



**INTERNAL OPERATING PROCEDURE**

<b>Department: Office of Human Resources</b>	<b>IOP No.: HR-3012</b>
<b>Subject: Employee Telecommuting Program</b>	
<b>Authority: UP-03-01</b>	
<b>Revision(s)</b>	<b>Revised Date: 10/18/2021</b>
<b>Purpose : Establish processes implementing UP-03-01</b>	
<b>Signature of Approving Authority:</b>	
<b>Related References:</b>	

**1.0 Policy Statement**

The purpose of this guidance is to establish processes for the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of eligible employees' participation in the Employee Telecommuting Program.

**2.0 Scope**

All offices and work units of the University.

**3.0 Definitions**

**3.1 Full Workday: Regular Hours of Operation**

The official hours of operation are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. All departments must be adequately staffed to provide full services during the hours of operation. Some employees may have assigned shifts or rotating shifts where the normal work schedule is other than 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Each employee is expected to work the number of hours in the employee's established workweek unless on approved leave. The minimum workweek is forty (40) hours for full-time employees. A&P, Executive Service, and Faculty employees are expected to work the hours necessary to carry out assignments, and their work hours may exceed 40 in a workweek.

**3.2 Telecommuting:** A work arrangement allowing employees to conduct all or some of their work away from the official worksite during their normal work hours on a regular basis for up to a maximum of two (2) full workdays per workweek. Any alternative arrangement may be granted at the discretion of the employee’s immediate supervisor or manager, but cannot be five (5) days per week. Telecommuting is also known as “telework.” **The term does not include; therefore, a telecommuting agreement is not required, for:**

3.2.1 Performance of required work duties away from the official worksite and outside of established work hours on an occasional basis and sporadically working away from the official worksite during all or some portion of the established work hours.

3.2.1.1 These arrangements may be approved by the supervisor or manager to accommodate extenuating circumstances by allowing an employee to maintain productivity away from the official worksite. This should be done via email to affected employees and copying the Office of Human Resources. Managers may use the productivity guidelines outlined herein to manage employee productivity.

3.2.1.2 In the event that a University office location is closed, employees may use administrative leave to account for the time they must be away from the official work location.

3.2.2 Duties and responsibilities that, by their nature, are performed routinely in the field away from the official worksite.

3.2.3 Duties performed while in travel status.

3.2.4 Contractors or contractors’ employees.

3.2.5 Employees who provide direct care to dependents at the alternative worksite during University business hours.

3.2.6 Employees away from the worksite while on workers’ compensation leave.

3.2.7 Employees who are on annual leave, sick leave, or Family Medical Leave.

3.2.8 Employees who are on administrative leave.

#### **4.0 Telecommuting Eligibility by Job Class**

**4.1** External new hires are not eligible to participate in the Employee Telecommuting Program within the first six (6) months of their appointment.

**4.2** Instructional Faculty are ineligible to participate in the Employee Telecommuting Program. However, non-Instructional Faculty are subject to the Employee Telecommuting Program.

**4.3** Employees who perform duties that, by their nature, must be performed at their official worksite may not participate in the Employee Telecommuting Program. For interns in a rotation phase, the supervisor may not be in telework status during that phase.

4.3.1 In determining telework eligibility, managers should look at the tasks that employees accomplish as part of their job rather than the position as a whole.

4.3.1.1 Example: If there are multiple employees serving in customer service or administrative positions, it might be possible to rotate schedules and the timing of tasks to accommodate telework one day per week.

**4.4** Executive Service Employees may not participate in the Employee Telecommuting Program unless approved by the President.

**4.5** Administrative and Professional Employees who report to a Vice President, Director level or equivalent may request and be considered for participation in the Employee Telecommuting Program for up to a maximum of two (2) full workdays per workweek. Any alternative arrangement may be granted at the discretion of the employee's immediate supervisor or manager.

USPS or OPS employees may request and be considered for participation in the Employee Telecommuting Program with a maximum of two (2) full workdays per workweek. Any alternative arrangement may be granted at the discretion of the employee's immediate supervisor or manager.

## **5.0 Program Participation**

**5.1** Employee participation in the Employee Telecommuting Program is discretionary based on the approval of the Division and the employee's immediate supervisor or manager and is in no way to be considered an entitlement. Participation may be terminated by the employee or University via email at any time.

