

Minnesota State University, Mankato University Policy	
Policy Name: Telework	Effective Date of Last Review:
Custodian of Policy: Director of Human Resources	Date of Last Review: September 2023
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POLICY

Minnesota State University, Mankato supports the practice of telecommuting when it is mutually beneficial to employee, student, and employer.

Telecommuting is the practice that combines the use of an employee's residence or other remote workspace with their current work location, on a regular schedule, such as one or more days per week. The terms telecommuting and telework are used interchangeably for the purposes of this policy.

Intermittent, short-term work assignments for an employee to work at home are not considered telecommuting under the guidelines of this policy.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

CONDITIONS

- A. Positions appropriate for telecommuting are designated by supervisors and it is in their discretion whether or not an employee telecommutes.
- B. Telecommuting is voluntary and may be terminated at any time by management or the employee with or without cause. Whenever practical, a minimum of 30 days' notice will be provided by either party initiating the termination of the teleworking agreement.
- C. Agreements must be reviewed annually.
- D. The telework arrangement must be reviewed if any of the following occur: 1) A permanent change in employee job duties; 2) A change in positions; or 3) A change in any of the provisions of the telework arrangement.

- E. All state laws, MinnState board policies and University policies apply. Failure to comply may result in the loss of telecommuting and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- F. Duties, obligations, responsibilities, and conditions of employment with the Minnesota State Mankato remain unchanged.
- G. Provisions of collective bargaining agreements and unrepresented employment plans remain in effect.
- H. Telecommuters who work at home must make alternative arrangements for dependent and/or elder care, as they would for days they report for work to the office location.
- I. Telecommuters must be available by telephone during agreed upon work hours.
- J. Travel time between the alternate work site and the designated primary work location shall not be considered as compensable hours. Mileage between the alternate work site and the primary work location is not reimbursable.
- K. Telecommuters and their supervisors shall be available to participate in studies to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and attend any related training.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Supervisors are responsible for designating the positions, if any, in their work units that are eligible for telecommuting. Supervisors should consider the following factors when determining eligibility:

1. Ability to meet the customer needs via telecommuting
2. Ability to fulfill the needs of the agency and work unit
3. Ability to achieve the position purpose and work duties
4. Availability of adequate supervision for telecommuters
5. Ability to measure the work performed
6. Effect of the telecommuting on other employees in the work unit.
7. Availability of equipment needed to enable telecommuting
8. Provisions of the appropriate collective bargaining unit/plan
9. FLSA status of the position

After supervisors designate which positions in the work unit are eligible for telecommuting, they shall determine which employees in the designated positions are eligible candidates. Supervisors should consider the following factors in this determination:

1. Employee's current and past job performance and conduct

2. Employees demonstrated work skills in time management, organization, self-motivation, and ability to work independently
3. Employee's attendance record

Seniority shall not be a basis for selecting employees to participate in the telecommuting program.

WORK SCHEDULE

The supervisor and telecommuter shall determine the work schedule including telecommuting workdays, hours, and core hours and note them in the telecommuting agreement. Changes to the schedule must be reviewed and approved by the supervisor in advance.

The work schedule and hours of work must be consistent with the requirements of the collective bargaining agreement or plan.

Telecommuters must attend all work-related meetings either remotely or by travel to assigned office, depending on the supervisor's direction and in accordance with regular expectations and departmental practices for in-person meeting attendance. This may include emergency meetings scheduled with short notice to the employee.

Telecommuters must notify their supervisor if they leave their alternate work site during core telecommuting hours.

WEATHER EMERGENCIES

Generally, a telecommuter who is scheduled to, or has the ability to, work at their home office on a day declared as a weather emergency is expected to work as scheduled in accordance with Board Policy 4.4. Please refer to Board Policy for additional guidance for weather related closure procedures

EQUIPMENT

Minnesota State Mankato, at its sole discretion, may provide equipment and related supplies for use by the telecommuter at his/her alternate site or may permit the use of employee-owned equipment and supplies. Equipment and supplies provided to the employee are not to be used for any purpose other than official business.

Minnesota State Mankato is responsible for maintenance and repair of state-owned equipment. Telecommuters are responsible for the maintenance and repair of personal equipment.

Telecommuters must return state equipment, software, products, documents, and data if they terminate their employment with University, go on an extended leave of absence, or if the telecommuting agreement is ended.

