Workplace Flexibility Program Manual

Human Resources

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PART I – FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES

A. Purpose

The University supports the use of various work scheduling arrangements that are designed to meet the operating and customer service needs of a department. The availability of flexible work schedules is not intended to change the department's regular hours of operation, nor does it alter the responsibility or diminish the authority of department heads to establish and adjust work schedules. Instead, this type of flexible scheduling is intended to bolster staff morale and retention while maintaining and enhancing a department's service delivery and meeting the departmental, divisional, and University goals, mission, and objectives.

This Section's purpose is to provide information on the University's flex time and compressed workweeks, how employees participate, and resources for participating employees and their supervisors.

B. Flex Time

Flex time is an arrangement that may include a consistent daily schedule with individualized starting and ending times that are the same throughout the week or a varying daily schedule that starts or ends at different times each day. The varying daily schedule may include a consistent eight (8) hour day throughout the week or a varying daily schedule of more or less than eight (8) hours. For full-time employees, the total weekly hours for both consistent and varying schedules must be at least 40 for the workweek (Monday through Friday).

C. Compressed Workweek

A compressed workweek is a 40-hour workweek completed in four (4) days or some mutually agreed upon variation, at least 40 hours per week. (Day off is determined by the supervisor and department head).

Compressed workweek schedules include the following examples:
- Four ten (10) hour days with no work on the fifth day.
- A four and one-half (4 ½) day workweek where 40 hours are worked in four and one-half days (4 ½).

For the employee, a compressed workweek includes the following advantages:
- Reduced commuting time and cost.
- Increased blocks of time off without reduction in compensation or benefits.
- Enhanced flexibility to meet personal needs while working full-time.

For the department, a compressed workweek includes the following advantages:

- Extension of daily work hours without increasing the budget.

- Access to and retention of qualified employees.

- Increase in productivity through better use of off-peak working hours and equipment.

- Reduction in absenteeism.

D. Program Description

Flexible work schedules are agreed-upon work hours that differ from the standard practice. They are options that enable employees to continue to meet the business needs of the departments while allowing the opportunity to complete the work in an alternative manner. The possibility to participate in a flexible work schedule is provided to allow employees to better balance competing demands on their time both personally and professionally.

The business needs of the division, department, and University will continue to be the primary focus and must guide the various arrangements as well as the number of employees who will be eligible for these flexible programs.

E. Eligibility

Employees who are interested in participating in a flexible work schedule are responsible for developing a proposal and presenting it to their supervisor for consideration and a determination of whether the proposal is feasible.

Flexible work schedules may be considered for employees whose current performance evaluation indicates that the employee is performing his/her job adequately at "Above" standards or above, and whose attendance records do not show patterns of absences or tardiness. If a current (within 12 months) performance evaluation is not on file, one must be completed before a flexible work schedule proposal may be considered. Flexible work schedules are not an employee entitlement. They may not be appropriate or available for every position or employee. Arrangements may vary depending on the position and department needs.

Decisions on proposals are determined on a case-by-case basis and are based upon appropriate supervisor and department head approval. This guidebook and the proposal worksheet are provided to assist employees in identifying and considering all of the variables surrounding flexible work schedules.

If employees have questions regarding this packet or the preparation of a flexible work schedule proposal, they should contact their supervisor for assistance.

F. Flexible Work Schedule Options

The following identifies options that are currently available to employees through the flexible work

schedule program. Other proposals may be considered on a case by case basis.

Flex time may include one of the following options/variations:
- Variable starting and ending times (flex time);
- Split work days;
- The variable work schedule for a fixed duration

Flex Time

Flex time is an alternate arrangement of employee work hours (other than 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., five (5) days per week) resulting in a schedule acceptable to both employee and supervisor and may include the following variations:
- Employees work a predetermined number of hours per day/week.
- Employees' starting and ending times may vary on a day to day basis.
- Employees' work days may be split. (Example: Employee works 7 a.m. to 10 a.m., is off work from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and works from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., for a total of 8 hours worked).
- Employees' variable work schedule is for a fixed duration.

For the employee, flex time may include the following advantages:
- Greater flexibility to meet personal needs with no reduction in compensation or benefits.
- Option to work/commute during non-peak hours.

For the department, flex time may include the following advantages:
- Increase coverage hours.
- Maximize limited workspace and equipment.
- Reduce employee absenteeism.
- Retain qualified trained employees.

G. Considerations

Employees evaluating whether a flexible work schedule is a feasible option need to consider the following issues:

- Performance and Attendance - An employee's current performance evaluation must be at "Above" standards or above, and attendance records must not show a pattern of absences or tardiness.
- How/Why - An employee must show how the arrangement will meet the business needs of the department.
- What is the impact on work volume, peak periods, and/or overtime in the employee's workgroup?
- How flexible can an employee be if business needs change?
- Clarify accountabilities. Who are the customers? How will they be affected?

H. Flexible Work Schedule Standard Practice

Work schedules once identified, will be maintained for a maximum of six (6) months. Upon the expiration of the proposed time period, the employee will return to the original work schedule unless there is a request to extend the flexible work schedule. Flexible work schedules may be extended for six (6) months at a time with no limit on the number of extensions requested. As stated, flexible work schedules are not an employee entitlement and may be modified or discontinued by the appropriate supervisory and department head.

Possible reasons to modify or discontinue a flexible work schedule include, but are not limited to, the following issues:
- Business needs or coverage needs change.
- Negative customer feedback occurs.
- Performance or attendance deteriorates.
- Departmental staff shortages occur.
- Holidays.
- Use of leave.

Efforts will be made by the supervisor to reach a resolution that is fair, equitable, and consistent among employees.

I. Process for Requesting Flexible Work Schedules

Employees interested in requesting a flexible work schedule are responsible for developing a proposal and describing in detail how they would perform their work. The proposal is then submitted to the supervisor for consideration.

A meeting is held between the supervisor and the employee to discuss the criteria of the proposal and to determine whether the flexible work schedule is workable within the confines of business necessity.

