

# **Telework Program Policy and Request Form**

Kentucky Wesleyan College

With proper approval, Kentucky Wesleyan College will allow employees to telework (also known as telecommuting). Here, telework is an arrangement where an employee works from an off-campus location. The most common alternate location for telework is the employee's home. The anticipated benefits of this program include increased job satisfaction, reduced absenteeism, increased employee retention, and an improved work-life balance. These must be balanced against the possible disadvantages, such as lack of direction and supervision, inadequate resources, and lack of access.

Teleworking is a tool to allow some flexibility in work location and perhaps work time. Teleworking does not change the terms or conditions of employment or alter the employee's work relationship with the College. The teleworker's compensation, benefits, and job responsibilities do not change as a result of teleworking. Telework is not a guarantee or contract of employment and does not alter the at-will status of staff employees.

Teleworking employees are subject to the same policies, procedures, rules, and regulations as on-campus College employees. These include, but are not limited to, the Employee Handbook, Business Policies and Procedures, Information Technology Policy Handbook, and the Intellectual Property Policy.

## **Availability**

Not all positions or employees are a good fit for telework. The position, the duties, and the employee will be evaluated for telework on an individual and case-by-case basis. Examples of tasks and qualities that are a better fit for telework include: information that can be easily transmitted electronically, minimal confidentiality concerns, limited face-to-face interaction or on-campus presence required, productivity can be easily measured and monitored, history of solid performance and job knowledge, strong communication skills across various media, strong organizational and time-management skills, self-motivated and self-disciplined, ability to work with minimal supervision, and no disciplinary issues.

Telework is not a right; it is a prerogative of the College. The telework program is equitable, meaning that employees will be considered based on whether their position, responsibilities, and personal characteristics are compatible with telework. This differs from equality, where all employees have the same access to telework regardless of what they do. While some positions are conducive to a telework arrangement, other positions simply are not.

Telework is not a substitute for dependent or elder care. If individuals needing care are at the alternate work location during work time, another person must be present to provide the care. In very limited situations, the employee may request that the supervisor waive this restriction.

## **Scheduling**

There are different levels of telework. For full-time telework, the employee rarely if ever works on campus. For part-time telework, the employee works part of the time on campus and part of

the time off campus based on a set schedule. Part-time telework can be regular telework, where an employee has a consistent mix of telework and working onsite (e.g., teleworking one day a week and on campus four days a week), or occasional telework, where an employee always works on campus except during specific, employer-approved situations. Some telework arrangements may be short-term while others may be on going.

A telework arrangement does not necessarily alter the employee's work schedule. It may just alter the location where the work is performed. The specific work schedule will be documented in the Telework Request Form. Teleworking employees must be available for communication and contact during telecommuting hours the same as they would be if working on campus.

### **Approval Process**

To make a request to telework, the employee completes the Telework Request Form. The employee should review and reference the job functions on their position description when completing the request and should submit the description with the request. The employee should submit the request to the supervisor. The supervisor will review the form and decide on a course of action. This can vary and may include approving the form, requesting additional information, making changes to the form, and declining the request.

The form must be signed by the employee, supervisor, and Cabinet Officer to be approved. Telework may not begin before it is approved. Employees attempting to or performing telework without prior approval and approval will be subject to disciplinary action. If a telework request is not approved, there is no right to appeal or file a grievance on that decision.

### **Review Process**

To monitor the progress and results of a telework plan, periodic reviews are required. Telework arrangements will be evaluated after one month of telework. If this initial review is negative, the arrangement may be altered or discontinued. If the review is positive, the arrangement may continue. Thereafter, ongoing telework arrangements will be reviewed every three months and adjusted as necessary. The primary focus of these reviews will be the telework arrangement and are in addition to the regular Staff Development and Performance Review process. However, if an employee's telework reviews are positive over a one-year period, they may be combined with the annual Staff Development and Performance Review.

### **Alteration or Termination of an Approved Request**

If an employee requests a change to a telework arrangement, the request must be approved by the supervisor in advance. Documentation of the request and its approval must be forwarded to Human Resources to attach to the original form.

If an employee approved for telework accepts a different position with the College, the telework arrangement will end unless a new telework request is approved under the supervisor of the new position. This remains true even if the supervisor is the same for both positions.

If a telecommuting arrangement is negatively affecting work performance, service, the department, or the College, the supervisor and employee should make a good faith effort to

resolve the situation. However, if the problem cannot be resolved, the supervisor has a responsibility to terminate the telework arrangement.

The College may discontinue a telework agreement at any time with or without cause. The employee will be notified of such termination in writing by the supervisor. Whenever possible, the employee will be given a two-week notice to prepare to return to a full on-campus schedule. If mutually agreed, a shorter notice period may be used. The College may terminate the telework agreement without notice for a violation of College policy, a violation of the teleworking agreement or policy, or if there is a relevant change in College policy or law. The College will not be held responsible for costs, damages, or losses to the employee resulting from termination of the telework agreement.

The employee may terminate a telework agreement unless it was a condition of employment. The employee must notify the College of such termination in writing and, whenever possible, provide a two-week notice. If mutually agreed, a shorter notice period may be used. The College will not be held responsible for costs, damages, or losses to the employee resulting from termination of the telework arrangement.

