



UNIVERSITY OF
CENTRAL FLORIDA

Telecommuting Program Manual

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The Telecommuting Program at the University of Central Florida offers a flexible work schedule and the ability to work offsite at an approved home office location, given the employee meets and adheres to the requirements described in this manual.

The University of Central Florida retains the right to terminate this program at any time at its sole discretion. If it is terminated, employees working remotely will be asked to return to their jobs within the university office setting. Also, if an employee's work performance is not acceptable, the supervisor may pursue the disciplinary process and/or require the employee to return to work onsite at the university. If the employee does not return on the agreed upon date, this will be deemed a voluntary resignation and will be treated as such per university policies and procedures.

Employees who request to utilize this program do so based on having been provided information about the program and the pros and cons of working remotely. Those approved for the program should typically commit to a minimum initial period of three months.

Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of the Telecommuting Program Manual is to provide guidelines for both managers and employees interested in the Telecommuting Program.

Definition

Telecommuting is an arrangement in which an employee performs their regular work at their home, for a specified portion of the workweek, or the entire workweek. The program may be utilized at the departmental managers' discretion and is not an employee benefit or right.

The Telecommuting Program should not be viewed as a substitute for dependent care. The university expects that telecommuting employees will arrange for dependent care. It is the employees' responsibility to ensure that they are fully able to complete their work assignments and to interact with university personnel over the phone in a professional environment.

In limited circumstances, telecommuting could involve special projects or work for another department. Temporary arrangements for a nonrecurring telecommuting schedule of two weeks or less may be handled informally by the department. A formal telecommuting agreement is required in Human Resources for a recurring schedule of over two weeks. For emergency preparedness, telecommuting agreements must be kept on file with the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) in the college or department.

Intention

Telecommuting 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.

Benefits & Disadvantages

The Telecommuting Program is not designed for every employee. The lure of household chores and family distractions can easily undermine performance. However, when implemented successfully, employees can experience increased productivity, savings on commuting costs, a better work/life balance and enhanced morale.

Program Overview

Telecommuting Agreement

Employees interested in participating in the UCF Telecommuting Program must complete the *UCF Telecommuting Agreement* (included in this manual) and submit it to their supervisor for approval processing. New hires approved for telecommuting are required to complete the Telecommuting Agreement with their new hire paperwork.

Expectations for Participation

Eligibility to participate in the Telecommuting 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 their tasks assigned independently. Some important items to consider include:

- The Telecommuting Program is not to be used as a substitute for childcare or other personal responsibilities. It is important to ensure that dependent care obligations or other family obligations do not interfere with work.
- It is expected that employees who telecommute will devote all of their effort to university business while telecommuting. Disruptions such as personal visitors during work hours are not acceptable, and personal telephone calls should be kept to a minimum.
- The supervisor or designee will need to approve annual and sick leave in advance when being taken during times scheduled to work at home.
- All telecommuting employees are required to obtain their supervisor's approval prior to working overtime.
- The supervisor must approve any changes to the employee's work schedule in advance.
- University equipment and files will be required to be returned to the university if work from home is terminated by either the employee or the university.

The employee:

- Must have the ability to perform all essential functions of the position from telecommuting location.
- Must have the ability to provide an appropriate work environment at home, which meets university standards such as setting up an ergonomically correct workstation.
- Must possess productive and organized work habits.
- Must have both strong verbal and written communication skills.
- Must be able to adhere to assigned work hours.
- Must comply fully with the university's attendance and time recording procedures and will accurately report and record all working hours.
- Must maintain a performance appraisal of at least "Satisfactory" or "Effective".
- Must be reliable, maintain confidentiality and work well independently.
- Must adhere to all university policies, procedures and guidelines.

- Must attend mandatory and other requested meetings on campus, including training sessions, workshops, etc.
- Must possess independent problem-solving abilities.
- Must maintain an appropriate level of professional demeanor and represent the university with respect and dignity.

Salary, Benefits and Onsite Meetings

Telecommuting Program employees' salary, job responsibilities and benefits will be identical to those of employees not working remotely. In addition, 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.

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.

Tax Implications

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.

Supervisor Responsibilities

- The supervisor must advise employee of final determination (approval or denial) of telecommuting request.
- The supervisor will decide tasks to be assigned to the employee. Work assignments for telecommuters will be handled in the same manner as they are for non-telecommuters.
- The supervisor will be responsible for assigning specific work hours to each employee working remotely. The number of working hours will be monitored regularly.
- Work hours determined by the supervisor will be communicated to team members, clients, and co-workers.
- The supervisor will be tasked to clearly define performance requirements and standards that are measurable and results oriented.
- The supervisor will regularly monitor and communicate in regard to the employee's performance in accordance with departmental and university policy.
- If an employee's behavior or performance is not satisfactory, the supervisor has the right to terminate the program and/or recommend disciplinary actions as appropriate in accordance with university policy.

Confidentiality

Sensitive university information should not be removed from university facilities without explicit written authorization by appropriate university management. Such information includes, but is not limited to files, employment and financial records.

Sensitive information is governed by various State and Federal laws and regulations as well as university policies, and includes any and all information that, if released, could cause harm to the university by virtue of such release. Therefore, university employees, without exception, must adhere to such policies and regulations and maintain confidentiality of such information at all times.

Therefore, individuals telecommuting are required to understand and abide by all university's policies and procedures. All employees must sign and adhere to the Human Resources Confidentiality Agreement (<https://hr.ucf.edu/files/ConfidentialityAgreement.pdf>).

Work Space and Work Site Inspection

The employee must ensure that the home office is a separate space set aside to allow the employee to work efficiently. For additional information and/or assistance in identifying risk factors present at your workstation as well as specific recommendations on how to address them, contact Environmental Health and Safety or visit <http://www.ehs.ucf.edu/ergonomics>.

The university has the right to visit the employee's home to ensure that the designated work location meets safety, ventilation and ergonomic standards. Such visits will not be scheduled without giving the employee a 24-hour prior notice and will be conducted during normal business hours.

The university does not pay for costs associated with working at home, such as electrical, heating, A/C, etc. (with possible exception of a voice/data line).

Telecommuting Equipment

The university may provide equipment such as computers, laptops, tablets, printers, communication devices, and software needed to perform the employees' work assignments. The equipment must be protected against damage and unauthorized use. Equipment must be used for official UCF business, be managed and supported by University IT, and its use must comply with the University Information Technology & Security policies and standards. For more information you may visit <https://policies.ucf.edu/> and <https://infosec.ucf.edu>.

University provided items remain the property of the University of Central 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 personally return all university equipment.

The university may reimburse the employees for the cost of installation and monthly service of telephone/High Speed Internet line(s) during the length of the telecommuting program. This is considered to be for the university's purposes only, and not for personal use. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that no one else has access to the university equipment.

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 USB drives, CDs, memory cards, etc. Must follow university policy 4-008 to protect university data.
- Enable device encryption (e.g., MS BitLocker, Apple FileVault, etc.) to mitigate data breaches.
- Ensure that no one else has access to the university equipment.
- University data and work products must reside on university equipment and not on personal devices or in personal cloud storage systems.
- Connect to the University of Central Florida internal network through VPN prior to performing job responsibilities on your officially assigned computer, or through the use of personal device to gain access to university networks (e.g., office desktop or virtual machine).
- Keep the operating system and malware protection current by installing the latest security patches and updates.
- Do not circumvent security settings to modify the operating system or applications.
- Do not download and/or save university data/files to personal devices or personal cloud storage systems.

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 (eight characters or more, mixture of letters, numbers and symbols).
- Turn on the highest level of encryption supported by your wireless router and the devices connecting to it (e.g., WPA2/AES, etc.). 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.
- Regularly update your wireless router software through the manufacturer.

The university, as needed, will provide telecommuting employees with office supplies. Employees' out-of-pocket expenses for other supplies will not be reimbursed unless prior written approval of the manager has been received. The university will repair and replace damaged university equipment unless it is lost, damaged or stolen through the employee's negligence or abuse.

University IT staff are responsible for managing and supporting authorized software applications under the University's control. University IT staff are responsible for reviewing and revising these security controls and access as necessary (e.g., when employees have been transferred or terminated).

Travel and Home Expenses

Travel and mileage between home and office will not be reimbursed.

UCF will not be responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, or any other incidental cost (e.g. utilities) associated with telecommuting from the employee's residence. For example, home-related expenses such as construction, renovations, heating/air conditioning, lighting, or electricity are not reimbursable. The university will also not be responsible for the maintenance and/or repair of personally owned equipment utilized for telecommuting purposes.

The employee may be entitled to reimbursement for authorized expenses incurred while conducting business for UCF, as provided for by applicable policies and regulations.

Accidents and Injuries

The university will be responsible for any work-related injuries under Florida State's workers compensation laws, but this liability is limited to injuries resulting directly from work and only if the injury occurs in the designated work area during the assigned work hours. Any claims will be handled according to the normal university procedure for Workers' Compensation claims.

As stated in the workers' compensation laws, the university will be responsible for injuries at the work home site, if the site is ergonomically maintained. The employee is responsible for any injuries and liabilities arising from his/her own negligence.

Any time an accident or an injury occurs, whether or not the employee wishes to seek medical care, it must be reported to AmeriSys. This should be done by the supervisor and employee, if available, as soon as possible. For additional information regarding the reporting process, visit the Workers' Compensation page on the HR website (<https://hr.ucf.edu>).

University's Right to End a Telecommuting Status

The university or department manager 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 to their campus work location on the expected date, failure to do so will be considered a voluntary resignation and will be treated as such under university standard policies and procedures.

Insurance

The employee agrees to carry a sufficient amount of homeowner's or renter's insurance to cover loss or damage to the equipment provided by the university, in the event that the university deems such a loss or damage is the employee's responsibility. Employees who work remotely from their home should consult with their insurance company or broker to purchase a business pursuits type rider on their homeowner's or renter's insurance policies. Current policies may be null and void without these riders or endorsements as a result of the workers' compensation coverage that is provided by the university for work related injury while on work time.

