

TELEWORK POLICY

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Frostburg State University (FSU) recognizes telework opportunities may be mutually beneficial to university operations and to our staff. FSU also acknowledges that not all positions are conducive for a telework plan, nor is telework an ideal option for some staff. FSU considers telework an opportunity to be a viable, flexible work option determined by the employee's specific role or assignments.

II. PURPOSE FOR POLICY

This Policy establishes teleworking procedures consistent with the state of Maryland Teleworking Program. FSU's telework policy provides alternative work arrangements and allow eligible employees to work at remote workplaces under appropriate circumstances.

This Policy provides an overview for Telework as a potential opportunity appropriate for specific functions and eligible employees.

III. ELIGIBILITY

The determination regarding the suitability of a position, eligibility of an employee to telework, or approval of an employee's participation in telework resides with management. It will be based on the duties of the employee's position, FSU's business/operational needs, and the employee's ability to fulfill his or her responsibilities as a teleworker.

Positions that will be considered for a Telework agreement include but are not limited to the following:

1. Where activities can be efficiently and effectively performed from an alternate worksite other than the traditional worksite location.
2. Contact with other employees and customers is predictable and can be scheduled.
3. Security of data can be protected from the alternate worksite.
4. The technology needed to perform the job offsite is currently available.
5. Cyclical¹ work does not present a problem.
6. Customer contact can be readjusted to allow for timely responsive communications.
7. The use of photocopies, fax machines, or other specialized equipment can be scheduled for days the employee is in the office.

¹ Cyclical work entails job responsibilities that may require teleworking employees to work on campus during "busy seasons," e.g., financial aid.

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Employees who will be considered for a Telework agreement have demonstrated traits that include but are not limited to the following:

1. Telework employees must maintain a satisfactory performance record of at least “Meets Expectations” in all categories on their performance record.
2. No disciplinary actions in the employee’s file for infractions that occurred during the previous two (2) years (except that management may consider serious infractions that occurred more than two (2) years prior).
3. Demonstrated ability to work with limited supervision or correction.
4. In times of public health emergency in which the University President (or designee) determines that telework is appropriate, the above requirements will normally be lifted during the emergency.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- a) **Eligible Employee:** An employee in a job identified as suitable for a telework plan who does not currently have an active disciplinary action, has received at least a “Meets Expectations” in all categories of their most recent two years of performance reviews (PMP).
- b) **Official/On-site Location:** The official worksite is the regular on-campus worksite for the employee's position at FSU or USMH.
- c) **Approved Telework Location:** A worksite other than the Main Workplace/Office. The location of the official worksite for an employee is agreed upon and documented in the Telework Agreement (e.g., the location of his or her home, telework center, or other alternate work sites from which the employee works).
- d) **Telework:** The term 'telework' refers to a work flexibility arrangement under which an employee performs the duties and responsibilities of such employee's position and other authorized activities from an approved telework location other than the employee's official/on-site location where he/she would otherwise work.
- e) **Teleworking:** An approved arrangement of a duration of time, Hybrid or Regular, where the employee completes their tasks and assignments from the approved Telework location.
- f) **Teleworker:** an Eligible Employee who is approved to regularly Telework according to this Policy.
- g) **Hybrid Telework:** A hybrid telework agreement involves the employee working both on-site and at the approved alternate telework location.
- h) **Regular Telework:** The employee teleworks on a regularly scheduled basis entirely remote at an approved location.
- i) **Telework agreement:** A Telework Agreement is a mandatory document agreed upon between the institution and the employee outlining the work to be performed at a location other than the traditional worksite and includes the terms and conditions required for participation in a Regular or Hybrid telework Agreement.

V. PROCEDURES

An employee who is hired or a current employee whose position has been determined to be a full-time eligible Telework role will be classified as a "Regular" Teleworker and will be required to complete the "Regular" Telework Agreement. Employees not classified as "Regular" teleworkers but who desire to have part-time telework options will be required to complete the "Hybrid" telework request form. Telework Agreements/request forms will include the following:

1. A work schedule that specifies telework days and hours of work.
2. The authorized telework location details.
3. Explanation of the process/timeframe for requesting approval for a temporary or permanent change to the telework location (e.g., during travel or a change of residency out of the state of Maryland).
4. Required methods of communication specific to telework (e.g., conferencing software, phone, email, etc.).
5. Responsibility for telework equipment.
6. Circumstances requiring on-site attendance, if applicable.
7. Outline work expectations and explanation of the methods that will be in place for assessing productivity.
8. A signed statement certifying the employee's acknowledgment/agreement to maintain a safe work environment.
9. Relevant attestations regarding applicable policy considerations.

VI. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

- a) Teleworking does not change the conditions of employment.
- b) Employees working at an approved telework location must comply with all FSU, University System of Maryland (USM), and federal, state, and agency laws, policies, and regulations.

VII. REGULAR WORK HOURS

1. The direct supervisor will determine the teleworker's regular work hours and accessibility to other FSU staff.
2. The employee's Telework schedule may be revised or rescinded by the respective Vice President at any time, to meet the needs of the unit, such as in-person coverage or changing workload/assignments, or to address issues involving the completion of assignments, productivity, or performance. An employee will receive at least fourteen (14) calendar days' notice of such change.
3. The teleworker must complete his/her timesheet within the established guidelines set forth by FSU.

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4. Telework is not intended to serve as a substitute for child or adult care or to perform other personal business during work hours.
5. Telework is not intended to be used in place of annual, sick, family & medical leave, or other types of leave.
6. Requests to use leave or overtime must be approved in advance by the immediate supervisor.
7. Time and attendance procedures are recorded in the same manner as when working at the Official/On-site location (i.e., in accordance with existing departmental procedures).
8. If campus operations are altered due to weather conditions, the following applies:
 - a. Regular and hybrid teleworkers scheduled to work remotely will follow their regular schedule.
 - b. Hybrid teleworkers scheduled to work on campus will follow the same process as on campus employees.

VIII. EQUIPMENT

The University will not be responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, or any other incidental costs (e.g. utilities, insurance, internet access, printer supplies, telephone, employee's equipment) incurred by employees that are associated with working at the alternate work location. Employees will be responsible for any damage to or loss of University property. Employees may be provided with University-owned equipment (e.g. laptop and monitor) to utilize at the alternate work location for University purposes and authorized use only. Employees are responsible for protecting University-owned equipment from theft, damage, and unauthorized use.

IX. SUPPLIES

Employees agree to obtain from their official/on-site location all supplies needed to work at their approved telework location. Any out-of-pocket expenses for supplies regularly available at the on-site location will not be reimbursable unless preapproved by the University.

X. RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

Questions or concerns regarding this Policy or applicability should be referred to the Office of Human Resources.

XI. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

1. FSU Telework Policy
2. FSU Telework Agreement
3. FSU Telework Self-Certification Safety Checklist