### **Alternate Work Location**

The employee is responsible for the establishment and costs of a suitable workspace at the alternate work location (e.g., remodeling, repairs, furniture, etc.). The workspace must be appropriate for work performed, safe, and free from hazards and disruptions. The employee is responsible for compliance with any state, county, or local zoning regulations and with any rental agreements. The College will not be responsible for any household expenses, operating costs, or home maintenance (e.g., electricity, heating, telephone, internet service, homeowner's insurance, etc.) or for any damage to the employee's personal or real property. Employees are solely responsible for any tax consequences related to telework.

The employee must allow visits by a College representative to the alternate work location if requested. Visits may be conducted to install, maintain, or inspect equipment or to inspect the workspace for suitability and safety. Two weeks advance notice will be given although the employee may agree to a shorter notice. In the event of a work-related injury, a visit may be conducted immediately and without notice. The employee cannot hold work-related, face-to-face meetings at a private telework location, such as a home or an apartment.

Teleworking employees are required to visit the College campus as noted in the approved request. Additionally, an employee must report to campus upon the supervisor's request. Employees will be given as much advance notice as feasible under the circumstances given.

The College may provide some of the equipment and technology needed for the alternate worksite, which should be listed on the form. College-approved antivirus software must be installed and in use on any computing device. An employee must immediately report any damage to College equipment to his or her supervisor. The maintenance and repair of College-owned equipment will be the responsibility of the College and will require the teleworking employee to bring the equipment to campus or to a College-selected service provider. College

equipment should be used by the employee only and only for business purposes. An employee will be responsible for any equipment or software that is lost, stolen, or damaged because of the employee's negligence, misuse, or abuse. If the telework agreement or employment is discontinued or if requested, all College-owned property (e.g., equipment, files, records, papers, etc.) must be returned immediately to the College. If it is not, the employee agrees to reimburse the College for the replacement value of the property.

The employee may provide some of the equipment and technology needed for the alternate work location. The maintenance and repair of employee-owned equipment will be the responsibility of the employee. The College will not be liable for such equipment or its repair or replacement, even if the employee was performing College-related work at the time of malfunction.

The employee must maintain the security and confidentiality of College records and information. Employees must ensure that others do not access or have access to this information.

The College will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) for completion of job responsibilities or will authorize the employee to purchase such. The employee must get approval for all business-related expenses before purchasing.

Injuries that occur while an employee is working at an alternate work location will be covered by workers' compensation insurance only if the injury is work-related, occurs while the employee is performing work for pay in the designated location and workspace during work hours, and the injury is directly related to the performance of work rather than to the general home environment or other setting. Work-related injuries must be reported within 24 hours of occurrence. The College is not be liable for injuries to nonemployees at the alternate work location.

### **Other Considerations**

Exempt or nonexempt status: Due to the nature of being exempt from overtime concerns, exempt positions have more flexibility in work scheduling than nonexempt employees. However, telework arrangement for such positions must still follow this telework policy.

If a telework request is approved for a nonexempt employee, the standard number of hours in a workweek must be followed. Hours worked must be documented on the timesheet. Any overtime must be authorized in advance by the supervisor. Telework may not cause or contribute to the need for overtime or the hiring of additional employees.

Campus closings: If the College campus is closed for weather-related or emergency reasons, a teleworker scheduled to work at an off-campus location will work from that location as scheduled. He or she will not be eligible for "emergency pay" or for additional PTO as indicated in the College's Weather-related and Emergency Class Cancellations or Campus Closing policy.

## Telework Request Form

The Telework Request Form is to document the telework terms and to ensure that the supervisor and the employee have a clear, shared understanding of the employee's telework arrangement. Add additional pages if needed.

Review and reference the position description when completing the request. Submit the job description with the request.

### EMPLOYEE SECTION

Employee name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position title: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Regular work schedule: \_\_\_\_\_

Telework start date: \_\_\_\_\_

Telework end date: \_\_\_\_\_

Off campus work schedule (days, times, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

On campus work schedule (days, times, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Justification for request: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telework location: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the workspace at the location: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Job duties to be performed by telework: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Job duties that cannot be performed by telework: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Performance measures and expectations: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Methods of communication: \_\_\_\_\_

---

How often (frequency) will contact with the supervisor be required? \_\_\_\_\_

---

How often (frequency) will contact with the department be required? \_\_\_\_\_

---

If telework is to be full-time, when will on-campus attendance be required (if known)? \_\_\_\_\_

---

Equipment, software, technology, etc. to be provided by the College: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Equipment, software, technology, etc. to be provided by the employee: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Other information or details related to this request: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Employee signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERVISOR SECTION

- Telework request is: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ approved
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ approved with the modifications noted on the form
  - 3. \_\_\_\_\_ not approved due to a request for additional information
  - 4. \_\_\_\_\_ not approved

Comments, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: Please forward an approved request (#1 or #2) to the Cabinet Officer. Please return a declined request (#3 or #4) to the employee.

CABINET OFFICER SECTION

- Telework request is: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ approved
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ approved with the modifications noted on the form
  - 3. \_\_\_\_\_ not approved due to a request for additional information
  - 4. \_\_\_\_\_ not approved

Comments, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Cabinet Officer signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cabinet Officer: Please forward an approved request (#1 or #2) to Human Resources. Please return a declined request (#3 or #4) to the employee. HR will provide a copy of approved requests to the employee and to the supervisor.