

Effective Date:
April 3, 2020

Retired:

Revised:

Approved by: Office of the President



Subject: COVID-19 Work from Home Guidelines

PURPOSE:

On March 24, 2020, Meharry Medical College began operating under a Level 2 Work from Home status. Since that time, the Governor of Tennessee has executed a Stay-at-Home Order, signed April 2, 2020, requiring that residents stay at home unless going to perform essential functions. Meharry Medical College performs essential services and the campus will remain open, with all Clinical faculty and staff reporting regularly, as required. The College will continue to operate under a Level 2 Work from Home status. Those with a business-critical need who can perform their duties from home should be doing so, until further guidance is provided. Additionally, there are some employees who will be required, based on the positions they hold and/or duties that cannot be performed remotely, to have a presence on campus. It is critical that the presence of these employees on campus be limited to the time that is required for them to complete the tasks necessary to fulfill their job responsibilities.

The following guidelines are intended to give consistency to the expectations of all employees during this interim period.

GENERAL STATEMENT:

All employees must comply with College's rules, policies, practices, and instructions and understand that violation of same may result in termination of remote work from home privileges and/or discipline, up to, and including, dismissal from the College.

The "Work from Home" status has been implemented in response to extraordinary circumstances. The basic terms and conditions of employment with the College are still in

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place, though employees are working remotely. Assignments do not change an employee's classification, compensation, or benefits. The accrual and charging of leave time is subject to the same policies and procedures applicable to non-remote employees.

Meharry Medical College is an "at-will" employer, meaning that the employment relationship between the College and each of its employees may be terminated at any time by either the Meharry or the employee, unless one is subject to an employee or faculty contract. Remote assignments are not contracts or promises of employment. Nothing in this status guarantees employment for any specific term, nor alters the "at-will" nature of employment.

DEFINITIONS:

Eligibility to Work from Home

Division Leaders/Managers are asked to allow staff to work from home if job responsibilities and functions can be fulfilled in a remote location. Division Leaders/Managers should be aware of the days/ times that staff is authorized to be in the office, in cases where it is necessary that staff report to campus. Employees who have roles that can no longer be performed because the campus is not fully functioning may be asked to complete other tasks as a means to fulfill a regular work week.

Division Leaders/Managers must regularly communicate with their staff regarding the fluidity of this situation, as well as changing business needs (such as the need to report to campus). Division Leaders/Managers may revoke a short-term remoting agreement at any time and for any reason.

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Expectations for Office

Signage should be placed on unoccupied offices that provides a time when someone will be in the office (if applicable), and phone/ e-mail contact information for assistance. When possible, phone lines should be forwarded and answered regularly. When necessary, voice mail messages should direct callers to a phone and/or e-mail address for assistance. Office mail will be delivered in a manner with the least potential for exposure to both the mail carriers and office staff. Division Leaders and managers should receive instruction on how to obtain mail.

Expectations for All Staff

Staff members who are working from home shall fulfill the expectations agreed upon with their division leader/manager regarding the scope of their remote assignment. Employees are expected to: work

- Uphold the duties and responsibilities of his/her position, to the extent possible in a remote location.
- Maintain a regular work schedule, with consistent work hours, which are 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. for most areas.
- Communicate regarding work assignments and personal needs, including reporting absence due to injury, illness, or caring for a family member.
- Use College equipment and materials as intended. Employee will be responsible for damage or loss of college-owned equipment.
- Complete timesheets timely. Leave requests must be submitted and approved for any day an employee is not available.
- Actively engage throughout the day with colleagues, Managers and Division Leads. Working from home is more than periodic checking of e-mail and voice messages. Additionally, employees must check email and voice messages hourly, at a minimum, and utilize the remote platforms established (i.e. Microsoft Teams, WebEx, Zoom) if appropriate. A 24-hour response time to messages is reasonable.
- Protect College information by following College policies governing information security, software licensing, and data protection; ensure that unauthorized individuals do not access Meharry data, either in print or electronically; and do

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not access restricted-level information in print or electronically unless approved by leads and protected by policy-compliant encryption and/or physical controls.

- Employees must provide a contact number for their respective Division Leader/Manager to maintain communication during this alternative work schedule and for emergency situations.
- If an employee is using a personal cell or home phone for business purposes but would like their number to remain confidential please invoke *67 before dialing to block your number from the caller identification system. Employees may use Google or other services to provide a de-identified number for business purposes.
- Maintain a safe environment while working remotely.

In addition to the above expectations, Non-Exempt employees:

- may work up to eight (8) hours each business day; and refrain from working over eight (8) hours in one day, or over 40 hours in one week;
- should take one fifteen (15) minute break near the middle of each four-hour segment of work;
- take one 30-60-minute meal break prior to the end of the fifth hour of work

Expectations for Division Leaders/Managers

Division Leaders/Managers are responsible for ensuring accountability and that their divisions/departments meet expectations of performance and deliverables. Division Leaders/Managers should communicate specific expectations to individual team members based on each person's needs and circumstance. To ensure that the remote work from home assignment is mutually beneficial to both the College and staff members, planning and communicating expectations in advance is crucial. Regular (at least weekly) one-on-one/ team meetings should be held with direct/indirect reports. Now provides an opportunity to develop special assignments to make progress on long term projects (i.e. review and redrafting of website content, policy revision, etc.). The formation of cross-divisional work groups will allow interaction with colleagues across areas of the College and engage diverse perspectives on projects.

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Business Critical Support Personnel-Remote Access Employee-Positive COVID-19 Testing

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 or those who have developed symptoms consistent with the virus **SHALL NOT** report to work on campus. Additionally, employees who live with an individual who has tested positive or has reason to believe they were directly exposed to someone who tested positive to COVID-19 should make contact with Meharry Employee and Student Health, and not access campus unless cleared to do so by the provider(s) in Employee and Student health. Employees are directed to contact the College's COVID-19 Hotline Number at **615.327.6093** for further direction.

Employees must wear a mask, practice safe distancing and take all CDC-recommended precautions when on campus.

EXHIBITS: