

System-wide Work from Home Guidelines

Employees may request the option to work from home on a single occasion or for a limited period of time. This is **not** a formal telecommuting agreement. Instead, it is a temporary arrangement for employees who need assistance in balancing work and home responsibilities. Employees must obtain advance approval from their supervisor before working from home. Approval will not be granted where physical presence is required to perform the essential function of the employees' job or where working from home is not in the University's best interest. The option to work from home is not an alternative to sick or annual leave and should be granted at the discretion of the supervisor of the unit/area and may be denied if its use is abused or in situations where more formal leave options are appropriate. This is not intended to be an option or requirement for employees that are otherwise approved for FML and are expected to be away from work to recover during an approved leave.

How to determine whether an employee can work from home?

Both employees and supervisors are advised to consider these questions before asking/approving work from home:

- Can the employee fulfill his/her job duties while away from their established work location? Does working from home create any security and data privacy concerns?
- Will collaboration with the employee's team become difficult?
- Do employees have the necessary equipment or software installed at home?
- Is it in the University's best interest to allow the employee to work from home instead of taking leave and not working?

Requesting Work from Home

When employees wish to work from home, this procedure must be followed:

- Employees make a request in writing to their supervisor in advance of working from home. A written response from the supervisor approving or denying the request should be obtained. Supervisors should use professional judgement to determine if the next level supervisor should also approve. (Employees who need to work from home for unforeseen reasons should make their request as soon as possible.)

Supervisors and employees should meet to discuss clear priorities and set specific goals, schedules and deadlines, focusing on the expectations, tasks, and responsibilities. They should also outline how the employee will be accessible (telephone, email, instant message, online meetings, etc.) Employees should not request to work from home if they cannot consistently devote time and attention to the outlined tasks and expectations set by the supervisor. Only checking and responding to email would not qualify for this arrangement. Annual leave or sick leave should still be recorded for time the employee did not dedicate to work activities. Simply having approval to work from home should not allow the employee to work less time than expected with their regularly established work schedule without recording leave.

- An employee may be required to use annual/sick leave for the time out of the office if approval is not obtained or if work is not performed as agreed.

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