Conditions & Terms of Telecommuting

Conditions and terms of employment will not change as a result of an employee participating in the Telecommuting Program. Salary, benefits, vacation, leaves, and other rights and responsibilities will be equal to those of an employee working onsite.

Telecommuting employees are subject to and must abide by all university and departmental policies and procedures. University policies governing the use of university equipment, facilities, including but not limited to, software, support services, internet, telephones, vehicle, etc. shall apply at the home work site.

Performance Evaluation

The employee will participate in and be subject to the university performance evaluation process of goal setting, review and evaluation as do the non-telecommuting employees. As part of the on-going supervisory and management activities, the employee will discuss with their supervisor the specific work assignments, time expectations for completion of such assignments, and will review these goals and objectives as necessary. The employee's assigned work will be completed according to procedures agreed upon by the supervisor in accordance with guidelines and standards set forth in the employee's performance evaluation document, and in accordance with departmental and university policies and procedures. Work performance expectations will remain the same as for those employees who work at their regular work location.

Management Controls

The employee will comply with established management directives, which will include, but are not limited to:

- In person meetings with management as requested and/or required.
- Regular ongoing communication with supervisor.
- Participation in staff meetings (via phone or in person).
- Submittal of periodic written activity/status reports, as required by the supervisor.

Sick Days, Vacation, Floating Holidays, and Leaves of Absence

Any use of sick days, vacation time (annual leave), or personal business must be approved by the supervisor. The employee must obtain prior approval before taking vacation, floating holidays or a leave of absence, in accordance with established university procedures. All leave must be reported as per policy.

If you are seeking a telecommuting arrangement to manage a health or caregiving-related situation for yourself or a family member, you should contact the Human Resources Leave Section to determine if your situation would be more appropriately considered under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or the Office of Institutional Equity if it should be explored as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Privacy

The employee acknowledges that the university-provided electronic mail, all forms of electronic data communication systems, voice message systems, electronic storage systems, and computer systems utilized for university business are not private and may be monitored, reviewed, or searched by the university.

Amendments

The telecommuting assignment may be amended, modified or supplemented by the department or university, as necessary, to conform to the department's needs or desires in connection with the telecommuting employee's alternate worksite arrangements, to conform to changes in the policy or procedure, or as otherwise necessary to address business needs or to comply with laws, rules, or regulations.

Program Agreement

Nothing in this agreement shall be deemed to create any right, interest, or expectancy of continued employment.



Telecommuting Agreement

New telecommuting request

Renewal or extension request

Employee Name:	
Employee ID:	Employee Classification: <input type="checkbox"/> A&P <input type="checkbox"/> USPS <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Division/College:	Department:
Current Position Title:	Official Work Location:
Agreement Duration: <input type="checkbox"/> Time Specific Begin Date _____ End Date _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing, until further notice	
Telecommuting Location:	
Reason(s) for Telecommuting:	
Type of Work:	

Proposed Telecommuting Schedule

Day	Hours at Official Work Location	Hours at Telecommuting Location
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

Supervisor Survey

Do these attributes describe the employee?	Y/N
Communicates effectively, whether face-to-face, by email, phone, etc.	
Displays independent problem-solving abilities.	
Is a self-starter.	
Is able to plan, schedule and manage work independently.	
Is reliable and meets timelines consistently.	
Maintains confidentiality in the workplace.	
Takes initiative in requesting advice or clarification from others.	
Understands the work objective(s).	
Works independently with minimal direct supervision.	
Works well without frequent interaction or feedback from others.	

Security of Data

The employee will apply approved safeguards to protect UCF data from unauthorized disclosure or damage and will comply with UCF Policy 2-100.3, *Florida Public Records Act – Scope and Compliance*. Work performed at the telecommuting location is considered official UCF business. All records, papers, and correspondence must be safeguarded for their return to the official location. Release or destruction of any records should only be done at the official location according to statute and regulation. Computerized files are considered official records and shall be similarly protected. See UCF Policy, 4-008, *Data Classification and Protection*.

Liability

UCF will not be liable for damage to the employee's property or changes in taxation requirements that results from participation in the Telecommuting Program.

Curtailement of the Agreement

The employee may terminate participation in the Telecommuting Program at any time. The university reserves the right to terminate this Telecommuting Agreement or adjust the telecommuting schedule at any time. The employee agrees to limit performance of officially assigned duties to the official work location or to the UCF approved telecommuting location. Failure to comply with this provision may result in termination of the Telecommuting Agreement and/or other appropriate disciplinary action.

Employee Acknowledgement

I request approval to participate in the UCF Telecommuting Program and agree to adhere to all applicable program guidelines and policies. **I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by this Telecommuting Agreement and the UCF Telecommuting Program Manual** and will submit all applicable university forms associated with telecommuting if approved.

Employee Signature

Date

Approval Signatures

Staffing	Print Name	Signature	Date	Approve? Y/N
Supervisor				
Director, Chair, Dean, or Designee				
Provost* or Vice President				
Human Resources				

**Vice Provost for Faculty Excellence (Provost's Designee) signature only needed for faculty*

Please forward the completed form to the Human Resources Leave of Absence Section for final review and processing via email (loandworkcomp@ucf.edu) or secure eFax (407-882-9023).