

# Remote Work Policies in Academic Libraries Before, During, and Immediately After the Height of the COVID-19 Pandemic

---

Shanti Freundlich, Sarah K. McCord, Sarah Callanan, Natalie Hutchinson, Erica Cataldi-Roberts, and Richard Kaplan

**abstract:** The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 forced changes to the workplace norms of academic libraries. As the pandemic waned, it was unclear whether these would be temporary or lead to long-term changes. In Fall 2022, the authors surveyed academic library leaders about remote work at their institutions during the following time periods: pre-pandemic, at the height of the pandemic, and immediately post-pandemic. The study results show that there have been notable changes in the norms and practices around remote work in academic libraries. Those differences are seen in the decision-making processes of leaders and managers, institutional culture and language, and who is required to be on campus versus who may work remotely in academic library environments.

## Introduction

The two-plus years of remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the large-scale feasibility of remote work in a way that was not possible in pre-pandemic academic librarianship. The emergency pivot in March 2020, to online-only services, the hybrid combination of remote and on-site work for many librarians in the following months, and the subsequent new normal have resulted in shifts in the acceptance and expectations around remote work availability in academic libraries. However, there are real-world differences among the existence of formal poli-

*portal: Libraries and the Academy*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2026), pp. 363–391.

Copyright © 2026 by Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD 21218.

cies, stated organizational support, and decisions about who is allowed to work remotely. Additionally, because every institution handled the pandemic in their own way and on their own timeline, every academic library and their employees experienced unique decision-making processes, practices, and implementations. This variety of experiences makes it challenging for the profession to form an accurate picture of significant widespread changes, as opposed to the crisis responses of individual institutions.

This study explores whether the norms and practices of remote work in academic libraries changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The researchers sought to address the following questions about the pandemic's impact on remote work policies in the studied institutions:

- In what ways does the existence of formal remote work policies differ by size of library or type of institution?
- In what ways does access to remote work differ by employee type?
- In what ways does access to remote work differ in the pre-pandemic, pandemic, and immediately post-pandemic time periods?
- In what ways does institutional decision-making support or reduce access to remote work in academic libraries?

### Literature Review

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, there has been an increase in scholarship on remote work and flexible work arrangements. This literature review begins with an overview of remote work in academic libraries, defining the concept and articulating its known strengths and challenges. As this study works to address each of the research questions in the pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic time periods, the themes of the literature review are also organized to address the three time periods.

### Defining Remote Work

Several terms are used almost interchangeably to describe working arrangements that do not involve traveling to a physical workplace during set hours. What the US Office of Personnel Management defines as telework, that is "a work arrangement that allows an employee to perform work, during any part of regular, paid hours, at an approved alternative worksite... people doing their work at locations different from where they would normally be doing it," is also referred to as "working remotely," and "working from home." Additionally, "hybrid" and "flexible" are frequently used to refer to flexible work arrangements that combine working at on-site and off-site locations on different days, or for pre-arranged temporary periods of time.<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this study, the definition of remote work includes working completely off-site, or working off-site with occasional on-campus days, and is usually a standing arrangement. Hybrid work is defined as working a combination of off-site and on-campus days that usually require on-going requests or permission.

Successful remote work depends on clear, consistent communication of expectations and deliverables between administration and employees.<sup>2</sup> It is important for managers to be transparent and flexible about working hours and aware of equity issues regard-



ing which positions may work remotely.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, access to appropriate technology can address common concerns about isolation and expand the types of work that can be completed remotely.<sup>4</sup>

### **Benefits and Challenges of Remote Work**

The literature shows that remote work holds benefits for organizations as well as individuals. Organizationally, remote work can eliminate some barriers to cross-training opportunities, lead to more inclusive meetings, and reduce commute times.<sup>5</sup> There also may be less absenteeism, especially for professionals with caregiving responsibilities and health concerns. Remote work also has the potential to increase employee retention, especially with respect to gender, racial, and disability disparities.<sup>6</sup> For individuals, the literature shows that when employees have control over their schedules and work locations, they are more productive, satisfied, and committed; their morale is higher; and the organization performs better.<sup>7</sup>

Remote work also presents challenges at the organizational and individual levels, especially for supervisors and their teams. Without intentional management practices, on-site employees may be favored over predominantly off-site employees for promotion or other professional opportunities, which can deepen existing inequities given that white, male employees are likely to spend more time in-office compared to people of color, women, and working mothers.<sup>8</sup> In addition, remote work further highlights inequities among employees, like ownership of home technologies, access to high speed Internet, and individual control over schedules and activities.

### **Pre-Pandemic Approaches to Remote Work**

Prior to the pandemic, remote work was viewed with skepticism within academic librarianship, and the limited scholarship tended toward case studies of the experiences of individual faculty librarians. Librarians and administrators were hesitant about the feasibility of off-site work, and there was an underlying assumption that most academic librarianship must be bound to a physical campus to be successful.<sup>9</sup> Historically, managers and administrators allowed remote work on a case-by-case basis, for a limited amount of time.<sup>10</sup> Remote work was more likely to be approved for employees in non-public-facing departments and generally only available to those with faculty status at large institutions.<sup>11</sup> While some pre-pandemic remote work policies existed, they tended to be confusing, opaque, and only accommodated remote work temporarily.<sup>12</sup>

---

**Prior to the pandemic, remote work was viewed with skepticism within academic librarianship.**

---

### **Pandemic Approaches to Remote Work**

The pandemic inspired an increase of remote work-related research, which attempted to articulate the changes that were rapidly implemented in the field and the decision-making processes that led to them. During the pandemic, library leaders prioritized the safety of users and staff in their decision-making and the majority of academic libraries

quickly pivoted to remote work.<sup>13</sup> Decisions were still aligned with strategic priorities but were made more independently, at a faster pace, and were less focused on broad consensus building.<sup>14</sup> When making internal decisions, library leaders generally consulted a smaller group within their libraries, connected with other leaders at peer institutions, and worked closely with institutional leadership.<sup>15</sup> Public-facing decisions, including when to open and staff the physical library, were often determined by university leadership and dependent on state guidance, sometimes with very little notice.<sup>16</sup> For some libraries, institutional leadership dictated all pandemic-related decisions, while others experienced a more collaborative decision-making process.<sup>17</sup>

### Remote Work after the Pandemic

The post-pandemic era rippled out across academia at an inconsistent pace. No single model of “return to work” emerged in academic libraries; every institution made decisions based on local requirements, existing policies, reporting structures, and community needs.<sup>18</sup> Some libraries developed detailed “return to work” plans that incorporated institutional requirements, an internal equity review, and a formal request process to work remotely.<sup>19</sup> Other institutions have experienced a trend toward pre-pandemic expectations and informal, inconsistent, unwritten work culture norms, even though remote work was successful during the pandemic.<sup>20</sup> As academic leaders resumed factoring in wider concerns to their decision-making, remote work went from a clear, safety-based approach to a fraught, non-policy policy that raised issues of inequity and workload.

Scholarship on remote or hybrid work in academic libraries in the pandemic and post-pandemic eras has emerged showing fairly consistent findings regarding employee experiences and preferences for flexible work arrangements. In short, employees felt remote work during the pandemic was successful, and they continued to appreciate the option to work remotely at least part of the time.<sup>21</sup> Faculty and staff have shown a

---

**While there is literature documenting the decision-making processes of academic library leaders during the pandemic, gaps remain around library policies for remote work and the relationship between those policies and the lived experiences of academic librarians.**

---

preference for workplace flexibility and there are concerns regarding inequity and low morale for the employees with less access to remote work.<sup>22</sup> Other studies found that while the majority of academic librarians surveyed would prefer to continue working remotely, almost all of them noted they were being asked to return to the office either full time or on a hybrid schedule, and they expected remote work options to continue for the next few years.<sup>23</sup> Flexible management and

current technologies allow many job functions to be done off-site at least part of the time, but the reality remains that not all jobs can be done remotely.<sup>24</sup>



## Gaps in the Research

While there is literature documenting the decision-making processes of academic library leaders during the pandemic, gaps remain around library policies for remote work and the relationship between those policies and the lived experiences of academic librarians. It is important to expand the research on the impact of policy. Continuing to gather evidence about policies and their implementation supports informed decision-making in academic libraries. Doing so also offers library leaders insight into how and why to consider access to remote work.

