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When Telework Ends, 'I Don't Want to Go Back'

By Theresa Defino

In the spring, colleges, universities and research institutions ordered all nonessential staff to work from home.^[1] A few strategies, such as regular communication, can make the experience better, but administrators from the University of Florida, Indiana University, and New York told RRC their experiences have been generally positive.^[2]

RRC also spoke to a research compliance official who asked not to be identified to speak more freely about a significant concern: the expected end of remote or telework. Unlike faculty or students who have tenure or unions, research administrators are not protected if they voice controversial positions.

“My single greatest source of anxiety, and this is really saying something, given our current climate, is what do I do when they tell me it’s time to go back to campus?” this research administration official told RRC. “I do not want to go back, and I have spent a significant amount of emotional energy trying to figure out how I can prevent it from happening.”

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