J. How to Write a Proposal

A standard proposal form is included as **Addendum A**. It may be used, or employees may create and submit their proposal. The following elements should be included in proposals:

- Explain the business rationale or benefit associated with the proposal.
- Describe how the job will be completed.
- Explain how regular communications with co-workers, customers, and the manager will be handled.
- Agree to be flexible and willing to make necessary changes to ensure the success of the schedule.
- Consider alternative proposals and explain how customer needs arising during the employee's absence will be handled (backup, buddy system, cell phone).

K. Program Planning

The following points will assist the employee and the supervisor in planning and managing a successful flexible work schedule:

- Flexible work schedules shall not adversely affect the services that are provided to students, other operating units, co-workers, or the public. The quantity, quality, and timeliness of the employee's work must be enhanced or maintained.
- Adequate supervisory contact and/or employee accountability must be maintained.
- Flexible work schedules <u>must not</u> cause or contribute to the need for additional staff or for existing staff to work additional hours or add costs to UWF.
- Flexible work schedules do not have to be made uniformly available to all positions in a department. Not every function is conducive to such scheduling because of service requirements. This should not deter supervisors from approving or establishing flexible work schedules for positions where such scheduling is possible and/or would enhance services. Where multiple employees request a flexible work schedule, a method for the equitable allowance of flex time or compressed workweek will be developed by the department.
- Employees are not required to participate if they choose not to do so.
- No work schedule shall be implemented that results in a full-time employee working fewer than 40 hours during the workweek or does not provide the employee **with at least a 30-minute unpaid meal period each day.**
- Flexible work schedules should be agreed upon in advance by the supervisor and the employee, be in writing and remain in effect until a change is made to the written agreement.
- A department that has established a flexible work schedule may discontinue, temporarily suspend, and/or alter the arrangement if work needs change or service is impaired. An employee may also request a change in schedule.
- Employees may be required to suspend their flexible schedules to attend required departmental meetings or events.
- Schedule changes initiated by the supervisor require advance notice, if possible.
- Safety issues should be a consideration. Employees may not be scheduled to work alone or in isolated areas.
- Staff members on flexible work schedules earn the same rate of pay and are eligible for the same benefit programs as if they were working on a traditional schedule.
- During weeks where paid holidays occur, the flexible work schedule may need to be adjusted so that the eight (8) hours of holiday pay does not increase or decrease the total hours scheduled in the workweek or result in overtime.
- Employees are discouraged from making non-work-related commitments associated with the new flexible work schedule in case the new schedule is discontinued.
- A flexible schedule should not be used to cover absences due to a serious medical condition or a Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) absence.

L. Departmental Responsibilities

Whether employees work flex time or a compressed workweek, some responsibilities affect the department as a whole. These responsibilities, for the department, include the following issues:

- Complete calendars should be prepared and posted that show all leave requested, compressed workweeks, and flex time scheduling.
- The schedule should be reviewed carefully by employees and supervisors for planning purposes and coordination of supervision.
- Circumstances requiring alternate supervisor coverage should be clearly communicated to all employees involved. This communication needs to occur before implementation.

PART II – REMOTE WORK

A. Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide guidelines for both supervisors and employees interested in the University Remote Work Program. Remote work is intended to create flexible conditions that will enhance the capability of both the employee and the University to meet/exceed the stated goals and objectives more effectively.

B. Remote Work

Remote work is a workplace initiative to increase employee productivity and job satisfaction. It is a program that allows employees to work from an alternate worksite (i.e., at home) other than the official UWF office or workspace for a specified portion of the workweek or the entire week. Many considerations go into making remote work a success. Technology has made the work-at-home concept a more attractive alternative by increasing the ability to communicate and share information with the office. The right combination of position, employee, and supervisor results in a remote work program that benefits everyone.

In limited circumstances, remote work could involve special projects or work for another department. Temporary arrangements for a remote work schedule of two weeks or less may be handled informally by the department. A formal Remote Work Agreement (**Addendum B**) is required in Human Resources for a schedule of more than two weeks.

C. Remote Work Advantages and Disadvantages

Successful remote work benefits the employee, employer, and the community. Remote work employees find their stress level decreased, job satisfaction and productivity increased, the cost of clothing, food, and transportation lowered and commuting time and frustration decreased. Employers benefit from remote work by having decreased absenteeism, reduced use of sick leave, lower turnover, a more dedicated and productive employee, and more continuous use of work time through fewer distractions in the home office and better use of time in the official UWF office or workspace. Through decreased peak-hour congestion, air pollution, and fuel consumption, communities also benefit when organizations allow remote work.

Remote work also has some disadvantages. Start-up and operating costs need to be factored into the implementation of a remote work program. Some employees and supervisors find it difficult to change their work style. Isolation from co-workers, less visibility, and lack of support services may be of concern to the employee.

D. Program Description

The Remote Work Program's objective is to increase employee productivity, job satisfaction, and provide efficiencies to the employee and the University in the following ways:
- Allowing employees to work remotely away from the distractions that may be present at their official UWF office or workspace and have more control of their work environment and flexible hours.
- Generating significant savings in time and money for the employee as well as for the University. Remote work employees may benefit from cost savings for travel, clothing, dry cleaning, food, and other costs related to commuting to and from the official UWF office or workspace. Remote work may also result in savings for the University by reducing the costs for utilities and the need for additional office/parking space, etc. Remote work employees may share office/workspace with another remote work employee at the University.

The program allows remote work employees to work at home without having to physically report to their official UWF office or workspace where the supervisor is present. Remote work employees are required to make themselves available to handle calls from the office and to come to the office for meetings while they are assigned to work remotely. Remote work is not a substitute for childcare. Childcare arrangements must be the same as if an employee is working in the official UWF office or workspace. A remote work schedule should not be used to cover absences due to a serious medical condition or a Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) absence.

Employees who are approved to work remotely must complete a Remote Worker Agreement (see Addendum B). This document lists the remote work employee's responsibilities and their supervisors' responsibilities, establishes working hours, and contains a home office evaluation checklist.

E. Liabilities

UWF will not be liable for damages to an employee's property that result from participation in the remote work program or any other costs, such as utilities and home maintenance, associated with the use of the employee's residence as a remote work location.

