

## **ARCHIVED HUMAN RESOURCES COVID-19 FAQs**

**UPDATED AUGUST 12, 2020**

**I am a faculty member and aware there are students or other professionals, even guest lecturers, who were in the classroom with me who have told me they are presumptive or confirmed with COVID-19.**

After understanding the protocols noted in earlier FAQs above, an individual can always voluntarily choose to notify their co-workers their diagnosis. This is an individual decision. Managers will be required to notify co-workers with whom an ill employee may have had close contact with that a fellow co-worker is ill without revealing the ill employee's identity, even if it is already known.

*The notification to students and their families is being managed in Storrs and the regionals by Student Health Services. If a faculty or staff member has a concern about a student exposure, they should contact the Student Health and Wellness Advice Nurse at 860-486-4700, who will then reach out to the student or faculty member.*

A Department Head, Dean, or PI will work with a faculty member to determine next steps once a physician has cleared any ill employee to resume normal work functions either remotely or when the times come, to return to the classroom or lab.

*This approach will also be the case for a graduate assistant, post-doctoral scholar, lecturer or any other employee.*

**If a household member is sick, what should I do?**

CDC guidelines recommend self-monitoring at home only when a household member has recently returned from a Level 3 country OR if the household member has a presumptive or confirmed case of COVID-19. Otherwise, employees may have the option to care for their immediate family member, as appropriate within guidelines; employees may also go to work, if unable or unapproved to telecommute, without restriction.

**I am scheduled to take a non-essential, University sponsored trip – should I still go?**

The University has suspended all domestic and international, university-sponsored travel outside of the state by faculty and staff until further notice.

If you believe an exception should be made for your planned travel, please make a request in writing to the appropriate operational leadership office to whom you report, meaning the President (for units that report directly to the President's office), Provost, Executive Vice President for Administration/CFO, or the CEO of UConn Health. Each request will be evaluated and a response will be provided.

**I recently visited an area that has had a COVID-19 outbreak, what do I do?**

Per CDC guidelines, employees who visit areas with COVID-19 outbreaks, but not Level 3 destinations, are instructed to monitor for symptoms. Employees should continue to work, either on campus or remotely; working remotely requires manager approval and must ensure continuity of critical University operations.

### **Should I cancel my personal travel plans because of coronavirus?**

All personal international travel is strongly discouraged by the University and the U.S. Department of State. Personal domestic travel remains a personal choice but an abundance of caution concerning your health is suggested.

### **What should I do if I'm returning to UConn after international travel?**

All travelers returning from international travel must fill out this [form](#) before their return. This is both for those on University-sponsored and personal travel. If needed, HR will notify employees of next steps. It is important to provide personal contact information where you may be reached.

The CDC currently requires anyone coming from Level 3 destinations to be quarantined for 14 days.

At this time, there are no federal restrictions on travelers returning from other locations.

If you develop any symptoms, you should stay away from work and reach out to your primary health care provider.

### **I have traveled abroad, but I wasn't in one of the CDC Level 3 countries and I am not sick. Can I come to work?**

Yes, you are expected to complete this [form](#) upon return and come to work or telecommute at the direction of your manager. There are no other restrictions on return at this time.

### **Do employees at Storrs, the Regionals, and the Law School come to work?**

All employees should continue their regular work schedules, but managers should instruct employees to telecommute, where possible. At times, telecommuting employees may need to return to the workplace to ensure essential functions are accomplished; employees may do so voluntarily or at the direction of their manager. Employees may only telecommute with manager approval.

### **I am told I must telecommute, what should happen next?**

Employees instructed to telecommute should receive a letter from their manager (sending a copy to Human Resources). Human Resources has created template letters for [Storrs/Regional](#) and [UConn Health](#) employees. In addition, Information Technology Services has provided a wide range of resources, including an [IT Guide to Telecommuting](#), to help facilitate the transition to working online. Other assistance and information about ITS support hours is also available.

### **I am told that I cannot telecommute, what happens next?**

Employees who perform functions that cannot be accomplished remotely or whose presence in the workplace ensures continuity of operations should report to work.

In certain instances, managers may use “rotational” schedules for areas that are not conducive to telecommuting. Employees should contact their manager about potential rotating schedules.

