

Policy Number: UFCD, HR, 1.12
Effective Date: January 2022
Last Revised Date: January 2022
Next Review Date: January 2024
Policy/Guideline Custodian: Director, HR
Category: Human Resources

Title

Alternative Work Location/Telecommuting Policy

Policy

Alternative Work Locations allow employees to work at home for all or part of their workweek. The College of Dentistry (UFCD) considers telecommuting to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some employees and jobs but not for others. Telecommuting is not an entitlement, it is not a college-wide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the college. Telecommuting arrangements can vary from short term temporary agreements to one or more days per week depending on eligibility described below.

Once a telecommuting arrangement is established, the college cannot guarantee that it can be converted to an on-campus position as office space is limited and may not be available. These positions will often utilize a shared space when on campus. Because of this, telecommuting arrangements may become permanent / required.

Eligibility

Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and supervisor, with the assistance of the UFCD Human Resource department (UFCD HR), will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

- Job responsibilities – the employee and supervisor will discuss the job duties and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement. It must be determined that some or all components of the job can be done off-site without disruption to the flow of work and communication, and without hindering the level of service to faculty, students, patients and other staff. If the nature of the employee’s job requires the physical presence of the employee, such as supervising employees or seeing patients, it may be determined that telecommuting is not appropriate. Additionally, there needs to be reasonable methods to measure and monitor job performance.

- Equipment needs, workspace design considerations, reliable internet access, and scheduling issues – the employee and supervisor will review that appropriate telecommuting workspace accommodations exist. Telecommuting arrangements will be ended if the employee cannot maintain reliable connectivity.
- Tax and other legal implications – the employee must determine any tax or legal implications under IRS, state and local government laws, and/or restrictions of working out of a home-based office. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.
 - Potential arrangements outside the state of Florida must be reviewed and approved by UFCD HR.
 - Telecommuting outside of the United States is prohibited under most circumstances. Supervisors can review with UFCD HR for more details.
- Employee suitability – for potential voluntary or temporary telecommuting arrangements, the employee and supervisor will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, compared to traits customarily recognized as appropriate for successful telecommuters.
- The college has the right to refuse to make working at a remote location available to any employee and/or to terminate the arrangement at any time—regardless of whether the request meets the established criteria. Appropriate notice needs to be provided to the employee if we are terminating an approved arrangement.

If the employee and supervisor agree, and the human resource department reviews and approves, a Remote Work Location agreement will be completed. The Remote Work Location Agreement must be completed in its entirety, including all appropriate required approval signatures, prior to an employee beginning work at a remote location.

Evaluating Performance

Measuring performance must include a focus on results and behavior (accomplishments and compliance with institutional policies). As telecommuting can increase a potential sense of disengagement for employees, regular, ongoing feedback between the supervisor and employee is imperative.

- Supervisors and employees should have regular communication by phone, video conference, email, or instant messaging.
- Supervisors should inform employees how often they expect updates on work progress, what those updates should include and how they should be communicated (e.g. verbal conversation, written documentation).
- Supervisors should communicate how quickly they expect employees to respond to work communications while teleworking and the best ways for the employee to contact the supervisor.
- All telecommuting arrangements are required to complete quarterly UF Engaged “check-ins”. Self-assessments and supervisor assessments should be completed.

- Goals and/or performance indicators should be discussed and documented for each upcoming period, and evaluated for the current period.
- University policies and standard workplace practices apply to telecommuting arrangements, including IT policies, department call-out procedures, etc.

Equipment, Supplies, and Furniture

In most approved telecommuting arrangements, the college will provide appropriate computer equipment (typically a standard desktop with 2 monitors). Other items may include a webcam with mic or soundbar/speakers. The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within the home for work purposes. Each employee and supervisor must ensure the workstation is appropriate for telecommuting including video conference capabilities.

- All college/university provided equipment will be tracked by HSC IT. The telecommuter must take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft.
- When university provided equipment is not functioning properly and requires being returned to HSC IT for repair or replacement, HSC IT, the supervisor, and the employee must work together to find a temporary solution to keep the employee productive. Options may include:
 - The employee might be able to temporarily use a personal device to access UF's VPN and/or web-based applications to keep working.
 - UFCD might be able to expedite shipping temporary equipment to the employee (or have the employee pick it up from campus if they live locally).
 - The supervisor can work with UFCD HR to see if a swing office can be used on campus until the necessary equipment is repaired (if the employee lives within reasonable distance to campus).
- It is the employee's responsibility to provide reliable, sufficient internet connection, and appropriate utilities at their own expense. UFCD may request documentation/proof of this.
 - An employee must use personal leave if they are temporarily unable to provide the sufficient internet connection or other necessary utilities / workspace to adequately perform their work.
- Equipment and utilities supplied by the employee will be maintained by the employee. The college and university accept no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment, utilities, or property. The college will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.
- HSC IT cannot provide support for:
 - Non-UF devices, nor will they enter private residences (or locations not under the UF purview) to fix UF devices.
 - Private internet connection services (ex: Cox, Comcast, etc.), this is solely the responsibility of the employee.

- Private networks, phone service, or other personal electronic equipment (tablets, printers, scanners, etc.).
- UFCD does not provide furniture for at home use, however UFCD will provide office supplies necessary to perform work duties.
 - Supplies requests must be approved by the employee's supervisor.
 - Except for extenuating circumstances pre-approved by the UFCD Executive Director, the college will not provide or reimburse for printing, copying, or scanning supplies.
 - Orders should be placed through the MyUF Marketplace when possible and can be shipped to the employee's residence.
 - The college may require the employee to return non-consumable items when employment or telecommuting arrangement with the college ends.

Security

Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working on campus (<https://security.ufl.edu/policies/>), telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of confidential information accessible from their home office. Steps include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, locking their computer (requiring password) when away from it, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

Safety

Employees are expected to maintain their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Injuries sustained by the employee in a home office location and in conjunction with his or her regular work duties are normally covered by the organization's workers' compensation policy. Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying UFCD HR of such injuries as soon as practical. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to his or her home worksite.

Scheduling and Time Worked

Unless an alternative schedule is approved by the college and specified in the telecommuting documentation, employees are expected to work during normal UFCD business hours (Eastern Time Zone). Employees may be required to be on site as necessary to attend meetings, training sessions, or similar events or occurrences, this is determined by the supervisor and nature of the position. Appropriate notice will need to be provided to telecommuting employee prior to on campus requirement.

Telecommuting is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate child care. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate child care needs, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting work demands. Prospective telecommuters are encouraged to discuss expectations of telecommuting with family members prior to entering an engagement.

Telecommuting employees are required to work, at a minimum, their scheduled weekly hours or use the appropriate personal leave. Telecommuting employees follow the same attendance policies and guidelines as set forth in the UF Employee Handbook and the UFCD Attendance Policy.

Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all hours worked. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval of the telecommuter's supervisor.

Documentation

All telecommuting arrangements require an alternate work location agreement completed online, which must also be renewed annually for Faculty/TEAMS positions and every six months for OPS.

References

[Alternative Work Location Agreement](#)
[Online Remote Work Location Agreement Form](#)
[UFCD Attendance Policy](#)
[TEAMS/USPS Employee Handbook](#)
[Faculty Handbook](#)
[UFCD Flextime Policy](#)

Contact Information

Policy Contact

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Important Dates

- Original Effective Date: January 2022, Approver: Dr. A. Isabel Garcia, Dean