

FAQS – The Graduate Center (CUNY) COVID-19 Emergency Modifications

During discussions of coronavirus (COVID-19) emergency remote working conditions, Graduate Center faculty and staff raised an assortment of questions and concerns. This resource was created to answer questions and alleviate concerns. The document will be updated as new and helpful informational becomes available. We encourage you to check back periodically.

Please adhere to the specific, modified submission instructions provided below.

The webpages below will provide you with some helpful information regarding COVID-19.

- [CUNY Coronavirus Updates](#)
- [The Graduate Center's Coronavirus Guidance and Updates](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [New York State Department of Health](#)
- [New York City Department of Health and Mental](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)
- [CUNY Research Foundation](#)
- [2019 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) FAQ for Contracted Health and Human Service Providers](#)

ABSENCES AND WORK DISRUPTIONS RELATED TO CORONAVIRUS

1. What should I do if I have the symptoms or have been diagnosed with the virus but have no leave balances? Will I be paid if I take time off?

- Regular sick leave policies will apply except for the 14-day quarantine. The employee (faculty, hourly and F/T staff) will be paid without deduction from leave balances.

2. What protocol should we use if an employee is caring for a member of the household (relative or roommate) who has tested positive?

- Self-quarantine for a 14-day period without deduction of leave balances.

3. What is meant by an “essential” employee and how do I know if I am an essential or non-essential employee during an emergency?

- Essential employees are defined as anyone whose job function is essential to the effective operation of their agency or authority, or who must be physically present to perform their job, or who is involved in the COVID-19 emergency response.

- Non-essential employees are defined as anyone who does not need to be physically present to perform job functions, or are not required to meet the core function and programs of their agency during this emergency response.
- Essential personnel at The Graduate Center have already been notified of their essential employee designation. You may contact your department supervisor/administrator who will have information regarding your designation as an essential or non-essential employee.

4. Will I still receive a night differential if I am unable to work evening shifts due to COVID-19 emergency?

- For those who work the evening shift, the night differential will continue.

5. What if I had a cold or flu while working remotely (not related to COVID-19) and was not able to work for three or more days?

- The process for submitting a doctor's note for absences of 3 consecutive days of sick days still applies. You may forward the doctor's note to OHR at hr@gc.cuny.edu

DATA SECURITY FOR SUBMISSIONS OF FORMS AND DOCUMENTS TO OHR

6. How can I ensure that the information and the forms I submit to the Office of Human Resources remotely are secure?

- **Documents and forms that do not contain sensitive information (social security number, date of birth, bank information):**
We are currently accepting PDF signatures, pictures of signed forms, and copies of ink signatures on forms that are submitted to our office provided that they do not contain any sensitive information.
- **Documents and forms that contain sensitive information (social security number, date of birth, bank information):**

Under normal circumstances, documents and forms that contain sensitive information should not be submitted to OHR via email. However, in our current emergency remote setting, we are accepting forms via email provided that employees follow the instructions below. In order to protect the security of your personal information, you **must** adhere to the instructions below to e-mail your documents to OHR. OHR **will**

not accept any documents or forms with sensitive information if they are not submitted to our office in a secure manner.

Option I: Password Protecting the Forms and Attachments

- The sender should password protect the attachment(s) and send it via GC email account to OHR. Please review the [Adobe instructions](#) on how to add a password to PDF's.
- The sender should send the password in a separate email to OHR at hr@gc.cuny.edu and include the best telephone number to reach the sender.
- OHR staff will contact the sender by telephone to validate that they, indeed, submitted the form.

Option II: If you are unable to use Option I

- Please fill out the form that you need to submit to OHR, but leave the sections that require sensitive information blank and email it to OHR from your GC email account. Please add the best number to reach you in the body of your email.

OHR staff will call you on the number that you indicated in the body of the email to receive your sensitive information and include that information on the form you submitted before processing the request.

TIMESHEETS/PAYROLL/PAYCHECKS

7. Where can I locate timesheets?

You may locate all time sheets here:

[Timesheets](#)

8. Where can I locate payroll forms?

You may locate all payroll forms here:

[Payroll](#)

Frequently Requested Payroll Forms:

- [IT-2104 NYS Tax Withholding Form](#)
- [W-4 Federal Tax Withholding Form](#)
- [Change your deductions](#)

- [Direct Deposit Form for NYS Employees \(AC-2772\)](#)
 - You must send the direct deposit form and a copy of a voided check with banking information (a picture of the check is acceptable) via a password protected email to payroll@gc.cuny.edu

9. I was not able to pick up my paper paycheck(s) from the Bursar's Office. How will I receive my paychecks issued before March 26, 2020?