### **I work at the Stamford Campus, which has closed, what do I do?**

Employees from the Stamford Campus should contact their manager about the possibility of telecommuting. If telecommuting is not an option, employees will be paid while the campus is closed, in accordance with standard practices and collective bargaining agreements.

### **I was told I cannot work remotely at the present time but would like to telecommute to lessen the risk of getting sick. May I do so?**

Some employees perform functions that cannot be accomplished remotely or whose presence in the workplace ensures continuity of operations and, therefore, these employees are unable to telecommute. Such employees may request (via their manager) to use their appropriate leave accruals if they wish to stay out of the workplace entirely. Approval is subject to management discretion based on operational needs.

The University encourages employees to consult with their physicians about steps they can take to protect their health while in the workplace. Employees may share physician recommendations with their manager for approval. It is important to note that, due to the essential functions of the University, managers may be unable to accommodate all physician recommendations.

### **What is the process to approve an employee for telecommuting?**

Managers and employees should have a discussion to confirm that the employee can perform their duties remotely. Managers should set clear expectations and monitor employee deliverables.

Managers should provide telecommuting employees with a formal letter or email. HR has created template letters for [Storrs/Regional](#) and [UConn Health](#) employees. Copies of the letters should be sent to the appropriate HR general email inbox, as indicated on the letter.

### **The telecommuting template includes an end-date. What date should I put?**

The University currently recommends that employees telecommute until further notice. Therefore, the end-date on telecommuting forms may be “to be determined” or “until further notice.”

### **I have a child whose college is closing, and the child needs to be moved home, can I apply for paid leave?**

No. Paid leave does not apply in this situation, as the purpose is to afford employees the ability to be at home with individuals who are not able to provide self-care.

### **How will I continue to get paid?**

Employees with direct deposit will be paid as usual.

In consideration of the steps being taken by the University in support of public health, employees that receive pay checks will have their pay check mailed to the “HOME” address listed in Core-CT.

Paychecks will NOT be issued to departments for distribution, nor will employees be able to claim their paychecks in Payroll.

### **What if my HOME address in Core-CT is incorrect?**

Employees can update their home address in the “Personal Information” section on the home page in Core-CT at [ess.uconn.edu](http://ess.uconn.edu).

Questions can be referred to [Sharon.watson@uconn.edu](mailto:Sharon.watson@uconn.edu) or contact the Payroll Main Office at (860)486-2423.

### **Our student employees cannot work, are we able to pay them?**

Due to the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 situation, and the financial hardship the lack of ability to work places on students, the University is allowing supervisors the option to continue to pay students their regularly scheduled hours from Saturday, March 14 through April 5th. This is consistent with the US Department of Education’s guidance on paying Federal Work Study participants for the same reasons.

Starting April 6th, departments should return to standard practice in paying student labor for hours worked. The University will continue to payout Federal Work Study, in alignment with earlier guidance.

### **How will student time worked be logged in Core-CT?**

Students and supervisors would continue to follow the same process for time submission and approval by utilizing Core-CT. However, Payroll will be following up separately with directions on which Time Reporting and Override Reason Codes to use for remote work.

### **Are students required to work?**

We also suggest that supervisors be mindful of the optional nature of students working during this time. While it is up to your department to determine the extent to which student labor will be utilized through April 5, be aware that some students may not be live in close proximity to campus, or may have concerns coming to campus when they have previously been instructed not to do so.

### **How many hours should be inputted for student hours worked?**

For March 14 through April 5, supervisors should only be approving hours for students based on their regularly scheduled hours and if the student is unable to work. Students should not be paid for hours on days they were not scheduled to work (e.g. student approved for time off during Spring Break should not be paid for this timeframe). If your students do not utilize a set work schedule, and typical work hours are variable, we suggest utilizing the average number of hours worked per week through the semester thus far to input for hours worked.

Beginning April 6th, supervisors should only approve actual hours worked.

### **Can summer instructional support GA appointments be rescinded at any time?**

Graduate Instructional Specialist appointments can be rescinded after an offer is accepted only if a class has been cancelled.