## Methods

The researchers collected data through a Qualtrics survey that combined closed- and open-ended questions. The study, including the pilot and final validated instrument, was approved exempt by the MCPHS University Institutional Review Board (IRB-2021–2022–83). The instrument was reviewed for clarity and readability by three experts in the field and then piloted with 36 respondents who met the study criteria. To qualify for the study, participants had to be:

- located within the U.S.A or territories,
- accredited and degree-granting,
- Carnegie classified,
- eligible for Title IV federal financial aid,
- currently open, and
- with a funded library of no fewer than two FTE library employees.

A census sampling approach was chosen because the eligible population was identifiable and comparatively small. The research team incorporated publicly available demographic information about each institution from the National Center for Education Statistics' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to allow the population to be clearly defined as academic institutions that had both funding and staffing dedicated to library services.

The survey asked the same questions about access to remote work policies for all employee types in each functional area, for each of three time periods: pre-pandemic (before March 2020), during the height of the pandemic, and at the time of the survey in fall 2022 (see Appendix A for time period definitions and study terminology). If the same policies applied to all library areas, participants could skip the functional area-specific questions. Respondents were asked between 21 and 69 questions, including two optional open-ended questions. The survey also asked how remote work policies were developed, about institutional support for remote work, and for any other relevant information (see Appendix B for the full survey).

The researchers sent the survey directly to the highest-ranking library administrator at qualifying academic institutions included in the 2020 IPEDS database. In addition, members of the research team visited each institution's website, and excluded institutions for which no library or library leader could be identified, or for which there was not a working email address. The researchers sent 2,450 invitations, with the survey

open from August 15, 2022 through December 15, 2022. Potential respondents were not offered any incentives to participate in the study.

### The Dataset

The survey received 481 responses and a staff member from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment matched these responses to the IPEDS data about each institution represented (for example, the highest degree granted and library staff size) and provided a de-identified dataset to the research team. The team then excluded responses from analysis if they had answered fewer than two thirds of the questions (38), if they were a one-person library (12), or if they were unsure of the relevant policies (9). Responses were also eliminated if they had different policies for different functional areas (131) because they would have required analysis beyond a realistic scope for this project. The researchers then conducted analysis on the remaining 291 responses ( $N=291$ ). Using a power calculation, the overall study results for remote work policies in doctoral-level institutions can be reported with an 87 percent confidence level, and for associates, bachelors, and masters-level institutions the level of confidence was between 73 and 74 percent. Overall, compared to 2020 IPEDS dataset the respondents were representative of the population by institution level (see Figure 1) and library staff size (see Figure 2).

### Quantitative Statistical Analysis

Statistical analyses were conducted using Microsoft Excel and Statistical Analysis System (SAS). The researchers did not assume that the data were normally distributed,

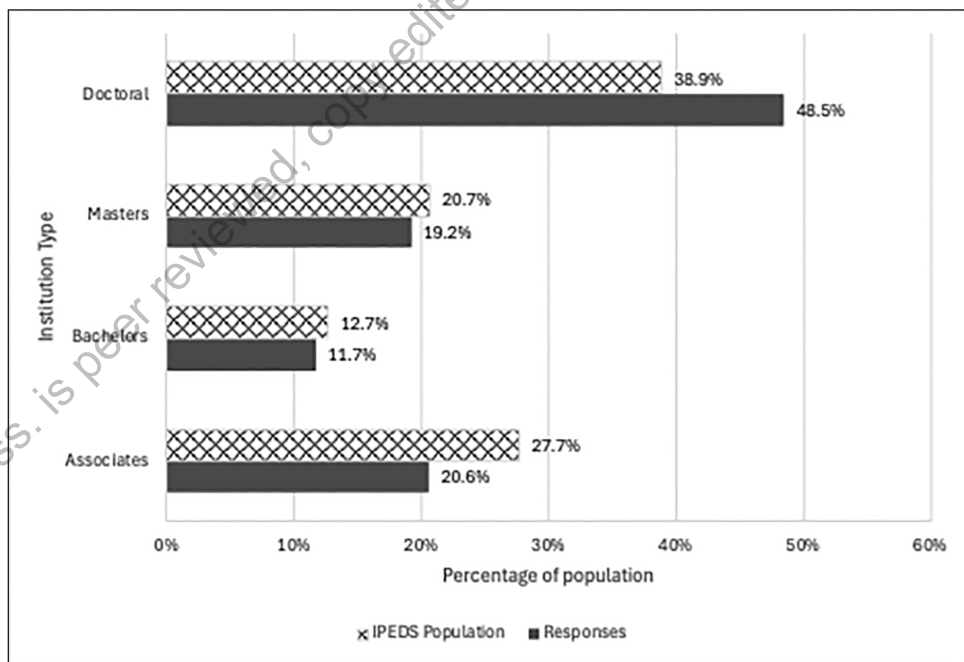


Figure 1. Responses by institution type compared to proportions of the 2020 IPEDS dataset.

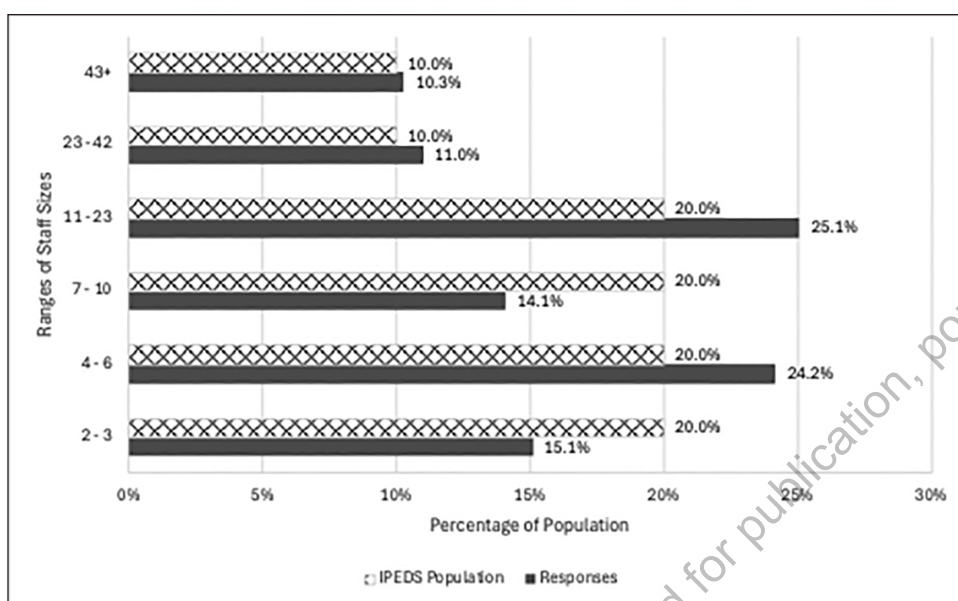


Figure 2. Responses by staff size compared to proportions of the 2020 IPEDS dataset.

and, because the sample sizes were small, differences in proportions, odds ratios, and chi-square tests were used to measure associations between variables. The study was sufficiently powered to reliably detect medium and large effect sizes. In most cases, the ordered categories did not have regular intervals, so Spearman correlation coefficients were used to estimate effect size, and modified ridit scores to conduct chi-square analyses. For staff size, respondents indicated which quintile grouping (calculated from the IPEDS 2020 dataset) their library fell within, and chi-square tests using integer ranks were done. A  $p \leq 0.05$  was the threshold for statistical significance. For employee type, the working assumption for analysis was that the following hierarchy described the control each employee type had over their work environment:

- salaried non-librarian professionals (most control),
- librarians with faculty status,
- librarians without faculty status,
- hourly staff employees, and
- temporary employees (least control).