- Paychecks that were not picked up before March 20, 2020, were mailed to the address indicated on each employee's paycheck. Paychecks returned to the GC as undeliverable will require an alternate plan of distribution, which will be communicated to staff and faculty as soon as practicable.

10. How will I receive my paycheck moving forward, when most GC offices are working remotely?

- Beginning March 23, 2020, the Office of the State Comptroller has started mailing paychecks to the employee's address on file. Please check your address in [CUNYfirst](#) and update it in order to avoid delays in the delivery of your paychecks.
- If you have not done so, please enroll in direct deposit. [Direct deposit](#) is the most efficient and convenient way to receive your wages.

11. What is the pay schedule for hourly employees?

If you are an hourly employee, you may view the hourly payroll schedule/calendar here:

- [Hourly Payroll Calendar](#)

12. Where can I obtain the hourly employee time sheet?

If you are an hourly employee, you may view the hourly employee time sheet here:

- [Hourly Employee Timesheet](#)

13. What happens if an hourly employee could not work regular hours since mid-March due to issues related to coronavirus?

- Hourly employees **who were unable to work** because of access or equipment or other issues as we adjust to a remote work arrangements, or due to childcare responsibilities caused by a school closure or mandatory quarantine/isolation, should enter their

scheduled hours on their time sheets, i.e., the hours they would have worked if not for the current circumstances, and submit to their supervisor for approval.

14. Whom do I contact if I have questions regarding my timesheet or leave balances?

- Hourly employees, please contact the Payroll Unit at: payroll@gc.cuny.edu
- Full-time employees, please contact the Time and Leave Unit at: timeandleave@gc.cuny.edu
- ECP employees, please contact the Time and Leave Unit at: timeandleave@gc.cuny.edu

15. I am a full-time employee; how do I know when I get paid? What is the pay schedule for full-time employees?

Please check:

- [F/T Payroll Calendar](#)
- [ECP Payroll Calendar](#)

16. Where can I obtain the timesheet for full-time employees?

Please check:

- [Full-time employee timesheets](#)

17. Whom do I contact regarding my pay or paycheck or paystub?

- Please contact the Payroll Unit at payroll@gc.cuny.edu

18. What happens if an essential employee cannot report to work due to The Graduate Center's or CUNY's closure?

- Your inability to report to work due to The Graduate Center's or CUNY's closure, will be excused with pay, and you will not be charged any time.

19. Are essential employees compensated in any way if everyone else is being paid to stay home?

- No. Essential employees are expected to perform their essential functions at regular pay during an emergency.

BENEFITS

20. I have questions about my transit benefits. How can I find answers to my questions? Whom can I contact regarding transit/commuter benefits?

- You may view the latest information regarding your transit benefits via this link: [Commuter Benefits - Temporary Deduction Suspension Option](#)
- Please direct your questions to hr@gc.cuny.edu

21. Whom can I contact if I or someone in my family is experiencing anxiety and/or personal issues or needs help?

- [Employee Assistance Program](#)

22. Whom can I contact regarding health and/or retirement benefits?

- Our benefits/retirement contact is Lenore Mitchell. She can be reached at - limitchell2@gc.cuny.edu

23. Whom do I contact if I need to update (e.g., adding/dropping dependent, increasing contributions, etc.) my benefits (e.g., health coverage, etc.) information?

- Please contact Lenore Mitchell at limitchell2@gc.cuny.edu

OTHER REMOTE HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES

24. How do I change my mailing address?

- Employees may log in to Self Service via CUNYfirst to update your mailing address:
 1. Navigate to the [GC Portal](#).
 2. Log in to CUNYfirst using your CUNYfirst login and password.
 3. Once logged in, select *Campus Solutions* from the menu
 4. Select *Self Service*
 5. Select *Campus Personal Information*
 6. Select *addresses*

7. Update your current mailing address (including apartment number) and indicate your current phone number as preferred.
8. Confirm and save any changes.