### **What if a Graduate Research Technician cannot work remotely?**

If the Graduate Research Technician for your department cannot work remotely, then the research they are engaged in must have been approved by the OVPR under the critical research infrastructure or research ramp up process. Otherwise, extended and accepted offers must be honored and departments should be aware that they are responsible for funding the Graduate Research Technician with departmental funds even if they are unable to work. Please note that summer research appointments may be made for periods from 2-12 weeks. If research work is not possible now, you may choose to make an appointment that begins when you anticipate that research can resume.

### **The offer has already been extended and accepted BEFORE the hiring freeze communication went out, the research has not been approved by the OVPR, and the work cannot be done remotely. Are there any legal issues regarding the GEU contract if we need to rescind the offer?**

Summer Graduate Research Technician appointments cannot be rescinded once accepted by the Graduate Assistant. As specified by the GEU Collective Bargaining Agreement, once an offer for a Graduate Research Technician is accepted, the Department and School/College is committed to honor that appointment.

Graduate Instructional Specialist appointments can be rescinded after an offer is accepted only if a class has been cancelled.

Graduate Special Payroll Lecturer appointments can be rescinded after an offer is accepted only if a class has been cancelled. The GEU Contract provides that when a class is cancelled, if the Graduate Payroll Lecturer is the Instructor of Record and has not previously taught the cancelled class, then he/she/they must be paid \$375 per credit as compensation for course preparation. The GA's department should ensure that it can cover these costs where applicable.

## **When do I need to notify graduate assistants of their offers of employment for summer appointments?**

The GEU-UAW Contract requires the University to notify students of appointments at least 14 days prior to the beginning of the work assignment for summer appointments.

## **What information does HR need to approve my department's summer research GA's hire request?**

Given the current circumstances with the Covid-19 pandemic and the unknown timing regarding the University's return to normal operations, Human Resources will hold all pending requests for summer Graduate Research Technician appointments until receiving confirmation of one of the following:

- The Graduate Research Technician has been identified as personnel in a laboratory or research project that has been deemed "critical research infrastructure" and approved by the Office for the Vice President of Research (OVPR). Individuals approved to engage in critical research infrastructure activities must provide the email confirmation of approval.
- The Graduate Research Technician will be working in a laboratory or research program approved by the OVPR to resume research activity. The faculty member or PI must provide the email confirmation of approval to resume research activity and indicate the Graduate Research Technician will be working in the approved laboratory or research program.
- The GA's department has confirmed that the GA is able to work remotely, in case the University is not at normal operations during part or all of the summer. We encourage you to appoint research assistants soon if you can identify them as (1) approved by the OVPR critical infrastructure and ramp up process and (2) approved to conduct research remotely, including internationally.

Note: If the graduate assistant is telecommuting from an international location additional approval is required.

- The GA's academic department has funding to cover the GA appointment in case the GA is unable to perform their duties. Funding must be secured on non-grant funds.

Departments should provide confirmations to [spar@uconn.edu](mailto:spar@uconn.edu) for all requests currently pending HR approval. For new requests being submitted, comments can be added to the Page Up system confirming which of the three criteria apply.

## **Can I rescind a summer research GA offer?**

As specified by the GEU Collective Bargaining Agreement, once an offer is accepted for a summer Graduate Research Technician, the Department and School/College is committed to honor that appointment.

## **Can I cancel a hire request for a summer Graduate Research Technician that is still pending HR's approval?**

Yes, a hire request can be cancelled prior to offering a position to a Graduate Assistant.

**Will summer teaching appointment hire requests be approved by HR?**

Summer teaching appointments will continue to be reviewed and approved as normal with no requirement to provide additional information to Human Resources.

**Can summer GA teaching appointments be rescinded at any time?**

Graduate Special Payroll Lecturer appointments can be rescinded after an offer is accepted only if a class has been cancelled. The GEU Contract provides that when a summer class is cancelled, if the Graduate Payroll Lecturer is the Instructor of Record and has not previously taught the cancelled class, then he/she/they must be paid \$375 per credit as compensation for course preparation. The GA's department should ensure that it can cover these costs where applicable.

**Will instructional support GA hire requests be approved by HR?**

Graduate Instructional Specialists will continue to be reviewed and approved as normal with no requirement to provide additional information to Human Resources.