This hierarchy was then compared to the participants' reported permission to work, by employee type. See Appendix A for the full list of employee types and definitions.

### Qualitative Thematic Analysis

In response to an optional question about ways their institution had supported remote work, 18 respondents used the text field to provide more information. The research team then applied emergent coding to these free-text responses, and six additional themes emerged. There were also 124 answers to the final, optional open-ended question which



## Table 1.

Emergent themes and most frequent sub-themes that appeared in responses to the final open-ended survey question

Major Emergent Themes	Frequency	Most Frequent Sub-Theme	Frequency
Policy	68	Case-by-case	15/68
Pandemic	44	Remote work	14/44
Remote Work	37	Incompatible with job responsibilities	8/37
		Hybrid	8/37
Staffing	37	Small staff	12/37
Management	29	Discouraged remote work	8/29
Equity	27	Inequity of remote work	15/27
Technology	10	Challenge	4/10
Flexibility	8	Increase	7/8

invited respondents to share anything else about remote work at their institution. Emergent coding on these responses revealed eight major themes, each with subthemes. Table 1 shows the emergent themes within these 124 responses, as well as the most frequently occurring subthemes. For the qualitative analysis, three coders first worked individually, then undertook several rounds of consensus coding to develop validity and reliability in phrasing, definitions, and application of the codes.

## Results

### Quantitative Results

#### *Staff Size and Institution Type*

During all three studied periods, libraries with larger staff sizes were more likely to have remote work policies and employees making use of them, although the statistical

**During all three studied periods, libraries with larger staff sizes were more likely to have remote work policies and employees making use of them.**

significance of the association varied among time periods. In fall 2022, the higher the degree offered at an institution, the more likely it was that at least some library employees could work remotely. However, in all three time periods there were no statistically significant relationships between the existence of remote work policies and the highest degree offered at an institution. These findings were somewhat of a surprise, as the researchers

had anticipated seeing differences among these groups and used institution level both as a grouping variable and for calculating statistical power.

### *Employee Type*

By fall 2022, the existence of a remote work policy had a statistically significant association with whether most employee types could potentially receive permission to work remotely. In most cases, employees that the researchers assumed had greater control over their work schedules were indeed more likely to be allowed to work remotely as part of their regular work schedule. However, the case was different for hourly employees. The association between a policy and permission was strongest during the pandemic, but not statistically significant before or after the pandemic. For temporary employees there was no statistically significant relationship between the existence of a remote work policy and whether they were allowed to work remotely or required to work on-campus. They were also less likely to have opportunities to work remotely, even if the institution had a policy or a larger staff. Employees with higher status or more control over their daily work—salaried non-librarian professionals, librarians with faculty status, and librarians with staff status—were more likely to work remotely as a regular part of their work schedule (see Figure 3).

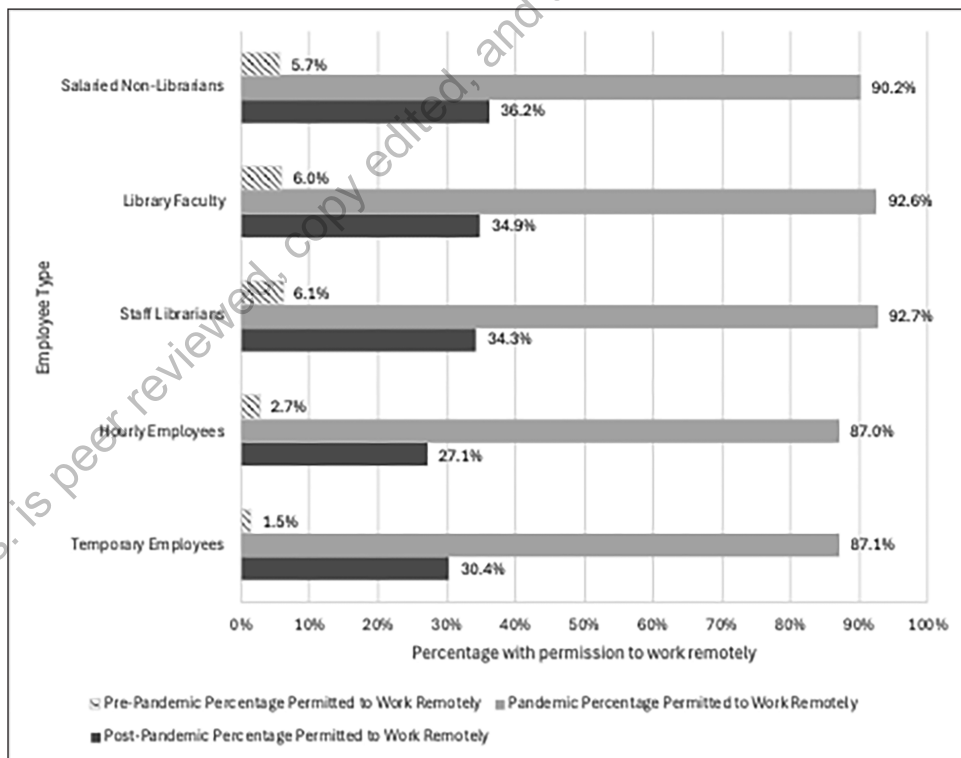


Figure 3. Permission to work remotely by employee type during each studied time period.

### Formal Remote Work Policies

Before the pandemic, if their institution had a remote work policy, employees were 9.3 times more likely to be able to work remotely compared to libraries without a policy. During the height of the pandemic this likelihood rose to 24.5 times more likely for those with a pre-existing remote work policy. In fall 2022, the chances of employees being able to work remotely if their institution had a policy before the pandemic dropped to 16.7 times greater.

Respondents were also asked how the remote work policy at their library was set. Across all three time periods, the least common decision-making process was for the library to independently set their own policy; it was more than twice as likely that the remote work policy was set at the institutional level without library input. The pandemic and post-pandemic time periods saw libraries having more of a voice in the process, and the number of institutions without a remote work policy decreased (see Figure 4).

### Informal Remote Work

During the pandemic, even the 6.5 percent of responding institutions (19 respondents) that reported not having remote work policies were more than twice as likely to report at least some employees regularly working remotely (68.4 percent) than no employees working remotely (31.6 percent). Libraries with no employees working remotely during the pandemic tended to be smaller, but since very few (3.8 percent) respondents reported that none of their employees worked remotely during the pandemic, this finding should be interpreted with caution. In fall 2022, the libraries where no employees worked remotely also tended to be smaller, with the likelihood of no remote work availability decreasing as library size increased.

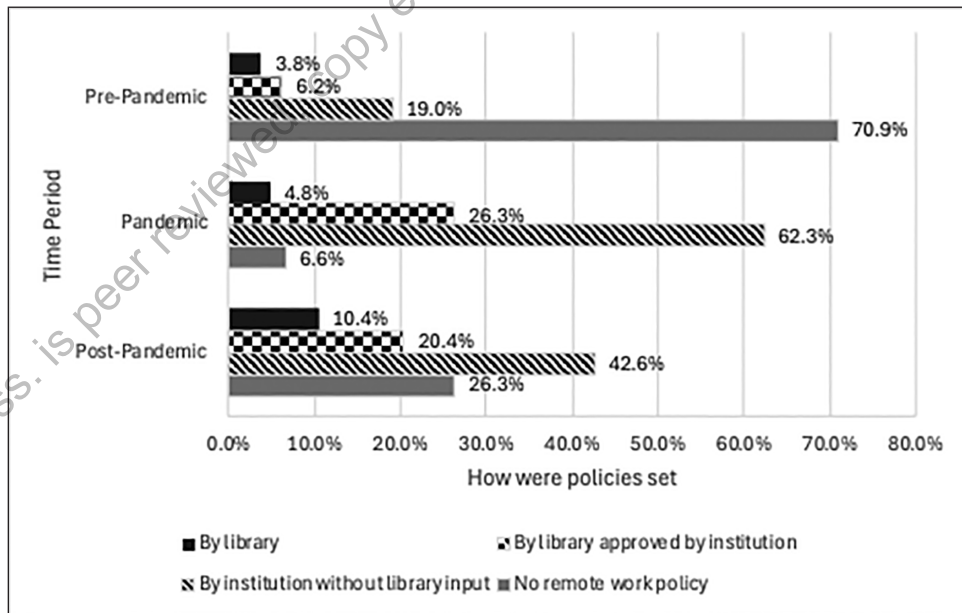


Figure 4. How remote work policies were established during each time period.

