

UT Health Science Center: HR0485-H Hybrid and Remote Work Arrangements	
Version 2	Publication Date: 02/16/2024

OBJECTIVE

To provide guidelines and standards for the establishment of remote and hybrid work arrangements either requested by regular, temporary, or student employees in an active pay status or when required by the UT Health Science Center (UTHSC). As the only public health science center in the state of Tennessee, UTHSC is a dynamic environment for students, faculty, staff, and administrators. While on-campus work is preferred, a hybrid work arrangement and, in some special circumstances, a fully remote work arrangement, can create benefits for both the University and its employees. The benefits may include increased productivity and performance, more effective space utilization, employee recruitment and retention advantages, and better job satisfaction.

WHO IS AFFECTED?

Regular and temporary employees.

Definitions:

Hybrid Work is defined as working from an assigned campus work location for a minimum number of days during a workweek and from an off-site location for the remaining workdays of the week on a regular basis. While working from an off-site location, eligible employees who are approved in advance for hybrid work are expected to work the same general hours that they were originally hired to work, or as specified or required in the work plan for their position, and to perform their responsibilities as they otherwise would at a campus work location.

Remote Work is defined as working from an off-site location all days of the week on a regular basis. Employees approved for a fully remote arrangement must work the same general hours they were originally hired to work, and to perform their responsibilities as they otherwise would if they were at an on-campus work location. An employee approved for remote work may also be required, at times, to attend meetings or work at a campus work location as directed by a supervisor or as operationally necessary.

Good Standing is defined as any employee who is not currently under a form of discipline.

ELIGIBILITY

When evaluating a remote or hybrid work request, supervisors should consider the specific position requirements, the impact on the office or department team, the employee's performance, and whether the employee can effectively perform the duties of the position while away from campus.

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Position Considerations

A position's suitability for hybrid or remote work will be based on operational needs and the responsibilities and duties of the role. An eligible position is one in which most of the duties can be completed away from campus or provide a significant advantage in being completed away from campus. There should be minimal bearing on others in the office or department or students from not having this position on campus. Positions that perform essential campus services will generally not be eligible for hybrid or remote work. Generally, positions at the Assistant Director level and above will not be eligible for remote or hybrid work unless specifically approved by the Area Vice Chancellor or Dean and the Office of Human Resources.

Employee Considerations

An employee's readiness for hybrid or remote work should be considered. Some employees may be better prepared to manage the requirements of these arrangements. When evaluating a request, supervisors should consider the employee's performance in the workplace. Strong performance in the following areas could indicate an employee's readiness for remote work: ability to prioritize work and meet deadlines, effective time management, ability to accomplish duties with minimal supervision, effective communication with internal and external parties, strong organization, self-motivated, and a solid understanding of their role and expectations.

Employee Responsibilities

While working a hybrid/remote work schedule you are expected to:

- Be available and reachable during your department's work hours.
- Be available for staff meetings and other on-campus meetings, as necessary.
- Arrange necessary equipment or services (computer, printer, phone, phone service, internet service, etc.) to facilitate working from your off-site location. There will be no reimbursement for printing, phone, internet, or furniture, including any costs related to the initial set-up or the maintenance of an off-site work location. Your on-campus workstation may be used by others on the days you are working off-site.
- Have access to reliable tools and technology to work from an off-site location.
- Protect University-issued equipment (i.e., laptop, etc.) from theft and damage, as well as prevent unauthorized use of all University-issued equipment.
- Continue to work from your off-site work location if the University announces campus closings, delayed openings, or modification of operations due to inclement weather.

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- Be solely responsible for any change in your tax obligations pursuant to a hybrid/remote work arrangement.
- Inform and seek re-approval prior to any change to the information contained on the Hybrid/Remote Work Arrangement Form.

Disability Accommodations

Requests to work remotely as a reasonable accommodation are handled through the accommodation request process. Employees should discuss these requests with the Office of Access and Compliance. Employees must be able perform the essential job functions of their position while working remotely or off-site.

Guiding Principles for Hybrid/Remote Work

A hybrid or remote work arrangement should be guided by the following principles:

1. The work arrangement supports the University's mission and vision and aligns with the operational and business needs of the department/business unit.
2. The work arrangement sustains service levels, quality of work, and productivity.
3. The arrangement will not affect the obligations, duties, and work-relationships of the covered employees.
4. The work arrangement approvals are made without favoritism or bias.
5. The frequency of required on-campus presence for a particular position will be determined by the supervisor, and clear expectations will be agreed upon by the supervisor and employee. The hybrid work arrangement will generally require on-campus presence at least 3 days during the normal workweek, Monday through Friday. However, on-campus presence may be required more often during the workweek based on the needs of the university. The specific terms must be approved by the relevant Academic Dean (if applicable) and the Area Vice Chancellor or designee.
6. Remote work arrangements are the exception and will be granted only under extraordinary circumstances where both the University and the employee share an interest in the arrangement and upon the recommendation of the relevant Academic Dean (if applicable) and the Area Vice Chancellor or designee. The Office of Human Resources will review the request and the EVC/Chief Operations and Financial Officer will provide final approval.
7. To participate in a hybrid work arrangement, employees must live within a commutable distance to the campus.

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8. To participate in a remote work arrangement, employees must reside in the United States. No remote work arrangement will be considered for working from outside the United States.
9. The work arrangement is revocable and can be discontinued at any time, when, in the judgment of the supervisor, it is in the best interest of the University to do so.
10. The work arrangement does not change an employee's terms and conditions of employment, including the at-will nature and the required compliance with or the application of university policies. Additionally, an employee's compensation and/or benefits do not change because of a remote work arrangement.
11. The work arrangement is not intended to permit employees to have time to work at other jobs or attend to other personal business, nor is it intended as a substitute for dependent care.
12. The work arrangement does not convert the off-site work location into a university place of business.

PROCEDURE

- If a position has been designated as eligible for a hybrid or remote work schedule, the employee and supervisor must complete a hybrid/remote work agreement form.
- Upon completion of the hybrid/remote work form the position's supervisor should obtain the signature of Dean/Vice Chancellor or designee and submit to Human Resources for review and approval. These guidelines are designed to provide the structure needed for effective implementation and operation of hybrid/remote arrangements. UTHSC administrators and employees are responsible for ensuring compliance within the provisions of these guidelines.