UWF will not incur any expenditure to assist remote work employees who are subject to an inquiry, investigation, or claim by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or Federal, State or local governmental entity.

Employees are covered by Workers' Compensation while performing official UWF duties.

F. Participating in Remote Work

Employee participation in the program is voluntary. Employees may terminate participation in the program at any time.

The University or department head has the right to end arrangements for working remotely at their sole discretion with a fourteen (14) day prior written notification. If the employee chooses not to return on the expected date, this will be considered a voluntary resignation and will be treated as such under University standard policies and procedures.

A Remote Work Program employee's salary, job responsibilities, and benefits will be the same as if they were not working remotely. Also, employees approved for the program agree to comply with all existing position requirements of their regular onsite office setting as well as any newly established requirements in the future. University rules/regulations and procedures regarding discipline, annual leave, sick leave, working overtime, etc., will continue to be enforced. All remote work employees are required to obtain their supervisor's approval prior to working overtime.

The departmental supervisor will be responsible for assigning specific work hours to each employee working remotely. The number of working hours will be monitored regularly.

It will be the employee's responsibility to determine any income tax implications of maintaining a home office area or traveling or maintaining residence outside of Florida. The University will not provide tax guidance nor will the University assume any additional tax liabilities on an employee's behalf. Employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss these matters in greater depth.

G. Employee Eligibility

Remote work does not suit every employee or every position. Eligibility to participate in the Remote Work Program is conditional upon agreement from the employee that he or she will be able to establish a proper working environment and have the skills necessary to perform the tasks assigned independently. Employees are selected based on having a position that is appropriate for remote work and employees must meet the following criteria:

- Has successfully completed the position orientation year and the most recent performance evaluation indicates an overall rating that is equal to or greater than "Above" standards.
- Has proven good work habits and time management skills.
- Must be able to adhere to assigned work hours.
- Is well organized, self-motivated, and can function independently of direct supervision.
- Can tolerate isolation (works well alone) and prefers the home environment.
- Have an appropriate home worksite that includes privacy without distractions.
- Employment history must reflect no chronic recorded lateness and/or absenteeism problems.
- Must not be in any formal phase of the progressive disciplinary process.
- Must be reliable, maintain confidentiality and work well independently.
- Must attend mandatory and other requested meetings on campus, including training sessions, workshops, etc.

- Will take the responsibility for notifying the supervisor or designated person, in advance, when requesting annual leave or sick leave, during the time scheduled to work at home.
- Will return University equipment and files when work from home is terminated by either the employee or the University.

H. Remote Work Costs

The University Remote Work Program is intended to be a workable arrangement that should be beneficial to the remote work employee and the University. Remote work employees are encouraged to use their personal property items (furniture, printers, office supplies, etc., if available and needed for remote work) to help keep departmental operating costs at a minimum (see Sections M, N, and O for more details on equipment recommendations). Use of personal computers is dependent on the employee's type of work and access levels to University systems. Certain job tasks should not be undertaken with personal computers.

More information regarding the use of personal computers:
Use of personal computers for University work is **prohibited** for certain work activities. Please refer to the [ITS Security Guidelines for Enterprise-wide (and emergency) Remote Access](#) for more information. When in doubt, please submit an Information Technology Request ticket via the UWF Service Desks (found in MyUWF).

Departments may cover the expenses of certain items for the establishment of a remote work employee's home office/workspace if such items are deemed essential for the effective performance of the remote work employee's responsibilities and are of the benefit of the University, Division, and the Department. However, the criteria for approval for the funding of these items may vary from case-to-case and rests with the department head. Specifically, departments will consider covering the expense of an item if the primary beneficiary in the use of the item is the University and not the remote work employee. Likewise, the department may not cover the expense of an item if the expense is deemed not in the best interest of UWF. The department may also elect to cover only a portion of the expense for items. Thus, departments and employees who are interested in participating in the remote work program are encouraged to discuss all possible costs that may be associated with remote work and reach a mutual understanding of how these costs will be funded.

Items for which expenses are **not covered** by the Department for the establishment of a home office/workspace include, but are not limited to, the following items:
- Lamps and other room lighting devices
- Fans and other room cooling devices
- Electrical outlets/conversions
- Telephone jacks/additional telephone lines
- The cost for the added use of utilities that result from remote work
- Door/cabinet locks
- Desk/work tables and chairs
- Answering machines

I. Approval Process for Remote Work Participants

The appropriate supervisors and department heads shall make approval decisions for employees' participation in the Remote Work Program.

Employees who are interested in participating in the program must complete the Employee Remote Work Survey (see Addendum D). The supervisor and department head shall review the survey, along with the position and departmental requirements, and notify those employees who are approved to participate.

The supervisor must communicate with related departmental personnel how the remote work program will work before implementing the program within the department.

Note: The steps in implementing the Remote Work Program are detailed in Addendum E.

The identification of positions that are appropriate for remote work should include, among other considerations, that the remote work employee in such positions be able to complete the following actions:
- Successfully meet job requirements while working away from the official UWF office or workspace.
- Have predictable contact with other employees and clients. The remote work employee's job requirement for face-to-face contact with clients/personnel can be planned and scheduled in the official UWF office or workspace.
- Identify and account for work that is performed outside the official UWF office or workspace, with beginning and ending points and/or time frames.
- Accomplish work inside or outside the official UWF office or workspace. The remote work employee's job is portable and not tied to any non-portable equipment or resources.
- Includes positions or duties specific to a particular position that typically are project-oriented and may have limited or no required day-to-day direct supervisory responsibilities.

The identification of positions that may not be appropriate for remote work should include, among other considerations, which employees are unable to remote work because of the following reasons:
- All the typical work performed in the position requires the constant presence of the employee at the official UWF office or workspace.
- All the typical work performed in the position requires the facilities, tools, and equipment, etc., that are only available to the employee at the UWF official office or workspace.

J. Work Assignment, Supervision, Onsite Meetings, and Performance Standards

The supervisor will decide what tasks will be assigned to the employee. Work assignments for remote work employees will be handled in the same manner as they are for non-remote work employees.

