

Staff Subcommittee Summary

This document summarizes methods, findings, and recommendations from the Future of Work staff subcommittee. Key recommendations are included in the full Future of Work@Iowa report. This summary offers additional background.

Staff Subcommittee Members

- Ann Byrd, deputy counsel, Office of the General Counsel
- Kristin Gilchrist, administrator, Department of Physiology, UI Health Care
- Talinda Pettigrew, senior HR director, Division of Student Life
- Rachael Kowbel, director of dental student admissions, College of Dentistry
- Jennifer Lassner (co-chair), associate vice president for research administration, Office of the Vice President for Research
- Rachel Napoli, administrator, Office of the Chief Information Officer
- Keith Saunders, director of state relations, Office of Governmental Relations
- Lynne Sebille-White, senior director of career advancement, Pomerantz Career Center
- Joni Troester (co-chair), assistant vice presidents and deputy chief HR officer, University Human Resources
- Jan Waterhouse, senior director for human resources policy and compliance, University Human Resources

Original Staff Subcommittee Charge

Evaluate the impact of remote or hybrid work on the employee experience for staff. Identify data to answer these and other relevant questions:

- Culture and leadership
 - How do we effectively lead remote staff teams?
 - What are best practices for leaders interacting with staff in a remote work environment?
 - How do we evaluate performance in a remote or hybrid setting?
 - Why types of support (mental health, resilience, belonging, well-being, etc.) do staff need?
 - How do we create an inclusive culture that drives results?
 - How do we enhance proactive talent and retention strategies; diversity, equity and inclusion; and positive employee experiences?
- Workforce
 - What impact has COVID-19 had on different groups of staff (regular, temporary, essential, etc.)?
 - How do we identify employment strategies for different staff groups?
 - How will total rewards (compensation, benefits, well-being/family services, training, health/dental plan design, etc.) change with moves to remote/hybrid work?
 - How do we reimagine recruitment and retention of top staff talent?
 - How do we retool, retrain, and realign our workforce?

Collect data, summarize findings, and identify recommendations for full committee consideration.

Methods

The subcommittee met every two weeks. We assembled and reviewed the following data:

- UI workforce data
- Benchmark information from peer institutions (Michigan State University, Pennsylvania State University, University of Michigan)
- College of Public Health well-being survey results
- Campus input

Subcommittee members also served on dedicated work groups and provided additional insight and information for group consideration (e.g., Rachel Napoli on campus Input; Ann Byrd and Jan Waterhouse on work outside Iowa).

Subcommittee discussion focused on balancing the business of university units with employee-experience factors. We aligned final recommendations with preliminary guidelines for work arrangements released in March 2021.

Definitions

The subcommittee developed definitions for terms associated with remote/hybrid work and other arrangements. Preliminary guidelines for work arrangements released in March 2021 and the full Future of Work report incorporate these definitions:

Work Locations

- **On-campus work:** Job functions that must be performed or are most effectively performed at an on-campus location. Employees have an assigned workspace at an on-campus site.
- **Remote work:** Job functions that can be performed effectively entirely off campus. Employees typically do not have a personal workspace assigned at an on-campus site.
- **Hybrid work:** Job functions that can be performed effectively in a combination of on- and off-campus locations. Employees typically have a personal or shared workspace assigned or available to them at an on-campus site.

Work Schedules

- **Standard schedule:** Work hours that reflect typical start and stop times for a unit's employees. Work may be performed on or off campus.
- **Flexible schedule:** Designated and consistent work hours that differ from standard unit start and stop times. Work may be performed on or off campus.

Out-of-State Work

- **Domestic out-of-state:** More than 30 consecutive calendar days worked outside of Iowa. Out-of-state work arrangements require additional review.
- **International out-of-state:** More than 14 consecutive calendar days worked outside the United States. Out-of-state work arrangements require additional review.

Recommendations

The subcommittee's recommendations build on the March 2021 [preliminary guidelines for work arrangements](#), providing additional guidance for rationales, processes, implementation, and more. Our recommendations frequently intersect with recommendations from other subcommittees, particularly the technology and physical space subcommittees.

Recommendation 1: Adopt Common Framework for Rationales Supporting Remote/Hybrid Work Arrangements

Colleges and divisions should develop mission-driven rationales and related considerations that establish which jobs are eligible for remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules. Rationales can consider:

- Whether a job requires regular in-person interaction
- How remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules may affect overall service and effectiveness
- How remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules may impact individual performance for affected employees
- How work arrangements reflect candidate/employee preferences and affect recruitment or retention
- Whether remote/hybrid work or other arrangements enhance space utilization (e.g., by reducing footprint and costs or by reallocating space to on-campus priorities)

Recommendation 2: Refine Work Arrangement Processes Introduced in March 2021 Guidelines

Colleges/divisions should develop transparent and equitable processes for reviewing and approving work arrangements.

