

Administrative Guideline: Telework for Administrative and Professional and Career Service Employees

Reviewed by Cabinet:

Approved by President:

I. OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this Administrative Guideline is to provide flexibility to Administrative and Professional and Career Service supervisors and employees in performing College work at an alternate site if it is in the best interest of students and the College. The College recognizes both the need for employees to be physically present and the opportunity to leverage a tele-workforce utilizing technology to serve students in the way they want and need to be served by providing virtual services to achieve administrative efficiencies, enhance and expand offered services, support continuity of operations, and sustain the hiring and retention of highly qualified and motivated individuals. These guidelines are established to designate the terms, conditions, and process for establishing full or partial telework positions to advance the institution in the evolution of our College and its delivery of educational services. This Administrative Guideline is not applicable to faculty positions.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY/PROCEDURE

POLICY

It is the policy of Santa Fe College that supervisors and employees (including Spherion employees who are assigned to SF) may have the option of establishing- requesting a telework arrangement at a site other than on SF campuses or centers on a regular or routine basis- as long as students and their needs remain the primary consideration. To be eligible for regular or routine telework, the employee generally must have been hired as a telework employee or have been an SF employee for at least six months prior to approval of telework. If a supervisor believes that special conditions warrant a teleworking arrangement prior to completion of six months of employment, approval first must be obtained from the Vice President as well as Human Resources.

~~Expectations and obligations for employees who are assigned to positions that have been identified as teleworking positions will be maintained in the Telework Agreement, which must be signed by the employee, approved by the Vice President, and submitted to Human Resources before teleworking may commence. Telework positions are subject to the same conditions of employment and requirements for compliance with College rules, procedures, and practices as on site positions of the College; this includes the Salary Schedule and all applicable Administrative Guidelines.~~

Telework should not be confused with Temporary Alternative Work Assignments (TAWA), which are granted to individuals on a specific case by case basis only for an identified and

Commented [DA1]: Add link if added to site

temporary period as specifically approved by the supervisor and appropriate Vice President. Additionally, this should not be confused with positions that provide some work from alternative locations as part of their normal job duties. Telework positions may be either fully remote or hybrid with work performed both remotely and on site based on an established scheduled.

Telework positions are subject to the same conditions of employment and requirements for compliance with College rules, procedures, and practices as on-site positions of the College; this includes the Salary Schedule and all applicable Administrative Guidelines.

PROCEDURE

Either employees or their supervisors may suggest that a particular position become a telework position. This dialogue begins with either the employee or the supervisor and, if both are interested, must include the chain of command up to the Vice President of the division in conjunction with Human Resources. Early consideration must be given to whether such a change will best serve students. During the transition time in implementing this new administrative guideline, all proposed telework positions will also be reviewed promptly for consistency and feedback with the Executive Leadership Team and HR Director. Expectations and obligations for employees who are assigned to positions that have been identified as teleworking positions will be maintained in the Telework Agreement, which must be signed by the employee and direct supervisor, approved by the Vice President, and submitted to Human Resources before teleworking may commence. Telework employees are expected to be Florida residents; any out-of-state arrangements are currently and will continue to be handled through a third party such as Spherion.

A. Time and Attendance

Work hours and location will be determined and agreed upon by all parties in the Telework Agreement. Telework positions have the same expectations for responsiveness, availability, accessibility, interactivity, and productivity as on-site positions, although telework position supervision may rely more heavily on work results than direct observation. Employees must be available to supervisors, coworkers, students, etc. during the hours listed in the agreed upon work schedule. In the event of connectivity disruption, employees are responsible for remaining productive or taking leave for non-productive time periods that are not replaced with other College business or made up during the weekly work period. In the event of such issues, supervisors and colleagues should be notified immediately

While teleworking, time and attendance will be recorded as if the employee were performing work on-site at the College. An employee must obtain supervisory approval before taking leave in accordance with established procedures. Employees will receive overtime and compensatory leave to the same extent as if they were working on campus. If an employee works overtime without obtaining preapproval for such work, the employee will still be paid for all hours worked but may be subject to discipline and loss of telework privileges. Timesheets and leave requests shall be transmitted as specified by the supervisor. Please refer to the Salary Schedule for information about standard workweeks and flexible work schedules which may be utilized to

Commented [LF2]: This will be a comprehensive document with all the expectations, job duties, accountabilities, legal requirements, etc. It will take some time to develop and will need legal review. It is basically the contract between the employee and employer.

Commented [NB3]: Goal: Make the telework agreement an electronic form which automatically moves to the next designated person for approval so we are not managing paper copies.

maximize availability to students.

Telework is not a substitute for the care of dependents. Employees will be required to take leave if their dependent/familial obligations do not allow them to perform their duties consistently and professionally during established work hours.

