

Ball State University
Telework & Flexible Work Arrangements
Guidelines for Professional and Staff Employees

Statement

Flexibility in the workplace is a business practice to manage people, time, space and workload more effectively and efficiently and responsively supports a variety of university goals related to recruitment and retention, sustainability, excellence, financial savings and well-being.

Ball State University will allow teleworking and other flexible work arrangements on a voluntary basis, to employees who hold positions that are conducive to these arrangements. This program is an employer option, not an employee right and is appropriate only when it results in a benefit to the institution and may be terminated at any time. In times of pandemic, supervisors are strongly encouraged to consider telework and flexible work arrangements.

Reason for Guidelines

The University provides guidance on various forms of workplace flexibility, balanced with required actions and legal concerns. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a framework to help supervisors and employees understand the principles and key components to consider to reach the personal and productive benefits of telework and flexible work arrangements and avoid potential downfalls since flexible work arrangements are not be suitable for all employees and/or positions. Employee requests for flexible work arrangements due to a health related issues are managed by University Human Resource Services and are not included in these guidelines. These guidelines do not apply to temporary or occasional work arrangements due to inclement weather or instances where the employee is approved to work from home for one to two days as these types of arrangements may be made by the supervisor on an as-needed basis. Flexible work arrangements generally last at least one month in duration.

The adoption of these guidelines is determined by each Vice President and does not automatically confer the right of a flexible work arrangement to employees. In addition, each Vice President may elect to implement additional guidelines beyond

those included in this document. In the case of a pandemic, natural disaster, or other extraordinary event, the University may provide separate guidance.

Guideline Principles

1. Document the scope of the arrangement and that the agreement may be modified or terminated at any time.
2. Establish Communication Expectations
3. Establish Performance Expectations
4. Ensure appropriate Technology & Data Security
5. Conditions of Employment

Forms of Flexible Work Arrangements

Flextime: Fixed start/end times that change periodically, along with consistent core hours, or the establishment of a regular schedule outside of regular business hours.

Alternate Arrival/Departure times: The core hours for a position are typically identified by a unit or department for a temporary or a consistent basis, and does not typically alter the total number of hours per week the employee works.

Compressed work: 40-hour work week compressed into fewer than five work days. This arrangement is only suitable for non-exempt employees, since exempt employees may regularly work beyond 40 hours and 5 days per week as employment arrangements are defined in terms of getting the job done versus working a set number of hours.

Reduction in Time Commitment

An employee may seek to reduce their time commitment to the university on a permanent or temporary basis to accommodate personal life transitions (e.g., preparing for retirement, pursuing a degree, etc.) Supervisors will consider the feasibility, duration of time, impact on duties, pay and benefits and determine if there are any university policies that may apply to the request.

Telecommuting or Remote work: a work arrangement in which some or all of the work is performed at an off-campus work site such as the home or in office space near home for a specified number of hours per week and for a preset, limited duration

Eligibility

While all professional and staff employees are eligible to request flexible work arrangements, not all positions or employees may be approved to participate in these programs. Employees with performance related issues as determined by the supervisor may not be granted telecommuting as an option.

Positions that require regular face-to-face contact with employees supervised, students, or members of the University community or public are likely not suited to telecommuting. Positions that require routine access to information or materials that are available only at the primary worksite are likely not suited for telecommuting either.

Process

Employee submits the request. Employees who desire to request a flexible work arrangement shall complete a Flexible Work Application and submit it to their supervisor.

The supervisor reviews the request. The request for a flexible work arrangement must meet the needs, requirements, and constraints of both the department and the employee. The decision to authorize flexible work is within management's discretion based on the nature of the work being performed and other business considerations. The supervisor will take into consideration:

- the nature of duties and overall ability to perform the primary duties
- the volume of work needed along with operational and customer needs of the department
- the type of communication needed for successful completion of duties, such as meetings, consultations, presentations, conferences, and other approved flexible work arrangements
- the applicant's demonstrated conscientiousness about work time and productivity, and their work habits, including their ability to be self-motivated with minimal face-to-face daily supervision

The supervisor may alter the request, with the employee's input, should the original request not meet the department's needs.

Approval begins with immediate supervisor and progresses to area Vice President. If the immediate supervisor approves the Flexible Work Application, it must be approved by the next level of supervision and submitted to the Vice President/Provost for final approval. The Flexible Work Application will include an agreement section

applicable to those approved for telecommuting in which the employee acknowledges that they will abide by established communication and performance expectations, comply with all general provisions and related IT policies. The arrangement does not alter an employee's work relationship with the University nor does it relieve an employee from the obligation to observe all applicable University rules, policies, and procedures. Existing terms and conditions of employment remain unless a substantial reduction in work hours is approved, then salary and benefits may be adjusted commensurate with reduction in work hours. The supervisor and employee will review the arrangement and make adjustments to address concerns/challenges. Ongoing reviews should be scheduled routinely with an annual documented review of the arrangement. The arrangement may be terminated at the supervisor's discretion. The final copy will be sent to University Human Resource Services and placed in the employee's personnel file.

Appeal Process. In the event the employee would like to appeal the supervisor's decision, they may submit their appeal to the next level supervisor and if necessary, would progress through the chain of command, with the Vice President as the final decision maker.

Contacts

University Human Resource Services 765-285-1834, humanresources@bsu.edu

Related Documents/Resources

Telework and Flexible Work [Application](#)

Telework Self-Certification [Safety Checklist](#)

[IT requirements for Telework](#)

[Flexible Work Arrangements website](#) and [FAQ's](#)

Telework Agreement Section of Flexible Work Application

Communication. While teleworking, the employee shall be reachable by telephone, chat, e-mail or other established methods during agreed-upon work hours. The employee and supervisor shall agree on expected turnaround time and the medium for responses.

