

# Work From Home (WFH) Policy

## **Policy Statement and Purpose:**

The purpose of this work from home (WFH) policy for the Department of Pathology Physician Services (UPP)\* at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC)/University of Pittsburgh (Pitt) is to delineate a framework for what constitutes “working from home”. The aim is to provide a flexible work environment for employees and offer guidelines that support remote work while preserving our shared commitment to the UPMC Values, Quality & Safety, Dignity & Respect, Caring & Listening, Responsibility & Integrity, Excellence & Innovation.

*\*This policy excludes pathology trainees (defer to GME policy) and laboratory technical staff (defer to HSD policy).*

## **Definitions:**

### **Working:**

Participating in clinical service, research, education, and/or administration pertinent to employment at UPMC/Pitt.

- a. **On service:** Refers to an individual who is assigned on their division’s schedule to deliver clinical service (e.g., scheduled to cover the frozen section service at an assigned UPMC facility)
- b. **Off service:** Refers to an individual who is not assigned on their division’s schedule to deliver service, is engaged in scholarly activities, and has not officially requested time off or submitted an absence form (i.e., vacation, illness, or other reason).

### **Home<sup>†</sup>:**

A location away from a UPMC/Pitt work site with secure internet connectivity and sufficient bandwidth to ensure online access to work-related tools and real time availability via email and telephone. WFH sites must allow for travel to UPMC/Pitt work sites within one hour if onsite presence is required to address unanticipated mission critical staffing needs.

<sup>†</sup>*Exceptions to policy should be uncommon, carefully vetted, and well supported before approval at the discretion of the Division Director, Center of Excellence (CoE) Director or Vice Chair as appropriate (faculty), or the appropriate Division Operations Director or Manager (staff).*

### **Working from home (WFH):**

Doing work related to UPMC/Pitt employment from a location away from a UPMC/Pitt work site (see definition of “Home” above) that does not require in-person, onsite presence and can be performed efficiently, effectively, and safely during your work hours without negatively impacting other team members.

## **Policy Guidelines:**

1. This policy applies to any workforce member (regular and temporary) in the Department of Pathology at UPMC/Pitt.

2. Requests to WFH require approval by the Division Director, CoE Director or Vice Chair as appropriate (faculty), or the appropriate Division Operations Director, Manager, or Supervisor (staff).
  - a. Requests should be submitted 1 week in advance for approval, unless there is an emergency.
  - b. If a WFH request is more than ad hoc then a written workplace flexible agreement is needed, and this needs to be documented.
3. Your leadership needs to fairly determine the minimum in-office headcount required to support operations.
4. Once permission is granted, faculty must notify their relevant administrative staff and section head or service director.
5. Employees WFH must have their UPMC contact information current.
6. WFH requires secure access to appropriate network and equipment that allows for effective facilitation of relevant job functions in an appropriate time frame.
  - a. Employees are responsible for ensuring their internet/cellular network is adequate to support working remotely and for any associated costs.
  - b. Employees need to check with their leadership that equipment being used remotely (e.g. for telepathology) is satisfactory to deliver patient care.
7. All employees working from home must be available to come into work within one hour of notification for critical, time-sensitive demands or service interruptions including:
  - a. onsite, in-person patient-care service coverage, or
  - b. emergency (e.g. fire, chemical spill) in their research lab/space, or
  - c. loss of remote access (e.g., internet, power) that precludes performing work-related tasks in a manner and time frame that meets expectations.<sup>†</sup>

<sup>†</sup>*Exceptions* to policy should be uncommon, carefully vetted, and well supported before approval at the discretion of the Division Director, CoE Director or Vice Chair as appropriate (faculty), or the appropriate Division Operations Director or Manager (staff).
8. If an individual WFH is scheduled for a clinical and/or teaching activity that does not require in-person, onsite presence, they must be available for timely consultation. Urgent needs should be treated as such.
9. WFH designation does not apply to brief scheduled or unscheduled absences, such as off-campus appointments, business lunches, meetings, or family emergencies.
10. Individuals seeking long-term WFH arrangements need to submit a formal agreement at the discretion of their Division Director, CoE Director or Vice Chair as appropriate (faculty) or their Division Operations Director, Manager, or Supervisor (staff) for review and approval.
11. Employees WFH are expected to observe all UPMC/Pitt policies related to standard practice, professional conduct, patient confidentiality and IT requirements.
  - a. When working remotely continue to follow UPMC dress code.

### **Exceptions to Guidelines**

- Division Directors, CoE Directors, Vice Chairs, Managers, and Supervisors have the authority to deny WFH requests or rescind permission to WFH at their discretion.
  - ✓ For ad hoc remote work days leadership are expected to grant/deny permission to a request within 24 hours, while one week is expected for permanent arrangements.
- For COVID infection please follow institutional and/or CDC specific guidelines.
- WFH designation should not be used in the following instances.
  - ✓ Unexpected emergent needs or illness that would preclude the employee's ability to successfully complete work-related tasks and obligations.
  - ✓ The individual is scheduled for a clinical service for which their absence may impede or hinder patient care, negatively impact the work of others, and/or erode opportunities for education.
  - ✓ Unavailable or inadequate validated digital or virtual tools to support remote service-related duties.

[Click here](#) for **UPMC /Pitt Remote Work Faculty & Staff Resource Guide**