

Teleworking

Personnel - General

EWU Policy 401-09

Effective: August 11, 2016

Authority: EWU Board of Trustees

Proponent: Vice President for People and Culture

Purpose: This policy prescribes standards and procedures for administration of teleworking arrangements at Eastern Washington University.

History: This policy reflects housekeeping changes made on August 11, 2016. It was originally adopted by the EWU Board of Trustees on May 20, 2016. Housekeeping edits to position titles were made on July 31, 2025.

Applicability: This policy applies to all employees of Eastern Washington University.

CHAPTER 1 - GENERAL

1-1. Goals

Telework (telecommuting) allows an employee to use technology to work from home or an alternate worksite. Eastern Washington University recognizes telework as an option that can meet a variety of interests, including:

- Enhancing employee productivity
- Reducing commute trips
- Allowing employees to work during inclement weather or suspended operations

1-2. Policy

University policy is to allow employees to telework when the supervisor determines that teleworking will allow work to be performed effectively and productively.

1-3. Requirements

Telework arrangements must meet the following requirements:

- Be for a prescribed time;
- Be subject to prior approval by the supervisor and the responsible appointing authority;
- Be reviewed by Human Resources; and
- Be revocable at the discretion of the supervisor and the responsible appointing authority.

An employee may rescind an agreement to a telework arrangement by providing notice consistent with the terms of the agreement.

1-4. Training

Human Resources will provide training and guidance to supervisors and their staff on the Teleworking policy and procedures.

1-5. Types of Telework Arrangements

There are two kinds of telework arrangements:

a. **Regular Telework** arrangements are an ongoing part of an employee's position and continue until ended. Rules concerning regular telework arrangements are contained in chapter 2 of this policy.

b. **Incidental Telework** arrangements may be approved on a temporary basis in response to unusual circumstances, such as inclement weather, university closure, family care, and household needs. For incidental teleworking, a formal telework agreement may not be required; however, the employee must obtain approval from his or her supervisor before working from an alternative work site. Prior to approving an incidental telework request, the supervisor shall:

- (1) confirm that the employee has the capability to adequately perform assignments from home,
- (2) determine the work is crucial enough to warrant being performed at that time, and
- (3) specify to the employee the work to be done and the amount of work time allotted (number of hours and dates).

1-6. Workers' Compensation

The employee is covered by workers' compensation for job-related injuries that occur in the course and scope of employment while teleworking. When the home is the designated workplace, workers' compensation does not apply to non-job related injuries that occur in the home.

An employee whose work is principally localized in another state will require workers' compensation coverage specific to that location. Contact Human Resources for assistance.

1-7. Taxes

Employees are responsible for addressing and resolving any questions about the employee's ability to deduct expenses related to telework.

CHAPTER 2 - REGULAR TELEWORK

2-1. General

a. Eligibility

Faculty and staff may request a regular telework arrangement from their supervisor, which will be reviewed by their supervisor and the Vice President with approval from Human Resources.

The university considers telework to be a privilege and not an employee right. Supervisors may deny and terminate telework arrangements at any time.

b. Terms of Employment

Telework arrangements do not change salary, benefits, job responsibilities, leave policies, or other terms of employment. The supervisor, with Human Resources' guidance, shall ensure terms and conditions of employment remain the same.

2-2. Approval Process

The process of developing a regular telework arrangement involves assessing the feasibility of the teleworking arrangement and preparing a Telework Agreement Form.

2-3. Assessment

In assessing the feasibility of a telework request, supervisors shall consider the following:

- adequacy and security of the technology resources available at the home work site
- work to be accomplished
- the needs of and the impact on the work group, department and the university
- anticipated benefits to the department
- interactions required between the teleworker and other staff members or customers
- employee's demonstrated skills

2-4. Approval Guidelines

Supervisors should consider a telework request when:

- The arrangement will allow the employee to perform the essential functions of the position effectively and productively,
- The employee has proven the ability to successfully perform the essential functions of the position,
- There is sufficient amount of work being proposed,

- The employee has a proven ability to work independently,
- The equipment and services necessary are feasible,
- Effective communication with the supervisor, co-workers and customers is possible,
- The work space is conducive to getting the work accomplished,
- The employee has the ability to be flexible about the telework arrangement, respond to all operational needs, and
- The employee has been provided information by the Environmental Health and Safety office regarding maintaining a safe workspace.

2-4. Telework Agreement

The employee and supervisor shall specify the terms of the individual telework arrangement on a Telework Agreement form. A Telework Agreement form must be completed and approved before an employee begins teleworking.

2-5. Terms and Periodic Review

a. Length of Commitment/Reversibility

Telework start and end dates shall be specified in the Telework Agreement Form.

The employee, supervisor, or responsible appointing authority may rescind an agreement to a telework arrangement at any time, consistent with the requirements specified in the Telework Agreement Form.

b. Review

Supervisors shall periodically review telework arrangements. Supervisors will also review telework arrangements, including employee performance:

- (1) After a designated review period identified in written agreements,
- (2) During regularly scheduled performance evaluations, and
- (3) When a new employee/supervisor relationship is established.

c. Changes

Changes to written agreements must be approved by the employee, supervisor, and responsible appointing authority with review by Human Resources.

2-6. Site Visits

The supervisor or other university officials may make work site visits or assessments during mutually agreed upon times.

Upon request of the employee, Environmental Health and Safety may visit the workplace for ergonomics

assessments or to investigate a workplace health or safety related incident.

2-7. Records

The employee may take copies of records to the alternative work site on an as-needed basis only. Original records are to remain at the campus office location.

2-8. Information Security

Employees are responsible for the security of university information and equipment, regardless of their work location.

Supervisors shall ensure that:

- (1) telework arrangements comply with university information security standards as prescribed by EWU Policy 203-01, Information Security
- (2) employees fully understand and have the technical expertise to comply with the safety and security requirements
- (3) teleworkers have the technology and equipment that can support security requirements

Teleworkers shall make reasonable efforts to protect university equipment, data and passwords in the teleworker's possession from unauthorized use, damage (beyond normal wear and tear) or loss.

The employee and supervisor shall consult with the Office of Information Technology (OIT) as needed, regarding security issues related to the use of computing equipment.

2-9. Software Licenses

The supervisor shall ensure that the employee complies with licensing agreement terms for use of all software owned by the university.

2-10. Equipment/Office Supplies

The employee and supervisor determine the equipment and supplies that are needed at the alternate work site. They also determine who provides equipment and supplies.

The department may, in its judgment, provide supplies and materials for telework. Any equipment, materials or supplies purchased by the department remain the property of the university. Per EWU Policy 901-02, Appropriate Use of University Resources, any materials or supplies purchased by the department shall be used solely for carrying out the employee's job responsibilities.

The department shall maintain an inventory of university-owned equipment, software, and supplies located at the teleworker's alternate work site.

2-11. Maintenance/Utilities

If the employee is working from their home, the university is not responsible for costs of home maintenance, utilities, or maintenance of employee-owned equipment used for telework.

2-12. Safety and Ergonomics

The employee is responsible for notifying the supervisor or manager immediately regarding any safety or ergonomic concerns at the telework site.

The employee shall:

- (1) maintain a safe telework environment by complying with the Environmental Health and Safety office guidelines,
- (2) provide an appropriate telework space, with ergonomically correct chair, desk and computer equipment, and,
- (3) immediately report any work-related accident by completing an incident report and submitting it to the Environmental Health and Safety Office.