Equipment. Home worksite furniture and equipment shall generally be provided by the teleworker. In the event that equipment and software is provided by BSU at the telework-site, such equipment and software shall be used exclusively by the teleworker and for the purposes of conducting official BSU business. Software shall not be unlawfully duplicated. If BSU provides equipment, the teleworker is responsible for safe transportation and set-up of such equipment.

Equipment liability. Ball State University will repair and maintain any loaned equipment. Surge protectors must be used with any BSU computer. The employee will be responsible for: any intentional damage to the equipment; damage resulting from negligence by the employee or any member or guest of the employee's household; damage resulting from a power surge if no surge protector is used; and maintaining the current virus protection for software.

BSU may pursue recovery from the teleworker for BSU property that is deliberately, or through negligence, damaged, destroyed, or lost while in the teleworker's care, custody or control. Damage or theft of BSU equipment that occurs outside the employee's control will be covered by BSU. Teleworkers should check their homeowner's/renter's insurance policy for incidental office coverage. BSU does not assume liability for loss, damage, or wear of employee-owned equipment.

Dependent Care. Telework is not a substitute for childcare or other dependent care. Teleworkers shall make or maintain childcare arrangements to permit concentration on work assignments.

Home Work Site. The teleworker must establish and maintain a dedicated workspace that is quiet, clean, and safe, with adequate lighting and ventilation. The teleworker will not hold in-person business visits or meetings with professional colleagues, customers, or the public at the home worksite.

Hours of Work. The teleworker will have regularly scheduled work hours agreed upon with the supervisor, including specific core hours and telephone accessibility. The

agreed upon work schedule shall comply with FLSA regulations and timekeeping requirements. Overtime work for a non-exempt employee must be pre-approved by the supervisor. The teleworker will attend job-related meetings, training sessions and conferences, as requested by supervisor. In addition, the teleworker may be requested to attend "short-notice" meetings. The supervisor will use telephone conference calling whenever possible as an alternative to requesting attendance at "short-notice" meetings.

Inclement Weather. If BSU is closed due to an emergency or inclement weather, the teleworker may continue to work at the telework-site. If there is an emergency at the telework-site, such as a power outage, the teleworker will notify the supervisor as soon as possible. The teleworker may be reassigned to the primary worksite or an alternate worksite.

Inspections. In case of injury, theft, loss, or tort liability related to telework, the teleworker must allow agents of BSU to investigate and/or inspect the telework site.

Injuries. The employee will be covered by workers' compensation for job related injuries that occur in the designated workspace, including the teleworker's home, during the defined work period. In the case of injury occurring during the defined work period, the employee shall immediately report the injury to Employee Relations. Workers' compensation will not apply to non-job related injuries that might occur in the home. BSU does not assume responsibility for injury to any persons other than the teleworker at the telework-site.

Intellectual Property. Products, documents, and records developed while teleworking are the property of BSU.

Network Access. BSU is committed to supporting telework by supporting network access to remote locations. However, network access is not guaranteed. Teleworkers are responsible for providing and paying for their own internet and phone service at their telework site.

Office Supplies. Out-of-pocket expenses for supplies normally available in the office will not be reimbursed.

Personal Business. Telework employees shall not perform personal business during hours agreed upon as work hours.

Policies. BSU policies, rules and practices shall apply at the telework site, including those governing communicating internally and with the public, employee rights and responsibilities, facilities and equipment management, financial management, information resource management, purchasing of property and services, and safety. Failure to follow policy, rules and procedures may result in termination of the telework arrangement and/or disciplinary action.

Record Retention. Products, documents and records that are used, developed, or revised while teleworking shall be copied or restored to BSU's computerized record system. Whenever possible, all telework related information shall be stored in a directory designated for telework and this information shall be backed up on university-supported file storage systems, such as your university Box or OneDrive account.

Security. Security and confidentiality shall be maintained by the teleworker at the same level as expected at all worksites. Restricted access or confidential material shall not be taken out of the primary worksite or accessed through a computer unless approved in advance by the supervisor. All remote access to university data must be in accordance with Information Technology policies, as described in this policy. The teleworker is responsible to ensure that non-employees do not access BSU data, either in print or electronic form.

Taxes. A home office is not an automatic tax deduction. Teleworkers should consult with a tax expert to examine the tax implications of a home office.

Travel. The teleworker will not be paid for time or mileage involved in travel between the telework-site and the primary worksite.

Worksite. Telework-sites that are not in Indiana must be reported to Payroll Services, as there may be work tax implications.

IT Policy section of Flexible Work Agreement

All remote work must adhere to the university's requirements for [data security](#) and as well as the [IT user's privileges and responsibilities policy](#) and information security requirements outlined in the [Keep Teaching and Working](#) guide. In particular, all remote workers must agree to:

- At no time provide their password to anyone, including family members. Note that Help Desk employees will never ask for a Remote User's password. Lock your workstation before leaving your workstation unattended, even you expect your time away to be brief.
- Abide by [Data Handling Guidelines](#) for protecting and controlling sensitive or restricted information in hardcopy and electronic format.
- Understand and abide by the University's [Information Technology Users' Privileges and Responsibility Policy](#). Work with your supervisor to consider these privileges and responsibilities when establishing use of this remote work agreement.
- Follow [the Data Management Procedures and Governance Structure, Authentication And Access Control Standards](#) and any additional guidelines issued by my department or Information Technology.
- Understand and adhere to the [Technology Data Management Procedures and Governance Structure](#).