



Emergency Telecommuting Guidance and Procedures

Responsible Unit: <i>Southern University System – Human Resources</i>	Effective Date: <i>03/18/2020</i>
Responsible Official: <i>Associate Vice President for Human Resources</i>	Last Reviewed Date:
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I. STATEMENT AND RATIONALE

The Southern University System (System) will temporarily allow teleworking and flextime during this Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. The Telework and Flextime program is an employer option, not an employee right and is appropriate only when it results in a benefit to the System. Telework and/or flextime may not be suitable for all employees and/or positions. Campuses may implement teleworking and/or flextime as a work option for certain eligible employees based on specific criteria and procedures consistently applied throughout the campus.

II. SCOPE AND AUDIENCE

This emergency guidance applies to all System employees approved for teleworking and flextime activities. All managers, supervisors, and employees should be familiar with the contents of this guidance and its supporting guidelines.

III. COMPLIANCE

This guidance is being mandated and all of System employees are required to comply, if applicable.

IV. DEFINITIONS

These definitions apply to these terms as they are used in this guidance :

- **Alternate Workplace:** A work site other than the employee’s usual and customary worksite (primary workplace). The alternate workplace may include the employee’s home.

- **Core Operating Hours:** Each institution may establish operating hours according to the operating needs of the institution during which all full-time employees are expected to work a minimum of forty (40) hours in a workweek. Core hours, which are a subset of operating hours, are the time period during which all regular professional/administrative and staff employees will normally be expected to be present. During this time, all offices are to be open for business, unless administratively and/or programmatically unfeasible. All offices are to be adequately staffed to transact business during these hours and to provide the necessary and appropriate services. An employee's flexible schedule will always include the core hours to facilitate the scheduling of institutional business.
- **Eligible Employees:** An employee, in an eligible position, who has been identified by the employee's supervisor as satisfactorily meeting performance standards, terms, and conditions of employment of their position. The employee shall have no active formal disciplinary actions on file for the current or immediately preceding review period.
- **Eligible Positions:** A position having measurable quantitative or qualitative results-oriented standards of performance that is structured to be performed during a work period that may vary from the core work hours established for a department or school. For teleworking, the position must be structured to be performed independently of others and with minimal need for support and can be scheduled at least one day a pay period to participate in teleworking without impacting service quality or organizational operations. The eligibility of a position for teleworking or flextime may change depending on circumstances.
- **Flextime:** A work period that may vary from the core work hours established for a department or school. Work schedule will include the core hours established by the institution, with the start and end times varying to ensure a forty (40) hour work week. Sample options for flextime, assuming the core hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., may include 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with one (1) hour for lunch, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with thirty (30) minutes for lunch, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with thirty (30) minutes for lunch, or 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with one (1) hour for lunch. Four (4) ten (10) hour days may also be considered by the manager when feasible for the department and position.
- **Flextime Agreement:** The flextime agreement documents the mandatory policies in effect and the results of any other agreements between the supervisor and the flextime worker. The agreement must be signed by both parties prior to the start of flextime, agreeing that both parties will abide by the terms and conditions of flextime. The agreement must be reviewed and renewed at least annually to ensure that the guidelines for participating in the program indicate continued eligibility and are well understood. A supervisor may elect to revise the agreement when a need arises. In addition, the flextime agreement should be reviewed and revised if necessary when there is a change in supervisor, job responsibilities, or change in work circumstances or performance. The agreement must have a place where the employee acknowledges that he or she has read and agreed to the terms of the guidance and items listed in the agreement. Any employee who is approved for flextime must sign a Flextime Agreement.
- **Primary Workplace:** The teleworker's usual and customary workplace.
- **Teleworker:** A person who for at least one or more days in a particular pay period works at home, or a satellite office, to produce an agreed upon work product. All teleworkers should complete the telework agreement and training. A teleworker is not a mobile worker.
- **Teleworking:** Working at a location other than the employee's usual and customary workplace.

- **Teleworking Agreement:** The signed document that outlines the understanding between the agency and the employee regarding the teleworking arrangement. The teleworker agreement documents the mandatory policies in effect and the results of any other agreements between the supervisor and the teleworker. The agreement must be signed by both parties prior to the start of telework period agreeing that both parties will abide by the terms and conditions of teleworking. The agreement must be reviewed and renewed at least annually to ensure that the guidelines for participating in the program indicate continued eligibility and are well understood. A supervisor may elect to revise the agreement when a need arises. In addition, the teleworking agreement should be reviewed and revised if necessary when there is a change in supervisor, job responsibilities, or change in work circumstances or performance. The agreement must have a place where the employee acknowledges that he or she has read and agrees to the terms of the guidance and items listed in the agreement. Any employee who teleworks must sign a Telework Agreement.

V. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

Overview

Telework and/or flextime may not be suitable for all employees and/or positions. System campus may implement teleworking and/or flextime as a work option for certain eligible employees based on specific criteria and procedures consistently applied throughout the campuses. Campuses will be responsible for designating the positions which will be authorized to approve telework or flextime arrangements. Chancellors, Deans, Vice-Chancellors, Directors, Department Chairpersons, or other management personnel authorized by a campus to approve telework or flextime (shall hereinafter be referred to as the Telework or Flextime Manager for the purposes of this guidance).

Telework or Flextime Managers who choose to consider telework for employees shall be responsible for the following:

1. Establishing expectations for and monitoring of employee performance;
2. Identifying eligible positions suitable for telework;
3. Identifying eligible employees;
4. Determining if office-like space is required;
5. Determining if equipment will be provided to the employee to use at home;
6. Establishing how the teleworker will maintain regular contact with office coworkers and supervisors;
7. Determining how the department will handle restricted access materials, security issues, and taking electronic or paper records from the primary work place;
8. Ensuring that practices are consistent and compliant with state, and System guidance and state and federal law in the use of technology;
9. Delivering telework training to employees;
10. Ensuring that individual work schedules and reporting for non-exempt employees are in compliance with FLSA regulations and guidance ;
11. Ensuring that each employee's request to telework is considered in relation to the department's operating and customer needs;
12. Requiring a Teleworking Agreement.

13. Ensuring that employees approved for telework record their telework days as “C19” for “Teleworking” on the appropriate institutional leave records. All approved employees must input the telecommuting code.

VI. RELATED INFORMATION

www.SUS.edu

www.EEOC.gov

FORMS

- Telecommuting Self-Assessment
- Telecommuting Certification
- Telecommuting Agreement

VII. HISTORY

This is a temporary emergency guidance and procedures.