B. Duration/Adjustments

The duration of the telework arrangement will be determined and agreed upon by all parties in the Telework Agreement. Supervisors may modify or cancel the telework arrangement at any time based on department needs, their assessment of work performance/productivity, or any other business-related reason. Employees may also request to modify or cancel the telework arrangement.

C. Workspace and Equipment

Telework positions require identification of an appropriate teleworking site that is free of distractions, promotes professionalism, provides appropriate privacy where confidentiality may be maintained, is conducive to personal safety, and ensures the security of College property and information in accordance with all applicable College rules and governing laws, including but not limited to, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The supervisor will conduct a virtual evaluation of the employee's workspace to ensure that it meets the College's requirements for professionalism, safety, connectivity, privacy, and security.

Note: Face-to-face business contacts are to be done at the College and not in the home.

The supervisor and the employee must agree upon the equipment and supplies to be used for teleworking and what equipment and supplies will be provided by the College. College-provided equipment and normal office supplies will vary based on the specific department and the position. Any SF equipment to be used during the telework arrangement must be agreed upon and documented in the Telework Agreement. College-owned equipment must be protected from damage and unauthorized use and will be serviced and maintained by the College. Employees must agree to report any incidents of loss, damage, or unauthorized access to College-owned equipment to their supervisor at the earliest reasonable opportunity.

Employees are responsible for following all Property procedures and Information Technology and computing policies of the College and have no expectation of privacy on any College equipment or services.

The College will not be responsible or liable for any damages to any employee-owned equipment or property used while teleworking.

D. Costs

Teleworking employees are solely responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, and any other incidental costs such as internet and utilities associated with the telework location. An

Commented [LF4]: There was a suggestion to add something about connectivity here as to what type of connectivity is required.

Commented [PL5R4]: Need Bill Penney's information and feedback

Commented [PL6]: Need to consult with IT on how to protect information on computers if employees are using their personal computers.

Commented [DA7]: Note for PL – add something here re: furniture included or not included?

Add ADA in general to policy or stay silent and have them go through accommodation process with HR/LZ?

Commented [AB8R7]: @Deborah Ackerman @Patti Locascio I believe we point to the ADA accommodations process.

Commented [DA9]: Amend cell policy, etc. to exclude telework?
Note to run through Cabinet along with or soon after this policy runs if so.

Commented [PL10R9]: Needs discussion

employee may still claim reimbursement for authorized expenses incurred while conducting official business for the College subject to advanced approval and consistent with applicable College rules, procedures, and practices.

E. Liability

The College will maintain workers' compensation and liability protection, as required by law, for the employee while in the course of performing duties established within the Telework Agreement. The College will not be responsible for any activity, damage, or injury which is not directly related to, associated with, or resulting from the official job duties, and over which the College has no ability to exercise control. The College assumes no liability for the employee's real property, or for any injury to the employee's family, guests, or other invitees injured upon the employee's premises or telework site. In the event of an accident, incident, or claim, the employee must follow the same protocols as if it occurred on College premises and the employee must be able to demonstrate that the occurrence took place while in the course of performing the duties referenced herein.

F. Work Assignments

A telework employee is responsible for fulfilling all aspects of the job while teleworking, including timely completion of work, responsiveness, and availability during working hours. Although the employee may generally be permitted to telework, the employee will be expected to attend in-person meetings or other on-site events (such as Convocation, department/division-wide meetings, etc.) when required by the supervisor or the needs of the job.

G. Evaluation

Employees are responsible for fulfilling the duties, assignments, and other work obligations associated with their position and the employee's performance will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation procedures outlined in College policies. Positions established for telework may be subject to additional periodic reviews for effectiveness and productivity as identified in the signed Telework Agreement and/or the position description. If it is determined that the employee is not meeting expectations or sufficiently satisfying service needs, the employee may be subject to progressive discipline, up to and including loss of teleworking privileges and termination.

H. Records and Security

Employees are expected to maintain a safe and secure work environment. Storage, maintenance, and destruction of College records and information must adhere to all internal and external governing rules, procedures, regulations, and requirements, including FERPA. A telework employee will apply safeguards which are approved by the College to protect records, electronic or otherwise, from unauthorized disclosure or damage. All records, papers, and correspondence must be secured for their return to the office and/or stored electronically in a College-approved manner. Telework positions have the same obligation for maintaining public records as on-site

Commented [DA11]: Still needs follow up:

Holding spot re: language re: filing claims with your homeowner's insurance, etc. – here or in equipment section?

Note for LF – is this still needed or stay silent for now and circle back later?

positions, and designated records custodians must have access to the employee's records to allow for prompt responses to public records requests.

I. Termination of the Arrangement

The written agreement for telework is not a contract to guarantee employment or telework for any specific duration. The College may terminate the Telework Agreement at any time and for any lawful reason which may also include termination of employment.