### Future Predictions

Respondents from institutions with and without remote work access in fall 2022, were equally likely to anticipate that their workplace policies on remote work would become more flexible in the future (see Figure 5). Nearly half of respondents at institutions without a current policy were unclear as to whether the policy would change in the future. Meanwhile, respondents at institutions with at least some remote work were more likely to report that, while changes were unlikely, they anticipated any change would be toward less flexibility.

---

**Even though remote work was successful during the height of the pandemic at some institutions, that was not enough to maintain access to it going forward.**

---

### Qualitative Results

#### *Institutional Support for Pandemic Remote Work*

Even though remote work was successful during the height of the pandemic at some institutions, that was not enough to maintain access to it going forward. As one respondent put it:

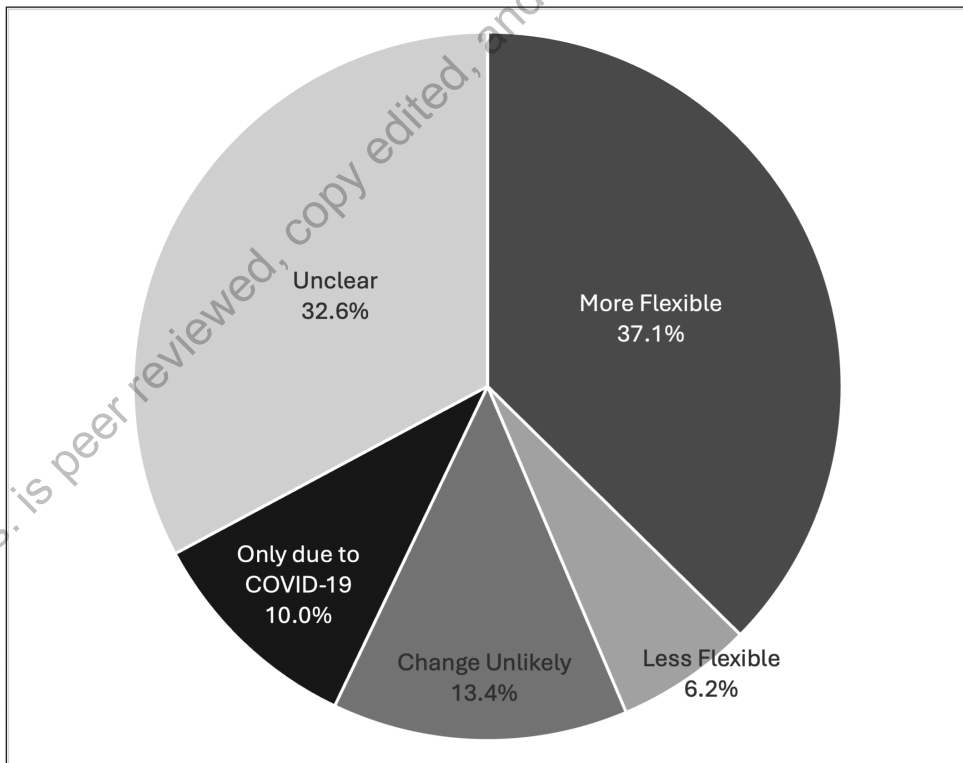


Figure 5. Anticipated future changes to remote work policies, as of fall 2022.



Remote work for the library was a success during the pandemic. It is disappointing that some sort of hybrid arrangement wasn't part of the return to on-site work. Remote work allowed flexibility for the library employees, boosted morale and productivity was high during that period. This university isn't budging on its decision not to allow remote work unless under extreme situations.

Respondents indicated their institutions had supported remote work during the pandemic in multiple ways including:

- providing technology or equipment (72.3 percent),
- reimbursing remote work-related expenses (16.3 percent),
- providing additional training (61.6 percent), and
- other ways (6.6 percent).

Only 17.3 percent indicated their institution had not provided additional support for remote work during the pandemic (see Table 2).

#### *Remote Work Challenges*

Multiple participants acknowledged the difficulty of allowing remote or hybrid work when some job responsibilities must be done in person on campus, and/or when the library has a small staff. One individual reported, "The institution officially has a remote work policy, however because of staffing shortages, the library cannot take advantage of the policy without adversely affecting public/customer service." Another survey respondent shared,

Ripple effects of more of our team working remotely means there's not as many people on campus to back up on-campus services. We have tried to be as generous as possible, but some positions are more tied to campus than others – and those who are not tied to campus are less available to help since they're remote nearly 100% now (but weren't pre-pandemic). We're struggling with how to provide as much remote work as possible while not having too much of the on-campus responsibility fall on a smaller number of people.

Technology and the space needed to work from home were also noted as barriers in some instances, especially at the height of the pandemic. One person stated,

Remote work here is awkward, as several staff do not have internet access at home... at the height of the pandemic the college continued to pay everyone's full salary even as some of these folks were unable to work remotely. This has caused some bad feelings among the staff, that some had to work throughout the pandemic while others didn't.

A similar response reported,

...some of our staff were not set up to work at home, and probably never could be... [they] had a physical layout not conducive to remote work, or their spouse/partner was already working remotely and their living quarters couldn't accommodate 2 people working at home.

#### *Remote Work Policies*

For some, institutional policy was best described as "case-by-case," had to be negotiated individually with a supervisor, was not a standing schedule, nor was remote work



## Table 2.

### Institutional methods of support for remote work during the pandemic

Option Provided	Frequency	Percentage (n=289)
<i>Respondents could select as many as were applicable</i>		
Provided technology or other equipment	209	72.3%
Reimbursed purchases for remote work-related expenses	47	16.3%
Provided additional training in the use of software or services that support remote work	178	61.6%
No additional support	50	17.3%
Other	19	6.6%
<b>Emergent Themes</b>		
Increased compensation	4	
Positive management strategies	4	
Required on-campus work during the pandemic	1	
Availability of remote work	1	
Hybrid work	1	
Remote work during the height of the pandemic	1	

available to everyone. Library leaders expressed a desire for clear, consistent guidance. One respondent stated,

Our university directors' group would like a campus-wide remote work policy put in place. We are a small campus so it is important for people to be on campus as otherwise the offices end up looking closed and abandoned. However, as people were coming back to campus there was a huge difference in the options for staff with similar responsibilities were given for remote work. Our directors' group wants clearer guidelines from our administration so people can be treated fairly.

Other respondents spoke about wanting future-facing policy directives because they recognized the inequity of access to remote work across different libraries, campus departments, and employee types, along with the workplace challenges this created. Survey reflections included:

- "The institutional decision giving staff in [other] divisions the ability to work remotely has created divisiveness and increased low morale issues for staff not allowed to work remotely," and



- “Departments across the university are seeing increased resignations as current employees seek out positions at other work places that accommodate remote work. Interestingly, all of our higher level administrators are given a remote work options, while few to none of those at lower levels in the organization are given the opportunity to work remotely.”

#### *Decision-Making Processes*

Highlighting the difference in institutional approaches during the height of the pandemic, some universities only provided work for some employee types and furloughed others. At others, leadership prioritized the safety and wellbeing of employees and students, and gave department heads the flexibility to make decisions, leading to a more successful remote work environment. In the post-pandemic era, participants also described widespread skepticism about remote work among campus leaders who were even less receptive to it than pre-pandemic. One respondent expressed,

As the library director I would love to be able to support up to 2–3 remote days per week for every employee. However, campus administration is very against making this change. They believe remote or hybrid work is the equivalent of just working less.

