



Eastern Kentucky University Policy and Regulation Library

8.3.8

Volume 1, Human Resources
Chapter 3, Work Policies and Procedures
Section 8, Teleworking (Interim)
Approval Authority: Board of Regents
Responsible Executive: Executive Director of Human Resources and Institutional Equity
Responsible Office(s): Human Resources
Effective: September 10, 2020
Issued: June 30, 2020
Next Review Date: September 2023

Teleworking

Statement

Teleworking is the allowance or assignment by the University for an employee to perform their job duties at an off-campus location, including the individual's home, for all or part of the workweek. The purpose of the policy is to allow workplace flexibility where such flexibility would still meet the needs, interests, and mission of the University as the employer and to ensure competitive advantages with other employers. Throughout this policy, the use of the word "teleworking" is intended to be synonymous with the word "telecommuting", the more nationally recognized term. Teleworking is not designed for, or intended to be used as, a substitute for in-home dependent care.

This policy does not apply to incidental or brief time periods that are best managed through the use of leave or other arrangements.

Entities Affected

University Employees

Procedures

General Information

No employee is entitled to or guaranteed the opportunity to telework. The continued successful operations of the University is of the utmost importance; thus, unit supervisors and department heads have the sole discretion to designate positions and/or individuals within their unit or department for an alternate work arrangement. Personal convenience, in-home dependent care, or other reasons of a personal nature are, in general, not adequate grounds for approval of teleworking requests. Therefore, the designation or termination of a position(s) or employee(s) for teleworking is neither grievable nor appealable.

To request consideration for a teleworking assignment, the employee must complete the teleworking agreement form and forward it to their supervisor. The supervisor, in turn, shall consider the operational needs of the unit, the job duties of the employee and whether a telecommuting employee could meet those needs. If approved, the supervisor will work with the employee to establish a clear schedule by which teleworking will take place. Supervisors shall forward the telework form to the Office of Human Resources, where it shall be added to the employee's personnel file. Faculty assigned to fully-online programs, or whose approved course load consists completely of all online courses, are exempt from the form requirement. However, Department chairs, deans may require on-campus presence to fulfil scholarly and service obligations of the faculty. Teleworking employees are not expected to telework on days when the University is closed.

In general, the acceptance of a teleworking assignment is voluntary on the part of the employee. Teleworking must not affect the performance requirements of the position. If approved to telework, employees will be expected to meet and perform all duties and responsibilities of a given position with appropriate levels of productivity and quality of work. Supervisors may require employees to report to a central workplace or video conference as needed for work-related meetings or other events to discuss work progress or other work-related issues.

If working from a home-based location, the employee will be expected to make arrangements which allow the work site to be a productive work environment during the agreed-upon work hours. Teleworking is not a substitute for in-home dependent care. The supervisor will clearly define the performance expectations and assess the employee's performance. If a decline in performance is noted, the arrangement will be cancelled.

Employees working from a location within their home are responsible for maintaining their work environment as a safe and productive work space. Work-related injuries occurring at the employee's home-based work location are subject to Kentucky Worker's Compensation laws. Teleworking locations are considered extensions of the employee's Primary Work Location during the time period outlined in the alternate work arrangement agreement.

The supervisor should consider material and equipment needs when considering an agreement for a teleworking arrangement with the goal of making the arrangement cost-neutral, i.e., no more equipment, supplies or expense should be necessary as a result of the alternate work arrangement than would be needed in the Primary Work Location.

The University will not be responsible for any additional costs associated with teleworking locations such as utilities, home maintenance, etc. The employee will be responsible for any tax implications of a home-based work location. For a home-based work location, the employee will be responsible for providing insurance coverage for equipment, supplies, etc. provided by the employee. The employee will be responsible for compliance with any local zoning ordinances or other restrictions related to maintaining a home-based work site. The University will not be liable for any fines, penalties, taxes or other expenses that may accrue as a result of any violation of applicable restrictions.

Care of the University-owned equipment, supplies, and records is the responsibility of the employee. Employees must protect confidential information. Copies of all records, papers, and

correspondence must be safeguarded by the employee to protect them from unauthorized disclosure, loss, or damage, and for their return to the appropriate University location.

At all times, employees must abide by all University policies, including, but not limited to: conduct, anti-discrimination, and work performance policies.

Special Circumstances

In the event of a University State of Emergency, this policy may be implemented by University administration on a widespread basis. In such cases, employees may be required to work from alternate sites off campus (including their homes) in order to meet the operational needs of the University. The President or President's delegate has authority to determine whether special circumstances exist to implement this Policy on a required and/or more widespread basis. The decision will be communicated to the entire campus community.

Designated employees will have already been notified of their status and arrangements to accomplish their tasks. Designated employees typically include employees in Information Technology, Accounting & Financial Services, Human Resources, Payroll, Facilities Management, Dining Services, Health Services, Public Safety, and other such areas/operations.

The implementation of this provision does not require individual signed teleworking agreements.

Definitions

- **Primary Work Location:** An employee's normal, on-campus work location.
- **University:** Eastern Kentucky University (EKU)
- **University State of Emergency:** A University State of Emergency is in effect when the University President, or President's delegate, declares such a state. The University State of Emergency may be campus specific, restricted to particular areas of any campus, or may be campus- or University-wide, depending on the circumstances at the time. During a University State of Emergency, special procedures will guide the utilization of paid and unpaid leave time in order to continue compensation and benefits throughout the period of emergency. The University State of Emergency shall cease at the earliest possible opportunity.

Responsibilities

- President
 - Declares a University State of Emergency when appropriate.
- Unit Supervisor/Department Head
 - Reviews employee applications to telework.
 - Considers the operational needs of the unit, the job duties of the employee and whether a telecommuting employee could meet those needs.

- Communicates clear expectations to employees approved to telework and maintains consistent communication with the employee to ensure understanding of the expectations.
- May terminate an agreement to telework if a decline in work quality exists or if the operational needs of the University are not met.
- Teleworking Employee
 - Maintain appropriate levels of productivity and quality of work.
 - Communicate with unit supervisor/ department head regarding any issues or questions.
 - Maintain a safe a productive workspace.
 - Make every effort to protect University records, supplies, and equipment.

Violations of the Policy

Failure to comply (i.e., failure to continue to work as directed) may lead to the full range of available University sanctions applicable including suspension, dismissal, or termination.

Interpreting Authority

President’s Council

Policy Adoption Review and Approval

Policy Issued

<u>Date</u>	<u>Entity</u>	<u>Action</u>
September 10, 2020	Board of Regents	Adopted
June 30, 2020	President McFaddin	Approved as Interim