

Flexible Scheduling and FFCRA

August 14, 2020

Nearly all K-12 schools in the Baltimore area will continue with full-time distance learning during the fall. Staff employees with school-age children or younger children whose child care is no longer available will face some tough decisions regarding how to handle working while also providing full-time care and education for your children for the foreseeable future. While this is certainly true for essential staff who need to work on campus, it is also true for employees working from home.

For staff employees who anticipate being impacted by distance learning or limited access to child care, now is the time to discuss a strategy for managing work and child care responsibilities with your supervisor. Employees have paid leave benefits under temporary federal regulations or may be able to work a flexible schedule in order to meet these dual roles.

Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

In April, Congress passed the FFCRA to provide paid leave and job protection to employees impacted by the Coronavirus. The FFCRA included two types of leave provisions:

Emergency Paid Sick Leave for up to 80 hours of paid leave in case an employee needs to quarantine, to seek a medical diagnosis, to care for an individual who needs to quarantine, or to provide child care if the child's school or day care is closed due to COVID.

Expanded Family Medical Leave Act (EFMLA) added child care as a qualifying event for FMLA. EFMLA provides up to 12 weeks of leave for employees whose child's school is closed due to COVID. Employees who do not have accrued leave available receive 2/3 pay up to \$200 / day. EFMLA can be taken intermittently rather than continuously.

These provisions apply to both on-campus and telework employees. For more information on the FFCRA, please see the [Fact Sheet](#) available on the HR web page.

Flexible Work Schedules:

Employees and supervisors are encouraged to work together to develop flexible schedules that work for both the employee and the department. Some options for flexible schedules include:

- Flexible daily work hours that include chunks of time away from work during the day to accommodate virtual learning or childcare. For example, an employee may

work a split shift, working hours early, stepping away from work to support virtual learning, and then returning to work in the afternoon.

- Flexible weekly work hours, which could include a condensed schedule (four 10's) or working more hours some days and fewer hours other days. Note: supervisors of non-exempt staff should consult with the Office of Human Resources (OHR) if implementing flexible work hours to ensure compliance with timekeeping policies and wage regulations.

Employees and supervisors should check in periodically regarding the work schedules to evaluate how well it is working and make adjustments as needed.

Using Leave

Many employees cancelled vacations or scheduled time off this summer because of COVID. This has compounded the stress and anxiety caused by the pandemic. While travel is discouraged, days off from work can still provide rest and relaxation. Employees are encouraged to schedule time off for self-care.

If you have any questions, please contact OHR at hr@ubalt.edu.