III. TELEWORK EMPLOYEE GUIDANCE

This section will assist employees in understanding the procedures and expectations associated with telework at SF and will provide guidance when transitioning into a teleworking role.

The success of a telework arrangement depends largely on a realistic assessment of the home office environment and the employee's ability to successfully perform their duties in such an environment. Beginning with a self-assessment will help determine if telework is a good fit for you, your position, and your proposed teleworking space.

A. Telework Readiness (Self-Assessment)

- *General*
 - Are some or all of your duties conducive to telework in general and the level of telework proposed in the Telework Agreement?
 - Are you comfortable working independently?
 - Will you be able to maintain the same level of connection with coworkers, supervisors, and constituents?
 - Are you willing to be flexible about the arrangement and the needs of your supervisor and the department?
 - Are there job duties that cannot be fulfilled via telework?
 - Are students' needs going to be met at the same or increased level?
- *Self-Management*
 - Are you comfortable and able to work with minimal direct supervision?
 - Do you have sufficient work organization practices and planning skills conducive to teleworking?
 - Are you able to meet schedules, deadlines, and other obligations from a home/telework location?
- *Space/Environment*
 - Is the proposed telework office space conducive to performing your job duties?

- Are you able to perform your duties in a telework environment with limited disruption/interruption?
- Does the proposed telework space offer the appropriate amount of privacy needed to conduct College business and maintain confidentiality?
- Is your teleworking space safe and free of potential hazards?
- Do you have dependent and other familial care arrangements in place, as applicable?

• Technology

- Do you know how to access the SF VPN and/or remote desktop?
- Are you familiar with Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and other teleconferencing applications?
- Are you comfortable with other technologies that you would need to successfully telework?
- Are you willing to learn new technologies, if required, to telework?

B. Communication

It is essential that telework employees are able to effectively communicate with coworkers, supervisors, and any other relevant constituents (e.g., students, faculty/staff, stakeholders, etc.) during their scheduled working hours. Supervisors, coworkers, and constituents need to know how to contact the telework employee and know when (or if) to expect them in the office.

The standards and expectations for communication will be established in the formal Telework Agreement. Aside from determining communication channels and frequency, consider other issues such as:

- Backup: There will likely be instances where physical presence is required and a co-worker needs to step in.
- On-the-spot assistance: Teleworking employees may need someone who is physically in the main office to assist them, for instance, to fax or scan a document to them, or to look up information.

Etiquette and Tips:

- Keep your Outlook (or other department) calendars up to date to avoid confusion and breakdown in communication.
- Ensure technology and internet service are operating appropriately before any scheduled meetings.
- While teleworking, the same standards for professionalism apply as would while working on-site. Dress, appearance, background, etc. should reflect the standards maintained by your department on-site.
- When participating in meetings, ensure your teleworking space is free of disruptive sounds and lighting.

Commented [DA12]: AB/LF considering out of state employees

Per convo 1/21 not pursuing right now

Commented [PL13R12]: Andy and Lela, do we need legal research on this issue?

Commented [AB14R12]: @Patti Locascio @Lela Frye I believe as long as we are using E-staff we plan to continue the practice of hiring out of state staff through Tempforce/Spherion or the next awarded Temporary Agency.

Commented [LF15R12]: Beyond payroll processing, you would need to research employment laws specific to each state to determine what additional rules are required. A salary schedule change would also be required so adding out of state employees is beyond the telework guideline.

Commented [LF16R12]:

Commented [PL17R12]: See Section II above; added: Telework employees are expected to be Florida residents; any out-of-state arrangements are currently and will continue to be handled through a third party such as Spherion.

- Have your webcam/video on so that you can demonstrate you are present and engaged in the discussion.
- When you are not speaking, mute your microphone to avoid any feedback or other sound issues that may disrupt the call.
- Remember that meeting facilitators or attendees may not be able to see or adequately interpret your body language virtually to know that you have a question or would like to speak.
- Choose the most effective communication channels based on context and audience (e.g., email, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, phone call, etc.)
- Forward your office phone to a location where you will be accessible to answer it (i.e. home/cell phone, Google Phone, etc.)

Visit the [Federal Telework](#) website for more self-assessment questions, etiquette tips, and other tools related to readiness for teleworking. This section has adapted portions from this site.

IV. **SUPERVISOR GUIDANCE**

This section will assist supervisors in identifying employees and positions appropriate for telework and will support supervisors in the engagement and management of teleworking employees. Supervisors will be provided with training in connection with oversight of teleworking employees.

A. Telework Agreement

Supervisors are responsible for establishing the telework expectations and guidelines set forth in the Telework Agreement. As the supervisor, you set the tone for employees teleworking and should be familiar with all relevant policies, processes, and skills needed to successfully telework in your area.