**5.2** Employees must be able to work the minimum number of full workdays in their official worksite as outlined in this document, to be deemed eligible for consideration to participate in the Employee Telecommuting Program. Any exceptions must be approved by the Division Vice President.

**5.3** Participation will not adversely affect the employee's eligibility for advancement or any other employment rights or benefits.

- 5.4** Employees on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) or similar performance review status are not eligible for the Employee Telecommuting Program. Employees must at least “achieve” or “meet” all satisfactory performance standard ratings in order to participate and remain in the telecommuting program.
- 5.5** An employee shall not telework if on approved leave.
- 5.6** Employees desiring to participate in the Employee Telecommuting Program must complete a Telecommuting Agreement, and agree to be bound by the terms and conditions set forth therein.
- 5.7** Telecommuters are subject to the same rules regarding conduct, attendance, leave, performance standards, and discipline as other employees. Telecommuters must obtain supervisory approval before taking leave. The employee is responsible for entering hours worked and leave taken in iRattler as required by their classification. The Supervisor is responsible for approving hours worked and leave taken in iRattler.
- 5.8** Telecommuters agree to allow their immediate supervisor, manager, or other Department designated staff to inspect the established approved designated alternative worksite during the telecommuter's established telecommuting hours after receiving a 24-hour written or verbal notice. Telecommuters may waive the required notification time if they choose. In the event of a job-related accident while telecommuting, the telecommuter agrees to allow immediate and follow-up inspection(s) at the established approved designated alternative worksite, as needed.
- 5.9** University ITS must approve the use of any telecommuting equipment. The use of a telecommuter's personal equipment for teleworking requires a written request from the telecommuter and approval from the appropriate supervisor after consultation with ITS. Equipment provided by the telecommuter shall be at no cost to the University and will be maintained by the telecommuter. Use of the University owned computer equipment and peripherals is subject to ITS approval and the availability of equipment and funding.

Telecommuters must maintain a home internet service with sufficient upload and download speeds capable of supporting all required work activities. Employees will be expected to use personal leave time in the event of service interruption, power outage, or if there is no work available. Employees have the option of reporting to their official worksite to mitigate use of personal leave.

Communication should be made to ensure the outage is not impacting the official worksite prior to reporting. If the outage is on the part of the University, reporting to the official location will be determined based upon the needs of the University. The University will not provide or reimburse the cost for any equipment, installation fees, or monthly service charges for telecommuters to have the required Internet connectivity. University owned computer equipment and peripherals must be protected against damage and unauthorized use. When ITS support is needed and cannot be accomplished remotely, telecommuters must bring their University owned equipment to their official worksite for support. Telecommuters may not use University owned equipment or software for personal activities. Approved University owned equipment must be listed on the Telecommuting Agreement and returned to the University within two (2) working days if the Telecommuting Agreement is terminated or the employee changes positions or separates from their unit or the University.

- 5.10** The telecommuter and their immediate supervisor or manager shall discuss and impose mandatory safeguards that shall be taken by the telecommuter to ensure protection of University documents and records from unauthorized disclosure or damage. Telecommuters must save documents in secure University cloud applications, rather than the local drive of their device. All records, papers and correspondence must be safeguarded and immediately returned to the work unit by the telecommuter upon request, upon termination of the Telecommuting Agreement, if the employee changes positions, or separates from the University.
- 5.11** The telecommuter must attest that the approved designated alternative worksite provides workspace that is ergonomically sound and free of safety and fire hazards. Environmental Health and Safety can provide additional guidance.
- 5.12** The University is not responsible for operating costs or any other costs associated with setting up or maintaining the approved designated alternative worksite location such as furnishings, maintenance, repairs, utilities, etc.
- 5.13** Upon execution of the Telecommuting Agreement, the University shall not be held liable for damages to the telecommuter's property and the telecommuter holds the University harmless against any and all claims, resulting from participation in the Employee Telecommuting Program.
- 5.14** The telecommuter will be in pay status during scheduled work hours at the approved telecommuting location. Overtime hours must be approved in advance and the telecommuter will be compensated in accordance with applicable law and rules. The telecommuter agrees that failing to obtain proper approval for overtime work may result in removal from the Employee

Telecommuting Program and/or other disciplinary action.

