

Staff Work Environment Guidance for Summer and Fall 2021

The guidance in this document is intended to help university officers and their delegates make informed decisions about the best work environment for their staff as the campus begins to loosen the COVID-19 restrictions put in place a year ago. This guidance is based upon the following assumptions:

By summer semester,

- Public health authorities will have relaxed or rescinded public health orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, it assumes there will be fewer limitations on gatherings, no social distance or mask requirements, and no surveillance testing.
- Vaccinations will be readily available to all employees and students who want them.
- Enhanced cleaning protocols and HVAC optimization will continue for the summer and fall semester.

Summer and fall mark a likely transition to a post pandemic environment, not an abrupt return to “normal”. Accordingly, departments should maintain some flexibility in determining if, how, and when they implement the varied approaches to work discussed below. Particular consideration should be given to caregivers whose options may still be limited as a result of care facilities not reopening consistent with our campus timeline.

Summer and fall also provide an opportunity to implement hybrid work pilots to test the success of a work arrangement and to make adjustments before adopting new work arrangements long term.

Please note, in the unlikely event our community experiences a new COVID-19 wave in the summer or fall, we have tools in place to guide the campus response at that time.

Guiding Principles

The following **Guiding Principles** have been adopted by the campus and provide criteria against which unit decisions should be assessed. The optimal work environment should:

- Advance the mission of the campus and affected units
- Enhance and not detract from the student experience or research and creative work
- Include planning for impact on diversity, equity and inclusion
- Include planning for impact on sense of place, community and affinity
- Increase/maintain hiring, engagement and retention
- Support the health & wellness of our community
- Support responsible stewardship of resources
- Cultivate a work culture built on trust and productivity

Guidance for Officers, College, Institute and School Leadership, Administrators and Supervisors

University officers have the discretion to delegate the authority to decide if individual employees work on campus, remotely, or a combination of both (hybrid model), and whether to temporarily or permanently reallocate space (see below), to the leadership of units within their organization, including institutes, schools, departments, programs, and other administrative units. The officer and their delegates remain ultimately responsible for the equitable allocation of the modality and space arrangements of their employees.

The primary consideration in making this determination is the impact the work arrangement has on the employee's ability to perform their job in a way that supports the mission of the campus and the unit.

Officers also need to balance the unit's ability to accomplish their mission with the critical role staff play in creating a welcoming, vibrant campus environment for our students, and a shared sense of community on campus that has been lacking over the last year. Officers should account for impact to the sense of community and the student experience in determining work arrangements for their units.

When prioritizing which employees should work on campus, supervisors should consult the guiding principles above and also consider whether:

- The employee's job duties support the health and welfare of students, faculty, and staff and/or support the academic, research, creative work or programmatic needs of students and/or the on-campus student, faculty and staff experience, or
- The duties support mission-critical work including primarily faculty and staff who support on-campus research and creative work or in-person teaching. This includes staff who must be physically present on campus to support teaching and learning, information technology and building and campus maintenance.

Flexibility in Location Limited for Summer and Fall

As supervisors consider allowing employees to work more flexibly and potentially from locations other than their assigned office or current residence, care should be given to discuss the fluid nature of careers on campus. In a healthy and innovative organization like CU Boulder, jobs change and the requirements of where, when, and how work gets done change too.

Accordingly, employees and supervisors should not assume that remote work arrangements for summer or fall will automatically become permanent.

Resources to Guide Supervisors in Work Environment Planning

In addition to the criteria and Guiding Principles above, the tools below are intended to help unit leadership outline the optimal work environment for their unit and provide guardrails for success. **While practices and standards within a unit should be applied consistently, unit practices and standards across campus can and will differ.**

[Summer/ Fall Transition Guidance](#)

[Remote Work Questionnaire](#)

[Remote Work Agreement Template](#)

[Staff Work Modality Tracker](#)

[Work Schedules Template - Google Sheet](#)

[Work Schedules Template - Excel Template](#)

Meetings and Required Gatherings

The past year has taught us that meeting virtually is a successful alternative to on-campus meetings and there are benefits associated with virtual meetings such as efficiencies of time and resources. We have also learned that connecting in person matters. Therefore, supervisors, in consultation with their upline and with reasonable notice, may require occasional in-person on-campus meetings regardless of whether some or all employees work remotely, allowing of course for documented medical exceptions and in compliance with the ADA and FMLA. No exception exists simply because someone is unvaccinated.

Where it is appropriate to hold hybrid meetings, those meetings in which some participants are in person and others are remote, it is a best practice to require all participants, whether on campus or remote, to connect electronically via zoom, teams, etc.

Employees are expected to participate in campus sponsored meetings and training in whatever format the organizer sets.

Other Considerations

With officer or delegate approval, supervisors have flexibility to temporarily or permanently reassign an individual's on-campus office space or to create shared on-campus space where a private office existed prior. Reasonable notice of at least two weeks should be provided if possible. Please update the Space Optimization Office with any changes to your spaces including assignments, change of use (e.g. from office to conference room) or change in configuration.

Technology, furniture and equipment will continue to be allocated in the manner that is currently in place for each department. Each department is responsible for providing, funding, and tracking of office furniture and computer and related equipment under current protocols until further notice. Employees are personally responsible for ensuring adequate internet connectivity and appropriate space to conduct remote work.

Classified staff are required by the Colorado Constitution to reside in the state of Colorado but they may work remotely from other states temporarily.

We will continue to build on this communication as new information becomes available and as new tools, processes, policies and training are developed.

For questions, please see <https://www.colorado.edu/hr> or contact Human Resources Employee Relations at [Employee Relations](#).