TELEWORK FACTORS TO CONSIDER

The purpose of this document is to serve as a guide in determining if a position and an employee are good candidates for telework. Not all factors will be applicable for each unit or employee. It is up to the unit management to determine what factors are appropriate for their unit.

The decision to allow an employee to telework must first be determined by an evaluation of the job responsibilities and not the employee. Employee performance considerations are evaluated after deciding whether the job responsibilities are practicable for telework. It is important to consider the nature of the job responsibilities based on a review the job description of the employee in conjunction with the work they actually perform.

Job Responsibility Factors to Consider:

- Clearly defined tasks, deliverables, or levels of service characterize the job functions.
- Work is of a nature where face-to-face interaction is minimal and may be scheduled to permit teleworking.
- A portion of the workload can be performed away from the office without diminishing the quality of customer service.
- The needs of internal and external customers (co-workers, faculty/staff/students, etc.) can be satisfied without adverse impact on the unit.
- The job functions can be performed in a way that appears invisible to customers.
- Absence from the office will not have an adverse impact on the productivity or work quality of other employees.
- The position is a job where work can be measured by output or services rendered and not solely on time spent doing the job.

Employee Performance Factors to Consider:

- The employee PRD evaluations meet or exceeds expectations.
- The employee is effective at working independently for extended periods.
- The employee demonstrates good time management skills by completing assignment on time.
- The employee communicates information fully and timely with leadership, co-workers, support staff, and customers.
- The employee’s demonstrated computer skills are sufficient to work independently at an alternate worksite.
- The employee has limited need for face-to-face contact with co-workers or customers.
**Supervisor Responsibility Factors to Consider:**

- The supervisor is familiar with and comfortable with enforcing the telework agreement, and telework guidelines.
- The supervisor is comfortable and effective with scheduling and enforcing expected work hours.
- The supervisor is comfortable, effective with and able to enforce the setting of goals and follow up for deliverables or quality of service.
- The supervisor has ensured that unit employees are cross-trained so there will be no loss of service when employees are working out of the office.
- The supervisor ensures there is fair and equitable treatment of all employees regardless of telework status.
- The supervisor is proficient in the use of the tools needed for remote supervision e.g. communication tools.
- The supervisor has established communication protocols for teleworkers.
- The supervisor will include the teleworker in office and unit events to preserve the teamwork environment.

**Performance Reviews and Evaluations:**

- PRD evaluation requirements for teleworkers shall not be different from non-teleworkers.
- The supervisor and teleworker will formulate objectives, expected results, and evaluation criteria for the work to be performed.
- The supervisor will monitor and evaluate performance by relying more heavily on work results rather than direct observation.
- The supervisor and teleworker will meet at regular intervals to review the employee’s work performance.
- The supervisor will record and address any work related issues as they arise.

**Communication and Accessibility Factors to Consider:**

- The supervisor and employee will determine how communications between the teleworker and the office and unit will be conducted.
- The supervisor will decide whether to establish scheduled times when the teleworker will be available to co-workers and clients.
- The supervisor and employee will inform all relevant staff of the communications protocols agreed to.
- The supervisor will ensure all relevant staff are made aware of the teleworker’s schedule.
- Teleworkers will be available to their co-workers during the agreed upon regular business hours regardless of work location.
- Teleworker must always answer the phone in a professional manner as if they were in the office.
- Teleworker must remain flexible. They should be available to attend staff meetings and other meeting as required by their supervisors, even if the meetings occur on a telework day.
Telephone and Internet Related Expense Factors to Consider:

- The university will not pay for any telephone service or equipment used by or installed for telework.
- The university will not pay for any fees, equipment, or installations for internet access services.

Work Hours Factors to Consider:

- The supervisor and employee will establish normal work hours, core hours, and the use of vacation and sick leave as part of the telework agreement negotiation.
- Telework will be performed during assigned work hours, up to a specific number of days per week.
- Telework does not change the number of hours an employee is expected to work.
- Any changes in work hours are to be approved in advance by the supervisor, including requests for overtime or leave.
- If the teleworker is unable to work due to illness, the employee must use sick leave and report the absence to their supervisor.
- Employees that telework cannot work a compressed workweek such as “four-tens” or “nine-nines”.

Travel Expense Factors to Consider:

- All University, University System of Maryland, Federal and State laws and policies pertaining to travel must be adhered to.

Emergency Operations Factors to Consider:

- When the university closes for weather or other emergency related reasons, which prevents employees from working in their normal environment, if the teleworker is on a scheduled day for telework, the teleworker is not excused from working.
- In the event of an emergency at the teleworker’s site, the teleworker must notify their supervisor as soon as practical.
- In a case where an emergency such as a power outage or computer downtime prevents the teleworker from accomplishing their work, the teleworker must contact their supervisor who will determine if the teleworker is excused from work, or must report to the office. If excused, the teleworker must use either annual or personal leave.
Home Office Use Factors to Consider:

- The teleworker will not meet with the public or customers in their home location in an official capacity.
- The teleworker is responsible for establishing and maintaining an adequate workspace for providing a work environment free of interruptions and distractions that would affect work performance.
- The employee will be responsible for all costs associated with remodeling, electrical modifications, furniture, or other permanent or temporary improvements to their home office space.
- In general, the University will not reimburse the employee for the purchase of special equipment or software to support telework.
- The teleworker must comply with all University policies on information privacy, security, storage, access, disposal, and any other areas not specifically mentioned in this statement.
- The teleworker’s supervisor has the right to make an on-site visit (with advance notice) as agreed upon in the Telework Agreement.

Equipment and Software Factors to Consider:

- The employee must possess the appropriate equipment to allow the job to be performed away from the office. In general, the University will not provide equipment, but the decision is the discretion of unit management.
- The usage of equipment, software, and other resources provided by the University for telework use is limited to authorized persons and for the express purpose of relating to University business.
- The employee and supervisor must sign an inventory of all University owned equipment provided to the employee for telework. All property owned by the University must be returned when the employee ceases to work for the University or the telework agreement is rescinded.
- The employee is responsible for all maintenance and repairs for personal equipment used to telework.
- No off-site technical support will be provided for University owned equipment.
- Only software owned by the University may be installed on University equipment.
- The employee will protect the integrity of copyrighted materials, adhere to the manufactures licensing agreements, and follow policies, procedures, and practices to the same extent applicable in their regular office environment.
- University owned software will not be duplicated except as allowed per the University Licensing Agreement.
- As a rule, confidential and/or proprietary information must not leave the University premises. In the rare occurrences that confidential information must be accessed by the teleworker, the teleworker will comply with all University policies and utilize all available technology and best practices to ensure the integrity and security of the data and information.
- Teleworkers are expected to maintain the same security procedures at home that they have at the University, including the use of locked file cabinets, locked or encrypted removable media, anti-virus software, and any other appropriate security measures.
The teleworker must immediately report to their supervisor and the Division of Information Technology Security Department any incident or suspected incident of unauthorized access and/or disclosure of University resources, databases, or other information.