There may be times employees will be asked to come to the office on a day when they were scheduled to work from home. Some of these instances include departmental staff meetings, training sessions, etc. Employees are required to attend these events on the University campus.

For each employee participating in the Remote Work Program, the supervisor will be tasked to clearly define performance requirements and standards that are measurable and results-oriented. The supervisor will regularly monitor the employee's performance per departmental and University policy. If an employee's behavior or performance is not satisfactory, the supervisor has the right to either terminate the program or recommend disciplinary actions as appropriate per University policy.

K. Checklist/Guide for Remote Work Employees

Being a successful remote work employee requires working with less structure and more freedom in completing work responsibilities. Remote work is not as simple as staying at home and working. It requires careful planning and discipline.

Get Organized
Develop good work habits from the moment remote work begins.

Select the Location
Identify a safe location in the home office as a workspace. There is no need to devote an entire room for the home office. However, the workstation location must be away from distractions. Do not work on the couch in front of a television. That is not conducive to good work habits nor is it an effective location.

Set a Routine
Set a work schedule for the remote work days and stick to it. The Remote Work Proposal includes a place for defining work hours. Begin and end work at the same time on remote work days.

Replace the Ritual of Getting Ready for Work
As a remote work employee, the traditional office rituals of morning conversations or coffee no longer exist. Even the drive to work that symbolizes the beginning of the workday is missing. Set up new rituals for remote work days.

Make a Daily "To-Do" List
Develop a list of goals and assignments for the days you remote work. At the end of the day, go over the list and see how much has been accomplished. It is helpful to start the list a few days before remote work begins. This helps to plan for all the resources needed to support activities at home. Schedule work. Remember, there may not be access to a fax machine or copier in the home office. Plan work accordingly.

Have an End of Day Ritual
It is a good practice to have a ritual in place to mark the end of the workday. Be creative in deciding what to do. Some signals that can show the end of the workday include the following methods:
- Lock the computer screen and turn off the lights.
- Close the door.
- Walk around the block.

- Pick up children from school or daycare.

Managing the Work
As a remote work employee, it is necessary to manage work efficiently. Remote work employees are responsible for keeping informed and continuing a high level of productivity.

Maintain Contact with the Official UWF Office
Schedule times to contact the appropriate supervisor during remote work days. Call the office for messages, have the office phone forwarded to home, and return phone calls.

Answering Machine
If the remote work employee does not have access to voice mail in the home, it is recommended that an answering machine be used while working at home.

Adhere to Deadlines
Follow the same rules for deadlines as if working in the official UWF office or workspace. Do not miss deadlines. If mailing reports to the official UWF office or workspace, they should be sent so they arrive the day they are due or earlier. If sending work electronically via a computer, it should also arrive on time.

Keep the Supervisor Informed
Keep the supervisor informed about the status of the programs being worked on, progress, and any difficulty encountered.

Attend Departmental Gatherings
Always attend departmental gatherings and group meetings.

Set Expectations with Family Members, Friends, and Neighbors
Make arrangements with the people at home so that there are not too many interruptions.

What Interruptions are Acceptable?
Determine what questions, favors, and needs warrant interruption. Develop ground rules for families to follow about interruptions. Some remote work employees have the family help determine the rules to ensure participation in the process.

Office Supplies
Develop an understanding with family members about how office materials are used. Inform them that all office supplies provided by UWF such as UWF computer workstations/laptops are for business work only and must never be shared. The workspace should be off-limits to or limited use by other members in the household.

Remote Work is Not a Replacement for Child Care
Do not assume that because the remote work employee is home, that childcare can be provided. Remote work may allow more flexibility in accommodating childcare needs. However, it is not a replacement for childcare. Childcare arrangements must be the same as if working in the official UWF office or workspace.

L. Checklist/Guide for Supervisors of Remote Work Employees

Managing employees from a remote work location is not a new concept. To ensure the success of your remote work program, be aware of the following tips and traps:

- Close supervision is not always good supervision. Good supervision may be achieved without being close in proximity.
- Manage by objectives and results instead of observation.
- It is acceptable to drop out of the program. The remote work arrangement must be mutually supportive.
- This program brings great flexibility to your work environment. Take advantage of that flexibility.

Help Remote Work Employees Organize Their Work
Understand the time frame involved in completing tasks and the resources required to see projects through to completion. By using planning skills as a supervisor, the supervisor can be successful in effectively distributing work among employees and feel confident that employees are completing the assigned tasks.

Work Assignments
Set up a means of communicating the expected end product as well as the due date. Discuss the expected quality and other criteria that might affect the successful completion of tasks the employees will be working on. Communicate to remote work employees what must be done, when it must be done, and who is to do it. The communication may take the form of a phone call, a weekly meeting, or email. Use the means that is most comfortable. Spend time communicating clearly and concisely the expectations of remote work employees.

Timetables
Work with employees to develop reasonable and timely goals. The timetable should list tasks for completion and the time by which those tasks should be completed.

Review Work Status
Set up intermediate checkpoints to determine the progress of the tasks the employees are performing. The assessment may be a designated point during the program, upon completion of certain tasks, or regularly, such as weekly on Monday.

Coach and Develop Employees' Capabilities
There is limited time to spend with remote work employees to reinforce the behavior. Reinforce positive behavior. Bring unsatisfactory performance to the employee's attention immediately. Develop employee capabilities to correct deficiencies. Use the communication tools available to provide employees with timely feedback, via voicemail, electronic mail, telephone call, or a face-to-face conversation.

