

SIPA Human Resources has prepared telecommuting guidance and FAQs that employees may find useful in navigating the transition to off-site work arrangements. If you have a question or concern that has not been addressed, please continue to direct them to SIPA Human Resources at sipahr@columbia.edu.

The University's [COVID-19](#) site provides a central repository of information where updates are posted as developments unfold. SIPA's counterpart site can be found [here](#).

Accessing Work Remotely

Many work resources are accessible from either your Columbia-issued or personal laptop or tablet. LionMail is accessible from any device by visiting LionMail and logging in with your UNI and password. Once logged in, additional LionMail resources (e.g. Drive, Calendar, Docs) are accessible from the Google Apps menu in the top right of your screen. SIPA Administrative Staff can access their SIPA email account on the [Office 365 Online Exchange](#) with UNI@sipa.columbia.edu email address.

Working Collaboratively

Holding Meetings

Location matters less when you have reliable online tools to help you connect and collaborate with colleagues. The SIPA community has access to a range of Google Apps that may help you and your team work remotely. Applications like GChat and Drive are helpful for communicating and collaborating on documents. To learn how to set up GChat and access Drive, consult CUIT and Google's support documentation. Columbia faculty and staff have access to LinkedIn Learning (formerly Lynda.com), which has a training session on how to fully utilize Google Hangouts and GChat. Office 365 also provides SIPA staff audio and video conference capabilities with Skype for Business.

Call Forwarding

When employees are advised to work remotely, it is recommended that they forward their office phones. For employees using NetPhone, CUIT has a user guide with instructions for call forwarding. Look for the "Forwarding All Calls" drop-down option under the "Receiving Calls" header and then click "Features" which will load a page where you can make several changes. For employees with a ROLM phone, CUIT provides instructions for forwarding calls. Instructions can be found on the ROLM phone tutorial, under the "FORWD" tab. CUIT Service Desk at askcuit@columbia.edu or call 212-854-1919.

Changing voicemail passwords

If you have a Rolm phone, you will need to know the current password attached to your extension. Enter your voicemail box as you would to retrieve messages and select Mailbox Options to update your password. More information is available [here](#).

If you have a NetPhone, go to myNetPhone, select Features and Voicemail and create your new password at the bottom of the page. More information is available [here](#).

Please remember that it is extremely important to create your own unique password to ensure the security of your voicemail messages and to protect yourself against possible voicemail abuse.

Email Notification

When employees are advised to work remotely, it is recommended that they modify their out of office reply. The message should specify their off-site hours of operation, for example Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.

Tips for Managing Remotely

The following HR guidelines apply to telecommuting arrangements:

- Develop agreed-upon work schedules
- Maintain "normal" workloads
- Use salary continuation or sick leave for illnesses while working remotely
- Use vacation or personal leave to be relieved of work responsibility while working remotely
- Consult with your supervisor on handling sensitive information, and consult sipaithelpdesk@columbia.edu for more information on best practices, data protection, and more.

Get Help

For questions related specifically to remote working technologies, please contact sipaithelpdesk@columbia.edu and someone from the SIPAIT Helpdesk team will reach out to provide assistance. For questions related to Human Resources matters, please reach out to sipahr@sipa.columbia.edu.

Transitioning to Remote Work

Which employees are expected to work on campus during this period?

Only designated personnel who are required to perform essential functions should report to work on campus. Those reporting to campus should take care to observe appropriate precautions and social distancing measures and maintain contact with their supervisor. PLEASE NOTE: This guidance may change if more restrictive directives are issued by the University in which case no non-essential personnel would be allowed on campus.

Can casual and workstudy student employees continue working remotely during this period?

Yes. If the work they are contracted to do can be performed remotely they can continue working and getting paid provided approved timesheets are submitted by the stipulated deadlines.

Which employees at the SIPA have been identified as essential personnel?

During an emergency, essential personnel provide services that are critical to maintaining the continuity of key operations at the School. Unit supervisors have identified specific employees who are considered essential to maintaining these operations. If you are unsure if you fall into this category, please speak with your supervisor; additional questions can be directed to sipahr@sipa.columbia.edu. Over time, as we navigate this campus-wide transition to remote work arrangements, we may be required to reevaluate our "essential employee" designations. PLEASE NOTE: This guidance may change if more restrictive directives are issued by the University in which case no non-essential personnel would be allowed on campus.

What if an employee cannot perform their job responsibilities remotely?

Members of our community who are not able to perform their job responsibilities remotely should speak with their unit supervisor, who will then consult with SIPA Human Resources.

What if an employee cannot perform their job responsibilities remotely and has an underlying medical condition or falls within the COVID-19 high-risk category?

Employees should speak with their unit supervisor, who will then consult with SIPA Human Resources. Roxanne Gamarra can advise as needed on completion of necessary documentation and provide contact information for the Leave Management Office and CIGNA where confidential medical documentation can be sent for review and processing.