Another shared,

Our institution does not encourage any ideas about working remote or in a hybrid setting. They want employees on campus in a traditional classroom setting. Even online course offerings have been reduced. I do not agree with this.

---

**A few respondents reported that previous accommodations and flexibility for health and caregiving were no longer available, including remote work for people with chronic diseases or those caring for a sick infant, and that these shifts in policy have affected employee retention.**

---

A few respondents reported that previous accommodations and flexibility for health and caregiving were no longer available, including remote work for people with chronic diseases or those caring for a sick infant, and that these shifts in policy have affected employee retention. For others, the pandemic added institutional requirements to provide comprehensive online library services in addition to on-campus services, which was an “untenable” workload.

Some participants also described their own skepticism of and opposition to remote work as managers and directors, with comments such as:

- “The work of remote employees were difficult to evaluate because of a lack of standards. Also some employees abused the remote work opportunity,”
- “I personally have stopped allowing remote work at the library due to inconsistent performance and staff using remote work in place of sick / personal leave,” and
- “Our policies are based on what the institution decides. We have two days remote, and three days onsite. I would prefer only one day remote but it is hard to require something when the other departments are gleefully hybrid.”



However, some respondents shared their quiet management decisions to be flexible and allow remote work, sometimes in the face of overt institutional hostility. Others described the transparent communication strategies and management approaches that were successful for their teams. One leader shared,

As Library Director, I am able to use my judgement to some extent here, but we are kind of flying under the radar by not directly challenging our president's inexplicable refusal to acknowledge the benefits of flexible remote work policies... If we are able to keep our library physically open when needed to serve students, we can manage occasionally taking turns getting work done from home.

Another wrote,

We implemented an operating schedule and procedures reflecting best practices. Our staff remained engaged with our community and our morale was high throughout the pandemic.

And one reflected,

We were able to make remote work a success due to the hybrid combination of some in-person time and some remote plus the availability of software such as using Zoom meetings. The university required weekly reports so I have documentation on their activities. I believe most persons were at least as productive at home, perhaps more productive. I hope the university will consider allowing remote work in the future.

## Discussion

### Size Matters

Libraries with more employees were more likely to have remote work policies and to have employees using those policies for flexible work arrangements. Understaffed, smaller libraries and institutions where librarians had multiple roles struggled to offer equitable flexibility while maintaining on-campus services. As with other aspects of academic librarianship, when a service is dependent on either a single person or people taking on multiple roles, the library is limited in what it can responsibly offer.

### Language Shifts: "Remote" vs "Hybrid"

Among the open-ended qualitative responses, there was a pattern of using "remote" to describe the work that happened during the height of the pandemic and using "hybrid" or "flexible" to describe post-pandemic work. While this was not a theme of the responses themselves, the change in language may indicate a change within academic librarianship re-

---

**Understaffed, smaller libraries and institutions where librarians had multiple roles struggled to offer equitable flexibility while maintaining on-campus services. As with other aspects of academic librarianship, when a service is dependent on either a single person or people taking on multiple roles, the library is limited in what it can responsibly offer.**

---

garding how work locations are described. It may also reveal that “a few days remote” or other scheduling flexibility has become the professional preference and expectation. Using institutional language around workplace location may make conversations about remote, hybrid or flexible work policies and permission more productive for managers and employees.

### “Policy”

Having a remote work policy means it is more likely that employees will be able to work remotely, but there is a lot to read between the lines of remote work policies in academic libraries. “Having a policy” means something different at each institution, ranging from the level of detail to unwritten exceptions and flexibility, to the space between official policy and express approval. For instance, there are libraries without formalized policies that have employees working remotely, with approval from supervisors. While this study only included responses where participants stated the same remote work policies applied to all departments, the open-ended responses made it clear that there are institutions where the consistent application of policy was more theory than reality. Policies can take many forms, from a multi-part application through the human resources office, to an internal library permission process, to a casual conversation with an immediate supervisor.

---

**Policies can take many forms, from a multi-part application through the human resources office, to an internal library permission process, to a casual conversation with an immediate supervisor.**

---

Opaque policies make it difficult for employees to advocate for themselves independent of support from their immediate supervisor. Unclear policies also ensure that institutional culture, rather than consistent written policy, will dictate whether remote work can be used without stigma.

### Immediate Supervisors

An employee’s immediate supervisor determines the interpretation of the potential flexibility that exists without formal policies, the terms of a formal agreement, and the approval for occasional flexibility for caregiving and health needs. Managers can bolster the morale of their teams by offering them flexibility, independence, and trust whenever possible. The power dynamics between management and employees may also be more visible and uncomfortable in the post-pandemic era, since many library employees have now experienced successful remote work and rapid workplace decision-making that centered employee safety and wellbeing.

### Institutional Backlash

Many library leaders have been able to create an organizational buffer between institutional policies and the library regarding flexible work arrangements. This allows library departments to internally organize scheduling, trusting employees to continue productive work regardless of location. However, if a library director does not approve

of remote work, employee options for doing so are minimized or eliminated within the library. Some respondents indicated that post-pandemic, the senior leadership at their institutions actively oppose remote work. This stance could be part of a movement to separate institutions from any policies or experiences that remind them of the pandemic and instead focus on a return to business as usual. If so, it may take several years of quiet success before remote work policies are revisited, discussed, and enacted.

### **Redefining Remote Work as a Benefit**

Remote or hybrid work can highlight the inequities within academic libraries, so for institutions looking to improve their employees' experiences or be more inclusive and equitable, reviewing remote work accessibility may be a tangible starting point. For example, shifting the costs of internet access, equipment, and space from the institution to the employee may make a flexible schedule inaccessible to lower-paid workers. Additionally, the exclusion of temporary staff from almost all institutional remote work policies suggests that libraries are passing the risk and inflexibility of campus-based work down the salary scale. For employees with benefits, it will be important to continue to separate earned sick and vacation time from flexible and hybrid work permission.

### **Limitations**

Even though the survey provided participants with definitions, institutions internally define functional areas and employee types differently, and no two institutions reacted to the COVID-19 pandemic on the same timetable. These differences may have impacted how respondents understood the questions. Another limitation was that there were not enough responses from libraries with separate policies for different functional areas to make meaningful comparisons between those that did and those that did not have the same policy for all areas. Therefore, the research team made the decision to exclude those responses from the analysis, but it is possible that they could be evaluated separately in the future. While the data analysis methods for survey research were time-intensive, this rigorous approach proved valuable as it allowed for calculated degree of certainty. Surveys can only capture a moment in time, so future research is required to understand whether the changes to remote work and remote work policies in academic libraries have remained or reverted to pre-pandemic approaches.

### **Conclusion**

The overall experience of many respondents is summed up by these three quotes:

- "We do not have a fair or universal remote work policy in place."
- "We don't talk about remote work on this campus. People are doing it anyway."
- "COVID led us to more remote, flexible work arrangements."

For a brief time during the COVID-19 pandemic, almost all employees in academic libraries worked remotely, and many leaders described the situation as an overall success, as well as a period of institutional support that prioritized employee and student safety. Post-pandemic institutional views on what academic librarianship should look like seem



---

**For a brief time during the COVID-19 pandemic, almost all employees in academic libraries worked remotely, and many leaders described the situation as an overall success, as well as a period of institutional support that prioritized employee and student safety.**

---

to have reset to more closely resemble pre-pandemic views. Reasons for this shift may be negative experiences with remote technology, communication challenges, management distrust of remote productivity, campus-based job responsibilities, staff sizes, institutional mandates, and pandemic fatigue. This study also highlights the positive impact of holistic management strategies that acknowledge the whole-person needs of staff members, promote transparent communication, and provide institutional support for remote work.

