

Customized Work Arrangements for Staff Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Does Drake still have a remote work policy?

Not as a stand-alone policy. The [Customized Work Arrangements for Staff](#) supersedes the old Telecommuting Policy. This new policy has an updated and expanded scope looking at a number of different flexible work options, including remote work, flexible schedules, and other options.

Who determines whether a customized work arrangement is an option for a particular staff position?

Consistent with past practice, Drake's new [Customized Work Arrangements for Staff](#) leaves the discretionary decision-making authority in the hands of the staff member's manager. Assuring proper staffing levels during operating hours and the effective performance of essential job functions are responsibilities of the manager.

Note the President's Council representative (or designee) over the employee's area must approve requests for Customized Work Arrangements.

Why aren't Customized Work Arrangements an option for every staff member?

Many positions are not suitable for remote work or modified schedules as it is either infeasible or does not deliver the same experience or service level as it would if it were performed on campus. For example, most research, instructional, clinical, performance, athletics, student- or public-facing activities, residence and dining, and buildings and grounds work will need to occur on campus, in person, and/or during standard operating hours.

In addition, some campuses, schools, and unit leaders may determine that all or most of their employees need to work on campus to support team dynamics and a sense of belonging, or to preserve the fundamental in-person character of the university.

What if my co-worker is approved for a Customized Work Arrangement, does that mean everyone in the unit will be approved?

No. Customized Work Arrangements may not be available to every staff member within a unit. The unit's operational needs, the nature of each position within the unit, and the performance of the individual will determine whether a Customized Work Arrangement is an option for an individual staff member. There are a wide variety of reasons that may lead a manager to appropriately approve a Customized Work Arrangement for one person on a team and deny another person's request—for example variables that may be factored in could include: core job duties, performance, workflow.

Would a Customized Work Arrangements allow someone to work remotely some of the time and on campus the rest of the time?

If appropriate for the position and approved by the staff member's manager, a hybrid approach is certainly an option. In fact, it is likely that most employees who have remote work as a part of their Customized Work Arrangement will work in a hybrid fashion.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, I worked remotely and did just fine. How can my manager deny my request to keep doing so now?

As a result of the pandemic, Drake University made a lot of temporary changes that were never anticipated to be permanent. It is true that some employees who were required or allowed to work remotely due to the nature of the crisis, may not be permitted to continue working remotely moving forward. Crisis-management required some sacrifices and compromises to when, where, and how a lot of work got done. The rationale applied during a crisis is not always applicable outside of the crisis. Case-by-case assessments will be made when assessing the feasibility and sustainability of Modified Work Arrangements in a non-crisis setting.

Can I work remotely while providing care for my child or a family member?

Remote work is not a substitute for child or other forms of dependent care. Remote employees must make or maintain appropriate childcare, adult care, or similar personal arrangements to allow them to focus on work assignments in the designated workspace during their established work hours.

Use of paid-time-off may be appropriate to deal with childcare or eldercare emergencies. Managers have the discretionary authority to establish expectations for requesting time off when using vacation time or personal days. Sick leave must be used consistent with the [Staff Sick Leave Policy](#).

But Note: If a staff member may need to utilize leave to care for an immediate family member with a serious medical condition, this may be covered by the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). If an employee believes their situation may fit this description, they should contact Human Resources (drakehr@drake.edu) to learn more about leave under the FMLA.

I have a question about equipment related to remote work, who should I contact?

Staff should always start with their manager. As part of the Customized Work Arrangement process, equipment needs should be discussed and planned out *prior to* the approval of a Customized Work Arrangement.

What if my internet connectivity is not reliable? Will I still be able to work remotely? Will Drake pay for better internet service to my home?

To be approved to work remotely, an employee must have reliable internet service to support their work activities. Employees are responsible for purchasing and maintaining appropriate internet service at their home if they are working remotely. Although a great deal of latitude was necessary while the campuses were impacted by the pandemic, employees wanting to work remotely all or part of the time through a Customized Work Arrangement will be responsible for securing reliable internet service. Drake will not reimburse staff for such service.

If I am approved to work remotely, what ITS and office equipment will be provided?

Employees are responsible for providing and maintaining all other components of their home-office configuration, including desk, chair, power, broadband (high speed) internet connection, lighting, etc.

Drake provides one standard computer bundle per employee. If employees are authorized for remote work, they are responsible for purchasing any duplicate components they choose for home-office use. Drake-owned computers (including all standard-bundle accessories) may be used in a home office with managerial approval.

Employee-owned components, such as laptop docking stations, must meet ITS defined standards. This equipment and home internet are not supported by ITS. However, ITS staff will provide best-effort assistance where possible.

Can I request a Customized Work Arrangement to accommodate my disability?

No. The Customized Work Arrangement process is not a replacement or substitute for the ADA-compliant interactive process. If an employee believes they have a qualifying disability for which a reasonable accommodation may be appropriate (even if that accommodation may be any combination of remote work, a flexible schedule, modified work hours, etc.), the employee must go through the ADA-compliant interactive process. This assures the process takes into account legal obligations of Drake and legal rights of the employee, which may not be addressed in the policy. To learn more about or to initiate the interactive process for disability accommodation requests, contact Human Resources (drakehr@drake.edu).

What can I do if my manager denies my request for a Customized Work Arrangement? Can I file an appeal or a complaint?

Managers have the discretionary authority to deny requests CWA requests altogether or modify requested CWAs. While we expect all managers to put thought and care in examining CWA requests and to fully comply with the CWA Policy, we recognized that there may be times when

an employee believes a decision was made rashly or inappropriately. In such cases, the employee may request time to talk to their manager to discuss the denial.

Alternatively, if an employee who requested a CWA and who believes it was inappropriately denied or the CWA policy was not followed, they may reach out to Human Resources (drakehr@drake.edu) and we can talk through the concerns and also reach out to the manager to help assure the policy was properly followed and the denial was appropriate.

Granting, denying, and modifying CWAs are within the discretionary authority of managers, so there is no formal appeal or complaint process. One exception would be if the employee has good reason to believe the denial was *based on* the employee's membership (or perceived membership) in a protected class (such as race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, etc.). If that is the case, the employee may consider pursuing a complaint. Please contact Human Resources and review Drake's [Discriminatory Harassment \(Non-Sex Based\) policy](#).

Can I work remotely from another state or country?

Only when approved per the applicable policies and processes. Working out of state or out of country subjects Drake University to numerous other laws and imposes additional insurance and payroll requirements, and costs. Additionally, this will impact tax withholdings. Accordingly, Drake employees may not work remotely outside Iowa for twenty-one (21) calendar days or longer unless approved through the process outlined in Drake's [Out-of-State Work Policy](#) (e.g., a one week working vacation in Colorado would be fine; permanently moving to Minnesota would require approval). Compliance with the CWA Policy would also be required. Any remote work not performed within Iowa must receive prior approval from both the employee's manager and department head, or designee (as required by the CWA Policy); as well as Payroll and Human Resources (per the Out-of-State Work Policy).

What if I'm working on an H-1B visa, can I change work locations?

Employees working under a work visa must obtain prior approval from both the employee's manager and Human Resources prior to any work being performed remotely to ensure compliance with the employee's work visa, which may only approve work being performed in designated work locations. Changing a visa-holder's work location without proper approval could violate the terms of the employee's work visa and threaten the employee's continued authorization to work in the United States.