Below you will find some questions and concerns brought up by CFAES staff in response to COVID-19. We as CFAES Staff Advisory Council hope that this fact sheet will help answer some questions you have during this time. We thank Dean Cathann Kress, Dr. Tracy Kitchel, HR Business Partners Brandi Gilbert-Hammett and Nicole Wakeley, and various other administrators in helping us answer these important questions to help you adapt well to our changing work environments.

If you have any future questions or concerns regarding COVID-19 or other CFAES related inquiries we as CFAES SAC are always available to be the staff voice to administration and welcome all questions. At the completion of this FAQ sheet you will find a list of the current SAC representatives for future contact needs.

Please note that the responses below are accurate as to the time this FAQ was created. As you are aware, this is an ever-changing situation. Continue to read university and college messages for the most up-to-date information.

**COVID-19 FAQ For CFAES Staff**

This is a very stressful and uncertain time for many staff members, what emotional health resources are available in dealing with COVID-19 related anxiety and stress?

- OSU’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available 24 hours a day, call 1-800-678-6265 to talk to a live person, or visit the [EAP webpage](https://go.osu.edu/eap) and type in username “buckeyes” to view expanded services. The EAP also has a previously recorded webinar titled Calm Is Contagious: Mindfulness Strategies for Responding to COVID-19 that is available on the website for the next 30 days.

- Several anxiety-reducing tips for faculty, staff and students along with information for parents about how to talk with your children about COVID-19 have been developed by the university’s chief wellness officer. These documents can be found on the [OSU Health and Wellness webpage](https://go.osu.edu/healthandwellness).

**NOTE:** Our university-wide wellness team has been creating wonderful new programming for our faculty, staff and students that should help them to cope with the pandemic and stay healthy. The new series “Staying Well and Calm in the Midst of the COVID-19 Storm” begins next Wednesday, April 8 at 12:30 pm. Sessions are short and weekly for 8 weeks on Wednesdays at 12:30. Faculty and staff will receive YP4H points if they attend 7 out of the 8 sessions.
Is it best to contact our supervisor or HR if we have questions regarding telecommuting?

- Staff are welcome to contact both. Different levels of supervisors are going to have different ideas and may already have action plans in place. Staff can also reach out to the HR consultant for their area, please note that it is not mandatory to go through a supervisor before contacting HR. Area HR consultants can be found HERE.

Will hourly staff that cannot work on campus or that cannot telecommute be paid?

- Staff who are concerned about not being able to telework due to technology issues or have work of telework nature should contact their supervisor or HR consultant immediately. College leadership has laid out a variety of creative options to keep staff engaged at this time, including a variety of professional development opportunities through BuckeyeLearn. We await additional guidance from the university as it relates to the Disaster Leave deployment.

For those unable to have sustainable work from home options what are some options for staff to continue working? Who should they contact for options/ideas?

Staff members are to contact their supervisors for teleworking ideas, here are some ideas:

- Organize BuckeyeBox folders
- Get a head start on marketing materials for future events/online events
- Work on the planning of an office-wide or team project
- Read a leadership/teamwork book
- Pursue a professional development opportunity
- Complete required BuckeyeLEARN webinars - check under “my transcript” on buckeyeLEARN for pending trainings
- Learn.extension.org webinars on all program areas and also office/interpersonal topics such as online teaching strategies, volunteer management, communications and mentoring
- Microsoft has free webinars on how to use Microsoft Teams HERE
- ACEL Leadership Center upcoming webinars
- ACEL to EXTENSION series – learn more HERE
- Attend a virtual conference
- Catch up on WORKDAY updates and upcoming trainings HERE

More information on successful teleworking strategies can be found at keepworking.osu.edu

Those concerned about their health or the health of their loved ones in regard to not currently being able to telework, please bring this to the attention of your supervisor and/or the HR team: cfaeshr@osu.edu
Telecommuting Tips

- Communicate to others when you are taking lunch, a break or even a walk since you aren’t physically in the same room.

- Use this time to improve yourselves, check out some professional development or continuing education opportunities.

- Take advantage of flexible work times, especially if you are managing childcare, homeschooling and other additional tasks.

- If you are feeling anxious or isolated please reach out to your colleagues, supervisor and/or HR consultant.

Are there ways to get those of us working remotely to be able to have access to a way to make calls from cellphones that would display as our work phone so that we don’t have clients/students knowing our personal cell numbers if we need to make work related calls?

Call Forwarding, standard university land line

- If you are not fully migrated over to a Skype for Business phone number, use these directions for forwarding a standard land line.

Call Forwarding Directions, Skype for Business

- If the Skype App is download, a phone can forward to an office number and can ring to a cell phone via the Skype App.

- The Skype for Business app can simultaneously ring on cell devices and computers/laptops with the university phone number without giving out a cell number. This is also independent of the computer, if you solely log in to the Skype for Business app on your phone.

How do staff, that are no longer allowed to come into the labs/facilities, to fill out time-sheets? Are there new guidelines in filling out and submitting time sheets?

- Fill out timesheet as you normally do with 8 hours of work and time for a one-hour lunch break.
Many staff members are putting in longer hours to prepare courses and complete a variety of duties, are staff eligible for overtime while teleworking?

- If there is a need for overtime, it is important to get that time approved through your supervisor first. We all must respect boundaries with potential overtime to avoid burn out, everyone needs that time away. One good strategy to avoid burn out, balance tasks and manage personal needs while working from home is flex time. More information on the Flexible Work Policy and how to implement can be found [HERE](#).