Telecommuters are responsible for promptly notifying their supervisor of an equipment malfunction or failure of either state-owned or employee-owned equipment. If the malfunction prevents the employee from performing the assigned tasks, the employee must notify the supervisor immediately and may be assigned to perform different tasks and/or be required to report to an alternate work location.

SECURITY

Equipment, software, documents, reports and data created because of work activities are owned by Minnesota State Mankato. All parties must guarantee the safety and security of data. Please refer to Board Policy 5.23 – Security and Privacy of Information Resources and the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

Equipment, software, data, supplies and furniture provided by the University for use at the remote work site are for purposes of conducting Minnesota State Mankato's business and may not be used for personal use of the employee or non-Minnesota State Colleges and Universities employees. Please refer to Board Policy 5.22 and Statewide Policy: Acceptable Use of Electronic Communication and Technology.

SAFETY AND LIABILITY

Employees must designate a remote workspace subject to the approval of their supervisor.

An employee is covered by Minnesota Workers' Compensation laws while in telecommuting status. Any injury that occurs within the course and scope of employment must be reported according to state and federal reporting requirements. For the purposes of Workers' Compensation, the employee's designated home work site is considered an extension of state work site only during scheduled telecommuting working hours.

The employee's designated at-home workspace is considered an extension of the state agency during the agreed upon work hours and the employee is subject to the same standards of conduct and workplace rules required of non-telecommuting employees.

Minnesota State Mankato does not assume responsibility for third party injuries or property damage that may occur at the home residence or with the designated at-home workspace. Business meetings may not be held at home work sites.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES, REPORTABILITY AND COMMUNICATION

The telecommuter's performance will be measured by objectives and results and will not differ from what is expected of individuals who report to work at the permanent work locations. These measurable objectives will be mutually agreed upon by the supervisor and the telecommuter and will be stated in writing prior to the start of the telecommuting schedule and included in the telecommuting agreement.

Reporting relationships will not differ from what is expected of non-telecommuting employees.

Telecommuters and their supervisors are expected to develop a communication plan that documents the frequency and method of communication and the type of technology required for the telecommuter to interface with students, customers, the office and the co-workers. This plan must be included in the telecommuting agreement.

EXPENSES

Prior approval must be obtained from the supervisor for expenses incurred. Approved expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with existing University policies.

Supplies needed for remote workspace should be obtained through the normal supply procurement procedures for the University.

Reimbursement for travel expenses will be based on the telecommuter's primary work location as determined by the telecommuting agreement. Unless otherwise stated in the bargaining agreement, mileage and parking are not reimbursable expenses for on-site meetings.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SERVICES FOR REMOTE ACCESS

The following services will be supported:

- Assistance accessing enterprise systems and services such as the Microsoft Office 365 portal, D2L Brightspace, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Adobe Creative Cloud, and more.
- Off-site use of Minnesota State Mankato-provided hardware and software in accordance with the Minnesota State Mankato Service Catalogue and with supervisor's approval.
- Technical support for all University-owned hardware, software, and applications using remote techniques and tools.

The following services are NOT supported:

- Support for internet/network access, services and devices not supplied or owned by Minnesota State Mankato including but not limited to home networks, routers, modems, range extenders, access points, public WIFI access, etc.
- Support of non-University issued hardware devices and peripherals.
- Support for any software that is not owned, supplied, or distributed by Minnesota State Mankato and is not included in the Minnesota State Mankato Service Catalogue.
- Logging of staff time while using the service for the purpose of tracking employee performance.

Desktop Support Services team members will be available at the Mankato campus location during regular business hours to provide support as needed. Telecommuters should follow standard process by submitting a Service Request to report issues or request assistance.

PROCEDURES

- A. Supervisor identifies positions appropriate for telecommuting.
- B. Employee completes a Telecommuting Agreement form and submits to supervisor.
- C. Supervisor works with employee to develop measurable objectives for monitoring and evaluating performance and includes this information on the Telecommuting Agreement.
- D. Supervisor and employee develop a communication plan that describes frequency and method(s) of communication required and includes this information on Telecommuting Agreement.
- E. The employee and supervisor sign the Telecommuting Agreement.
- F. Divisional vice president reviews and signs the Telecommuting Agreement.
- G. Human Resources staff review, sign form and return copies to the employee, supervisor, and employee file.

APPEAL:

An employee may appeal a supervisor's decision by requesting a review by the divisional vice president and director of human resources. The determination by the divisional vice president and director of human resources is final.