Executive Summary of Feedback
Received from the Policy Portal to the
Flexible Work Policy/Procedure

Below is a history of all comments created for this policy:

Comment 1a.

The procedure updates should focus more on employee engagement and effective communication, rather than mandating specific communication methods for all. A more inclusive approach would be to have the department/office articulate what engagement and communication look like, and have the employee and supervisor collaborate on a communication plan for the remote days. MCC values inclusivity, and as a neurodivergent employee seeing the 'communicate this way language' decreases my sense of belonging here.

Administrative Response:

The flexible work policy and procedure revisions help provide greater clarity for both employee and leaders when requesting and reviewing requests for flexible work arrangements. These revisions better define expectations for both employees and leaders. They also center on the consistent application and an on-going review of flexible work arrangements to ensure these arrangements do not detract from the ability of the employee to successfully perform their job responsibilities and do not negatively impact their colleagues' ability to successfully perform their job duties. For these reasons, we agree that these updates aid in promoting employee engagement and an inclusive workplace.

Comment 1b.

Changing the determination from 7 calendar days to "a reasonable timeframe" feels like a step back in transparency. If that was too short, why not look at something with more time but still provide clarity to the employee on when they could expect to hear back. This could be business days instead of calendar days.

Administrative Response:

The intent behind revising the timeline from specific number of days to a reasonable timeframe is to ensure there is sufficient time for a thorough and timely review by the immediate supervisor/department head, up through the divisional Vice President, and in some cases the Executive Director of Human Resources and Organizational Development and a bargaining unit representative (as applicable).   This review can also necessitate the need for leaders to have further conversation with the employee requesting the flexible work schedule to resolve questions or concerns as well as ensure compliance with this policy and procedure. Lastly, this update allows for timely review if a request is denied and under appeal.

Comment 1c.

Is there really a business need to make people work for a year before being allowed to work remote days? Same for the 6 months for a new position.

Administrative Response:

The purpose of requiring a one-year timeline for new hires and six months for newly promoted is to enable the on-the-job training prior to authorizing a flexible work arrangement. The language does allow for exceptions to these timelines with additional approvals. Intent is to ensure the new hire / newly promoted employee has received the required training before working remotely and ensure they are set up for success.

Comment 2a.

The new eligibility restrictions based on a time period seem arbitrary and counter-productive if you desire a motivated workforce. New employees having to wait a year and promoted employees ineligible for 6 months will make it more difficult to attract and retain excellent performers. People from outside and inside can be perfectly capable of doing their new jobs right off the bat. In fact, some of the people we seek to hire because they are the subject matter expert to help train our existing team! And people we are promoting often have already been doing the job they are promoted into, it just takes the HR processes time to catch up and adjust. I think it would be a better approach to say that if someone is starting a job and their supervisor deems that they need to be onsite for training and development, that that be the basis of approving/denying or adjusting their flexible work schedule accordingly. Let's empower our management team by trusting their management discretion as the experts on their department. And if some employees and/ or managers are not doing their jobs in terms of being accountable to the existing guidelines, then why don't we address those as performance problems instead of punishing everyone because some abuse the system. You know who they are, so address it with them instead of proposing arbitrary rules that demotivate the majority. We have a hard enough time convincing people to take on more responsibility without saying, oh and with your promotion you have to stop working your flex schedule. That is not going to go over well.

Administrative Response:

The purpose of requiring a one-year timeline for new hires and six months for newly promoted is to enable the on-the-job training prior to authorizing a flexible work arrangement. The language does allow for exceptions to these timelines with additional approvals. Intent is to ensure the new hire / newly promoted employee has received the required training before working remotely and ensure they are set up for success.

Comment 2b.

Also, 99.9% of phone calls to my office are vendor cold calls. I do not want my office phone forwarded to my cell phone when I am working remotely. My co-workers have my direct cell phone number for calls and texts, and I am online in Microsoft 365 all day long so am very responsive to emails or Microsoft Teams chats. In addition, if someone phones my office phone and leaves a voicemail, it comes into my email so I can listen and respond almost immediately on the rare occasion it is not vendor spam.

Administrative Response:

We understand that employees may not want to share their personal phone number and this is not required under these revisions. However, there is alternative option outlined within this revision to include software that enables forwarding desk phone to an employee's computer when working remotely. This includes working with IT to download Jabber software to enable this function. The intent in providing these options is to ensure an employee who is working remotely is just as accessible as they would be when working on campus.

