

Staff Telecommuting Policy

Policy

This policy enables Pacific to permit eligible staff, exempt and non-exempt, except those covered by a collective bargaining agreement, to telecommute (work from home or an alternate location)..

Context and Definition

University of the Pacific is committed to delivering a personal education that serves the individual student. The University is dedicated to exceptional and dependable service to students, families, and other constituents, both internal and external. High-quality, personalized, face to face service must be our top priority, no matter how, when or where it is delivered.

In exceptional circumstances, Pacific may permit staff to telecommute (work from home or an alternate location). Telecommuting is generally a mutually agreed upon and mutually beneficial work arrangement in which all or some of the employee's work is performed at a non-University work site. It can result in focused work time for employees completing key projects as well as provide needed flexibility to employees. Telecommuting is not an employee entitlement or benefit of employment. Telecommuting arrangements are not intended to create part-time schedule or extra days off. Telecommuting in no way changes the terms and conditions of the employee's employment with the University.

Applicability

- This policy is applicable to all staff, exempt and non-exempt, except those covered by a collective bargaining agreement, unless that agreement specifically indicates that this policy is applicable to its covered employees.
 - The policy is not intended to limit the flexibility intrinsic to exempt staff positions.
 - Typically, only staff members whose performance is entirely rated "meets all job requirements," "meets all and exceed some," or "exceptional" will be considered for telecommuting. Together, the staff member and supervisor/manager should engage in an active dialogue to discuss timely completion of work, expectations for delivering results, and how to meet position requirements
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Suitability

Jobs best suited to telecommuting are those that require independent work and minimal face-to-face interaction, result in a specific, measurable work product, and benefit from quiet and uninterrupted time. These jobs typically consist of thinking and writing (writing decisions and reports) and computer-oriented tasks (programming or data analysis). Jobs typically not suitable for telecommuting include those that provide office or counter coverage, support others, or where face-to-face contact, attendance or supervision is a requirement of the job. Individuals approved to telecommute should have proven time-management skills and a demonstrated history of independent and effective work performance.

Approval

In determining whether to approve a telecommuting work arrangement, the University will take into consideration the on-site service requirements of the position and the needs, requirements and/or constraints of the employee's department and position. Every telecommuting arrangement requires the written approval of the employee's supervisor/manager, the unit head/dean, and the division heads (i.e., President, Provost, or Vice President) or their designee. All telecommuting agreements must be documented in a Pacific Telecommuting Agreement to be kept on file with the Human Resources department.

Practical Considerations and Limitations

An Agreement sets the stage for the telecommuting arrangement, but whether telecommuting is suitable for a position at any given time is subject to supervisorial approval at all times. For example, a supervisor may conclude that the arrangement is ineffective, unproductive, or negatively impacts the work of the unit or others. Also, there may be times in the academic year, or during certain projects, when telecommuting arrangements may need to be changed, paused, or cancelled because of the needs of the unit, and that decision is at the supervisor’s discretion.

Most units of the University will have core hours when services have to be available or when people are expected to work together. Telecommuting arrangements do not change the expectation that the employee will work during those core hours.

On a daily basis, Telecommuting arrangements are always secondary to the on-site work needs of an employee’s position and the goals of the unit. This means that if a face-to-face meeting is planned on campus and teleconferencing is impractical or would be inappropriate, then the employee should attend in person, regardless of existing telecommuting arrangements.

Enrollment Procedures

The following are enrollment procedures for telecommuting.

Step	Action
1	Interested staff members submit telecommuting requests to their immediate supervisors/managers.
2	Supervisors/managers review telecommuting requests—considering the needs of the team, constituents, and staff members—with their team.
3	If the supervisors/managers support the telecommuting request, they will review their recommendations with their unit head/dean.
4	If the unit head/dean supports the telecommuting request, the immediate supervisor/manager and/or unit head/dean will meet with the division heads (i.e., President, Provost, or Vice President) or their designee.
5	The division heads or their designee will give final approval or denial of the telecommuting request and return the completed form to the supervisor/manager.
6	Supervisors/managers will inform each staff member of the final decision and route request forms and/or completed agreements to their campus human resources office for record-keeping.

Incidental Telecommuting

This Telecommuting Policy is not intended to apply to incidental telecommuting resulting from emergencies or for relatively brief tasks. However, supervisor approval is required in all instances where an employee performs work off campus. Telecommuting under this Policy is distinguished from leaves associated with illness or disability accommodations, which are handled separately by HR.

Disclosure

Telecommuting arrangements are subject to change or termination at any time in the sole discretion of Pacific. Pacific reserves the right to end any telecommuting arrangement and require the employee to return to employee’s regular on-site work location

Contact

The campus Human Resources department is available to help work through the particulars of a Telecommuting request and/or agreement with staff or management.