



Policy and Procedures Manual

Application: All Personnel

Section A14: Pandemic Policies

Scope

This is a temporary policy concerning appropriate and immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic. East Central University may establish telework and/or a flex schedule as a condition of employment based on the University's business needs. In the event of a pandemic or similar emergency, the University may institute "social distancing" telework policies. In other words, employees may be directed to stay away from their traditional on-campus workspace. Those employees should be directed to work from home when and where possible. In these emergency circumstances, the University may waive the requirement for completing a Telecommuting Agreement form, and Telecommuting and/or a Flex Schedule may be deemed to be a condition of employment for the duration of the emergency.

Telework and/or a Flex Schedule is not an entitlement, is not a University-wide benefit, and may be discontinued at any time at the sole discretion of the University President. As a matter of practice, telework and/or a flex schedule shall be used only in circumstances that are unusual, urgent, emergency, or unique, based on the totality of the circumstances, and as judged by the President alone. Telework and/or flex schedule is not to be used as a recruitment or retention incentive by supervisors, or offered as such.

This policy applies to the whole university workforce, including all branch campuses and other sites. It applies to all full-time and part-time employees, exempt and non-exempt employees, full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, student employees (both work study and regular work), and all temporary employees.

Policy

Telework is a workstation alternative that is appropriate for some employees but not all employees and all positions. No university employee is entitled to or guaranteed the opportunity to telework. Certain categories of positions are ineligible for telework. The work conducted by employees under telework may be the same as the work otherwise conducted at the university workstation, or may fall under "other duties as assigned" and therefore may be different than the type of work assigned at the university workstation, at the discretion of each individual supervisor. An employee's classification, compensation, and benefits will not change if the employee is assigned to telework or flex schedule.

In telework workstations, all university policies that would have applied at the university workstation continue to apply in full effect, including policies related to data security and information protection or privacy.

The total number of hours that telework employees are expected to work will not change, regardless of work location. The university also expects the same level of productivity from telework employees that is expected from employees at the university workplace. Telework employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to record all hours worked in a manner designated

by the university the same as they would otherwise. Non-exempt employees who work in excess of 40 hours are eligible for compensatory time in the way they would normally be. When accrued personal leave is taken while conducting telework, it must be approved by a supervisor in the same manner as if the leave was taken while working at the university workstation.

Liability

The university assumes no responsibility for injuries occurring in the employee's alternate work location outside the agreed upon work hours or for injuries that occur during working hours but do not arise out of and in the course of employment. The university also assumes no liability for damages to an employee's real or personal property resulting from participation in the telecommuting program unless it arises out of the course of employment during working hours.

Workers' compensation coverage is limited to designated work areas in employees' homes or alternate work locations. Employees must provide a description of their telework station to their employer. Employees agree to practice the same safety habits and follow the same safety regulations they would use in the university and to maintain safe conditions in their alternate work locations. Employees who need disability accommodations to work in a telework environment must request such accommodations and shall not assume the employer already is aware of such needs. Employees must follow normal procedures for reporting illness or injury. Due to this liability, employees conducting telework for more than 40 workdays consecutively, may be required to provide evidence of the workstation's safety and suitability such as a photograph or permit an inspection of their telework station to their supervisor.

Equipment and Materials

Normally, the university will provide equipment and materials needed by employees to effectively perform their duties; however, the university will not duplicate resources between the central workplace and the alternate work location. Telework employees may use specific university-owned equipment only for legitimate university purposes. Telework employees are responsible for protecting university-owned equipment from theft, damage and unauthorized use. The university will maintain, service and repair university-owned equipment used in the normal course of employment. The university will stipulate who is responsible for transporting and installing equipment, and for returning it to the central workplace for repairs or service. Telework employees may also use their own equipment, provided the use of such equipment has been approved by their supervisor. When employees are authorized to use their own equipment, the university is not responsible for the cost, repair or service of the employee's personal equipment, unless otherwise expressly related to the creation of work product for the university.

Best Practices

Employees should expect to be contacted by their supervisor at least once per workday for an interactive conversation (not by correspondence). Address concerns – whenever they arise, during the telework arrangement, be sure to make any concerns known quickly, so that they don't magnify and interfere with the telecommuting arrangement unnecessarily.

Be Proactive. To the extent possible, attempt to foresee the needs of your unit, department, or division. Do not wait for instruction unless absolutely necessary to perform your work. When supervisors are assigning tasking lists, attempt to fill each day with meaningful work that provides value to the university. Because this is an

unusual situation, there may be unavoidable issues that arise, and everyone must be prepared to do work that is substantially different than that for which they were originally hired, in some cases.

If your connectivity changes, or the safety of your workstation changes, or any other matter arises that interrupts your ability to conduct telework, inform your supervisor immediately. Supervisors are encouraged to be liberal in the granting of personal leave, annual leave, and sick leave during this pandemic - even if such requests must continue to follow University policies.