



University of West Georgia Telework Guidelines

The University of West Georgia provides a variety of flexible working arrangements, at the discretion of the department, to enable employees to serve students and the University community; meet University and departmental goals; and balance personal and professional responsibilities. Participating in a flexible working arrangement is a privilege and not a right.

Policy Statement:

Teleworking arrangements are optional work arrangements that may be discontinued at any time at the sole discretion of the manager. After consultation with the employee, managers determine the employee's work schedule and the employee must maintain the agreed upon schedule. Telework agreements shall be limited to periods of no more than 12 months, and after review, may be extended annually in 12-month increments.

Teleworking is limited to regular employees who have completed the provisional employment period. One limited exception is that any regular employee seeking accommodation under the American Disabilities Act may be considered for teleworking if it provides a means of reasonable accommodation for the employee's needs. Such requests shall be made through the unit's HR Representative using the appropriate procedures for requesting reasonable accommodation and must be approved by the appropriate unit head or his / her designee.

Policy Terms:

Alternate Workplace: A work site other than the employee's customary work site. The alternate workplace may include the employee's home.

Core Operating Hours: Each department may establish operating hours according to the needs of the University. All full-time employees are expected to work a minimum of forty hours in a workweek. Core hours are the time period inside operating hours where regular professional, administrative, and staff employees are normally expected to be present, generally these coincide with the times during which university offices are open.

Eligible Employees: An employee, in an eligible position, who has satisfactorily met performance standards in the view of their supervisor. Eligible employees must have successfully completed their provisional period of employment.

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Eligible Position: A position having measurable, results-oriented standards of performance that is structured to be performed during a work period that may vary from Core Operating Hours. For the purpose of remote or telework, the position must be structured to perform independently and with minimal support. The eligibility of a position may change depending upon the circumstances.

Equipment Loan Agreement Form: Document that must be completed and approved by the supervisor and/or department head prior to the removal of University property from campus.

Occasional Teleworker: An employee who teleworks, with the prior approval of their supervisor, on an infrequent basis.

Telework: The performance of normal work duties at a location away from the conventional or main office. This off-site location is most often the employee's home, but can also be a satellite office or, if traveling, a virtual office. Telecommuting is a privilege and not a right. All teleworkers must have a signed Teleworking Agreement.

Teleworking Agreement: The signed document that outlines the understanding between the department and the employee regarding the employee's teleworking arrangement. The agreement must be reviewed and may be renewed jointly with an employee's annual performance review. The supervisor may revoke the agreement at any time. The agreement may be revised for any reason including, but not limited to, where there is a change in supervisor, job responsibilities, work circumstances, or employee performance.

Procedures:

Telework is not suitable for all employees and/or positions and may only be implemented by a manager based on specific criteria that is applied consistently throughout the department.

Managers who approve telework for employees shall be responsible for the following:

- Establishing employee performance expectations and monitoring the same;
- Identifying Eligible Positions;
- Determining whether requesting employees are Eligible Employees for the purpose of teleworking;
- Determining if equipment must be provided to the employee to use at home;
- Establishing how the teleworker will maintain regular contact with the office, work colleagues, students and the university community;

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- Determining how sensitive information will be handled in the telework environment;
- Ensuring that all telework practices are consistent with state, Board of Regents, and university policies and procedures.
- Establishing work hours and ensuring that, if the Eligible Employee is non-exempt, the Eligible Employee is not working more than 40 hours in any week without prior written approval from the supervisor; and
- Ensuring the Teleworking Agreement is signed and filed with the Office of Human Resources.

Work Hours

Each employee who teleworks shall develop and maintain a work schedule with their supervisor and any changes to said schedule must be approved by the supervisor beforehand. The teleworking employee must maintain contact with the office during their scheduled work hours. The teleworking employee is required to retrieve voice messages and/or forward their office phone to ensure timely response. Out of office messages are not appropriate for teleworking employees who are not taking approved leave.

Child and Dependent Care

Teleworking is not a substitute for child or dependent care. The teleworker shall continue to make arrangements for child or dependent care in the same manner as if the teleworker was working at the primary workplace.

Alternate Workplace

The teleworking employee shall inform their supervisor of the location of the Alternate Workplace. Alternate Workplaces not located in the State of Georgia require approval of the appropriate Vice President, General Counsel, and/or Chief of Staff. The hiring manager will coordinate with payroll on next steps if approval is granted.

Employee Participation

The opportunity to telework is not an employee entitlement. An employee's participation is purely voluntary. The employee, supervisor, or manager may terminate the Teleworking Agreement at any time with or without cause.

Retention of Agreement Forms

The Office of Human Resources (OHR) should retain the Telework Agreement until superseded or obsolete. All Telework Agreements must be submitted **electronically** to OHR to hr@westga.edu. The agreement(s) and related documents should be maintained by OHR for two years after the agreement has concluded.