Organizational Tools and Techniques in Managing Remote Work Employees
When managing remote work employees, the focus should not be on how the employee accomplishes the task, but whether the task is accomplished in a timely, complete, and satisfactory manner. The following tips may be of help in managing the products that employees produce:

- Prepare an itemized list of what is expected from the employee. This list can be on a weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis. Establish objectives in a format that is easily administered. Include the remote work employee in the process of establishing objectives. This enables the employee to make a valuable contribution concerning the accomplishment of the expectations.
- Establish a matrix or graph that clearly defines what the remote work employee must accomplish for satisfactory and excellent performance evaluations. Be clear about the expectations of the employee.
- Complete the required Remote Worker Agreement (Addendum B). This document is a contract between the supervisor and department head and the remote work employee, agreeing upon expectations. The agreement is signed by the employee, supervisor, and department head.
- Track the time spent and the results of projects. If weekly goals are established, schedule a meeting each week to review the remote work employee's accomplishments.
- Establish a tracking mechanism for original copies of critical department files that are used at the remote work location. The tracking mechanism should document the content of the files and track dates that the files are taken from and returned to the official office.
- Remote work employees who need to make long distance calls for business from a land telephone line at the home office must have supervisory approval before making the calls. A Direct Pay Request may be submitted to Controller's Office for reimbursement.
- All departments must keep current records of the locations from which an employee is remote working. Such records must include the city, county, and state. Remote work employees should update their location with the department within five business days after changing the city, county and/or state from which they are working.

The Non-Remote Worker in a Remote Work Environment
Plan the implementation of your group's remote work program. As participants in the remote work program are identified, it is necessary to work carefully with the non-remote work employees to avoid negativity in the workplace.
- Prepare, in advance, the necessary documentation to determine why a position and the employee was chosen to be eligible for remote work. Some non-remote work employees may have been excluded from participating in the program because of job performance. Consider a plan to help these employees raise their job performance rating to a level that would allow them to participate in the program. It is up to the supervisor to communicate information to employees.
- Understand the individual parts that make the team successful to guarantee continued success.
- Establish mutual strategies to support the non-remote work employees and the remote work employees and to ensure equal distribution of work between the two groups.

Communication
Effective communication between the remote work employee and the supervisor is one of the most important aspects of a successful remote work arrangement. Supervisors and remote work employees both have a responsibility to assure effective, consistent communication. Following are some issues to consider regarding effective communication during remote work:
- Provide guidelines for contacting the remote work employee when an issue arises that

requires immediate action.
- Establish guidelines for handling the telephone calls of remote work employees such as having them forward official UWF office phones to home phones. During business hours when the remote work employee is working at home, the telephone should be answered the same way it is answered in the official UWF office or workspace. The remote work employee should also establish voice mail in the home office that is identical to his/her official UWF office voice mail.
- Ensure appropriate communication/messages are given to callers. If the official UWF office or workspace does receive calls for the remote work employee, other employees should not tell callers that the remote work employee is working from home but should instead say, "Johnny Jones is unavailable. I'll be happy to have him return your call as soon as he is available." Then, contact the remote work employee to return the call.
- Establish guidelines for the remote work employee to call the official UWF office at regular intervals for unforeseen issues or assignments.
- Consider keeping a log of any incoming calls answered by the support staff for the remote work employee. This will assist in determining any workloads generated as a result of the remote work program. The log will also provide documentation showing when the call came into the official UWF office, and when it was given to the remote work employee.

As a supervisor, always keep in mind that good communication skills are the backbone of a successful remote work program. Use the following tips:
- Speak with the remote work employee often.
- Use effective listening skills when exchanging information with remote work employees. Include the remote work employee in office activities even when they are not physically present.
- Maintain appropriate guidance and direction of remote work employees through frequent communication.
- Keep the avenue open for reciprocal communication from remote work employees to help avoid their possible feelings of isolation.
- Bring remote work employees back into the official UWF office or workspace frequently. As a manager, assign core days for remote work employees to be in the office. The core days are good opportunities for staff meetings.
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A remote work program is extremely flexible. Take advantage of that flexibility, and it can aid in achieving success in remote work efforts.

Social Network
It helps when non-remote work employees understand that the social interaction within the official UWF office or workspace will change with the start of remote work. Co-workers with whom they share breaks and lunchtimes may no longer be available.

Visibility
A key concern for remote work employees is that they will have less visibility in the official UWF office or workspace. Points to help the supervisor in maintaining high visibility for any employee follow below:
- Monitor employee performance.
- Encourage employees to set higher goals.

- Assign more complex projects to aid in developing employee skills.
- Communicate the employee's achievements to others.

Contingency Plans
Set up a strategy to guide the workgroup through "what if" events that may affect the group as a result of remote work. Encourage the remote work employee and non-remote work employee to participate in this process.

What Happens if Remote Work is NOT Working?
Not everyone who attempts remote work is successful. While the employee remote work survey process attempts to identify successful remote work employees, it is not a guarantee that all selected remote work employees will be happy or successful with remote work. Some reasons why the remote work employee may need to end participation in the program include the following issues:
- Uncontrollable distractions,
- Neighbors and family do not understand that the employee is at home working and unavailable for other activities,
- Being at home 24 hours a day becomes unacceptable,
- Employee's productivity or work quality has declined since participating in the remote work program,
- Desire or need to be around people, and/or
- An employee discovers the need for social interaction is a critical factor in work life.

Each supervisor is aware that there are many good reasons why employees may have to end their participation in remote work. Help employees understand their value to the organization. Bring the employee back into the official UWF office or workspace as quickly as possible. Use this as a developmental opportunity to coach the employee in an area of weakness to create an area of strength.

M. Equipment, Office Supplies and Use of University Property

Communication technology provides an efficient means to communicate with the remote work employee. Some of the current technologies include the following equipment or processes:
- Videoconferencing
- Telephone / Voice Mail / Electronic Mail
- Instant Messaging / Chat
- Cellular Telephones
- Fax Machines
- Document Scanners

A system should be established with remote work employees to check electronic mail, chat and voice mail frequently for messages. The telephone, fax machine, electronic mail, and voice mail provide an electronic link between the remote work employee and the supervisor.

Computers
The employee and supervisor should discuss whether the employee will use a University laptop or a computer already in the employee's home. UWF is not responsible for the employee's computing

equipment used during remote work. Employees should store documents and files using [Google Drive for Work](). Google Drive for Work can be also [installed on a personal device](). Visit [Data Compliance and Restrictions by Service]() to learn about the types of data that can be stored in UWF Google Drive.

