkit](#). This toolkit includes resources to support your overall wellbeing in addition to increasing wellbeing within your teams.

Showing your support for wellbeing can be as easy as using an out of office message like this one when on vacation:

*“Time away from the office is essential and an important way to rest, recalibrate, and remain at our best. I will be out of the office without access to email from [date] through [date]. Please consider resending your email after [date]. If your need is urgent, any of my amazing teammates will be able to assist. You may contact [name] at [email] for [type of service] or [name] at [email] for [type of service]. For scheduling assistance, please contact [name] at [email].”*

We have many other resources and Toolkits available for mental health and overall wellbeing.

- Resources for overall wellbeing are found here: [UCI Wellness](#)
- Resources for virtual wellbeing are found here: [Virtual Wellbeing](#)
- Working Well Remotely Webinars: [Working Well Remotely Webinars](#)
- Pre-recorded webinars on remote and hybrid work wellbeing are found here: [Wellbeing Webinars](#)

## EMBRACE WORK REIMAGINED

Statements of support for Work Reimagined and flexible work arrangements should be made across all levels of leadership to set clear cultural, operational, and experiential expectations.

After UCI-wide communications from the Chancellor and Provost supporting Work Reimagined, schools and unit leadership will initiate their implementation and communication plans. HR will provide support to school/unit leadership with additional program details, tools, processes, and next steps/expectations.

### Unit or School Responsibilities

- Each school/administrative unit will reconvene its Future of Work Pilot committee to review updated guidelines. Identify a Work Reimagined Project Manager for the unit.
  - Implementation teams continue to reinforce that unit operational goals are the foundation for flexible work arrangements.
- Identify changes to services and workforce plans in alignment with the updated guidelines.
- Communicate changes and benefits to staff and key stakeholders. Schedule on-going staff and key stakeholder meetings supporting implementation, communicating progress, etc.

HR will provide on-going consultation and support to unit implementation teams throughout the planning and implementation process to ensure the program's processes and guidelines are being followed.

## ENHANCE LEADER AND STAFF SKILLS

New and existing training, resources, and tools are being identified to address the specific situations leaders and staff will face when working together as a distributed team. Additional content sources (e.g., vendors and partners) are being established to build out the programming specified below. The training will be delivered virtually via Zoom and on-demand through the UC Learning Center (UCLC) to allow for greater access and availability.

### Leadership Skills for a Flexible Work Environment

All leaders are strongly encouraged to attend their respective [Leadership Success Programs](#) as soon as possible to acquire foundational leadership skills. For leaders who have attended one of the Leadership Success Programs, additional training programs, outlined below, are being designed to support the implementation of a flexible work environment.

<p><b>Leading in a Flexible Work Environment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shifting Leadership Mindsets from Pandemic to Permanent</li> <li>• Realign Your Team’s Culture to Purpose</li> <li>• Establishing/Reestablishing Expectations</li> <li>• Include Everyone</li> <li>• Leading with Trust and Managing Through Performance; Role Model Your Expectations</li> <li>• Leading with Empathy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communicating Effectively in a Flexible Work Environment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating Team Communication Norms and Processes</li> <li>• Holding Effective and Inclusive Meetings (in-person and virtually)</li> <li>• Having Meaningful Check-Ins and One-on-Ones</li> <li>• Learning to Listen, Hearing What People Say</li> <li>• Have Courageous Conversations</li> <li>• Navigating Distributed Team Dynamics</li> </ul>
<p><b>Managing Staff Schedules in a Flexible Work Environment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding Opportunities to Gather and Connect</li> <li>• On-Site Staff Scheduling</li> </ul>
<p><b>Maximizing Performance in a Flexible Work Environment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting and ACHIEVEing Goals</li> <li>• Peak Performance</li> <li>• Addressing Performance Issues</li> </ul>

HR will work with unit/school leadership and HR Business Partners/Campus Personnel Officers to roll out training and support workshops to leaders within their respective areas.

Additional resources for leaders in a flexible work environment are found here: [Tools & Resources](#)

## Staff Skills for a Flexible Work Environment

Staff will also be provided with resources to thrive in a flexible work environment. They will need to be more self-driven and accountable, especially when working remotely. Team members on different schedules will need to establish effective ways to collaborate and connect synchronously and asynchronously to accomplish tasks with joint responsibilities or dependencies. Lastly, a successful flexible work environment heavily relies on technology. All staff will need to be able to troubleshoot and navigate basic technical challenges (e.g., Internet/Wi-Fi connection issues, computer peripheral issues, conference room technology).

New training programs, outlined below, are being designed to support the implementation of a flexible work environment.

<b>Self-Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accountability</li><li>• Communications/collaboration skills</li><li>• Agility and resilience</li><li>• Time management</li></ul>
<b>Basic Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Basic Internet understanding and connectivity proficiency (on-site and remotely)</li><li>• Additional training on Zoom upgraded Smart Conference Rooms</li><li>• Additional training on Office 365 collaboration features</li></ul>

## SCHOOL/UNIT LEADER PLAN & TIMELINE

Action	Date
Preview Work Reimagined materials shared in advance of formal communications	August 2022
Review Work Reimagined communications from Chancellor	August 2022
Review Work Reimagined website, materials, toolkits	August 2022
Review the Work Reimagined Principles & Guidance document	August 2022
Reconvene unit's Future of Work Pilot committee to complete the Work Reimagined Implementation Workbook	September 2022
Schedule planning sessions with HR	As needed
Attend Work Reimagined Town Hall, encouraging others to attend	September 14 <sup>th</sup>
Communicate school or unit level commitment to flexible work to all staff	September 2022
Update your plan for managing change	September 2022
Leaders communicate any updated work arrangements and schedule changes to teams.	September 2022
Leaders at all levels hold meetings with staff to reinforce Work Reimagined concepts and set operational and cultural expectations	Late September
Work with HR for on-going implementation support	As needed
Leaders and staff complete newly assigned training programs on managing and leading in a flexible work environment	Available in UCLC beginning September 2022
Update ServiceNow with staff primary work location and location frequency value	October 2022