

Pilot Telecommuting/Remote Work Policy

Accommodations for individuals with disabilities in accessing these policies are available upon request by emailing accessiblepolicy@wcupa.edu

Purpose and Scope

The intent of this pilot program is to test a flexible, non-mandatory program designed to promote better work-life balance for, and to maximize productivity of appropriate positions via a flexible workplace arrangement. It is the policy of West Chester University of Pennsylvania to permit telecommuting work arrangements as provided by this policy when it is in the best interests of the University and when it will enhance the productivity of the employee. This policy applies to University staff, both represented and non-represented positions. It does not apply to Faculty, Coaches, Nurses, Student Workers, Graduate Assistants or Public Safety positions. Telecommuting is not an employee right or guaranteed employee benefit and the implementation and/or continuation of telecommuting is at the sole discretion of the employer.

Definitions

- A. Telecommuting is an authorized work arrangement that involves an employee primarily or occasionally working at a location that is not the University campus or regularly assigned place of employment.

- B. A regularly assigned place of employment is the location on the West Chester University Pennsylvania campus where an employee usually and customarily reports for work or where work is performed. With the approval of a telecommuting agreement, the office space assigned to an employee maybe redistributed

and that employee may be assigned a shared workspace, where an office is shared among employees.

Policy

Telecommuting or remote work includes alternative work arrangements available to employees whose job duties are appropriate for such assignment. The decision to authorize these options is within management's discretion based on the nature of the work being performed and other business considerations. The participation does not alter an employee's work relationship with the University, nor does it relieve an employee from the obligation to observe all applicable University policies and procedures. All existing terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to the position description, salary, benefits, leave, and work hours remain the same as if the employee worked only at the regularly assigned place of employment. Decisions regarding policy development or changes remains at the discretion of the President and Cabinet. All requests or assignments for telecommuting require the approval of the appropriate Vice President and may be reviewed at Cabinet. Requests for telecommuting for 40% or more requires approval by the President or their designee. Requests for telecommuting for positions covered by a collective bargaining agreement (i.e. AFSCME or SCUPA) must be discussed with the Office of Employee and Labor Relations prior to seeking Vice President approval.

Alternative work arrangements are appropriate only when both the abilities of the employee and the nature of the work to be performed to meet the minimum criteria set below. This pilot policy is not meant to enable short term work from home assignments to meet employee personal needs or to circumvent the need for employees to use leave as

normally required. During the pilot phase of this policy, the University will be considering the effectiveness of the pilot and any impacts on the workplace and/or delivery of services.

The University reserves the right to terminate any approved telecommuting agreement with two weeks' notice at its sole discretion. The University also reserves the right to terminate any agreement without a notice for any violations of University policy, a violation of the conditions of the agreement, or when there is a relevant change in University policy or law. When a scheduled workday is declared to be an official paid office closing due to inclement weather or emergency that impacts the regularly place of employment, telecommuting employees will be expected to and will work from the remote site or will be required to submit leave time for that day. Additionally, the University may temporarily suspend or place a moratorium on remote work due to changes in the workplace, assignments, increases in volume of work, vacancies, approved leaves of absence, or other business needs.

Guidelines:

Supervisor Considerations - Telecommuting is appropriate for employees who:

- Have the abilities to successfully organize, manage time and work independently.
- Have at least a satisfactory or solid work performance rating.
- Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of their job functions.
- Have no prior discipline within a two (2) year period, with particular consideration for leave abuse, performance issues, or violations of standards of conduct.

- Employees within a contractually provided probationary period may be eligible for this pilot program.

Position Requirements - Positions that may be considered for telecommuting arrangements are those that:

- Have job functions that can be performed at a remote site without diminishing quality or productivity of a unit or employee performance and does not increase cost to the University.
- Telecommuting approval is for the employee's existing position. Any changes in positions will require a review of the agreement at the sole discretion of the employer, with no guarantee of approval.
- Do not require an employee's presence at the regularly assigned place of employment on a daily or routine basis.
- Have an emphasis on the electronic production and/or exchange of information by means of technology (i.e. email, telephone, software technologies, etc...)
- Generally, these positions involve measurable or quantifiable work product.
- Have minimal or flexible need for specialized materials or equipment available only at the regularly assigned place of employment.
- Do not result in a shift of job duties from the telecommuting employee to employees working at the regularly assigned place of employment.