Policies can support or forbid remote work, depending on the intentions of the institutional and library leaders writing them. Like budgets, the policies are a way for an institution to demonstrate their values—it raises questions about what values are demonstrated when remote work policies are

hazy, vague, and inconsistently applied or inaccessible. Remote work is still work. It is not a benefit to replace vacation time, sick time, or accommodations. While many knowledge workers want to hold on to the positive qualities of remote work, it is likely that the workplace challenges remote work creates will also remain. Remote or hybrid work may not be the right option for every position within every academic library all the time, but over two years of hybrid work at institutions of every size and level have demonstrated it can be done successfully.

*Shanti Freundlich is an associate professor and the associate director for library learning and assessment at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, email: shanti.freundlich@mcphs.edu, ORCID: 0000-0002-2569-8818.*

*Sarah K. McCord is an associate professor and the science librarian at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, email: sarah.mccord@mcphs.edu, ORCID: 0000-0001-8652-163X.*

*Sarah Callanan is an assistant professor and the digital initiatives librarian at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, email: sarah.callanan@mcphs.edu, ORCID: 0009-0008-8919-0790.*

*Natalie Hutchinson is an assistant professor and the instruction and outreach librarian at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, email: natalie.hutchinson@mcphs.edu.*

*Erica Cataldi-Roberts is an assistant professor and the head of information literacy services at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, email: erica.cataldi-roberts@mcphs.edu.*

*Richard Kaplan is the dean emeritus of library and learning resources division at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.*



## Appendix A

### Definitions

#### *Time Period Definitions*

The following definitions were included in the survey instrument:

We recognize each institution has a different COVID-19 pandemic timeline and is impacted by different local ordinances and unique decision-making factors. For the sake of consistency, we're using conceptual definitions for pre-pandemic, pandemic, and current workplace practices:

**Pre-pandemic** is prior to March 2020.

**Pandemic** is the period of closures and emergency pivots to remote work to support predominately online only services. **For the purposes of this study, please report the remote work policies that were in effect during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in your local area.**

**Today** is the current status of your work environment, which may or may not involve a hybrid combination of remote and on-campus work and services." (Note: this survey ran from August 15, 2022 – December 15, 2022, so that is the "current" time period respondents described.)

#### *Functional Areas*

These functional areas were used in the survey instrument. The researchers define these functional areas using the following definitions:

#### **Administration**

- Handles internal and external administrative matters for the library, providing managerial leadership, strategic planning, resource management, development/fundraising, and direction of the overall operations of the institution's library.  
UO Libraries. "Administration." University of Oregon, 2024. <https://library.uoregon.edu/administration>.

#### **Access Services**

- Develops and provides services that connect library users to library resources. Often includes the following areas: assessment and quality control, circulation, course reserves, document delivery, facilities management/accessibility, public service, interlibrary loan/resource sharing, marketing/outreach, off-site or remote shelving, patron accounts management, security/emergency management, space management, stacks maintenance, student management, system management, and wayfinding/signage.

Warren, Brad, DaVonne Armstrong, Amy Boucher, James Harper, Cindy Pierard, Jean Thoulag, and David Ketchum. "A Framework for Access Services Librarian-



ship: An Initiative Sponsored by the Association of College and Research Libraries' Access Services Interest Group." Association of College and Research Libraries, April 2020. <http://hdl.handle.net/11213/17206>.

### Archives and Special Collections

- Acquires, preserves and makes available to researchers unique materials of enduring value to support research and teaching that reflect the mission of the institution and cultural history.

American University University Library. "Archives and Special Collections." American University, 2024. <https://www.american.edu/library/archives/>.

### Collections Management

- Selection of materials acquired by the library based on type of the library, mission, and audience. Involves assessment of campus users' needs; collection development fiscal issues; the local collection development policy; selection sources; how the library balances collections among formats; local acquisitions systems, approval plans, and standing or blanket order plans; local standards for assessing collections; issues of storage and deselection; and preservation issues.

American Library Association. "Technical Services Librarian." American Library Association, 2024. <https://www.ala.org/educationcareers/libcareers/jobs/technical>.

Evans, G. Edward, and Stacey Greenwell. Academic Librarianship. Second Edition. ALA Neal-Schuman, 2018.

### Reference and Instruction

- *Reference*: Recommend, interpret, evaluate, and/or use information resources to help patrons with specific information needs.

American Library Association. "Reference Librarian," 2024. <https://www.ala.org/educationcareers/libcareers/jobs/reference>.

- *Instruction*: Teach patrons how information is created and shared, how to use sophisticated search strategies and technologies to find and access information, how to evaluate the information they find, and how to use that information ethically by citing sources and respecting copyright. Done at the reference desk through appointments, workshops, in-person, online, one-shots, credit bearing course, and online learning objects.

Saunders, Laura, and Melissa A. Wong. Instruction in Libraries and Information Centers: An Introduction. OPN Textbook Series. Champaign, IL: Windsor & Downs Press, 2020.



### **Technical Services**

- Acquires, organizes, and preserves library materials.

American Library Association. "Technical Services Librarian." American Library Association, 2024. <https://www.ala.org/educationcareers/libcareers/jobs/technical>.

### *Employee Types*

#### **Librarian, faculty status**

- Position requires an MLIS or equivalent degree and entails the same rights and responsibilities as for other members of the faculty at the institution.

#### **Librarian, professional staff**

- Full-time position, requires an MLIS or equivalent degree, there may be a promotion process, but it is not the same as for faculty at the institution.

#### **Hourly staff**

- Position usually required a high school or undergraduate degree, or equivalent education/experience. May prefer graduate work in LIS field. Often supports a functional area.

#### **Salaried non-librarian professionals**

- Full-time position, usually requires an advanced degree but not necessarily an MLIS as they are not usually in a library-based position. Often serving in an institutional administrative, leadership, or management position.

#### **Salaried staff**

- Position usually requires an undergraduate degree and/or at least some graduate work in LIS field, and/or equivalent education and experience. Usually full-time, may be represented by a union.

#### **Temporary or contract staff**

- These may be part-time librarians with adjunct faculty status equivalent to non-librarian adjunct faculty. Or they may be short-term contracts, either full- or part-time in place of professional, hourly, or salaried staff.

This mss. is peer-reviewed, copy-edited, and accepted for publication, portal 26.2.



## Appendix B

### Remote Work in Academic Libraries: Online Survey

#### Institutional Demographics

1. How many librarians and other staff work in your library system? Please include all hourly, salaried, or temporary employees, excluding student workers.  
[Multiple-choice. Answering "1" takes respondents to the end of the survey as they do not meet inclusion criteria.]
  - 1
  - 2-3
  - 4-6
  - 7-10
  - 11-22
  - 23-42
  - 43+
  
2. Which of the following functional areas are present in your library? Please mark choices that are the primary job function of any employee (excluding student workers).  
[Select all]
  - Administration
  - Access Services (including Circulation, Reserves, and InterLibrary Loan)
  - Archives and Special Collections
  - Collections Management
  - Reference and Instruction
  - Technical Services
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Which of these best describe your primary area of work?  
[Multiple-choice]
  - Administration
  - Access Services (including Circulation, Reserves, and InterLibrary Loan)
  - Archives and Special Collections
  - Collections Management
  - Reference and Instruction
  - Technical Services
  - Other [If select, text box appears.]



4. Which of the following employee status categories (excluding student workers) are present in the library at your institution?

[Select all]

- Librarian, faculty status
- Librarian, professional staff
- Hourly staff
- Salaried staff
- Temporary or contract staff

5. Which of these describe your employee status?

[Multiple-choice]

- Librarian, faculty status
- Librarian, professional staff
- Hourly staff
- Salaried staff
- Temporary or contract staff
- Other [If select, text box appears.]

#### Remote Work Policies

For the next series of questions, we will be asking about remote work policies for library employees at your institution, excluding student workers. We recognize each institution has a different COVID-19 pandemic timeline and is impacted by different local ordinances and unique decision-making factors. For the sake of consistency, we're using conceptual definitions for pre-pandemic, pandemic, and current workplace practices:

**Pre-pandemic** is prior to March 2020.

**Pandemic** is the period of closures and emergency pivots to remote work to support predominately online only services. For the purposes of this study, please report the remote work policies that were in effect during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in your local area.

