



The Green Workspace Program

1. Introduction

Welcome to the Green Workspace Program! Thank you for committing to sustainability here at University of Richmond. This checklist will be your guide for implementing positive changes in your workspace.

The Green Workspace Program is an opportunity to create lasting change as a group by committing to actions that align with UR's Sustainability Plan. It is also a chance to engage with workspaces across campus and work together on sustainable initiatives as a community.

2. Getting Started

Before you make your selections, please review the following materials to get acquainted with the priorities of the Office for Sustainability and the Rethink Waste Office.

1. Sustainability 101 - Video
2. Rethink Waste 101 - Schedule a Presentation
3. Sign up for the [Sustainability Newsletter](#)
4. Sign up for the [Rethink Waste Newsletter](#)

3. Complete the Checklist

Below we have listed six key target categories for sustainable improvements: Rethink Waste, Events & Purchasing, Conserve Energy, Create Belonging & Community, Connect to Nature, and Educate Your Workspace. **Each academic year, select two actions per category to complete (a total of 12). Bolded actions must be completed first.**

RETHINK WASTE

Utilize UR's programs to divert waste

- ☐ We will participate in the [Rethinking Workspace Waste program](#) to remove deskside bins and plastic bin liners.
- ☐ We will tour the Spider Exchange as a workspace at [336 New Fraternity Row](#).

Divert workspace waste

- ☐ We have a compost bin in our workspace and compost our food waste, including at all events and meetings.
- ☐ We will recycle batteries, e-waste, and toner/ink cartridges using appropriate collection bins.
- ☐ We will participate in an office waste audit.
- ☐ We will eliminate or replace disposable K-Cups and individually wrapped coffee pods with compostable or reusable options.
- ☐ We will purchase sustainable items (and compostable items if possible) when buying office and [cleaning supplies](#). Think about certified items: Organic, Certified B corporation, Rainforest Alliance Certified.
- ☐ We will reduce paper by making all classroom assignments and workspace communications digital.

CONVENE & GREEN

Bins & Signage

- ☐ ***We will ensure there is a recycling and compost bin at our event.**
- ☐ We will have signage that indicates what is recyclable and compostable.

Supplies & Decorations

- ☐ We will eliminate purchasing of single-use plastic dishware, silverware, and drinkware (water bottles). We will either buy reusable items (preferred), compostable items, or encourage participants to bring their own.
- ☐ For decorations, prizes, and event supplies, we will utilize recycled items before purchasing new ones (check out the Spider Exchange or Scrap RVA).
- ☐ We will purchase or acquire environmentally friendly gifts or experiences for guest speakers, giveaways, and raffles.

Food & Procurement

- ☐ We will buy condiments, coffee, and other supplies in bulk to minimize packaging waste. This is to avoid individually packed food items like condiments, creamers, and chip bags.
- ☐ We will select sustainable food options (local, organic, fair trade, humane, plant-forward) for all meetings and events.
- ☐ We will use University catering when getting food - most of their items are compostable! Or, we will purchase food from a vendor with compostable options.

CONSERVE ENERGY

Power Down

- ☐ We will turn off lights when leaving a room or building.
- ☐ We set calendar reminders and/or implement visual reminders to power down before telework days, weekends, holidays, and breaks.

Increase Energy Efficiency

- ☐ We use centralized, shared appliances and equipment such as printers, scanners, copiers, and refrigerators, and we will eliminate individual printers and appliances.
- ☐ We have replaced our old power strips with “smart” power strips.
- ☐ When we replace or update appliances and equipment, we purchase those that are ENERGY STAR, EPEAT or CEE qualified.
- ☐ We will open windows shades during the day and utilize sunlight over artificial light when possible.
- ☐ We will adhere to facility temperature guidelines and set our thermostat to 68 when occupied in the winter, and 74 when occupied in the summer.

CREATE BELONGING & COMMUNITY

Make sustainability a focus of your workspace

- ☐ ***We will participate in a sustainability-based volunteer opportunity as a workspace. Examples include a Rethink Waste athletic event, working in the Eco-Corridor, etc.**
- ☐ We regularly check the Sustainability Events Page and attend opportunities throughout the year.
- ☐ We highlight and openly celebrate our Green Workspace achievements and progress through social media, staff meetings, and our newsletters/communications.

Organize office-wide sustainability events

- ☐ We will host a potluck centered on sustainability.
- ☐ We will watch an educational environmental film or short as a workspace.
- ☐ We will host a sustainability-based event.
- ☐ We will take a trip to a space that offers refills. Examples include Eco Inspired, Ellwood Thompsons, and Good Foods Groceries.

Engage with Richmond

- ☐ A group from our workspace (at least 3 people) will attend a sustainability-focused event in the Greater Richmond area.

CONNECT TO NATURE

Bring nature to the workspace

- ☐ We will have a staff picnic, meeting, or other activity in the Eco-Corridor.
- ☐ We will have at least one outdoor team meeting per semester.
- ☐ We maintain many living plants throughout our office to help improve air quality.

Visit Richmond's natural space

- ☐ We will schedule an off campus nature walk, visit to the James River, or hike in Richmond for the workspace. We suggest reaching out to OAR for guidance or recommendations!
- ☐ We will create and share a list of outdoor locations (e.g., James River, Forest Hill Park) and upcoming events/opportunities around Richmond for employees to participate in recreational activities (e.g., hiking, rafting, birdwatching, etc.). We will share this list each semester.

Facilitate being outdoors

- ☐ We have a designated bike rack by our workspace.
- ☐ We will play a round of disc golf with our staff.

EDUCATE YOUR WORKSPACE

Disseminate sustainable information

- ☐ ***We will share a poster of sustainability events and opportunities with our workspace each semester. This will be shared by the Office for Sustainability.**
- ☐ We share information about alternative vehicles, public transportation options, and reducing idling with those operating university-owned vehicles through digital communications.

Make sustainability a focus of your workspace

- ☐ We include an introduction to the Green Workspace Program, specific to our workspace, in new staff orientation.
- ☐ We encourage our workspace and constituents to donate used materials to the Spider Exchange or the Big Yard Sale at the end of the semester.
- ☐ At least 75% of our office has tried an alternative transportation option this year (carpooling, biking, walking, public transportation) to get to work.