Positions that are not suited to telecommuting are those that:

- Require regular face-to-face contact with a supervisor, other employees, students and/or members of the University community or the public.

- Require routine access to information or materials that are available only at the regularly assigned place of employment.
- Involves the direct handling of secure or sensitive materials that renders telecommuting inappropriate.

Scope and Scheduling of Remote Work:

- Employees with a remote work arrangement can be assigned a designated regularly scheduled remote workday within a week or pay period or can be provided flexibility for remote work as part of an arrangement with their chain of command.
- Employees within bargaining unit and approved for a remote work arrangement are required to have a regularly assigned remote work schedule approved by their chain of command.
- Remote work arrangements can fall within three categories:
 - 90-100% remote: The employee is generally working remotely and is occasionally or rarely is expected to return to the regular assigned University workplace.
 - 40-60% remote: The employee is typically working remotely 4-6 days per pay period.
 - 20% remote: The employee is typically working remotely 1-2 days per pay period.
- Employees working more than 40% remotely shall not be provided a permanent office location on campus or must be provided with a shared office location.
- Employees may be approved for limited full-time or part-time telecommuting/remote work for up to six (6) weeks at the discretion of the of approving Vice President.

Remote Work Site Requirements:

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- Employees must self-certify that the remote work site is clear of conditions that pose a hazard to the employee's safety or otherwise present a danger to assigned equipment or data and that the site is conducive to the performance of assigned duties and must maintain this through the duration of telecommuting assignment.
- Employees must have internet access appropriate to work requirements.
- Non-work related events and activities will not disrupt or interfere with work at the remote work site.
- The employee must make advance arrangements for dependent care to ensure a productive work environment. Telecommuting is not meant to substitute for dependent care or other personal obligations. The employee shall continue to make these arrangements to the same extent as if the employee was working at the regularly assigned place of employment.
- Once the agreement is approved, the University retains the right to make prearranged on-site inspections of the remote work site during scheduled work hours to address any claims related to workers' compensation or other potential disciplinary actions as appropriate.
- Employees must ensure that all sensitive and confidential information and equipment is protected and secured when accessing information from the remote location.

Regularly Assigned Place of Employment:

- Employees participating in telecommuting shall report to the regularly assigned place of employment as agreed upon with the supervisor and as indicated in the agreement. Additionally, when operational needs require, an employee must report to the regularly assigned place of employment upon the supervisor's request.

- In person meetings are prohibited from being conducted at the remote work site.

Technology/Equipment:

- Only University approved software shall be used for connecting with the University's network from the remote work site. Employees who are participating in telecommuting shall follow all University information security policies, copyright laws, and manufacturers' licensing agreements.
- It is understood that any equipment issued to the employee, including any related software, is the sole and exclusive property of the University, and is subject to the same business and proper use of technology as if it were located on-site. Employees must utilize such equipment as directed, including any directives regarding accessing confidential data. Only the employee may use this equipment.
- Telecommuting employees must store all university work related electronic content (documents, image files, etc.) on a University OneDrive, MS Teams drive, or other appropriately assigned electronic file.
- No content should be stored on a personal device.
- Any equipment that is used by an employee (personal or University resources) is subject to discovery and Right-to-Know requests. The use of personal computer equipment and software is subject to all University policies and security protocols.
- If this agreement is terminated, the employee must return any and all University owned property, supplies, equipment and work products.

- The employee is required to notify his/her supervisor immediately of any equipment, software, or internet connection malfunction or failure, or of any theft or loss of equipment issued by the University.
- In the event that a telecommuting employee is unable to work remotely due to a technology failure, the employee must be able to report to the regularly assigned place of employment to complete their work for the duration of the failure as directed by their supervisor.
- The employee is responsible for the security of all official data, both electronic and physical, in accordance with established guidelines.
- Employees and supervisors must ensure that all protective software and other firewall technology is installed and used on all equipment at the remote location.

Work Schedule, Leave and Reporting:

- A telecommuting agreement does not necessarily alter the employee's work schedule. The specific work schedule of a participating employee shall be designated by the supervisor based on the business needs of the position. Human Resources and Payroll must be informed of approved work hours. All work hours must total 37.5 hours per week and follow applicable collective bargaining agreements and state and federal labor laws.
- Employees are required to utilize ESS to enter all leave requests as would be required at the regularly assigned place of employment.
- All leave policies, including reporting off (call offs), must be followed.