The following safeguards must be followed:

- Maintain appropriate physical security for computers and computing devices storing or transmitting confidential information. This is especially important for portable devices such as laptops as well as portable storage devices such as USB drives, CDs, memory cards, etc.
- Require proper identification and authentication to access the device to ensure authorized use only.
- A computer firewall must be enabled at all times.
- Keep the operating system current, with the latest security patches installed. Use the auto-update feature that downloads updates when available.

The following safeguards must be used on a UWF Managed workstation:

- Enable full hard drive data encryption to mitigate data breaches.
- University installed anti-malware/virus endpoint protection, and regular scanning of all local drives enabled.
- Do not circumvent security settings to modify the operating system or applications.
- Only officially approved applications are allowed to be installed.
- Do not install or attempt to install applications that do not support the official University business.
- Connect to the University of West Florida internal network if necessary using Remote Desktop (preferred) or VPN (restricted to certain roles) prior to performing your job responsibilities on your officially assigned computer.

The following safeguards must be followed when using a personal computer:

- Maintain up to date antivirus software with real-time protection and perform regular scans

Listed are some additional minimum recommendations if a home wireless network is being used:

- Change the default administrator password for the wireless router. The password should be difficult to guess (twenty characters or more, a mixture of letters, numbers, and symbols).
- Turn on the highest level of encryption supported by your wireless router and the devices
- connecting to it (WPA2 at a minimum). The encryption keys should be long and difficult to guess.
- Change the default SSID and disable SSID broadcasting.
- The wireless router's built-in firewall should be enabled.
- Your department ITS staff is responsible for authorizing access to software applications under their control and must ensure their department's employees are suitably

documented, tracked, trained, and only granted access appropriate to their role. Also, ITS is responsible for reviewing and revising such access as necessary (e.g., when employees have been transferred or terminated).

Equipment

The University of West Florida's ability to provide equipment determines what technologies are available to support remote work. When the need and technology have been identified, department heads may determine what equipment is provided. With supervisory approval, employees may check out equipment from the University to use during remote work and must follow procedures described in the Property Guide (https://confluence.uwf.edu/display/BPL/Introduction+to+the+Property+Guide) in the Business Process Library of Confluence, including completing and submitting the Equipment Check-Out Form. Supervisors must maintain the Department Equipment Check-Out Log. More information on these procedures may be obtained from the Controller's Office Property division.

The University may provide the necessary equipment such as computers, printers, communication tools, and software needed to perform the employee's work assignments. All of these items remain the property of the University of West Florida and must be returned to the University upon request. In case of extended illness, resignation or termination, or if the program ends, it is the employee's responsibility to return them personally. The equipment must be protected against damage and unauthorized use. UWF owned equipment will be serviced and maintained by UWF at UWF. Equipment provided by the employee will be at no cost to UWF and will be maintained by the employee.

Office Supplies

The University, as needed, will provide remote work employees with office supplies. Employee's out-of-pocket expenses for other supplies will not be reimbursed unless prior written approval of the supervisor has been received.

N. The Home Office

Employees who are approved by their department for remote work are responsible to ensure, at their own expense, that their remote work worksite is ergonomically appropriate. Most employees can create an adequate temporary work area in their home. However, for remote work to work, there is a need to provide a home office space with control over noise, interruptions, work equipment, and materials.

Many professionals whose work is task-oriented may work at home for the duration of a specific project. Those workers may continue informal practices such as taking a laptop computer home and preparing work on a dining table. These employees are not a part of the remote work program. *The practice of occasionally working at home in a less formal work setting in the home is already an established informal work practice.* The occasional remote work employee is someone who infrequently may find it beneficial to work from home for no more than two days a week during a specific project. This may be arranged with the supervisor.

A remote work employee works from a home office regularly. The remote work employee enters into a formal arrangement by qualifying for the program and signing the Remote Work Proposal. When

remote work is an established, the home office needs to be more formal.

Employees who are considering remote work should consider the following criteria related to organizing the home office:
- Adequate space to work,
- Access to telephone or electrical outlets,
- Security and safety of work materials,
- Separation from on-going domestic activities, and
- Temperature, sound, and light control of workspace.

Space Considerations
A major requirement for the remote work employee is the availability of enough dedicated space in the home to support work-related activities. There should be similar personal space as exists in the official UWF office or workspace. In some cases, this will involve dedicating a room or part of one to the job-related activity. A spare room may be closed off from the rest of the house, or part of a room may be reserved for job-related activity. The work setting should be large enough to accommodate files, shelves, and, if needed, lockable storage in addition to any computer equipment. Remote work employees need space equipped with the necessary electrical and telephone outlets.

Telephone and Electrical Outlets
Expenses to prepare a home for remote work may include the installation of grounded outlets, a telephone jack, or an additional telephone line. These expenses are not covered by UWF and are the remote work employee's responsibility. Remote work employees should have a surge protection device between the electrical outlet and computer to protect equipment from faulty electrical fluctuations. No UWF owned computer equipment may be used in the home office without a surge protection device. Installation of a separate line may be required for jobs involving a high volume of telephone calls to or from the home office. Such equipment and installation will be at the expense of the remote work employee.

Telephones
If the remote work employee's role is customer facing then the employee will arrange for UWF business telephone calls to be received in real-time at their remote location. Any expenses in this regard are the responsibility of the remote work employee. Voice mail should also be used at the remote work location including a voice mail message identical to that used at the official UWF office or workspace. [More information on how to handle UWF business telephone calls](#).

Security and Safety
In homes where a spare room is converted for work at home, employees must provide adequate protection for files, materials, and equipment. If work is performed in a shared space, employees must store all work items in a protected place.

Records
Work performed at the remote work location is the official UWF business and is considered a public record. All records, papers, and correspondence must be safeguarded for return to the official UWF office or workspace. Release or destruction of any records should only be done at the official UWF office or workspace according to statute and regulation. Computerized files are

official records and shall be similarly protected. Carefully review the Information Security & Privacy Policy regarding the protection of information.

