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**Subject: Alternate Work Site and Telework Policy**

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## **1. Purpose**

The Code of Virginia requires each state agency to establish a telework and alternate site work policy under which eligible classified/university staff and AP faculty may telecommute, for all or part of their workweek, in order to promote general work efficiencies. Telework may also enable departments to respond to certain employee needs, such as the economics of commuting. The following policy defines the requirements for establishing a telework arrangement for salaried classified/university staff and AP faculty. Implementation guidelines and the telework online agreement form can be found on the [Hokie Wellness website \(http://www.hokiewellness.hr.vt.edu/Occupational/FlexibleWorkOptions.aspx\)](http://www.hokiewellness.hr.vt.edu/Occupational/FlexibleWorkOptions.aspx).

## **2. Policy**

Telework is defined as allowing employees to work at an alternate location. Employees perform essentially the same work that they would in the central work place in accordance with their same performance expectations and other agreed upon terms. Telework arrangements may be established for long-term or short-term periods.

Although many of the university’s programs, operations, and services are normally performed on university premises and require the presence of employees at the central work place, department heads have the authority to designate positions eligible for telework or alternate work arrangements. While alternate work arrangements may meet the needs of both the department and the employee, management has the sole discretion to determine when this is appropriate. In certain cases a telework arrangement could be considered a reasonable accommodation for an employee with a disability covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Contact Human Resources for more information.

Approvals for telework should be made on a case-by-case basis. The approval of a position for telework does not mean that any employee who later may fill that same position would be authorized to work at alternate work sites. The position should be periodically re-evaluated to determine if telework continues to best meet the department's needs. If telework is expected as a condition of employment, the job announcement should include a statement describing this requirement.

## **2.1 Telework Agreement**

Work performed in alternate work locations is considered official university business; therefore, departments may establish specific conditions that apply to employees engaged in telework. Prior to beginning a telework arrangement, a formal telework agreement must be executed by both parties. The online agreement form is accessible at the [Hokie Wellness website](#).

### **2.1.1 Exceptions to Formal Telework Agreement**

It is an accepted practice for teaching and research faculty to carry out their work with varied schedules on campus and at alternate locations, including the delivery of distance-learning courses. Normally, a formal telework agreement will not be required for T/R faculty unless the normal work assignment is consistently at an alternate location (i.e. not the standard assigned office).

On occasion, a department may also determine that employees may need to work at alternate worksites for a few days to accommodate unusual circumstances, such as a brief office closing for renovations or relocation. In such cases, the formal telework agreement is not required, but should be documented for department files by memorandum or email, specifying work expectations and duration.

### **2.1.2 Termination of the Telework Agreement**

Management reserves the right to end the telework arrangement at any time. Employees should be given reasonable notice of the termination of the agreement. Employees may be required to return to the central work place if deemed as having performance or work conduct problems, or if management feels it is in the best interest of the organization and/or the employee to end the arrangement, either permanently or temporarily.

## **2.2 General Expectations and Conditions**

There are a variety of issues which supervisor and employee should discuss before implementing a telework agreement. Review the Telework Implementation Guidelines [on the Hokie Wellness website](#), or contact Human Resources for assistance.

An employee's classification, compensation and benefits will not change upon implementation of telework.

### **2.2.1 Hours of Work**

The amount of time the employee is expected to work will not change due to participation in a telework agreement. Hours of work should remain the same unless specified in the agreement. The employee agrees to apply her/himself to work during work hours. The procedures for approval of overtime and the approval and use of leave should also be specified.

Nonexempt employees are responsible for reporting all hours worked each week. Failure to report time, like failure to obtain approval for overtime, can result in the termination of the telework arrangement or other disciplinary action.

### **2.2.2 Telework Objective**

The opportunity to telework is not intended to be used in place of leave, nor is telework designed as a substitute for child or adult care. If children or adults in need of care are in the home during the employee's at-home working hours, another individual should be present to provide the primary care.

### **2.2.3 Compliance with Policies**

Employees must agree to comply with university rules, policies, practices and instructions and understand that violation of such may result in the termination of the telework arrangement and/or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

### **2.2.4 Security of Agency Information and Records**

Employees are responsible for the security of all documents and records in their possession while teleworking and must adhere to the university's security procedures to ensure confidentiality and security of data. Any use of restricted-access information or materials at an alternate work location must be approved and described in the telework agreement, along with procedures for removing and returning those materials. See [Policy 7025, Safeguarding Nonpublic Customer Information](#) ([www.policies.vt.edu/7025.pdf](http://www.policies.vt.edu/7025.pdf)) and [Policy 1060, Policy on Social Security Numbers](#) ([www.policies.vt.edu/1060.pdf](http://www.policies.vt.edu/1060.pdf)).

### **2.2.5 Authorized Closing**

Employees who telework will be subject to the same policies as other employees.

### **2.2.6 Equipment and Materials**

Employees may be authorized to use their own equipment. Where agreements specify, the department may provide equipment and materials needed by employees to effectively perform their duties; however, they are not required to do so.

Employees must agree to use equipment provided by the department and supplies for business purposes only and to notify the supervisor immediately of equipment malfunction in order to schedule repair or replacement. All university equipment located at an employee's premises is fully insured. Any damage or theft of the equipment should immediately be reported to the supervisor. University-owned equipment used in the normal course of employment will be maintained and repaired by the department. When employees are authorized to use their own equipment, the department will not assume responsibility for costs of repairs, maintenance, or service.

