



## Southeastern Louisiana University Telecommuting Policy

### Document History

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Responsible Office: Human Resources

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### Policy Statement

Telecommuting is the concept of working from home or some other location other than campus on a full or part-time basis. Telecommuting is not an employee benefit. Rather, it is an alternative method of meeting the needs of the University which has the right to refuse to make telecommuting available to an employee and to terminate a telecommuting arrangement at any time. Employees may be required to telecommute if it is necessary to ensure the viable operation of University functions. Telecommuting assignments will generally be of a temporary or special nature. The approval of a position to telecommute does not mean that any employee who later may fill that same position would be authorized to work at alternate work sites. The employee's compensation, benefits, work status and work responsibilities will not change due to participation in the telecommuting program. The amount of time the employee is expected to work per day or pay period will not change as a result of participation in the telecommuting program. The employee's at-home work hours will conform to a schedule agreed upon by the employee and his or her supervisor and approved by the relevant division head. If such a schedule has not been agreed upon, the employee's work hours will be assumed to be the same as before the employee began telecommuting. The employee's time and attendance will be recorded as if performing official duties on campus.

### Purpose of Policy

This Policy provides guidelines and parameters for telecommuting for classified and unclassified staff whose normal workplace is located on campus or an off-campus location of the University.

### Applicability

This policy applies to all classified and unclassified staff. Graduate Assistants and Student Workers are generally not eligible to telecommute but an exception may be requested based on extenuating circumstances.

### Policy Procedure

The employee's direct supervisor up through the relevant division head must approve in advance any telecommuting arrangements. In the event that overtime is anticipated, this must be discussed and approved in advance with the supervisor, just as any overtime scheduling would normally have to be approved. Telecommuting employees must obtain supervisor approval before using leave in accordance with established University policies. The telecommuting form can be found at <http://www.southeastern.edu/admin/hr/forms/index.html>

### Inclement Weather or Other Emergencies

During the threat of inclement weather or other potential emergency situations, the University may decide to transition to remote work or institute a University closure. The following applies in each of the two scenarios.

#### University transition to Remote Work

Employees will work remotely during this time, which will be effective based on the start and end times published by the University. In this situation, individual telecommuting agreements will not be required. Special leave will be granted to employees that by nature of their job are unable to telecommute. Employees working in remote status would be

expected to continue working since they are telecommuting and would not receive Special Leave unless it can be documented that the employee was impacted by the emergency in such a way that they were unable to fulfill their work assignments. Essential personnel, as determined by the supervisor, may be required to report to campus to work during this time.

#### University Closure

During a University closure, employees are not expected to work. This includes those employees that are approved to telecommute. Special Leave will be granted in these situations and will be effective based on the start and end times published by the University. Essential personnel, as determined by the supervisor, may be required to report to campus to work during this time.

Graduate assistants and student workers are not eligible for special leave.

#### Eligibility

All telecommuters must sign or acknowledge a Telecommuting Agreement, except in emergency situations as indicated above.

#### Equipment/Tools

The telecommuting employee may use personal equipment for telecommuting purposes. In such cases, employee will be responsible for maintenance and insurance for the equipment. The University may provide specific tools/equipment for the employee to perform his/her current duties. This may include computer hardware, computer software, phone lines, email, voice-mail, connectivity to host applications and other applicable equipment as deemed necessary. The home department will log and checkout the appropriate equipment to the employee. It is the employee's responsibility to return the equipment to the University. The use of equipment, software, data supplies and furniture when provided by the University for use at the remote work location is limited to authorized persons and for purposes relating to University business. The University will provide for repairs to University equipment. When the employee uses her/his own equipment, the employee is responsible for maintenance and repair of equipment. The telecommuting employee will comply with the University Computer Use Policy and all data security and responsibility requirements.

#### Workspace

The employee shall designate a workspace within the remote work location for placement and installation of equipment to be used while telecommuting. The employee shall maintain this workspace in a safe condition, free from hazards and other dangers to the employee and equipment. Approval of the Telecommuting Agreement constitutes approval of the remote work location described in the Telecommuting Agreement. Any University materials taken home should be kept in the designated work area at home and not be made accessible to others. The University has the right to make on-site visits (with 48 hours advance notice) to the remote work location for purposes of determining that the site is safe and free from hazards, and to maintain, repair, inspect, or retrieve University-owned equipment, software, data or supplies.

#### Schedule

The employee shall work the normal University schedule unless otherwise indicated on the Telecommuting Agreement. The employee is expected to be available during normal business hours.

#### Office Supplies

Office supplies will be provided by the University as needed. Reimbursement may be made for out-of-pocket expenses if prior approval is received from the employees' supervisor and division head.

#### Worker's Compensation and Liability

The employee's home workspace will be considered an extension of the University's workspace. Therefore, during work hours and while performing work functions in the designated work area of the home, telecommuters are covered by worker's compensation. Any work-related accident or illness that occurs in the home workspace during the employee's

working hours must be reported to the supervisor and Human Resources as soon as possible. The University assumes no liability for injuries occurring the employee's home workspace outside the agreed-upon work hours. The University is not liable for loss, destruction or injury that may occur in or to the employee's home. This includes family members, visitors or others that may become injured within or around the employee's home.

#### Tax Implications

It will be the employee's responsibility to address any income tax implications of maintaining a home office area. The University will not provide tax guidance nor will the University assume any additional tax liabilities. Employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss income tax implications.

#### Communication

Employees must be available by phone and email during agreed upon assigned hours. Employees will be available for staff meetings, and other meetings deemed necessary by management during normal work hours or assigned hours, if different.

#### Employee Responsibilities

Telecommuting employees remain obligated to comply with all the University rules, practices, and instructions. Likewise, telecommuting employees will be subject to routine performance evaluations and may be subject to disciplinary procedures as provided for in the University policy. If unable to work due to illness, utility outage or vacation then appropriate leave must be taken by employee.