Sound Control

The protection of the remote work employee from household noise and the household from the remote work employee is important for a harmonious work environment. Printer noise should be anticipated before setting up an office. Unlike the situation in many office environments, remote work employees can insulate themselves by closing doors. Noises such as a barking dog, crying children, the television, lawnmower, or vacuum cleaner affect your professional image when heard by others as you talk on the telephone. These noises also disrupt concentration.

Lighting

A computer user should be aware of the light levels in the work area. Too much light or light striking the screen at the wrong angle causes glare, eye strain, and fatigue.

Local Zoning

The home office should conform to local zoning ordinances. Employees are responsible for complying with such regulations.

O. Equipping the Home Office

The home office should be equipped with furniture and lighting appropriate to the tasks performed. Special attention must be given to employees working at computers in home offices. Poor positioning of the keyboard and screen relative to the worker's body may cause extreme fatigue.

Furniture

Specially designed furniture or modules are commercially available to create a workstation. The furniture depends on the permanence and size of the remote work space. In a home with a dedicated room, the furniture may duplicate the official UWF office or workspace, with a permanent desk, printer stand, telephone table, side chairs, etc. In a temporary installation or a small apartment, all the remote work equipment may be portable, storable, and movable to a corner or closet during nonworking hours.

Desk

The desk, table, or stand on which a computer will be placed have the following characteristics:

- A surface, typically 26 ½ inches from the floor, that places the keyboard at a comfortable height for keying so that forearms are horizontal.
- A depth, usually 24" minimum, sufficient for the computer and monitor.
- A table or stand that positions the monitor at a comfortable angle with the eyes (usually the center of the screen should be 20 degrees down from eye level).
- Surface space for working materials. Depending on the space available, this may be a full-sized desk or a storable unit. The unit may have arms that unfold to form a working space. Full-sized and storable computer desks are available through commercial sources.

Printer Stand

The printer may be placed on the computer desk, on a stand designed for that purpose, or on a surface with the following characteristics:

- Sturdy construction to support the weight of the printer without vibration.
- A height that allows adjustment of paper and controls while seated at the computer.

Workspace

Space must be provided for working materials - telephone, or other peripheral equipment and supplies needed for the tasks to be performed. Manuals and other computer supplies may be stored on or near the desk. Various configurations may be tested by the remote work employee to see which meets the overall comfort and use requirements.

Chair

A chair for the worker who sits for long periods at a desk or computer must be the correct height and give lumbar support. An adjustable office or ergonomic chair is desirable. The seat should be adjustable and 15-18 inches from the floor. The backrest should be adjustable for height and angle and should provide support at the waist. Armrests should provide support but not be in the way.

P. Ergonomics

Proper layout of office equipment in the work environment is key to avoiding discomfort and injury. Information on workplace safety called "Preventing Ergonomic Injuries" is found in Addendum F. More information is available on the UWF Office of Environmental Health and Safety website. https://uwf.edu/finance-and- administration/departments/environmental-health-and-safety/.

**THE FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULE AND REMOTE WORK FORMS
CAN BE FOUND ON MYUWF
by searching:**

Addendum A: Flexible Work Schedule Request Form

Addendum B: Remote Work Request Form

ADDENDUM C
Remote Work Resources

This information is provided as a reference for department heads as they discuss remote work with potential remote work employees and their supervisors.

What is Remote Work?
Remote work is working at a location other than the official UWF office or workspace. This place may be the home or an office close to home. Remote work involves moving work to the workers instead of moving the workers to work. Remote work is an alternative to the traditional office setting.

How does the Community Benefit from Remote Work?
- Decreases peak-hour road congestion, air pollution, and fuel consumption,
- Decreases transportation (highway and transit) capital and operative costs from the substitution of telecommunications for transportation,
- Provides employment opportunities for the mobility-limited, and
- It provides the ability to shape and use patterns in a positive way (e.g., moving employment to outlying areas where housing is more affordable and moving job opportunities to areas of high unemployment). This benefits the University by increasing recruiting options in outlying areas that would not have otherwise been available.

How does the University Benefit from Remote Work?
- Increases Productivity. Employee productivity normally increases with remote work because employees experience fewer distractions and interruptions, more continuous work time because meetings and other duties are scheduled together, decreased stress caused by commuting, the ability to work at personal "peak" time, increased motivation and productivity because with increased flexibility comes greater employee autonomy, and decreased absenteeism and use of sick leave.
- Decreases turnover
- Creates a competitive recruiting advantage
- Increases the applicant pool
- Improves managerial techniques
- Improves employee morale
- Decreases overhead
- Provides space savings

How do University Employees Benefit from Remote Work?
- Decreases stress
- Decreases or eliminates the commuting time, cost, and frustration
- Increases flexibility to handle work and family schedules
- Increases job satisfaction
- Improves work environment
- Decreases cost of clothing, food, and transportation
- Increases employment opportunities
- Increases safety in the home and the community

- Enables closer bonds with the family and the community

Employee Concerns
- Feelings of isolation from co-workers
- Less visibility to co-workers
- Lack of support services
- Loss of living space
- Increased at-home costs
- Distraction in the home environment
- Increased equipment and document security responsibility

Characteristics of a Successful Remote Work Employee
- Require minimal supervision
- Are moderately people-oriented
- Possess a high level of skill and knowledge of job responsibilities
- Work well with family members
- Prefer the home environment
- Are self-motivated
- Exhibit a positive attitude toward remote work
- Are well organized
- Possess a high level of productivity
- Possess strong time management skills

Types of Duties Conducive to Remote Work
Any position or portion of a position wherein the individual works alone handling information may be conducive to remote work. Examples of functions and tasks include the following:
- Auditing reports
- Conducting business by telephone
- Preparing or monitoring contracts
- Analyzing data
- Entering data
- Processing data
- Programming software
- Working on projects
- Thinking, reading, and writing reports

Issues for Supervisors
- Increases security responsibility
- Requires a change in management philosophy
- Requires monitoring of actual work hours
- Presents additional regulatory and legal issues to consider
- Increases costs of start-up and operation

Management Style
- Managing by objectives, not by observation

- Managing projects, not individual tasks
- Managing the non-remote work employee in a remote work environment

Remote Work Technology Resources
- [UWF Continuity Tools](#) provides a list of tools to help employees work remotely

ADDENDUM D
Employee Remote Work Survey

Employee's Name_____Date_____

Position_____Department_____

Division_____

1. Do you believe that your position would permit you to remote work at least part of the time?
   a. Yes
   b. No

2. The following characteristics relate to you and your position. Please carefully consider each characteristic and rate as High (H), Medium (M), or Low (L).