Comment 3

While I am not personally, directly impacted by this portion of the policy update, I have a concern about one of the major changes to Types of Flexible Work Arrangements. Under the previous policy, it was my understanding that some job descriptions could be updated to be fully remote. I felt this was a boon to the College in terms of competing for technical staff especially. With our salary limitations, being able to offer remote work as a benefit in some very specific technical positions would allow us to potentially be competitive with other employers. I am worried that adding the word "temporarily" when discussing certain positions being able to be performed fully remotely will mean that we will no longer be able to offer that benefit to potential future hires. Also, I am concerned what will happen to the current staff who have already been granted permission to work fully remotely.

Administrative Response:

To clarify, the intent behind the process for those identified as able to work remotely are for those leaders and employees to revisit the current flexible work arrangement and ensure this arrangement is not negatively impacting students or colleagues. As the current policy states, "Flexible work arrangements are not employee entitlements. Determinations about which positions are eligible for flexible work arrangements and determinations to approve or deny proposed flexible work arrangements are subject to management discretion based on business and operational needs and the advancement of student success in alignment with the College's values. Determinations are not grievable under any collective bargaining agreements."

Comment 4a.

The following statement in the procedure seems to contradict the policy which allows up to five days per pay period: "Once the period is complete the employee will be considered for one (1) day each workweek (based on a calendar week) for flexible work arrangement for each week upon completion of in-person training." Can this statement be clarified? Also, what is the in-person training that is referenced?

Administrative Response:

Upon further review of this language, it is agreed that the current revised language is confusing. Please note that this language has been updated to reduce confusion:

- All full-time employees in roles designated for flexible work arrangements are required to have at least one (1) year of service. Employees who have been promoted to a different role within the College will not be eligible for flexible work arrangement for six (6) months. Exceptions to the timelines defined above will be determined on a case-by-case basis as described below and require prior approval from the supervisor/department head, up through the divisional Vice President.
- Employees must be fully trained and performing at a satisfactory level as determined by their latest performance evaluation and/or as determined by the supervisor and/or department head for the area based on current work performance.

Comment 4b.

The first sentence in Subsection F should include "with" between College and advance.

Administrative Response:

Agree with including the word "with" and have revised to include in Subsection F.

Comment 5

The last sentence (in red under the first section of 4.8) appears to be incomplete. "…Director of Human Resources and" ?

Administrative Response:

Please see below outlining the language within the section of the 4.8 Flexible Work Policy:

- The initial determination to approve or deny occurs at the supervisor/department head level, and the final determination rests with the respective divisional Vice President or their designee. Supervisors are encouraged to engage employees and the Executive Director of Human Resources and Organizational Development or their designee to develop effective flexible work arrangements that support business and operational needs, advance our shared commitment to student success, and reflect MCC values. The

College expects and requires no reduction in service, quality of work, or productivity due to implementing a flexible work arrangement.

- The College will not approve remote work in locations outside New York State due to out-of-state tax and regulatory implications. In limited circumstances, prompted by business or operational needs, the College may approve requests to work remotely outside of New York State, on a short term, temporary basis. Prior to approval, the divisional Vice President must consult with the Executive Director of Human Resources and Organizational Development or their designee and the Controller's Office to evaluate tax, additional costs, including regulatory requirements.
- The College reserves the right to approve or deny any flexible work arrangement, and to modify or revoke such arrangements once approved, in accordance with the notice timeframes set forth in the related procedure. Generally, flexible work arrangements may be approved for a semester or academic year. When business or operational needs necessitate modification, suspension, or cancellation of a flexible work arrangement, appropriate notice will be provided in accordance with the related procedure.

Comment 6

I think we should address the idea that if you have "reception" duties in your job description, you should be precluded from participating. It's frustrating for students/faculty/staff when there is no one sitting in an office. Here are current job vacancy notices for positions that require reception:

- [Secretary II Job Notice](#)
- [Clerk II Job Notice](#)

Administrative Response:

The revisions to the Flexible Work Policy and Procedure include additional responsibilities for leaders to evaluate and ensure future or existing flexible work arrangements are not detracting from an employee's ability to successfully perform their job duties. In your example, where an employee performs reception duties requiring in-person interactions, the supervisor / department head is responsible for evaluating if a new or existing flexible work arrangement can be supported. The leader's decision is based on whether the essential duties of the position can be effectively performed. To clarify, this would be the same process leaders would follow for all other positions at the College where in-person interactions are deemed essential. If leaders have questions regarding what is considered essential job duties, they are encouraged to reach out to their department head or Human Resources.