With MiFi internet hotspots in limited supply from OCIO will there be any assistance or compensation for work related personal data usage as staff start going over limits?

- Currently OCIO continues to work on a solution but is hoping to have some resolution soon. MiFi’s continue to be shipped as we get them.

Due to working from home how are staff members to send and receive work related mail and packages? If we need to have something for University Business mailed/shipped, is it appropriate to have it sent to our home address and if we use USPS will we be reimbursed?

- Guidelines for mail and packages have been shared with leadership and the administrative person from each department. *Please do not forward mail to your home.*

Even though a variety of research projects have been put on hold many labs still have plants, insects, etc. that need maintained, are staff allowed to gather supplies/plants/course materials to keep at home until the university is fully functional?

- Administration had to make the hard decision to stop many research projects to ensure the safety of personnel but understand there are years’ worth of materials that need maintained. Faculty and staff are allowed to pick up needed items from campus ONE TIME ONLY. It is asked that personnel do not pick up as a group to keep social distancing practices intact. It is also asked for personnel to check first with departmental chair as there may be pick up scheduling already in place.
I am looking to purchase an item for department/office use through Amazon and be reimbursed later but the item is listed as OCIO restricted item, can Amazon purchasing be lightened in these weeks?

- Specialty purchases outside of technology can be considered on case-by-case basis. OCIO-specific cases can also be considered, but other factors like timeliness of the request related to the programming need and maintained cyber security will be considered.

At this point in time do we have an estimate on when CFAES operations and events could be back to normal?

- Unfortunately, we are unsure when we will be back to normal and we acknowledge that we will likely be redefining “normal” after many of the health orders are listed. We take our lead from the CDC, state health department and Governor, and university guidance.

- We don’t know when we will be done with teleworking since we believe that it will take at least 10 days until we see the impact of our social isolating. We must change perspective as we receive new information from our governor and news outlets. What we do know is that we are fortunate to work for an institution that puts our people first. The goal of the university and CFAES is to take care of as many of our people as possible.

Extension is a very large, wide-spread portion of our college and likely has some unique challenges during this time, is extension having regular updates?

- Yes, though most Extension-planned activities are postponed through May 15, there are regular updates from extension administration and personnel. Jackie Wilkins, interim director of OSU Extension, completes daily updates, is available for questions via Zoom through standing “office hours” and she is continuing to help address the many extension-specific issues that staff might have. Additionally, program area leaders are relaying information to the various staff that work in specific areas according to extension focus.
What if I become ill with COVID-19 or someone in my family becomes ill that I need to take care of?

- In accordance with federal law, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), The Ohio State University provides job-protected Family and Medical Leave (FML) to eligible faculty and staff who are unable to work because of their own serious health condition or because of the need to care for an immediate family member with a serious health condition. To receive FMLA assistance, there must be a positive test result for COVID-19. Staff affected should reach out to their area HR consultant who will then send appropriate forms to your doctor. More information on Family and Medical Leave can be found [HERE](#).

**REPORTING:**

- If you are experiencing signs or symptoms of respiratory illness consistent with coronavirus, have been exposed to an individual with coronavirus or have been diagnosed with the virus, you should contact your primary care physician. If you are unable to reach your primary care physician, call the Wexner Medical Center’s COVID-19 call center at (614) 293-4000 for guidance.

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**Stay up-to-date on Ohio State and other news related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

- Daily updates on Ohio health and recommendations followed by the Wexner Medical Center
- Updates on Coronavirus and Your Research Program [HERE](#)
- Ohio State Insights - Ohio State’s coronavirus expert answers critical COVID-19 questions
- Ohio Department of Health: How You Can Prevent and Prepare
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) latest updates and facts: [HERE](#)
2020 CFAES Staff Advisory Council Representatives

**Academic Programs** - Morgan Dailey.180

**ACEL** - Emily Wickham.24

**AEDE** - Kelli Trinoskey.1

**Animal Sciences** - Christopher Okonkwo.5

**At-large Position 1** - Melissa Burant.2 (Grant Development Support Unit)

**At-large Position 2** - Terri Fisher.456 (OSU Extension Director's Office)

**Dean's Operations** - Lynette Arner.14

**Entomology** - Sarah DeVilbiss.14

**Extension Representative 1 (SE Region - Perry Co)** - Misty Harmon.416

**Extension Representative 2 (Central Region - Extension Operations)** - Patty Corfman.4

**Extension Representative 3 (Central Region - Livestock/Food Animal Programs)** - Elizabeth Share.8

**Extension Representative 4** - OPEN POSITION

**Extension Representative 5 (SW Region – Clermont Co)** - Kelly Royalty.9

**FABE** - Rachel Cornell.68

**Finance** - Beth Tucker.158

**Food Animal Health Research** - Sara Tallmadge.7

**Food Science and Technology** - OPEN POSITION

**Horticulture & Crop Science** - Meredith Luikart.6

**Human Resources** - Brandi Gilbert-Hammett.1

**Marketing and Communications/Advancement** - Amanda Lukacs.6

**Past Chair** - Amanda Forquer.13 (Morrow Co Extension)

**Plant Pathology** - Zak Ralston.45

**SENR** - OPEN POSITION

**South Centers/Piketon** - Joy Bauman.67

**Wooster Campus Representative** - Desiree Lutsch.11

**Wooster Staff Council** - Zac Burkey.56

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