- 5.15** The telecommuter agrees to work at the official worksite or approved designated alternative worksite and not from any other unapproved site. Occasional location changes may be approved by the telecommuter's immediate supervisor or manager via email. Failure to comply with this provision may result in termination of the Telecommuting Agreement and/or the appropriate disciplinary action.
- 5.16** The telecommuter is prohibited from conducting in-person business at his or her approved designated alternative worksite. Failure to comply with this provision may result in termination of the Telecommuting Agreement and/or other appropriate disciplinary action.
- 5.17** Remember that telecommuting does NOT apply to employees performing required work duties away from the official worksite and outside of established work hours on an occasional basis or sporadically working away from the official worksite during all or some portion of the established work hours.
  - 5.17.1 These arrangements may be approved by the supervisor or manager to accommodate extenuating circumstances by allowing an employee to maintain productivity away from the official worksite for a defined period of time.
- 5.18** The University College of Law and other University locations may have additional and more specific guidance.

## **6.0 Schedules and Program Approval Process**

- 6.1** Employees requesting to telecommute shall complete and sign the University Telecommuting Agreement in accordance with the procedures outlined in UP 03-01.
- 6.2** Supervisors or managers shall forward approved Telecommuting Agreements to the Office of Human Resources or the Division of Academic Affairs, as appropriate, preferably through the University's DocuSign application. Upon receipt of the fully executed form, the Office of Human Resources or the Division of Academic Affairs, as appropriate, will retain the original copy in the employee's official personnel file. Copies will be sent to the employee and the employee's immediate supervisor or manager.
- 6.3** If a request is disapproved for any reason, the immediate supervisor or manager shall forward the original request to the Office of Human Resources or the Division of Academic Affairs, as appropriate, (preferably through the University's DocuSign application) maintain a copy of the original request and provide a copy to the employee. Comments regarding the disapproval **MUST**

be maintained within the form. The Office of Human Resources or the Division of Academic Affairs, as appropriate, shall maintain a copy for monitoring and reporting reasons.

## **7.0 Work Assignments**

- 7.1** The Work Hours and Location section of the Telecommuting Agreement must be completed indicating the approved designated alternative worksite address, telephone number, and the agreed upon work hours, including daily lunch breaks, in both locations (official and designated alternative worksite locations).
- 7.2** Temporary intermittent adjustments to the base work hours due to extenuating circumstances and/or to meet the needs of the University, are permitted provided the changes are agreed upon between the immediate supervisor or manager and the employee. Significant or long-term changes to the agreed upon telework schedule must be documented with an updated Telecommuting Agreement that must be signed, approved, and processed in the same manner as an original request to comply with procedural and periodic reporting requirements.
- 7.3** A telecommuter may be called into their official work location by the employee's immediate supervisor or manager at any time, in order to meet work unit or University needs.
- 7.4** The Telecommuting Plan section of the Telecommuting Agreement must be completed to document the employee's general work duties and to develop monitoring and supervision plans. Immediate supervisors or managers are to meet regularly with the telecommuter each week. This is required to be a Teams/Zoom call, a phone call, or email. The supervisor is expected to discuss specific work assignments, due dates, productivity expectations, and to review completed work, etc. Employees who are in telecommuting status are expected to take and return calls in a timely manner. Immediate supervisors or managers may also assign new work tasks or review progress status by email, telephone, or other means as needed. Immediate supervisors or managers are expected to monitor work performance and productivity, just as they would in a traditional work environment.
- 7.5** Telecommuters are expected to meet or exceed performance and productivity standards while participating in the Employee Telecommuting Program. Failure to do so shall result in revocation of the telecommuter's participation in the Employee Telecommuting Program.

## **8.0 Program Coordination, Documentation, and Reporting**

The Office of Human Resources is responsible for maintaining records and providing guidance regarding the University's Employee Telecommuting Program. Telecommuting Agreements and related correspondence or documents shall be maintained in the telecommuter's official personnel file (in rare instances, the Division of Academic Affairs may maintain certain personnel files). The Office of Human Resources shall maintain a list of current and former telecommuters, copies of all approved or disapproved requests, and report Employee Telecommuting Program results.

## **9.0 Training**

**9.1** The Telecommuting Program will be implemented by large-scale trainings. Additionally, the following resources are available:

- 9.1.1 MS Teams Training
- 9.1.2 Zoom Training
- 9.1.3 Managers' Toolbox
- 9.1.4 Employees' Toolbox