**Today** is the current status of your work environment, which may or may not involve a hybrid combination of remote and on-campus work and services.

1. Do the same remote work policies apply to all library employees (excluding student workers) regardless of functional area (e.g. Administration, Access Service, Archives & Special Collections, Collections Management, Reference & Instruction, and Technical Services)?

[Multiple-choice. Answering "No" or "Unsure" takes respondents to the questions for each functional area.]

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

*[Repeat the following two questions for all three time periods: pre-pandemic, height of pandemic, today.]*

2. During [time period] how many library employees worked remotely as part of their regular schedule?  
[Multiple-choice]
- None
  - Less than half
  - Half
  - More than half
  - All
3. In general, for library employees, how often were they required to be on campus during [time period]?

	Fully remote with no on-campus workdays	Fully remote with occasional on-campus workdays	Hybrid combination of on-campus and remote workdays	Fully on-campus with occasional remote workdays	Fully on-campus with no remote workdays
Librarian, faculty status	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Librarian, professional staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hourly staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Salaried staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Temporary or contract staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*[Respondents who indicated there are different remote work policies for each functional area are presents with the following questions for each area: Administration, Access Service, Archives & Special Collections, Collections Management, Reference & Instruction, and Technical Services, and for all three time periods: pre-pandemic, height of pandemic, today.]*

1. Are you familiar with the remote work policies for employees in [functional area]?  
[Multiple-choice. Answering "No" takes respondents to the next functional area.]
- Yes
  - No
2. At your library, which types of employees have [functional area] as their primary job responsibility?  
[Select all]
- None of these types of employees have [functional area] as their primary job responsibility



- o Librarian, faculty status
  - o Librarian, professional staff
  - o Hourly staff
  - o Salaried staff
  - o Temporary or contract staff
3. During [time period], how many [functional area] employees worked remotely as part of their regular work schedule?  
[Multiple-choice. Answering “No” takes respondents to the next time period.]
- o None
  - o Less than half
  - o About half
  - o More than half
  - o All
4. In general, for [functional area] employees, how often were they required to be on campus during [time period]?

	Fully remote with no on-campus workdays	Fully remote with occasional on-campus workdays	Hybrid combination of on-campus and remote workdays	Fully on-campus with occasional remote workdays	Fully on-campus with no remote workdays
None of these types of employees have Administration as their primary job responsibility	o	o	o	o	o
Librarian, faculty status	o	o	o	o	o
Librarian, professional staff	o	o	o	o	o
Hourly staff	o	o	o	o	o
Salaried staff	o	o	o	o	o
Temporary or contract staff	o	o	o	o	o

Other Library and Institutional Policies and Potential for Change

1. If your library had a remote work policy [time period], how was it set?  
[Multiple-choice. Repeat for all three time periods.]
- o Remote work policy set by the institution without library input



- Remote work policy set by the library and approved by the institution
  - Remote work policy set by the library without additional approval from institution
  - We did not have a library remote work policy [time period]
2. Is it likely that your library's remote work policies will change again?  
[Multiple-choice.]
- Yes, to be more flexible
  - Yes, to be less flexible
  - No, unlikely to change
  - Only in response to changes in the COVID-19 pandemic
  - Unclear at this time
3. How has your institution supported remote work? Check all that apply.  
[Select all.]
- Provided technology or other equipment
  - Reimbursed purchases for remote work-related technology or equipment
  - Provided additional training in the use of software or services that support remote work (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc).
  - No additional support
  - Other [If select, text box appears.]
4. Is there other information about the current or future remote work policies in your library that you would like to share? Examples include: other departments at your institution not addressed above, details about closure/opening dates, or factors that made remote work a success or challenge at your institution.  
[ multi-line text box]

This mss. is peer reviewed, copy edited and accepted for publication, portal 26.2.



## Notes

1. "About Telework," Telework, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, accessed March 4, 2025, <http://www.telework.gov/about/>.
2. Rafael Ferreira, Ruben Pereira, Isaias Scalabrin Bianchi, and Miguel Mira da Silva, "Decision Factors for Remote Work Adoption: Advantages, Disadvantages, Driving Forces and Challenges.," *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity* 7, no. 1 (2021): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.3390/joitmc7010070>; Laura M. Gentry, "Digital Collections at a Distance: Telework During the Covid-19 Pandemic," *Library Resources & Technical Services* 65, no. 2 (April 2021): 65–75, <https://doi.org/10.5860/lrts.65n2.65-75>; Mihoko Hosoi, Lauren Reiter, and Diane Zabel, "Reshaping Perspectives on Flexible Work: The Impact of Covid-19 on Academic Library Management," *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 21, no. 4 (2021): 695–713, <https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2021.0038>.
3. Gentry, "Digital Collections at a Distance," 65–75; Daniel Hickey and Neely Tang, "Theoretical and Applied Approaches to Remote Work for Academic Reference and Instruction Librarians," in *Library Staffing for the Future*, ed. Samantha Schmeffel Hines and Marcy Simons, vol. 34, Advances in Library Administration and Organization (Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2015), 177–200, <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0732-067120150000034008>; Hosoi, Reiter, and Zabel, "Reshaping Perspectives on Flexible Work"; Lauren Reiter and Diane Zabel, "New Ways of Working: Flexible Work Arrangements in Academic Libraries," in *Leading in the New Academic Library*, ed. Becky Albitz, Christine Avery, and Diane Zabel (Libraries Unlimited, 2017); Carli Spina, "Can You Hear Me Now? Library Managers on the Challenges of Leading from a Distance," *American Libraries* 51, no. 9–10 (September 2020): 14–16.
4. Ferreira et al., "Decision Factors for Remote Work Adoption"; Gentry, "Digital Collections at a Distance"; Dawn Smith and Teresa B. Van Dyke, "A Telecommuting Interlibrary Loan Librarian's Experience: The Views of Both the Telecommuter and the on-Site Supervisor," *Journal of Interlibrary Loan, Document Delivery & Electronic Reserve* 18, no. 4 (2008): 449–55, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10723030802181828>.
5. Ben Auger, "Higher Education Telework and Flexible Work Survey," George Mason University Office of Sustainability, (July 2021); Hickey and Tang, "Theoretical and Applied Approaches to Remote Work for Academic Reference and Instruction Librarians"; Hosoi, Reiter, and Zabel, "Reshaping Perspectives on Flexible Work"; Reiter and Zabel, "New Ways of Working"; Tamara Townsend and Kimberley Bugg, "Putting Work Life Balance into Practice: Policy Implications for Academic Librarians," *Library Leadership & Management* 32, no. 3 (September 2018): 1–30, <https://doi.org/10.5860/llm.v32i3.7272>.
6. Auger, "Higher Education Telework and Flexible Work Survey"; Kate Carter, "Facing New Challenges: Recovering from Bell's Palsy and Shifting to a Flexible Work Paradigm," *Journal of New Librarianship* 8, no. 2 (November 2023): 171–80, <https://doi.org/10.33011/newlibs/14/15>; Amanda L. Folk, "Exploring the Experiences of Academic Library Employees with Long Covid in the United States and Canada," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 49, no. 6 (November 2023): 102790, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2023.102790>; Susan Rathbun-Grubb, "Librarians Working with Chronic Conditions During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Journal of Library Administration* 64, no. 1 (January 2024): 34–51, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2023.2287942>.
7. Ashlea Green, "Academic Library Employees and Their Work Modality Options and Preferences," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 49, no. 5 (September 2023): 102764, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2023.102764>; Ashlea Green, "Post Covid-19: Expectations for Academic Library Collections, Remote Work, and Resource Description and Discovery Staffing," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 48, no. 4 (July 2022): 102564, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2022.102564>; Hosoi, Reiter, and Zabel, "Reshaping Perspectives on Flexible Work"; Reiter and Zabel, "New Ways of Working"; Amelia Rodarte and Abby Moore, "Academic Librarians' Perceptions of Productivity While Working From Home



