

**Approving a Telecommuting Arrangement**

Vice Presidents/Provost may authorize telecommuting arrangements for employees under their direction that are in the best interests of the university, including authorizing the use of equipment and/or services owned or paid for by the university as well as telecommunications. This authority may be delegated to deans and directors, except they may not approve their own telecommuting arrangements.

Procedures should be developed for each vice-presidential area with respect to the approval of telecommuting arrangements. Such procedures must be in compliance with all applicable laws and university regulations, policies, and procedures. At a minimum, eligibility for telecommuting should be based on an evaluation of suitability of the job and likelihood of success with such an arrangement. Because of the potential implication of wage and hours laws and the monitoring, restrictions, and record keeping associated with hours worked by non-exempt employees, telecommuting agreements are typically limited to exempt (Administration) employees. Additional guidance for developing procedures and approving telecommuting arrangements can be provided by the Division of Human Resources ("DHR"). DHR must approve telecommuting agreements involving non-exempt employees.

**Engaging in a Telecommuting Arrangement**

Each employee entering into a telecommuting arrangement, for telecommuting on other than an incidental or occasional basis or for which the university will provide equipment and/or services, will have a written agreement with the university. The Telecommuting Agreement form should address the terms and conditions of the telecommuting arrangement, including, but not limited to, duration, work hours, location, description of equipment and/or services the university and/or employee will provide, expenses to be paid by the university and/or employee, and how work will be evaluated.

Employees working at a telecommuting site are obligated to comply with all applicable laws and university regulations, policies, and procedures.

The designated telecommuting site is to be maintained in a safe condition, free from any hazards to the employee and any danger to university property located at the site, to the extent possible. However, the university is not liable for damages to the employee's property resulting from the telecommuting arrangement.

While working at the telecommuting site, it is the employee's responsibility to properly safeguard documents/records from loss, damage, or unauthorized access and to prevent unauthorized access to any sensitive or confidential information and data via computer or other telecommunications.

Employees, while engaged in work at the telecommuting site, are covered by workers' compensation. As such, employees must authorize appropriate officials access to the telecommuting site to perform safety inspections and/or investigate a workers' compensation claim.

When the designated telecommuting site is the home, employees should schedule work during a time when interruptions can be kept to a minimum. Employees should not be responsible for care-giving for children, parents, or others during their scheduled hours of work.

The university will not be responsible for operating, maintenance, or other incidental costs associated with use of the employee's home as the designated telecommuting site.

Employees who have been approved for a telecommuting arrangement are responsible for determining any income tax implications of maintaining a home office. The university will not provide any tax guidance nor assume any additional tax liabilities.

A telecommuting agreement may be terminated in writing at any time, either by the employee or by management, when it has been determined that it is not in the university's best interest for the telecommuting arrangement to continue. Also, failure of an employee to comply with the provisions and conditions of the agreement may result in termination of the agreement and telecommuting arrangement and/or appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Equipment and/or Services Owned or Paid for by the University**

Generally, equipment and/or services owned or paid for by the university will not be provided for an employee when the telecommuting arrangement is authorized solely for the convenience of the employee.

When telecommuting arrangements warrant the expenditure of university funds for the purchase of equipment or services or the reimbursement of expenses, those expenditures are to be approved prior to being incurred. Approval of such expenditures must be documented in the written agreement addressed above.

Typically, maintenance and service of university-owned equipment used at the telecommuting site will be the responsibility of the university.

When a telecommuting arrangement ends, it is the responsibility of the employee's department to account for any university-owned equipment used at the telecommuting site and to ensure services are terminated that are no longer required.

Provision and use of equipment owned and/or services paid for by the university for a telecommuting arrangement must be in compliance with established procedures as follows:

### **Requesting/Purchasing Equipment and/or Services**

- Telecommunications equipment and/or services - Telephones and related equipment and services are requested through Information Technology by way of a properly executed Request for Communications Services.
- Other equipment and/or services - Computers, printers, fax machines, scanners, computer software, service/maintenance agreements, and other required equipment and services are requested through Purchasing and Property Services. See FIND IT for a link to COMPASS for detailed procedures.

### **Authorizing Use of Equipment at a Telecommuting Site**

Use of any university-owned equipment at a designated telecommuting site must be authorized by way of a properly executed Off-Campus Property Permit submitted to Purchasing and Property Services.

### **Enabling Remote Computer Access**

Employees may be authorized to access their workplace computer if they have appropriate Internet capability at the designated telecommuting site.