B. Positions Suitable for Telework

Supervisors must first identify job categories and duties that can be performed in an alternate location. Some considerations include:

- Job requirements that accommodate working away from the office for one or more days each week.
- Predictable contact with other employees and "customers."
- Identifiable portions of the job which can be performed effectively outside of the office.
- Work that can be accomplished equally as well inside or outside of the office.

As a rule of thumb, if someone can close their office door for eight hours, without the need for face-to-face contact, then you might consider the job for telework. If someone can "cluster" their work into eight hours not requiring face-to-face contact, they may be a candidate for telework. In all cases, student-centeredness must continue to be the priority.

Commented [DA18]: Note for AB when policy finalized - add supervisor training around all of this

Commented [AB19R18]: @Lela Frye just placing on the radar.

Commented [LF20R18]: Absolutely need to get a training plan together. Would we also want to move any employees on telework to eSFTIME?

Commented [NB21R20]: @Lela Frye Great idea. eSFTIME will really help us move forward with telework.

C. Employees Suitable for Telework

Telework does not suit everyone. Careful selection and candid communication are essential elements in a successful telework program. Employees with the following characteristics generally make effective telework employees:

- Self-motivated
- Successful performance evaluations
- History of dependability
- Function independent of direct supervision
- Comfortable working independently
- Well-organized with good time management skills
- Able to communicate effectively
- Has an appropriate teleworking location that includes privacy and lack of distraction
- Has adequate level of job skills and knowledge

D. Support/Commitment

Supervisors must be willing to develop realistic performance goals for telework employees. The supervisor must support telework and adapt management styles to continue providing effective guidance. Telework is not a reduction of management/supervisory responsibility. Participation in a telework program requires a high level of communication and management skills.

E. Setting Expectations

Supervisors should set specific expectations for telework employees with regards to:

- Equipment and other supplies
- Work schedule and "down time"
- Telework duties v. in-person duties
- Performance standards and other assessments
- Communication

The above information should be clearly outlined in the approved Telework Agreement, but other internal processes, schedule, and deadlines should be detailed and clearly understood by the telework employee, supervisor, and any relevant staff (e.g., coworkers working in the office).

F. Communication

Set clear expectations in terms of the frequency and channels for communication (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Zoom, phone, etc.). Establish a schedule and identify techniques for staying in touch with telework employees and how best to keep abreast of their assignments/progress. Encourage communication between telework employees and their in-office coworkers. Telework employees should be accessible during their working hours and other members of the campus should know how to reach them.

G. Performance Standards

Identify and set clear standards of performance for telework assignments. The same management skills and expectations used to manage employees working in the office should apply to telework employees. Manage for performance and results instead of managing by observation. A common question is "how do I know when someone is working?". Effective managers do not equate presence with performance.

Some tips as it relates to identifying objectives and standards include:

- Review current job tasks and responsibilities.
- Establish measurable outcomes and deliverables.
- Specify who receives or monitors the outcomes and deliverables, and when interim checkpoints and due dates will occur.
- Use language that avoids subjectivity, vagueness, and interpretation. Be clear and specific to avoid misunderstandings about what is required.
- Link outcomes and deliverables to organizational goals. It is important that employees understand the importance of work functions in relationship to the organization's goals, mission, and services.

Things to avoid:

- Assigning telework employees more or less work than you normally would if they were in the office. Telework does not change an employee's job responsibilities, it just changes where the work is performed.
- Close supervision is not always good supervision. Effective supervision can be achieved without being close in proximity.

H. Feedback/Addressing Concerns

Supervisors should provide clear feedback often and regularly. It is recommended to schedule ongoing check-in meetings and evaluations and to adjust procedures and processes as needed. If performance problems occur, it is essential to discuss with the employee immediately. The issues may not necessarily be the results of the telework arrangement itself. If telework employees continue to perform unsatisfactorily, work with them to implement a solution. You can also reach out to Human Resources for assistance and guidance on establishing a plan for performance improvement. If necessary, the telework arrangement can be cancelled.

Feedback Tips:

- Be descriptive and avoid subjective language
- Prioritize feedback to address immediate concerns
- Give positive feedback; "praise in public, criticize in private"

I. Employee Engagement

Some concerns for telework employees are that they will have less visibility in the office and become less connected with the department. Supervisors can support telework employee engagement by participating in the following:

- Include the telework employees in office activities even when they are not there. For example, include them in departmental meetings or casual events (e.g., staff meetings, lunch meetings).
- Frequent communication with telework employees enables you, as the supervisor, to maintain the appropriate guidance and direction your employees need and expect.
- Engage in active listening and ensure your telework employees feel heard and valued.
- Ensure visibility. Take advantage of "opportunity assignments" and have the telework employees participate in those assignments. When the opportunity arises for presentations, be sure to include them.

This Administrative Guideline has adapted portions of the [University of North Florida's Remote Work Policy 4.0160P](#), as revised 5/24/2021.