Comment 7

You guys should be able to work with the unions and add this into the policy for each union of what they require for the flexible time. but when it's vacation time in the CSEA calendars, it states that you had to put in six months in advance, but you can only take weeks at a time. is there any way you guys could be able to add no single days off every week one flexible time starts? Like those one person in departments that like to take time off and abuse the time and take every Friday up so no one else in the departments are able to have that day off.

Administrative Response:

The existing Flexible Work Procedure includes language that ensures employees submit request for scheduled time off in accordance with established policies and/or contracts and charge appropriate time off. Changes to these policies and/or contracts are handled outside of the Flexible Work Policy / Procedures. Additionally, abuse of time off, including unexcused patterns of absences are handled outside of this policy and procedure.

Comment 8a.

4.8 Policy: Last paragraph under "Policy" starting with Remote work locations and ending with regulatory requirement and costs is duplicate.

Administrative Response:

Updated to remove duplicate language.

Comment 8b.

Under "Types of Flexible Work "Arrangements" should "Depending on the business and operational needs..." statement be added to both flextime and compressed?

Should an example be included under compressed work schedule?

Administrative Response:

Yes, updated the policy to include the following statement "as business or operational needs can support" for each of the three types of flexible work arrangements.

Yes, the policy has been updated to include an example of a 40-hour workweek condensed into four days instead of five.

Comment 8c.

4.8 Procedure - Should Description include a description of this procedure?

Administrative Response:

Yes, the Flexible Work Procedure outlines the descriptions in detail.

Comment 8d.

As a supervisor I am unaware of how a fwa affects PTO - where does one find this information?

Administrative Response:

One example, of a compressed work schedule for a 40-hour workweek is condensed into four days instead of five, the employee requesting vacation may request 10 hours of their accrued vacation day in order to cover the absence to support the approved compressed scheduled. This is one example, if you have specific questions applicable to your team, please reach out to your supervisor/department head or Human Resources.

Comment 8e.

Why do initial determinations of requests get put into writing if this is an online system that the employee can follow the path of approval? Shouldn't only a denial be put in writing to show the justification?

Administrative Response:

The intent behind this revision is to ensure all requests are current and accessible in one location for ease of reporting. Employees and leaders have access to view so employees can see their own requests, including status and expiration date and leaders can view requests of by their department to evaluate the impact and aid in decision making for current and future requests. This ensures compliance with the policy and procedure, including if a request is denied and under appeal.

Comment 8f.

I find subsection d to be confusing on determining the length of time a new employee can use after one year.

Administrative Response:

Upon further review of this language, agree the revised language is confusing. This language has been revised to better clarify as follows:

- All full-time employees in roles designated for flexible work arrangements are required to have at least one (1) year of service. Employees who have been promoted to a different role within the College will not be eligible for flexible work arrangement for six (6) months. Exceptions to the timelines defined above will be determined on a case-by-case basis as described below and require prior approval from the supervisor/department head, up through the divisional Vice President.
- Employees must be fully trained and performing at a satisfactory level as determined by their latest performance evaluation and/or as determined by the supervisor and/or department head for the area based on current work performance.

Comment 8g.

Page 6 - Number 10 - I don't believe you mean the word "Apply" at the end of the first sentence. Page 6 - Number 11 - there is a letter "o" near the end that should probably be "or"

Administrative Response:

Yes, agree with these edits and have updated.

Comment 8h.

Page 6 - Number 14 - what are the state procedures or standards that people are responsible for knowing and adhering to?

Administrative Response:

The list of procedures within this section include the MCC's internal policies that incorporate SUNY and State regulations. These policies include the standards and procedures that employees of College are required to follow:

- Complying with Information Security Requirements: Telecommuters are responsible for adhering to the SUNY Information Security Policy (Document 6900) and all State, and MCC policies, procedures and standards concerning use of computer equipment and the security of data/information while utilizing this telecommuting program:
- 7.1 MCC Acceptable Use of College Technology Policy
- 7.2 Password Policy
- 7.3 Information Technology Security Policy

Comment 8i.

Am I missing where this procedure tells you where to apply?

Administrative Response:

Updated the Flexible Work Procedure to include a link for easier access to the online Flexible Work Schedule Application. This can also be found by logging onto MyMCC home page: Home Page - Monroe Community College (monroecc.edu), then selecting Employee Home tile, then Human Resources tile. Within the Human

Resources Tile, you can then select Remote Work Application or via Link: New Request | Flexible Work Schedule Application | Monroe Community College (monroecc.edu).

Comment 9a.

Hi, for item G-5, I would like to recommend other official channels which many of us operate on and through all day, such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Teams in particular is much more suited to a hybrid environment because it can be flexible with notifications.

