



## **Remote and Flexible Work Policy**

### **I. Policy Statement**

The purpose of this Policy is to establish standards and processes for remote and flexible work arrangements that meet WPI's operational needs and are consistent with the core principles set forth in this Policy.

WPI recognizes that offering remote and flexible work options has the potential to improve job satisfaction, enhance employee recruitment and retention, optimize building and space planning and achieve a more fulfilling work/life balance, while continuing to support WPI's vibrant and inclusive culture. WPI encourages employees and managers to explore the remote and flexible work options described in this Policy.

Employees and managers considering remote and flexible work arrangements should consult this Policy, WPI's Flexible & Remote Work Guidelines, and WPI's template FlexWork Agreement.

### **II. Scope**

This Policy applies to all non-faculty WPI employees. This Policy does not apply to (1) faculty; (2) student workers; or (3) employees subject to a collective bargaining agreement.

### **III. Definitions**

***“Remote Work”*** means that all job functions are performed off-campus, typically at home, for a designated period of time (e.g., a partial or full workday).

***“Flexible Work”*** means that an employee works on-campus or remotely with a non-traditional work schedule. Flexible Work arrangements may include, but are not limited to:

- **Flexible Hours**. The employee works a set schedule that may deviate from “traditional” business hours.
  - Example for full-time exempt employees: working 10:00 AM-7:00 PM instead of 8:00 AM-5:00 PM.
  - Example for full-time hourly employees: working 10:00 AM-6:30 PM instead of 8:00 AM-4:30 PM.
- **Compressed Workweek**. The employee's standard weekly hours are worked in fewer days.



- Example for full-time exempt employees (40 hours/week): Working four ten-hour days.
- Example for full-time hourly employees (37 ½ hours/week): Working three ten-hour days and one 7 ½ hour day.

In this Policy, “*FlexWork*” means any non-traditional work arrangement that includes any combination of Remote Work and/or Flexible Work.

- Example: The employee works two days from home from 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM and three days on campus from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

#### **IV. Policy**

##### **A. Core Principles**

This Policy is based upon the following core principles:

1. FlexWork Should Promote Positive Work Experiences. In a contemporary workspace, employees view alternative work arrangements as a benefit that should promote a healthy work/life balance. FlexWork should also enhance WPI’s ability to retain and recruit talent.
2. FlexWork is Not Suitable for Every Job. While many jobs may be amenable to FlexWork arrangements, certain jobs are primarily student- or customer-facing and may require in-person interactions to be most effective. Other jobs can only be performed on campus or during normal business hours.
3. FlexWork Supports and Should Not Diminish WPI’s Vibrant and Inclusive Culture. WPI prides itself on the importance of in-person connections with students, colleagues, and the broader WPI community. Although FlexWork arrangements may be a different way of working, all employees will continue to contribute to a vibrant, in-person community.
4. FlexWork Depends on Training, Technology and Manager Support. Training, technology and manager support are key elements of successful FlexWork arrangements.

##### **B. Determining if FlexWork is Appropriate**

Employees and managers should consult WPI’s Flexible & Remote Work Guidelines which contain detailed guidance for determining the suitability of FlexWork arrangements including:

- Managers have broad discretion to decide whether and to what extent a FlexWork arrangement may be appropriate for an employee; and



- FlexWork arrangements are contingent on the employee's satisfactory performance and demonstrated ability to work independently.

Certain positions do not lend themselves to FlexWork. The following conditions may make FlexWork unsuitable:

- Being on campus is an integral part of performing the job.
- The job is a student- or customer-facing position that requires the employee to be in-person to provide the best experience.
- The employee has difficulty working independently and/or has performance issues that require in-person supervision.
- Necessary equipment, materials, or files are only available on campus.
- The employee lives in a state where WPI is not registered to do business or payroll and benefits systems are not set up for that state.

### **C. The FlexWork Agreement**

All FlexWork arrangements must be documented, in writing, through a FlexWork Agreement, a template for which can be found [here](#), which must capture the specific agreement reached by the manager and employee. Managers must keep their Talent & Inclusion business partner apprised of their FlexWork discussions with their employees and provide their Talent & Inclusion business partner with a copy of all finalized FlexWork Agreements. An employee will be provided at least thirty (30) days' notice of termination of the FlexWork Agreement.

The FlexWork Agreement is kept on file within the department and in the employee's personnel file maintained by Talent & Inclusion.

Infrequent or episodic arrangements do not require a FlexWork Agreement but do require prior manager approval.

### **D. Compliance with WPI Policies**

Employees with a FlexWork Agreement must comply with all applicable WPI rules, policies, and practices.

### **E. Equipment, Materials and Accommodations**

In assessing whether FlexWork is appropriate, the manager must take into account whether, and to what extent, additional equipment and materials may be necessary to perform the job at a



remote location. All purchases of Computer Systems<sup>1</sup> must comply with the [Computer Systems Purchasing Policy](#). The department is responsible for providing specific electronic and/or other equipment or assistive technology for employees with approved disability accommodations from Talent & Inclusion. FlexWork cannot be denied on the basis of an employee’s approved disability accommodations.

Employees must agree that WPI’s equipment and supplies provided by the department are for business purposes only and to notify their manager immediately of equipment malfunction to schedule repair or replacement. Any damage or theft of WPI equipment must immediately be reported to the manager. WPI-owned equipment used in the normal course of employment will be maintained and repaired by the department. When employees are authorized to use their own equipment, the department will not assume responsibility for costs of repairs, maintenance, or service. Return of Computer Systems must comply with the [Computer Systems Purchasing Policy](#).

#### **F. Liability and Insurance**

WPI assumes no responsibility for injuries occurring in the employee’s alternate work location outside the agreed-upon work hours, or for liability or damages to an employee’s real or personal property resulting from their FlexWork Agreement.

Workers’ compensation coverage is limited to designated work areas in employees’ homes or alternate work locations and applies only during the employee’s agreed-upon work hours. Employees agree to practice the same safety habits they would use if on-site at WPI and to maintain safe conditions in their alternate work locations. Employees must follow normal procedures for reporting illness or injury.

#### **V. Related Policies**

- [Computer Systems Purchasing Policy](#)

#### **VI. Questions**

If you have questions about this policy, please contact WPI’s Division of Talent & Inclusion at [talent@wpi.edu](mailto:talent@wpi.edu).

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**Policy Sponsor:** VP, Talent & Inclusion

**Responsible Department:** Talent & Inclusion

**Effective Date (i.e., date of Presidential Approval):** May 12, 2022

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<sup>1</sup> “Computer Systems” is defined in the [Computer Systems Purchasing Policy](#) as “any desktops, laptops, smartphones, or tablets purchased with WPI Funds.”