

March 12, 2020 COVID-19 Telecommuting and Paid Time Off Policies

Dear Rutgers Colleagues:

The University recognizes the very serious concerns of all within our community regarding the current public health emergency.

To that end, the University is committed to helping slow the spread of COVID-19. Understanding and considering the need to balance employee concerns related to their own health and the health of loved ones while maintaining required operations, the following temporary measures are being implemented, effective immediately:

1. We encourage flexibility in allowing telecommuting wherever feasible. The existing telecommuting guidelines, provision and procedures will be relaxed in order to expedite decisions regarding telecommuting arrangements. Supervisors must work closely with their employees and their departmental HR and IT teams in order to determine whether telecommuting would be feasible based on position functions and operational need. Where it is determined that telecommuting would be feasible, this would include both Exempt (NL) and Non-exempt (NE) employees who are aligned and unaligned, and it will be effective immediately. Employees who telecommute must comply with all University policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, policies related to timekeeping (where applicable).
2. We will expand the University's paid time off policies (i.e. Sick/Sick Leave, Vacation, and Administrative Leave) insomuch that there will be no requirement to charge paid time off for absences in the following instances:
 - a) An employee is diagnosed with COVID-19
 - b) An employee is directed by a medical professional or government agency to self-isolate or quarantine due to suspicion of exposure to or diagnosis with COVID-19
 - c) An employee is undergoing a period of self-quarantine or isolation pursuant to public health assessment recommendations
 - d) An employee is providing care to an immediate family member who (i) has been diagnosed with COVID-19, (ii) was directed by a medical professional or government agency to self-isolate or quarantine due to suspicion of exposure to or diagnosis with COVID-19, or (iii) is undergoing a period of self-quarantine or isolation pursuant to public health assessment recommendations, and/or
 - e) An employee is staying home to provide care for a child due to the closure of the child's preschool program, elementary or secondary school, or childcare center related to COVID-19

These measures will be in place at least through March 23, 2020. Additional information related to the establishment of a formal emergency telecommuting plan, the relaxation of leave policies, and required documentation will be forthcoming.

Sincerely,

Vivian Fernández

Senior Vice President for Human Resources & Organizational Effectiveness