In my entire time at MCC, nearly ten years now, I have only had two people calling me on a regular basis and both of those were more senior people who "just liked the phone". You can see if someone is in a meeting or otherwise busy before calling someone via Teams, as well.

Administrative Response:

At this time the College has purchased the software Jabber to enable employees who are working remote to forward calls from their desk phone to their computer.

Comment 9b.

I also think subsection D needs some rethinking. Let's say you have a valuable employee and their life's circumstances take them four hours away from campus. They're still valuable and you still want to promote them, but you want them to find local living accommodations after that promotion?

We have a very difficult time attracting real talent and I think if MCC finds someone worth promoting, it's probably worth considering that most people in that situation would leave rather than finding a way to comply with the in-office policy for six months. Even as someone this is unlikely to affect, I found the reading to be arbitrary and punitive, which again, is a weird side effect for getting a promotion.

Administrative Response:

The purpose of requiring a six-month timeline for newly promoted employees is to enable the on-the-job training prior to authorizing a flexible work arrangement. The language does allow for exceptions to these timelines are allowable with additional approvals. Intent is to ensure the newly promoted employee has received the required training before working remotely as we want to ensure they are set up for success. As a result, we can help ensure the retention of employees.

Comment 9c.

I also think that in a policy document, we should focus on being available through official channels as a general statement because those channels may change. For example, it may be appropriate for some of us to drop external phone numbers at some point in the near future. Further, Jabber may not be a supported method within the next few years.

That was a lot of words, but I think focusing on availability through official channels and not specifics like forwarding the desk phone (which is more situational, maybe to be determined on a departmental level) or Jabber (which is a stopgap solution) is more ideal.

Administrative Response:

At this time, we wanted to ensure the College community knew that this software (Jabber) is available along with including call forwarding expectations when working remotely. Based on feedback received, we learned that our employees were not aware that the College had this software to enable call forwarding from a desk phone to a computer. This is important as it enables those who are working remotely to be as accessible as they

would be when working on campus. If there are future updates to the software that the College utilizes to support call-forwarding, this will be shared with the College community.

Comment 10

I support the changes to this policy. The policy allowing for flexible arrangements and remote work where appropriate is vital to the college's ability to attract and retain talent in a competitive employment market.

Administrative Response:

Appreciate you taking the time to review these updates and for sharing your feedback.

Additional Feedback Shared Verbally:

Comment 11

Under the Flexible Work Policy, why include the word "temporary" in this sentence, "In limited circumstances, certain positions may temporarily be performed fully remote". Reason being that the revisions to the policy/procedure now require a renewal following the expiration of a Flexible Work arrangement.

Administrative Response:

Agree that the use of temporary can be removed from this section. The revisions to the procedure now identify the supervisor/department head responsible for ensuring that any expired flexible work arrangements are managed and shall ensure the employee returns to working on campus until such time a new flexible work arrangement request has been submitted and approved.

Comment 12

The current Policy and Procedure does not consistently outline requirements regarding working fully remote.

Administrative Response:

Agreed. Updated both to ensure this is clarified and referenced in both the Policy and Procedure.

Comment 13

Can leaders and employees review current and expired flexible work arrangement applications?

Administrative Response:

Yes, current and expired (archived) flexible work applications can be viewed by the employee and leader via the online form located under [myMCC home page (monroecc.edu)](): Home Page - Monroe Community College (monroecc.edu), then select Employee Home tile, and then Human Resources tile. Within the Human Resources Tile, you can then select [Remote Work Application (New Request, Flexible Work Schedule Application, monroecc.edu)]().

Comment 14

Can leaders and/or employees receive reminders from IT when a flexible work arrangement application is going to expire?

Administrative Response:

Employees and Leaders should set own reminders to ensure flexible work applications are active. Leaders are responsible for ensuring that any expired flexible work arrangements shall be managed to ensure the employee returns to working on campus until such time a new flexible work arrangement request has been submitted and approved.

Comment 15

Why does the new procedure in Subsection E, "Supervisory Responsibilities" require leaders review flexible work arrangements every semester? A flexible work arrangement duration may be for a longer duration, including up to a year. Therefore, a semester review may not apply in all situations.

Administrative Response:

Agree to remove "every semester" from this section. To clarify, the immediate supervisor/department head is responsible for evaluating existing flexible work arrangements on a regular basis. This ensures flexible work arrangements are reviewed, documented, and fully approved prior to considering new requests. This review may be required each semester, each 30 days, after X number of months, etc. This leader review will not only depend on timeline of the prior approved flexible work arrangement but may also occur as business and operational needs change.