- During the COVID-19 Pandemic," *International Journal of Librarianship* 7, no. 2 (December 2022): 4–29, <https://doi.org/10.23974/ijol.2022.vol7.2.230>; Townsend and Bugg, "Putting Work Life Balance into Practice: Policy Implications for Academic Librarians."
8. "Leveling the Playing Field in the Hybrid Workplace," *Future Forum Pulse*, January 2022, <https://futureforum.com/pulse-survey/>; Hickey and Tang, "Theoretical and Applied Approaches to Remote Work for Academic Reference and Instruction Librarians"; Joan C. Williams, Rachel M. Korn, and Mikayla Boginsky, "Don't Lose the Democratizing Effect of Remote Work," *Harvard Business Review*, August 4, 2021, <https://hbr.org/2021/08/dont-lose-the-democratizing-effect-of-remote-work>.
  9. Jennifer Duncan, "Working from Afar: A New Trend for Librarianship," *College & Research Libraries News* 69, no. 4 (April 2008): 216–36; Gentry, "Digital Collections at a Distance"; Hickey and Tang, "Theoretical and Applied Approaches to Remote Work for Academic Reference and Instruction Librarians."
  10. Duncan, "Working from Afar"; Hosoi, Reiter, and Zabel, "Reshaping Perspectives on Flexible Work"; Smith and Van Dyke, "A Telecommuting Interlibrary Loan Librarian's Experience"; Seth Kaplan, Lia Engelsted, Xue Lei, and Karla Lockwood, "Unpacking Manager Mistrust in Allowing Telework: Comparing and Integrating Theoretical Perspectives," *Journal of Business and Psychology* 33, no. 3 (June 2018): 365–382, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-017-9498-5>.
  11. Monica D. T. Rysavy and Russell Michalak, "Working from Home: How We Managed Our Team Remotely with Technology," *Journal of Library Administration* 60, no. 5 (July 2020): 532–542, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2020.1760569>; Duncan, "Working from Afar"; Smith and Van Dyke, "A Telecommuting Interlibrary Loan Librarian's Experience."
  12. Auger, "Higher Education Telework and Flexible Work Survey"; Duncan, "Working from Afar"; Hosoi, Reiter, and Zabel, "Reshaping Perspectives on Flexible Work"; Smith and Van Dyke, "A Telecommuting Interlibrary Loan Librarian's Experience"; Townsend and Bugg, "Putting Work Life Balance into Practice"; Mira Waller and Carla Lee, "The Future of Flexible Work and Hybrid Work Culture Beyond Covid-19: Challenges, Opportunities and Lessons Learned at UVA Library," *Proceedings of the IATUL Conferences*, June 16, 2022. <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/iatul/2022/woc/10/>.
  13. Carter, "Facing New Challenges"; Green, "Academic Library Employees and Their Work Modality Options and Preferences"; Christina Heady, Joshua Vossler, and Millicent Weber, "Risk and ARL Academic Library Policies in Response to COVID-19," *Journal of Library Administration* 61, no. 7 (October 2021): 735–57, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2021.1972725>; Liisi Lembinen, "Academic Libraries' Leaders' Decision-Making During the Covid-19 Crisis," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 49, no. 3 (May 2023): 102709, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2023.102709>; John J. Meier, "Changing Leadership: A Longitudinal Study of Decision-Making by Academic Library Leaders," *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 24, no. 4 (October 2024): 893–917, <https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2024.a938747>; Nadine Newman, "Academic Library Leadership Lessons from COVID-19," *Library Leadership & Management* 35, no. 2 (June 2021), <https://doi.org/10.5860/llm.v35i2.7473>; Christine E. Woods, "The State of Online and Remote Work of Academic Librarians in Virginia," *Virginia Libraries* 67, no. 1 (September 2023): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.21061/valib.v67i1.660>.
  14. Lembinen, "Academic Libraries' Leaders' Decision-Making During the Covid-19 Crisis"; Meier, "Changing Leadership."
  15. Sarah R. Fitzgerald et al., "Decision-Making by and for Academic Libraries during COVID-19," *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 23, no. 1 (January 2023): 45–65, <https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2023.0008>.
  16. Heady, Vossler, and Weber, "Risk and ARL Academic Library Policies in Response to COVID-19."; Rysavy and Michalak, "Working from Home."

17. Fitzgerald et al., "Decision-Making by and for Academic Libraries during COVID-19"; Ioana G Hulbert, "Ithaka S+R US Library Survey 2022: Navigating the New Normal," Ithaka S+R, last modified March 30, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.318642>.
18. Bart Ragon, Elizabeth C. Whipple, and Melissa L. Rethlefsen, "Except for My Commute, Everything Is the Same: The Shared Lived Experience of Health Sciences Libraries During the Covid-19 Pandemic," *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 110, no. 4 (2022): 419–28, <https://doi.org/10.5195/jmla.2022.1475>; Waller and Lee, "The Future of Flexible Work and Hybrid Work Culture Beyond Covid-19."
19. Waller and Lee, "The Future of Flexible Work and Hybrid Work Culture Beyond Covid-19."
20. Carter, "Facing New Challenges"; Rathbun-Grubb, "Librarians Working with Chronic Conditions During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic"; Waller and Lee, "The Future of Flexible Work and Hybrid Work Culture Beyond Covid-19"; Ruth Sarah Connell, and Meris Mandernach Longmeier, "An Analysis of Hybrid/Remote Work Eligibility in Academic Librarian Job Advertisements," *College & Research Libraries* (forthcoming 2025), <https://kb.osu.edu/handle/1811/104406>.
21. Ferreira et al., "Decision Factors for Remote Work Adoption"; Green, "Academic Library Employees and Their Work Modality Options and Preferences"; Gentry, "Digital Collections at a Distance"; Hosoi, Reiter, and Zabel, "Reshaping Perspectives on Flexible Work"; David Petersen, Matthew Covey, and Janet Crum, "Prevalence and Impact of Remote and Hybrid Work in Academic Health Sciences Libraries," *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 112, no. 4 (October 2024): 298–306, <https://doi.org/10.5195/jmla.2024.1905>; Ragon, Whipple, and Rethlefsen, "Except for My Commute, Everything Is the Same"; Shelby Buckman, Jose Maria Barrero, Nicholas Bloom, and Steven Davis, "Measuring Work from Home," Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, February 2025, <https://doi.org/10.3386/w33508>.
22. Tammy D. Allen, Timothy D. Golden, and Kristen M. Shockley, "How Effective Is Telecommuting? Assessing the Status of Our Scientific Findings," *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* 16, no. 2 (October 2015): 40–68, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1529100615593273>; Moddie Breland, Karen Venturella, and Steven Shapiro, "Looking Back, Looking Ahead: Lessons Learned from the Pandemic (Are We Prepared for the Next Pandemic)," *Library Leadership & Management* 37, no. 2 (2023), <https://llm.corejournals.org/llm/article/view/7557>; Green, "Academic Library Employees and Their Work Modality Options and Preferences"; Petersen, Covey, and Crum, "Prevalence and Impact of Remote and Hybrid Work in Academic Health Sciences Libraries"; Natalie Tagge, Lisa Martin, and Susan M. McGuinness, "Reflecting on the Impact of Hybrid Work on an Academic Library Using the Socio-Ecological Model," *Library Leadership & Management* 38, no. 1 (July 2024). <https://doi.org/10.5860/llm.v38i1.7591>.
23. Rodarte and Moore, "Academic Librarians' Perceptions of Productivity While Working From Home During the COVID-19 Pandemic"; Green, "Post Covid-19: Expectations for Academic Library Collections, Remote Work, and Resource Description and Discovery Staffing."
24. Hosoi, Reiter, and Zabel, "Reshaping Perspectives on Flexible Work"; Smith and Van Dyke, "A Telecommuting Interlibrary Loan Librarian's Experience"; Waller and Lee, "The Future of Flexible Work and Hybrid Work Culture Beyond Covid-19."

This mss. is peer reviewed, copy edited, and accepted for publication, portal 26.2.