**Number:** HR-318

**Policy Number (if applicable):**

**Office of Primary Responsibility:** Human Resources

**Effective Date:** January 5, 2024

**Review Date:** 01/24/2024

**Title of Procedure:** Telework Procedure

**Purpose:**

In order to maximize operational efficiency, Hocking College may permit an employee to work remotely from a designated alternative work location. Telework is a management option and not a right or benefit that an employee of Hocking College can expect or demand. Telework is authorized by the College on a case-by-case basis based upon the operational needs of the College; during disasters, emergency situations or long-term pandemic circumstance; or any other reason that would benefit the College to have an employee perform their assigned job responsibilities at an alternative work location for a specific period of time.

This procedure does not exclude the option for employees to work from home or other remote locations on a short-term (single occurrence) basis as approved by the College.

The College may choose to limit teleworking to employees in certain classifications, certain positions, or certain circumstances.

**Guidelines**

1. Definitions
	1. Employees: Staff members who are employed on a regular, annual renewable appointment (including grant-funded) who meet the eligibility requirements and are approved to do telework.
	2. Telework: Telework is a work arrangement in which some or all the work is performed at an off-campus work site. Telework is an alternative method of meeting the operational and functional needs of the College and other employees.
	3. Work Location: Location where telework will be performed must be reachable by phone, email, and other video conferencing solutions during all scheduled telework hours. The location shall be reasonably quiet and free of distractions or any noises inconsistent with the office environment. The employee is responsible for ensuring the alternative work location has adequate internet capabilities and security necessary to perform the assigned work tasks efficiently and confidentially.
	4. Telework Schedule: Telework Agreement may apply to a hybrid or fully remote schedule. In either case, the employee will have an established, predictable schedule. The established schedule may be changed upon agreement between the employee and the supervisor and the College.
2. Eligibility Steps
	1. All telework requests must be approved in advance by the employee’s supervisor and the designated Vice President, based on College approved criteria.
	2. Employees that are interested in telework should request the Telework Feasibility Assessment from their supervisor to begin the process. Review for approve or denial of telework request may take up to 3-4 weeks.
	3. Upon approval of the Vice President, the President will have the final review and approval of all telework requests.
	4. For an employee to be eligible to submit a telework request, all of the following criteria must be met:
		1. The duties to be completed via telework must be pre-defined, task based and able to be performed from an alternative work location in a cost-effective manner.
		2. Employees must be able to function throughout the scheduled workday without encumbrances, including the loss of internet services, or non-work-related appointments just as if they were on campus.
		3. Employees must work during scheduled work hours.
		4. The employee shall not have active discipline and shall not be the current subject of an administrative or internal investigation.
3. Terms and Conditions of Telework
	1. A teleworker’s duties, obligations, responsibilities, and conditions of employment with the College will be unaffected by teleworking.
	2. A teleworker shall not perform any duties associated with outside employment during scheduled working hours unless the employee uses appropriate accrued leave. This prohibition includes the use of any College equipment, software, online computer systems, or supplies to perform any duties associated with outside employment.
	3. During scheduled working hours, teleworkers shall utilize accrued leave when providing direct care for dependents (adult and minors).
	4. An employee who is approved for telework shall perform their duties at the designated alternative work location during all scheduled work hours.
	5. Employees are expected to maintain a regular work schedule. If these hours are not performed, the Telework Agreement may be revoked, and the employee may be subject to discipline.
	6. Employees are expected to submit daily work product reports to their supervisor.
	7. The work location must maintain an environment noise level similar to an office.
	8. The College maintains the right to require the employee to change the telework schedule permanently and/or temporarily based on operational needs with as much advanced notice as possible.
	9. Reporting, equipment, and alternative work location guidelines may be outlined in the employee’s teleworking agreement.
	10. Permission to telework is revocable at any time, at the discretion of the supervisor and the appropriate Cabinet member. The revocation of permission to telework shall not be considered a form of discipline.
	11. Telework is covered under the State of Ohio workers’ compensation law for injuries occurring in the course of and arising out of the performance of official duties at the main office or alternate work location. An employee authorized to telework, or someone acting on the employee’s behalf shall, before the end of the shift, notify the employee’s supervisor of any accident or injury that occurs at the employee’s normal report-in location or alternate work location. The supervisor and the employee are required to follow applicable policies regarding the reporting of injuries for employees injured while at work. Other than for the injuries discussed above in this section of the procedure, the College is not liable for any accidents or injuries resulting from the teleworker’s failure to comply with all safety and health rules and regulations or any violation of this procedure.
	12. The College is not liable for damages to the teleworker’s personal or real property while the teleworker is working at the teleworker’s normal report-in location or alternate work location, except to the extent adjudicated to be liable under Ohio law. Employees should consider telework-related issues that may impact or be impacted by an applicable insurance on their dwelling if that is to be the site of the alternate work location. Employees who do not have any type of homeowner’s or renter’s insurance should evaluate whether or not such insurance (at the employee’s expense) might be appropriate. Employees who have homeowner’s or renter’s insurance should investigate if their current coverage is appropriate for teleworking.