### **2.2.7 Other Costs**

Departments may choose to pay for leased telephone lines or install and provide basic telephone service in employee's alternate work location, may provide cell phones for business use, or may reimburse employees for business-related long distance calls made from their personal telephones. However, the university is not responsible for operating costs (such as electric bills), home maintenance, or other costs incurred by employees in the use of their homes as alternate work locations.

### **2.2.8 Liability**

The university assumes no responsibility for injuries occurring in the employee's alternate work location outside the agreed upon work hours, or for liability damages to employee's real or personal property resulting from participation in the telework program. General liability insurance protecting the actions of all Virginia Tech agents is provided 365 days per year subject to the provisions of the insurance policy in effect at the time.

Workers' compensation coverage is limited to designated work areas in employees' homes or alternate work locations. Employees agree to practice the same safety habits they would use in the university and to maintain safe

conditions in their alternate work locations. Employees must follow normal procedures for reporting illness or injury.

### **2.2.9 Safety Confirmation**

As they deem necessary, departments may wish to include additional conditions in their work agreements that require employees to:

- maintain safe work conditions and practice appropriate safety habits,
- confirm that the work location is free from hazards, and
- notify their supervisors immediately of any injury incurred working.

## **3. Procedures**

The department must develop a telework agreement that incorporates the employee's conditions of employment. The online agreement form and guidelines for evaluating and implementing telework agreements are provided at the [Hokie Wellness](#) website. Human Resources can be contacted for further assistance.

The executed telework agreement for salaried classified/university staff and AP faculty shall be maintained by Human Resources in accordance with the Virginia Public Records Act. A copy of the telework agreement, and any subsequent changes to it, should be kept in the employee's departmental file. The termination of such an agreement should be in writing, with a copy sent to Human Resources.

## **4. Definitions**

Telework – A work arrangement in which supervisors direct or permit employees to perform their usual job duties away from their central workplace for at least one day per week or 32 hours per month and in accordance with the telework agreement.

Alternate work location – Approved work sites other than the employee's central workplace where official university business is performed. Such locations may include, but are not limited to, employees' homes and satellite offices.

Central workplace – the location where the employee normally performs her/his duties.

Work agreement – The written agreement between the employer and employee that details the terms and conditions of an employee's work away from his or her central workplace.

## **5. References**

Policy 1060, Policy on Social Security Numbers  
<http://www.policies.vt.edu/1060.pdf>

Policy 4075: Accommodations of Persons with Disabilities  
<http://www.policies.vt.edu/4075.pdf>

Policy 4300: Hours of Work  
<http://www.policies.vt.edu/4300.pdf>

Policy 4305: Authorized Closings  
<http://www.policies.vt.edu/4305.pdf>

Policy 4415: Workers' Compensation

<http://www.policies.vt.edu/4415.pdf>

Policy 7025, Safeguarding Nonpublic Customer Information

<http://www.policies.vt.edu/7025.pdf>

Code of Virginia § 2.2-203.1

<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+2.2-203.1>

Code of Virginia § 2.2-2817.1

<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+2.2-2817.1>

Department of Human Resource Management, Policy 1.60, Standards of Conduct

[http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/docs/default-source/hrpolicy/pol1\\_60.pdf?sfvrsn=2](http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/docs/default-source/hrpolicy/pol1_60.pdf?sfvrsn=2)

Implementation Guidelines

<http://www.hokiewellness.hr.vt.edu/Portals/0/TeleImplentGuide.pdf>

Telework Agreement (Online Agreement Form)

<http://www.hokiewellness.hr.vt.edu/Occupational/FlexibleWorkOptions.aspx>

## **6. Approval and Revisions**

Approved April 12, 1996, by Associate Vice President for Personnel and Administrative Services, Ann Spencer.

- Revision 1

Section 2.13, Hours of Work, was revised to include responsibilities of employees and the implications to employees if they fail to obtain approval for overtime. Also mentioned is a reminder to supervisors of employee responsibilities in record keeping.

Other minor clarifications made.

Approved September 4, 1999, by Assistant Vice President of Personnel Services, Linda Woodard.

October 10, 2001: Technical corrections to update policy links and name change for the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Human Resource Management (formerly Department of Personnel and Training).

July 18, 2008: Technical corrections to update policy links and name change for Human Resources Department (formerly Personnel Services).

- Revision 2

Modified policy to add additional information, changed the paragraph on authorized closing to allow employees under a telework arrangement to be treated the same as those in the central workplace, reworded "telecommuting" to "telework" clarified paragraph on security of agency information and records, updated URLs, changed paragraph on telework agreement to indicate that original form remains in employee file, with a copy forwarded to HR, eliminated the safety checklist to mirror the updated DHRM policy at [http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/hrpolicy/web/pol1\\_61.pdf](http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/hrpolicy/web/pol1_61.pdf).

Approved December 15, 2008 by Sherwood G. Wilson, Vice President for Administrative Services.

- Revision 3

Technical corrections to update website links.

Approved February 19, 2010 by Vice President for Administrative Services, Sherwood G. Wilson.

- Revision 4

Technical corrections to update website links.

Section 2.2.9 – Changed section to reflect rewording of DHRM policy.

Approved March 29, 2011 by Vice President for Administrative Services, Sherwood G. Wilson.

- Revision 5

Technical corrections to reflect ability to complete agreements online and to update references and links.

Approved February 18, 2013 by Vice President for Administrative Services, Sherwood G. Wilson.

- Revision 6

Technical corrections to update website links.

Approved June 22, 2015 by Vice President for Administration, Sherwood G. Wilson.