

**Southwestern University**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Procedure Guidelines for Staff Members to Request Remote or  
Other Alternative Work Arrangements for Fall, 2020  
Due to a Medical-Based Issue Related to COVID-19 (“Procedures”)**

Q: Why was the emergency period under the Emergency Pay Policy and Procedures ended?

A: The primary reason is because the University has made the decision to resume regular operations for the fall.

Q: Which staff members are covered by these Procedures?

A: Staff members who are employed by the University during the fall.

Q: If I have already been working remotely due to a medical-based issue related to COVID-19 which was approved under the Emergency Pay Policy, do I still have to go through these Procedures?

A: Yes, if you wish to be considered for continued remote work (or other work arrangements). Remember that the University expects that all departments/offices will be open and operational no later than August 24, 2020. This may mean that the remote (or other alternative work arrangements) currently in place may need to be changed. If you continue to have a medical-based issue related to COVID-19, these Procedures will help to document your specific issue and, hopefully, will help the University to approve a continued remote or other alternative work arrangement for you in the fall.

Q: What if I’ve been working remotely since the Stay at Home order was issued back in March and never did notify anyone that I (or a member of my household) have medical-based high-risk factors related to COVID-19? Since I was able to work remotely, it did not seem necessary to go through that process, and I have not been ill.

A: That is not a problem. The Emergency Pay Policy did not require you to self-identify as having high-risk factors if you were able to conduct your work remotely. Now, though, it is possible that some remote or other alternative work arrangements may need to be changed as the campus resumes regular operations. The Procedures provide a way for you to apply for continued remote or other alternative work arrangements and also to identify yourself

(confidentially) as someone who has medical-related high-risk factors related to COVID-19. We definitely want to ensure a safe work environment for all campus members and do what we can to provide work alternatives if possible.

Q: How is this different from requesting a Family and Medical Leave or an Americans With Disabilities request for accommodation?

A: The Procedures are intended to provide a process that will hopefully result in the ability to resolve remote or other alternative work arrangement requests without the more lengthy process required under the formal FMLA or ADA processes.

Q: What happens if my request is denied?

A: If your request is denied, you will be expected to report to work as scheduled by your immediate supervisor.

Q: How long is each request approved for?

A: Generally, approval under these Procedures is for the fall semester only.

Q: Can I request an on-going remote or other alternative work arrangement - not just the fall semester?

A: Not at this time. It is possible that the University will either provide another opportunity to apply for remote or other alternative work arrangements for the spring, or to formalize a Telecommuting Policy. The University will monitor the COVID-19 situation as the fall semester unfolds.

Q: Why is this only for medical based requests?

A: The University wants to ensure a safe work environment for all campus members and understands that for staff members with medical-based issues related to COVID-19, their personal health as well as the work they perform for the University may be hampered by those issues.

Q: What happens if I am unable to obtain child care services for my child(ren)?

A: Unfortunately, the inability to obtain child care services does not qualify for special consideration outside of the department's plans for staggered or rotating schedules. In some

cases, this will resolve the issue. It is also possible that you could discuss the possibility of a [Flextime Schedule](#) with your supervisor, if that might help your situation.

Q: What happens if my position cannot be performed remotely?

A: It is possible that other alternative work arrangements or a Flextime schedule can be considered, depending on the position's primary duties.

Q: What kind of alternative work arrangements (other than remote work) are there?

A: There are a variety of alternatives, including staggered schedules and rotating schedules, Flextime Schedules, as well as other possible options that you might propose for consideration.

Q: I will need additional equipment/training to work from home. How do I request and receive this?

A: Your first step will be to discuss this with your immediate supervisor, who will check budget availability and obtain the appropriate approvals for possible purchases.

Q: If I apply for a remote or alternative work arrangement, but it is not approved, but my medical-based reason IS approved, what happens?

A: You may need to immediately consider whether to apply for leave under other University policies or consider other options - such as Family and Medical Leave. If you do, you should contact the Human Resources department for further discussion of their options.

*For further assistance, please contact the Human Resources Department at Ext. 1435*