	13. Employees must comply with all public records obligations. Records retention schedules, public records law, and all College policies relating to records apply to telework.
	14. At all relevant times, a teleworker must comply with the existing policies and procedures of the College. Employees must adhere to the established standards and protocol relating to information protection and security. Please see the Remote Use of Hocking College Resources Procedure. Questions pertaining to these standards should be directed to the IT department. A teleworker who fails to comply with these policies and/or a teleworking agreement may be disciplined, up to and including termination.
	15. The Telework Agreement is intended to capture all of the specifics of the telework relationship. The Telework Agreement should be used, and extra pages may be added as necessary to set forth additional information. See Telework Agreement for additional information. The Telework Agreement should be kept on file locally within both the employee’s department and the Office of Human Resources. If any amendments to the Agreement are agreed to by the employee, the supervisor and College, those amendments should be set forth in writing and kept on file with the Telework Agreement. The Telework Agreement will be reviewed and reevaluated every six months for the first year. Beyond the first year, the Telework Agreement review scheduled will be determined by the supervisor.
	16. The Telework Agreement can be terminated by either the supervisor or the employee or the College.
		1. A supervisor may determine it is no longer in the best interest of the College to continue the telework arrangement. For example, a supervisor might deem that an employee’s tasks are no longer suitable for telework; find that work product, productivity, or accountability standards are not being met; or a short-term need or other premise that gave rise to the telework arrangement may no longer exist. When a supervisor determines to terminate the Telework Agreement, they should provide thirty days’ notice unless extenuating circumstances make such notice impracticable.
		2. An employee may also seek to end the telework arrangement by notifying the supervisor that they wish to discontinue teleworking. The employee should give as much notice as reasonably necessary, preferably a minimum of 30 days, to facilitate regular reporting to the work location. For example, if the teleworking employee and another employee have a shared workspace that each of them uses on non-teleworking days, the supervisor may need time to locate another workspace for the other employee. Generally, notice of intent to discontinue telework should be accepted by the supervisor and notification should be made to the respective division Vice President and the Office of Human Resources.
	17. Liability
		1. The College assumes no liability for injuries occurring in the employee’s alternate work location outside of work hours.
		2. The College accepts no responsibility whatsoever for the safety, security or suitability of any alternative work site. The College also accepts no responsibility for the personal property of any employee.
		3. In accordance with Ohio and local tax regulations, we must withhold taxes from each location in which you work. It is ultimately your responsibility to ensure your actual tax withholding and required payments are made in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The college recommends that you contact your personal tax advisor or accountant for advice related to your specific circumstances.
4. Equipment and Supplies
	1. Employee must use only college-issued computer for teleworking.
	2. All equipment, furniture, software, supplies, or other materials purchased and maintained by the employer are to be used only by the teleworker and only for the employer’s business in accordance with College policies.
	3. Any items purchased by the employer remain the property of the employer must be returned upon the request of the College. Items must be returned in good condition, subject to normal wear and tear.
	4. The teleworker will be responsible for the cost of maintenance, repair, and operation of personal equipment or services not provided by the College, including secure internet access. The College assumes no liability in regard to damage or loss of property owned by the employee at the alternate work location.
	5. To support positive customer service and efficient team communication, employees are expected to forward their extension to their cell phone during all of their scheduled telework hours.
	6. When working in a home or other location, employees are expected to maintain a professional appearance and a virtual office presence which includes a camera for participating in any virtual meeting. An adequately appointed home or other office is the preferred alternate work location from where an employee may regularly telework. In situations where employees are unable to work out of a home or other office, employees are expected to take all necessary steps to ensure compliance with the Remote Use of Hocking College Resources Procedure.
	7. In the event that the College experiences an outage that interrupts the ability for teleworking employees to access the network at no fault of the employee, the supervisor will communicate alternative expectations for work completion and alternative arrangements may require an employee to complete assignments on site.
5. Timekeeping
	1. Non-exempt employees shall maintain accurate records that set forth actual time spent doing College work. All employees scheduled to telework must comply with the College leave procedures in event of sick, vacation, or other applicable leave.
	2. Telework employees should report their inability to work as they would on a non-telework day. If over a reasonable period of time a pattern of usage of unscheduled absences in connection with telework days becomes noticeable and the supervisor suspects abuse, the supervisor should address the situation with the employee. If the situation is not resolved to the supervisor’s satisfaction, the telework agreement can be revoked and the employe may be subject to discipline.
	3. An employee must have prior approval from their supervisor to work any overtime or to change their schedule when teleworking, in accordance with College policies.
	4. For accountability purposes, employees should be able to provide evidence of work completed within their operational deadlines and standards. All work performed while in teleworking status is subject to review at the discretion of the Cabinet Member or President.
6. Contact

All questions can be directed to the Director of Human Resources.