Returning to/Working from Campus

What are the building hours for the IAB during this period? Is Lehman Library open?

Entry into the International Affairs Building currently requires swipe access. When on site, all members of the community are reminded to maintain appropriate precautions and social distancing measures. All University libraries,

including Lehman Library, are closed as of March 16, and will remain closed until further notice. E-resources are still available online.

May I return to my office/workstation to retrieve personal items or other materials or documents I need in order to work remotely? If so, what is the acceptable window of time for doing so?

If staff determine that they need to retrieve items from their workstations, they should notify their supervisor as soon as possible to coordinate a timeline for doing so. Unit heads should try whenever possible to schedule non-overlapping return trips for their employees, and retrieval visits should be kept as brief as possible. PLEASE NOTE: This guidance may change if more restrictive directives are issued by the University in which case no non-essential personnel would be allowed in the building.

If I am comfortable doing so, may I continue to work from my office or workstation?

Non-essential administrative staff should not report to work on campus unless directed to do so by their supervisor. Our primary objective is to reduce the density of our campus environment. With that in mind, faculty wishing to engage in virtual teaching from their offices or classrooms, or conduct core research or practice activities, should seek out further guidance from the Office of Academic Affairs.

Time and Attendance, Compensation & Paychecks

Will support staff have to submit timesheets if working from a remote location? Will that process change?

The requirement to submit approved timesheets and the process for doing remains unchanged. Per the standard procedure, the employee should download the timesheet, complete it and email it to the supervisor. The supervisor will approve and email it to SIPA HR at SIPAHR@columbia.edu, attention Roxanne Gamarra.

How do students and approvers submit timesheets during this period?

For casual payroll, students and supervisors should follow the procedures currently in place which includes the following: (1)the student downloads the timesheet from the website (link), (2)the student completes the timesheet form and emails it to the supervisor, (3)the supervisor signs the form and emails it to SIPAHR. For workstudy payroll, students and supervisors should follow the procedures currently in place. The Workstudy process is fully electronic and will not be affected by any changes to the University's on-site operations.

How is the University handling the concern that hourly students- casuals and workstudies- rely on their employment to finance their education and loss of this income would pose a significant hardship?

The University is committed to ensuring payment continuation at existing pay rates, through May 15. For students on work-study, this compensation will be up to the amount of their work-study award. Hours, whether representing time worked or not, will need to be reported and approved through the normal process. SIPA HR cannot process payments without approved timesheets. Student officers will continue getting paid through the end of their appointments.

How will employees who receive live checks (instead of via direct deposit) get their checks?

The University is currently exploring the option of establishing a central location on campus from which anyone receiving a live check (students included) can pick up their check. Further information will be provided as updates become available. The University is strongly encouraging individuals to sign up for direct deposit. More information is available [here](#).

Additional HR Services for Hiring Units

Can I submit new casual or workstudy hire requests?

Yes. Submit a completed Request for Casual (or Workstudy) Hire form to Kaitlyn Puckart via email at kp2830@sipa.columbia.edu. The form is available [here](#).

How will additional compensation payments be processed going forward?

The same online process for requesting additional compensation payments that exists now will remain in place. All required attachments, i.e. timesheets, will have to be submitted as they are now in order for the payment to be processed. HR staff working remotely will process these transactions electronically, routing them through the appropriate approval workflow to Payroll.

Will resignations/terminations be processed according to the normal protocols?

Yes, as long as the SIPAHR Office receives completed time and attendance records for the terminating employees as requested. The University has established an electronic process for submitting terminations that involves submission of scanned documentation through the standard workflow.

Temporary Staffing (through temp agency)

Can I submit new temp staffing requests?

Yes. Submit a completed Request for Non-Student Temporary Hire form to Roxanne Gamarra via email at rg3045@sipa.columbia.edu. The form is available [here](#).

Am I obligated to pay a contractor if my School/Department is closed and the staff are working from home?

Columbia University is not obligated to pay a contractor when work is cancelled with 24 hours' notice.

What are the University's policies with regard to contractors that may need to work remotely?

Allowing a contractor to work remotely is at the discretion of the School/Department. We would encourage hiring managers to establish a protocol with their contractors to closely monitor the hours worked on a daily basis.

Do I need to notify the Temporary Staffing Office if a contractor's assignment is put on hold or if a contractor is working remotely?

Yes, please notify the Temporary Staffing Office by e-mail at tempstaffing@columbia.edu. Please copy Roxanne Gamarra at rg3045@sipa.columbia.edu.

If my contractor has questions regarding time off, how should I proceed?

Please refer your contractor to their employer of record. If you have a temp whom you identified for the assignment, the employer of record is Nextsource; they can be reached at 212.851.1553. If you have a temp who was identified through one of the agencies whom the CU Temp Staffing Office works with, the employer of record is the agency specific to that contractor. Contractors generally know their agency contact name and number. If they do not, you can get this information by contacting the Temporary Staffing Office by e-mail at tempstaffing@columbia.edu.