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Remote Work Guidelines - Faculty

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Applies to: (examples; Faculty,Staff, Students, etc)

Faculty

Policy Overview:

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Frequency of Review: Annually

Guiding Principles

UHSP seeks to have a campus and workplace culture that is highly effective toward meeting the institution's goals while being sensitive to the needs of faculty, staff and students. In the right circumstances, remote work can improve flexibility and work-life balance while potentially improving productivity.

Faculty have routinely operated with latitude to complete certain types of work away from the physical campus. This document presents guidelines that apply to faculty now in a concise document to ensure that critical institutional needs around data security, risk and compliance are met while recognizing that individual faculty should rely on department or college rules regarding when they need to be on campus. Department chairs are expected to work closely with faculty regarding what type of work can be done remotely, or off-campus, and what work must be completed on-campus.

Work off campus for the University must still comply with federal, state and local laws, as well as University policies that apply to employees at University of Health Sciences and Pharmacy in St. Louis. This includes, but is not limited to, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA).

Details:

1. Remote work is an arrangement between the faculty member and chair; is based on the needs of the job, work group and organization; and may be determined by the employee's past and present levels of performance. Employees on corrective action or performance improvement plans may have restrictions placed on their ability to work remotely.
2. The nature of the faculty member's work must be considered in evaluating the appropriateness of remote work.
   a. Work that entails working alone such as grading, writing, or data analysis can often be done remotely.
   b. Work that requires physical presence or close contact with faculty/staff/students is not suitable for remote work. Examples include, working with research equipment, physical specimens, physical skill instruction with students, etc.
   c. Work that requires a high degree of collaboration and/or group discussion that cannot be adequately recreated in a forum other than in-person interaction may not be suitable for remote work. This may include faculty retreats, or similar events.
   d. Employees in positions designated as "Critical Personnel" under the University's Critical Personnel and Continuity of Operations Planning policy may be less suitable for remote work.
3. Other factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, assessing potential costs and savings to be expected; impact on space, equipment, staffing and overall departmental efficiency both at the alternate work location and on the primary work site. This may include an evaluation of applicability of HR/payroll burdens for work from another site such as new state worker's compensation requirements, tax set up, insurance requirements and liability coverage.
4. The chair and faculty member must be in agreement about what work can be done remotely. This includes agreement on a good system for measuring the quality, quantity and timeliness of output that should be equally effective for both employees on-site as well as those working at home and should not reflect differences in standards. Information on requirements of the employee to work non-remotely for specific meetings or events that require in-person attendance, and/or requirements to work on campus for a period of time to ensure connection, communication, and collaboration with colleagues and the University community must be agreed upon as well. This may include requirements for video and audio communication as outlined by the chair for meetings. Departmental plans regarding work to be done remotely should be consistently applied to faculty within the department recognizing that some courses, disciplines, and programs may have differing needs for in-person versus remote work. In addition, these decisions must be in alignment with college goals and business practices, as approved by the dean, academic leadership team and faculty, where appropriate.
5. Faculty must meet data security requirements for remote work. All forms of information (paper, electronic, conversations) must be kept secure and confidential, and employees are required to complete training on and follow the data protection standards policies found at https://policies.uhsp.edu/policies. These policies include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. While connecting from an off-campus location, establish a VPN or encrypted connection before accessing any confidential or restricted use data via the network. This must only be done from your University-issued computer. VPN should not be installed on devices that are not managed by the Office of Information Technology.
b. All wireless connections must use strong encryption (WPA2 or equivalent or better) such as is offered by the University's EuTecNet wireless network or by using the University's VPN over a wireless network.
c. Data should only be accessed and/or stored on devices and within services managed by the University. For example, data should be stored on University Microsoft Office 365 accounts and file servers but not in a personal Google Drive.

6. The employee is responsible for:
   a. Maintaining their own home, high-speed internet connection capable of conducting work (including communications and video conferencing) without significant delays in productivity.
   b. Maintaining the remote work site work area including having suitable table, chairs, power supply, or other furniture or equipment that makes an acceptable work environment. It is the employee's responsibility to collect from campus necessary consumable supplies required for remote work; University funds typically will not be used to ship materials to the remote work site. University funds are typically not used/approved for home office furniture or additional equipment.
   c. Maintaining the remote work site in a manner free from health or safety hazards that could endanger the employee, his/her family or others.
   d. Notifying the supervisor immediately about any safety or ergonomic concerns at the remote work site. Injuries believed to be work-related must be reported immediately to Human Resources. If an injury to the employee occurs at the remote work site, management reserves the right, in response to the injury or illness, to inspect the worksite and make appropriate recommendations.
   e. Taking reasonable steps to protect any University property from theft, damage or misuses. This includes maintaining data security and record confidentiality to at least the same degree as when working at the regular University worksite. All University data security (including FERPA and HIPAA policies) and other compliance policies and procedures remain in effect as if the employee were working at the regular University worksite.
   f. Securing dependent or childcare arrangements during agreed upon work hours such that these arrangements do not interfere with work being performed during agreed upon work periods.
   g. For exempt and non-exempt employees, maintaining agreed upon hours in the "remote office," reasonable work productivity and following expectations regarding availability for spontaneous communication.
   h. Remaining available for communication with students, colleagues, and chair as agreed upon with your chair. If this includes availability for video conferencing, the employee should dress in attire that is consistent with the University's dress code policies.
   i. Returning any and all documents, equipment, badges, keys, etc. upon separation of employment, in accordance with University policy.

7. The employee may not duplicate University-owned documents for home office use without permission and will comply with the licensing agreements for use of all software owned by the University. Depending on the circumstances, the employee may be responsible for any damage to, or loss of, University property.

8. Employees must adhere to all University and departmental policies while remotely working. In particular, all record-keeping requirements must be followed.

9. The employee will be covered by workers' compensation for job-related injuries that occur in the course and scope of employment while working remotely. In cases where the home and the designated workplace are the same, workers' compensation will not apply to non-job-related injuries that might occur in or outside the home or for incidents that occur outside of work hours. The employee must report job-related injuries to his or her supervisor as soon as possible and seek treatment from authorized medical care providers consistent with University policy.

10. These guidelines are intended to apply to voluntary remote work arrangements only and do not cover remote work as a reasonable accommodation for a disclosed disability or remote work in response to a University emergency or continuity of operations plan (COOP). Employees seeking disability accommodations must communicate with Human Resources and request an accommodation for a specific disability. Human Resources will work with the employee and unit to identify an accommodation that does not create an undue burden.

11. The employee will be subject to all applicable University policies during the remote work arrangement.

12. If a faculty member wishes to work remotely and the faculty member feels as if the denial of this request is unreasonable, and attempts have been made to resolve the issue through the institutional channels of authority, the faculty member may appeal to the Faculty Grievance Subcommittee, as laid out in the Faculty Bylaws.

13. Questions should be directed to the Office of Human Resources.