Human Resources | One Washington Square | San José, CA 95192-0046 | 408-924-2250 408-924-1701 (fax)

Telecommuting FAQ's

1. **What classifications qualify for this benefit?**
   A. Telecommuting is only feasible for those job duties that can be performed away from the campus. ("Purpose" pg. 1)

2. **Can a person in probationary status qualify?**

   A. It is not recommended as training and acclimation to the office culture may be critical during this early period.

3. **Can telecommuting be made part of a hiring package?**

   A. Yes. Those instances may be considered when there are opportunities for improved operational performance, reduced commuting miles or to facilitate the potential for University savings. ("Purpose" pg. 1 and "Policy Guidelines: Telecommuting Agreement" pg. 2)

4. **Is occasional telecommuting (1 or 2 random days per month) allowable?**

   A. It is not recommended as the Telecommuter must sign a Telecommuting Agreement that specifies the length of the agreement as well as the telecommuting schedule. ("Policy Guidelines: Telecommuting Agreement" pg. 2 and "Policy Guidelines: Telecommuting Schedule" pg. 3) Ad hoc instances due to reorganization specific circumstances are to be determined by the appropriate administrator.

5. **Is one day per week as the usual telecommuting agreement allowable?**

   A. Yes. A Telecommuter must sign a Telecommuting Agreement that specifies the length of the agreement as well as the telecommuting schedule. ("Policy Guidelines: Telecommuting Agreement" pg. 2)

6. **Can a MPP with staff supervision duties telecommute?**

   A. These cases will be considered on a case by case basis by the employee's appropriate administrator and the Associate Vice President/Dean. The appropriate administrator will consider all relevant factors with regards to the request, including but not limited to the suitability of the position for telecommuting as well as analyzing risk factors associated with telecommuting. ("Policy Guidelines: Positions Suitable for Telecommuting and Approval Process for Telecommuting" pg. 2)

7. **Can a condition for approving telecommuting be that the employee has above or superior work performance as reflected in evaluations?**

   A. Yes. Management has the discretion to determine if telecommuting is feasible based on operational needs and performance. Telecommuting is not suitable for all employees and/or positions. Telecommuters must be self-motivated, their job responsibilities must have minimal requirements for face-to-face daily supervision, and they must have demonstrated conscientious observance of work hours and productivity requirements. ("Policy Guidelines: 2. Positions Suitable for Telecommuting" pg 2)

8. **Would certain days be "off limits" to telecommuting (such as regular department staff meeting days, division meeting days, department head meeting days, campus wide event/meeting days)?**

   A. Yes. A specific work schedule will be stated in the Telecommuter's Agreement that includes that exceptions will be made when an employee's attendance is required for an office function or activity. ("Policy Guidelines: 10. Telecommuting Schedule" pg. 3)

9. **Would it be wise to do trial/test cases of telecommuting to see how it goes, say for 3 months?**

   A. Pilot or temporary programs may be helpful in determining what type of arrangements will be most effective. ("Purpose" pg. 1)

10. **Are there differences in how exempt and nonexempt employees are treated in regards to telecommuting?**

    A. Yes. Non-exempt employees must be available between department work hours and their time is accountable on an hourly basis. A non-exempt Telecommuter shall not work overtime without prior written approval from his/her appropriate administrator. Exempt employees are expected to complete their work and should be available during department work hours. ("Policy Guidelines: Overtime" pg. 6)

11. **Is sick time treated differently since a person could work from home while taking care of a sick child, parent, or self?**

    A. No. Telecommuting is not a substitute for dependent care or medical leave or caring for an ill family member. Telecommuters are expected to perform the full functions and range of their position description. Telecommuters are required to make arrangements for dependent care during the agreed-upon work hours. ("Policy Guidelines: No Dependent or Medical Care" pg. 6)

12. **How is the home environment determined to be safe, adequate...etc?**

    A. The telecommuter completes and signs a self assessment form. The Telecommuter shall designate an off-site workspace that is quiet, free of distractions, and kept in a clean, professional, and safe condition, with adequate lighting and ventilation. ("Policy Guidelines: Equipment and Designated Workspace" pg. 4)

13. **How is a workplace accident handled if a person is working from home?**

    A. The person is covered by workers' compensation and he/she must report the accident immediately to his appropriate administrator. This is the same process as followed on campus. The University has a right to conduct an on-site inspection of the workspace in the event of a workers' compensation claim. ("Policy Guidelines: Right to Inspect and Off-Site Maintenance Costs" pg. 5)