

To: Ms. Shakenna Adams-Gormley, Chair, College Council
From: Dr. Jermaine F. Williams, President
Subject: **College Council Recommendation 24-01: Flexible Work Arrangement Written Communication for Divisions/Departments**
Date: May 7, 2024

I want to express my appreciation to you, the College Council, and all the members of the participatory governance process for their leadership in considering issues of importance to Montgomery College. I have reviewed recommendation 24-01: Flexible Work Arrangement Written Communication for Divisions/Departments, which the Council voted to move forward to the President on March 26, 2024. The document presented to me by the College Council is attached.

The College recently reviewed and updated the Policy 32500–Flexible Work Arrangements and its Procedure. I am pleased that the governance recommendation provided input into this review process. The recommendation from College Council has been incorporated into the Procedure, specifically into Section IV, which is entitled, Guidelines for Managing Flexible Work Arrangements, namely, that service and operational standards and flexible work arrangement provisions should be communicated in writing to employees (parts A and B).

Based on my review, I have approved this recommendation and look forward to working with you on other insightful recommendations. Should you have any additional questions, please contact the College Council Liaison and Chief of Staff/Chief Strategy Officer Stephen Cain.

Thank you for your service to Montgomery College's governance system and the work you do to support Montgomery College's mission and vision.

Attachment

cc: Cabinet Members
Deputy Chief of Staff for Presidential Publications and Operations
Governance Director



Governance Recommendation

Title: Flexible Work Arrangement Written Communication for Divisions/Departments
Council Name submitting the recommendation: Employee Services Council
Council Chair: Dr. Paul D. Miller
Date of Approval by the Individual Council: March 7, 2024
Date of Recommendation Review and Vote by College Council: March 26, 2024
Recommendation Presenter: Dr. Paul D. Miller
Recommendation Issue or Concern: <i>(Provide background reasoning or justification and any research findings or supporting documentation for recommendation.)</i> The Policy and Procedures for Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA-telework) policy (See Section 32500) is currently being revised. The modified/pending policy will allow for up to two days of telework with some discretion on limiting the amount of telework time depending upon the needs and services provided by individual units. It has been brought to the attention of Employee Services Council (ESC) that multiple instances within many divisions and departments of the institution are implementing the College guidelines on FWA-telework without written notification. The origin of this recommendation was a concern brought by an employee from a specific unit. While this particular concern has been addressed, upon further discussion and investigation, the ESC realized that many employees are requesting clarification and information be provided in writing for the telework (FWA) policy unique to their unit.
Resolution: We hereby propose that the Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA) workgroup language include in the latest draft of the procedure update (Policy and Procedure Section 32500) a requirement that divisions or departments must communicate in writing the operation/service standards pertaining to FWA provisions within any given unit.
Student Impact: Employees who feel engaged and empowered are more likely to serve students effectively. This aligns with the focus on fostering a sense of belonging outlined in MC's Strategic Plan.
Economic Impact: <ol style="list-style-type: none">Improved Efficiency and Productivity: The College can improve efficiency and productivity by informing all impacted employees of guideline changes through

written memos. Employees well-informed about the procedures they must follow are less likely to make mistakes or require retraining, reducing the time and resources spent correcting errors.

2. **Enhanced Compliance and Risk Management:** Formalizing communication regarding guideline changes can help maintain high compliance levels with both internal policies and external regulations. This reduces the risk of legal or financial penalties associated with non-compliance, thereby protecting MC's economic interests.
3. **Reduced Turnover Costs:** Transparent and inclusive communication practices, as promoted by the proposed motion, can contribute to higher employee satisfaction and engagement. Employees who feel valued and informed are less likely to leave the organization, leading to lower turnover costs associated with recruiting, hiring, and training new staff.

Equity and Inclusion Impact:

1. **Transparent Communication:** Mandating written memos for guideline modifications ensures transparent communication across all levels of the organization. This transparency is crucial for fostering an inclusive environment where all employees are informed and aware of changes that may affect them. It prevents any group from being inadvertently left out of the loop and supports equity by ensuring that information is available and accessible to everyone, regardless of their role or position.
2. **Consistent Information Sharing:** By requiring that changes be communicated through a formal memo, the organization can ensure that the same information is shared consistently with all impacted employees. This uniformity in communication can help avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations that often disproportionately affect marginalized or less-represented groups within the workplace.
3. **Opportunity for Feedback:** This policy can also open up avenues for employee feedback regarding the guidelines' modifications. A formal mechanism for employees to express their concerns or suggestions in response to the memo can enhance inclusivity by valuing diverse perspectives. It ensures that employees from all backgrounds have a voice in the process, potentially leading to more equitable and inclusive outcomes.
4. **Accountability and Documentation:** Written memos serve as a documented record of changes, which can be crucial for accountability. This documentation can be particularly important for ensuring that guideline modifications do not inadvertently discriminate against or exclude any groups of employees. It allows for a retrospective review of changes to assess their impact on equity and inclusion within MC.
5. **Empowerment through Information:** Ensuring that all impacted employees receive written memos about guideline changes empowers them with the information they need to navigate their roles effectively. Knowledge is a form of empowerment, and by equitably distributing this knowledge, MC supports an inclusive culture where all employees have the resources they need to succeed.

Proposed Motion:

We hereby propose that language in the procedure update (Policy and Procedure Section 32500) include a requirement that divisions or departments must communicate in writing the operation/service standards pertaining to FWA provisions within any given unit. This written communication would be available to existing employees impacted by the operational/service standards decision and provided to potential employees during the hiring process.

Final Disposition/Recommendation: *(Complete once decision is made by College Council)*

On March 26, the College Council voted unanimously to move the above recommendation forward to the President for his consideration.