Liability:

- The alternate work site is an extension of the University; therefore, the telecommuting employee is covered by worker's compensation

insurance during the course and scope of employment, during the approved work schedule, and in the designated work location. The University assumes no liability for injuries that occur outside of the designated remote work area or outside the employee's normal work schedule. The employee is responsible for immediately informing his or her supervisor and the Human Resources Office of any work-related injury or illness.

- In response to claims regarding working conditions or workers' compensation, the University reserves the right to make on-site inspections of the alternate work site and will provide at least 24 working hours notice to the employee of such visit.
- The University will not be liable for damages to employee-owned equipment being used in telecommuting or that may result from telecommuting. The University will not be responsible for operating costs, remodel expenses, home maintenance, or any other incidental costs (e.g. utilities, telephone, insurance) associated with the use of the employee's residence for telecommuting. The employee is responsible for all insurance, maintenance and utilities associated with the remote work site.
- Any potential personal tax implications related to the alternate work site shall be the employee's responsibility.
- The employee will not be reimbursed for any travel miles to/from or receive any compensation for time spent commuting to/from the regularly assigned place of employment and the remote location.
- Appropriate office furniture (i.e. desk, chair, filing cabinets, etc.) is the obligation of the employee and not the University.

Work Assignments and Supervision:

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- When telecommuting or working at an alternate work site, the employee's work status, job duties, and responsibilities remain essentially unchanged. As applicable, the University may require additional duties of the employee, including periodic written reports to his/her supervisor regarding work progress and deliverables. Employees shall be available for communication and contact during their scheduled work hours.
- The employee must be accessible and available at all times during their normal work hours while telecommuting, except during periods of approved leave. The employee will be directed on modes of communication to be used during the telecommuting arrangement (i.e., telephone, VPN network access, email, etc.). The employee may be required to grant calendar access to his/her supervisor.
- Employees are responsible for ensuring that non-employees do not have access to University files, records, or data in print or electronic format.
- Restricted-access materials shall not be taken out of the office or accessed remotely via computer unless approved in advance by the supervisor.
- Failure to abide by the telecommuting policy may result in discipline and/or revocation of approval for telecommuting.

Recruitment for Hard to Fill Positions:

- For Management positions that are identified by the Chief Human Resources Officer and appropriate Vice President as “hard to fill” based on market or specialty of experience, knowledge, and/or skills, it may be appropriate to advertise and recruit position as 40% remote or up to 100% remote with little or no expectation for the employee to work on campus.
- Postings for these positions must have special consideration regarding the type of work, cost to recruit, and long-term implications related to a full-time remote work arrangement.
- Other specific considerations and implications for these arrangements are the location of the employee and potential HR, payroll, regulatory, and legal implications on hiring individuals located outside of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. As such, approval for this type of recruitment should be very limited and must require approval by the CHRO, appropriate Vice President, and the President.

Procedure

Agreement:

- A Telecommuting Agreement must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor and must have the approval of the employee's Dean or Director prior to initiating a telecommuting arrangement. The agreement must be approved by the appropriate Vice President and a final signed copy must be sent to OPF@wcupa.edu.
- Equipment and Supplies – As part of the Telecommuting Agreement, the employee will describe and present to the supervisor a request for office equipment, hardware, software, communication needs and office supplies needed to participate in telecommuting from a remote work site. The supervisor will review the request for approval for purchase or reimbursement. The University will not reimburse the employee for any costs not pre-approved. Purchases or reimbursement shall be provided in accordance with applicable University policies. The University will not reimburse employees for out-of-pocket expenses for materials and supplies that are reasonably available at the regularly assigned place of employment. The University will not provide printers, scanners, or fax machines.
- IS&T must review and approve all requests for technology after approval of the agreement. The equipment will be documented on the agreement.
- The employee should designate a workspace and maintain it so that it is conducive to working and free of hazards. The employee agrees that the supervisor or designee reserves the right to visit the alternate work site to ensure compliance and safety in the case of various claims. The employee should fill out the Workplace Safety

UNIVERSITY POLICY

Checklist and provide it to the supervisor and a copy to Human Resources.

- The employee will provide telephone and internet service (as applicable) at their own expense. These services are not reimbursable.

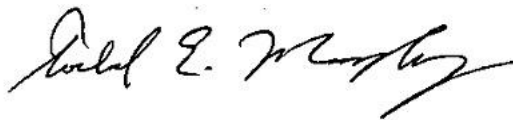
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