Characteristics typical of your position:
   a. Amount of face-to-face communication required H M L
   b. Ability to group required face-to-face communication into predetermined time periods. H M L
   c. Amount of telephone communication required H M L
   d. Need to use databases not part of the UWF computer system H M L
   e. Time spent working on a computer H M L
   f. Clarity of objectives for a given work effort H M L
   g. Autonomy/degree of independence H M L
   h. Ability to control and schedule your workflow H M L
   i. Amount of in-office reference material required H M L
   j. Amount of physical access to special resources required H M L
   k. Ability to group in-office reference/resource requirements into predetermined time periods H M L
   l. Amount of concentration required H M L
   m. Need for the physical security of data H M L

Characteristics that describe you:
   n. Need or desire for supervision H M L
   o. Need for feedback from others H M L
   p. Self-motivation H M L
   q. Initiative in requesting advice or clarification when needed H M L
   r. Motivation derived from the work itself H M L
   s. Self-discipline regarding work H M L
   t. Self-discipline regarding personal issues (eating habits, breaks, etc.) H M L
   u. Desire/need to be around others H M L
   v. Need for scheduling flexibility due to non-work responsibilities H M L
   w. Considering the requirements of your job, how much time would you like to spend as a remote work employee?
      a. Less than one day per month

b. One day per month
c. Three to four days per week
d. Two days per week
e. One day per week
f. One day every two weeks
g. Every day with weekly office visits
h. Other (please specify)_____

3. What type of work would you expect to perform while working remotely?
a. Writing Reports
b. Entering data
c. Programming
d. Performing administrative work (e.g., progress reports)
e. Creating graphics/layout
f. Reading
g. Conducting research
h. Working on the telephone
i. Sending/reading email
j. Meeting people
k. Thinking/planning
l. Other (please specify)_____

4. Given the frequency of remote work you desire and the type of work, you could perform while remote working, what equipment/services would you need and which of those do you currently have at home?

	Have	**Need**
Computer		
Printer		
Surge protection device		
Modem		
Telephone for UWF business		
Long-distance connection		
Software		
Fax		
Desk, filing space, other furniture		
Basic office supplies (staplers, paper, pens, etc.)		
Voicemail for UWF business use		
Other		

5. Is your typical schedule of work hours flexible in such a way that you can frequently (once a week or more) change your schedule by an hour or more?
   a. Yes
   b. No

ADDENDUM E
Steps in Implementing the Remote Work Program

Step 1

Request information and complete the appropriate forms from Human Resources (HR) located on MyUWF Remote Work Request Form.   The complete University Workplace Flexibility Program Manual is available on the Human Resources web site.

Step 2

Supervisors should review the University Workplace Flexibility Program Manual with the prospective remote work employee. Once the program has been discussed, the supervisor should have the employee complete the Employee Work Remote Survey found in Addendum D.

Step 3

After reviewing the survey along with the position requirements and talking about the needs of the department with the department head, the supervisor determines whether the remote work candidate should submit a remote work proposal and notifies the employee.

Step 4

The prospective remote work employee should complete and sign the remote work proposal and submit it to the supervisor. The supervisor indicates whether the proposal is approved and signs the proposal. The department head also reviews the proposal for approval. If approved, the department head signs.

Step 5

After the remote work employee begins participating in the remote work program, any problems should be brought to the attention of the supervisor, department dead, and Human Resources, as needed.

ADDENDUM F
Preventing Ergonomic Injuries

The following ergonomic information was obtained from the U. S. Department of Labor (https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/checklist_evaluation.html).

Good Working Positions

To understand the best way to set up a computer workstation, it is helpful to understand the concept of neutral body positioning. This is a comfortable working posture in which your joints are naturally aligned. Working with the body in a neutral position reduces stress and strain on the muscles, tendons, and skeletal system and reduces your risk of developing a musculoskeletal disorder (MSD). The following are important considerations when attempting to maintain neutral body postures while working at the computer workstation:

- **Hands**, **wrists**, and **forearms** are straight, in-line and roughly parallel to the floor.
- **Head** is level or bent slightly forward, forward-facing, and balanced. Generally, it is in-line with the torso.
- **Shoulders** are relaxed and **upper arms** hang normally at the side of the body.
- **Elbows** stay in close to the body and are bent between 90 and 120 degrees.
- **Feet** are fully supported by the floor or a footrest may be used if the desk height is not adjustable.
- **Back** is fully supported with appropriate lumbar support when sitting vertical or leaning back slightly.
- **Thighs** and **hips** are supported by a well-padded seat and generally parallel to the floor.
- **Knees** are about the same height as the hips with the **feet** slightly forward.

Regardless of how good your working posture is, working in the same posture or sitting still for prolonged periods is not healthy. You should change your working position frequently throughout the day in the following ways:

- Make small adjustments to your chair or backrest.
- Stretch your fingers, hands, arms, and torso.
- Stand up and walk around for a few minutes periodically.
- These four **reference postures** are examples of body posture changes that all provide neutral positioning for the body.

Upright sitting	Standing
Upright sitting posture. The user's torso and neck are approximately vertical and in-line, the thighs are approximately horizontal, and the lower legs are vertical.	**Standing posture**. The user's legs, torso, neck, and head are approximately in-line and vertical. The user may also elevate one foot on a rest while in this posture.
Declined sitting	Reclined sitting
Declined sitting posture. The user's thighs are inclined with the buttocks higher than the knee and the angle between the thighs and the torso is greater than 90 degrees. The torso is vertical or slightly reclined and the legs are vertical.	**Reclined sitting posture**. The user's torso and neck are straight and recline between 105 and 120 degrees from the thighs.