- Colleges/divisions should determine which jobs are eligible for remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules based on job functions and mission rationales or other considerations for approving work arrangements.
- Processes and decisions should reflect institutional guidelines *and* each college/division's specific needs.
- Out-of-state (domestic or international) remote/hybrid work arrangements require additional mission justification and institutional review (e.g., General Counsel, Risk Management, Provost, Information Technology Services, and University Human Resources).
- Offices charged with reviewing out-of-state arrangements (see above) should assess and request any additional resources needed for compliance.
- Colleges/divisions must fully document arrangements for remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules using Employee Self Service tools (in development).

Recommendation 3: Share Practices for Implementing Work Arrangements

Org-level leaders should be responsible for implementing work-arrangement processes.

- Rationales and considerations for approving work arrangements, eligibility decisions, and processes should be established at the org level, not by individual supervisors.
- Leaders should emphasize that the future looks different—all types of work arrangements can achieve results, provide rewarding experiences, and lead to career opportunities.

- Colleges/divisions should consider initiatives that clarify org-level practices and encourage culture change as needed, for example:
 - Soft campaigns highlighting successful work arrangements during the pandemic
 - Messages that emphasize benefits or remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules before instituting new training or other perceived administrative burdens
- Leaders should embrace training opportunities and encourage other supervisors to do the same.
- Colleges and divisions should encourage ongoing dialogue about effective work arrangements, process improvements, and related needs.

Recommendation 4: Develop Resources and Guidance for Supervisors

- Mandatory supervisor training developed by University Human Resources should incorporate new information about training, onboarding, and supervising remote/hybrid teams.
- University Human Resources and campus partners should expand the Supervisors' Toolbox and other resources to address remote/hybrid work and flexible schedule implications for:
 - Onboarding
 - Communication
 - Collaboration
 - Performance coaching and management
 - Support service opportunities and referrals
- Skills and competencies for supervisors should include "Managing in a remote/hybrid environment" as appropriate.

Recommendation 5: Consider All Facets of Employee Experience When Adopting Remote/Hybrid Work Arrangements

Employee supports in "new-normal" work environments should continue to address whole-person needs, including mental health, caregiving, family circumstances, and overall well-being.

- Employees should have access to retooling/reskilling and other developmental needs regardless of their specific work arrangements.
- University Human Resources and other central units should provide best practices and resources for remote work environments, ergonomics, technology, and related considerations.
- University Human Resources and other central units should establish best practices for employee communication, collaboration, and meeting interactions, with training and resources available as needed.
- Colleges/divisions and University Human Resources should inform employees about potential implications of remote work for:
 - Application of university policies (especially for employees working out of state, domestically, or internationally)
 - Out-of-state (domestic or international) tax issues
 - Out-of-state (domestic or international) health-insurance coverage
 - Isolation and other psychosocial factors

Recommendation 6: Establish Cost Responsibilities and Track Financial Impacts from Remote/Hybrid Work Arrangements

- When feasible, colleges/divisions should provide basic workstation equipment (e.g., laptop computers, docking stations) to employees working remotely.
- Employees working remotely should be responsible for internet connections.
- Colleges/divisions should establish any specific requirements for remote workspaces, equipment, or other environmental factors and coordinate periodic reviews with employees.
- Colleges/divisions should collect data on equipment costs and related financial considerations during fall 2021 pilot period.
- Colleges/divisions should collect any additional data to inform analysis of cost savings or avoidance (i.e., employee retention, turnover, engagement, or similar measures)

Recommendation 7: Update Policies and Practices as Needed to Support the Range of Potential Work Arrangements

- Decision-making and implementation process outlined here apply to long-term work arrangements, including:
 - Any remote/hybrid work or flexible schedule arrangement lasting more than 30 consecutive calendar days.
 - International remote-work arrangements lasting more than 14 consecutive calendar days
- Shorter-term, temporary arrangements do not require formal review and reporting processes
- Remote/hybrid work and flexible schedule arrangements should be reviewed at least once each year.
- Per current [flexible work policies](#), any long-term change to work location or schedule requires a minimum four-week notice period.
- Work-arrangement changes require a reasonable review period at the college/division level. Out-of-state work arrangements require additional time for institutional review.
- Appeal processes for denied work-arrangement requests should be clear and transparent. Existing [administrative review processes](#) offer a good framework.