OR

- Employees may also complete and submit [change of address form](#) accessible and send it to hr@gc.cuny.edu

25. How can I request verification of my employment at The Graduate Center?

- The Graduate Center's policy is to verify employment only upon receipt of a written request that includes a signed authorization from the employee. Employees may access the form [here](#).

26. Whom do I contact for general questions about my employment? (title, policies, changes to my personal information, etc.)

- Please contact hr@gc.cuny.edu

27. How will the Office of Human Resources verify my eligibility to work as a new hire at the GC/SOJ/MHC?

- An HR representative will forward essential new hire paperwork via email. Completed documents with no sensitive information (e.g., S.S.#, date of birth, etc.) can be returned to HR via email. An HR representative will conduct a video-conference call to verify I-9 documents and/or to obtain additional information.
- View instructions on [Completing Form I-9 for Remote Hire](#) on the [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services](#) website.

28. I have a candidate who has accepted an offer of employment, but there is no work location for the person to report because of the COVID-19 emergency. Are we still honoring the offer of employment? If so, how do we ensure the required paperwork is received and processed accordingly?

- Please contact hr@gc.cuny.edu to discuss options and next steps.

TELECOMMUTING

29. Are there any guidelines for telecommuting?

- In accordance with the CUNY's [Flexible Work Arrangements](#) for staff, GC has developed [The Graduate Center Telecommuting Guidelines](#) to assist GC employees and supervisors to memorialize telecommuting plans.
- These guidelines are temporary in nature and may be modified or revoked in response to further guidance from city, state, or federal government and agencies, or if CUNY or the GC deems that telecommuting is no longer necessary or desirable.
- These guidelines are applicable to all full-time and part-time tax levy staff, except persons who perform critical functions and are required to be on campus in order to perform their assigned duties.
- These guidelines are not applicable to the GC faculty who already have been given guidance on distance learning and who will continue to maintain their own distinct responsibilities in terms of instruction, mentorship, and holding of office hours.

30. How will the Telecommuting Guidelines be implemented?

- The employees are expected to submit their [Telecommuting Plan](#) to their supervisors by April 3, 2020, for their review and approval.
- The employees should submit an approved [Telecommuting Plan](#) and [The Graduate Center Offsite Workplace Self-Certification Checklist](#) to the Office of Human Resources by April 10, 2020.

31. How can I access files or items from my workspace during the emergency?

- Faculty and staff will be permitted to retrieve personal belongings and materials needed to work remotely in conformance to the [New York State on Pause](#) executive order.

32. What technology/tools are available for me to work remotely?

- To facilitate online meetings and conference calls, CIS has enabled WebEx accounts for all University staff. All of the systems are accessible through the [CUNY Technology resources page](#) using your @login.cuny.edu credentials (username and password).
- To claim a [Dropbox](#) account and access training materials and FAQs.
- [Microsoft Office 365 for Education](#) (this includes One Drive and the cloud versions of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams, and SharePoint).
- Please contact IT's helpdesk at itservices@gc.cuny.edu should you require technical assistance.

33. While working remotely, do I need to charge annual leave if I need time off, or sick leave if I am unwell?

- If you are working remotely and need to take time off or are unwell (but not related to COVID-19) the same process still applies as when you are on-site.
- Annual leave or unscheduled holiday: You should have a discussion with your supervisor to request the time off. Once your supervisor will approve the request, and your leave balance will be charged.
- Sick Leave: If you are feeling unwell, advise your supervisor as soon as possible. You or your supervisor should inform the Office of Human Resources at hr@gc.cuny.edu

NOTE: While on approved leave, you should not engage in work activities.

34. How will the classroom teaching observations be conducted for the spring 2020 semester?

- Classroom teaching observations that have not been conducted before transition to remote learning will be conducted only if requested by the employee to be evaluated.

35. How will full-time or adjunct faculty hold office hours while working remotely?

- Full-time and adjunct faculty who are responsible for and paid for office hours will hold office hours through remote-working technology and will notify their students and department chairs regarding how they plan to hold the hours. Notifications should be made on or before March 27th.

36. How will my supervisor conduct my evaluation if I am working remotely?

- Annual evaluations will be conducted through distance technology, which may include phone and/or videoconferencing.