



**WORKPLACE PRACTICES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 —
FALL 2020 UPDATE**

Special Considerations for Dependent Care and Family Obligations

Working remotely poses particular challenges to families with dependent-care and family obligations whose regular care arrangements have been disrupted. As we enter this next phase of work under continuing pandemic circumstances, infection-control measures mean that schools, child care centers, and care arrangements for older adults may not return at the same capacity as before.

Under non-emergency circumstances, engaging in substantial non-Harvard activities is not permitted when teleworking. In the current circumstances, Harvard understands that employees must balance family caregiving tasks with work tasks and that these activities will therefore continue to be integrated.

- **Managers** are encouraged to understand that staff may have to work outside of standard business hours, and therefore are encouraged to accept asynchronous work times, to be flexible with non-standard schedules, and to redouble their commitment to managing to goals, results and deliverables. Good management skills – including clear and frequent communication – are essential here. At the same time, managers are encouraged to guard against the potential for overwork and burnout. Please visit the [Coronavirus Remote Work Resources](#) page for links to a Managing Remotely Toolkit and for a tip sheet on Recognizing and Preventing Stress and Burnout.
- **Staff members** are encouraged to consider how they can meet their work goals using a non-standard schedule — such as an early or delayed start, a split-schedule work day, or a compressed or extended work week — if they have the option to work around another caregiver’s availability.

Employees with family-care responsibilities may also investigate available back-up dependent care and distance-learning support resources.

Your [Care @ Work benefit](#) now includes new services and temporarily reduced copays:

- **Care.com’s online database of learning facilitators and tutors** — Through your Harvard membership, you have unlimited and free use of Care.com’s online database of caregivers and other services. This self-service tool has always included babysitters, nannies and eldercare providers, but has now been expanded to help families find one another and create a nanny-share or a learning pod, or find providers who can serve as distance-learning facilitators or tutors. There is no limit to the number of days or types of care procured via this site. More information on these services can also be found [here](#).
Please note: Because caregivers on the digital, self-service platform are not necessarily licensed or fully background-checked, you should learn about making wise hiring choices in Care.com’s [Safety Center](#) and read about additional [background checks](#) available for purchase.
- **Reduced copays for In-home back-up child care** — Available through Care@Work, this in-home [back-up care service](#) differs from the self-service Care.com database; Care.com has represented that these caregivers are specifically trained, experienced, and vetted to provide in-

home back-up care. When an employee uses in-home back-up care, they are gaining access to a smaller pool of caregivers and the professional placement services of Care @ Work.

- **For summer and fall 2020, Harvard is further subsidizing the hourly rate:** For care that is booked after July 1, 2020, and takes place between July 1 through October 31, 2020, benefits-eligible employees will pay \$3, \$6 or \$10 per hour, according to their Harvard benefits salary bracket. These copays will be automatically updated within the Care.com portal once you have created an account and logged into the portal.
- Days of this service count toward the overall total of 20 days per benefits-eligible faculty or staff member. Read more [here](#), and see Care.com's [coronavirus guide](#) for caregivers and parents.
- **Back-up adult care** — Also available through Care @Work, this [service](#) will send a vetted and qualified senior caregiver to your family member's (or your own) home. **Reduced Copays are the same as those outlined above for child care.**
- **Senior Care Solutions** — This [service](#) helps faculty and staff navigate the demands of caring for an aging family member or other adult by connecting you, free of charge, with a professional senior care advisor (a licensed clinical social worker who is an expert in adult and elder care). The program also provides referrals and access to vetted services around the country.

Other benefits and services available through Harvard include:

- **The SOURCE Program** — SOURCE (Subsidy for Occasional, Unplanned, and Respite Care Expenses) Program is a reimbursement program that helps income-eligible employees work when child or adult care is unavailable. Learn more at the [Source Program's](#) page on HARVie.
- **Child Care Scholarships** — Harvard offers child care scholarships to eligible faculty, staff and postdocs that help defray the cost of child care. Based on need, these [programs](#) have annual application periods open over the summer and fall depending on your employee group.
- **Harvard's Employee Assistance Program** — [Harvard's EAP](#), provided by KGA, Inc., is free, confidential, and has counselors available 24/7 to help:
 - KGA's clinicians can consult with employees on wide range of family-care issues, providing both counseling services and practical resources. Note: KGA is now offering both telehealth counseling and chat options, and has developed a webpage dedicated to [COVID-19 resources](#).
 - KGA can also assist in identifying local care child care providers to meet both regular and back-up care needs. Register on their [website](#) for articles, resources, tools, and training programs.
 - The EAP is just a phone call away: 877-327-4278 (877-EAP-HARV).
- **Mindfulness and Mindful Parenting** — Mindfulness resources, including online Mindful Parenting seminars, are available through Harvard's Office of [Work/Life](#) and through Harvard's [Center for Wellness and Health Promotion](#). Harvard staff and faculty are also now eligible for a free membership to the [Ten Percent Happier app](#), which offers guided mindfulness meditation, practical teaching, and a 30% discount for family members of subscribers.
- **Harvard's updated flexwork guidelines** — The onset of COVID-19 has raised the profile and accelerated the pace of departmental adoption of flexwork, which underscores the need for employees and managers alike to become familiar with the [basic tenets of flexwork](#) and approaches to balancing family caregiving and work tasks.