Shawnee State UNIVERSITY

Flexible Work Arrangements

PRINCIPLES OF FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

The primary criterion for determining approval of a flexible work arrangement for any employee shall be whether the arrangement meets the business needs of the department and University. Flexible work arrangements may be appropriate for staff and faculty in some positions and departments but may not be possible for all.

- Managers reserve the right to require, deny, alter or cease flexible arrangements based on the unit's business needs, the individual's work performance, or other factors. Managers should work through needs that might be individual-based while also evaluating business needs.

- The approval of a remote work plan and other flexible work arrangements is not a right of an employee or faculty member and it also does not change the terms and conditions of employment with the University.

- While acknowledging that not every position is appropriate for a remote work model, managers should strive to ensure reasonable and equitable access to flexible work arrangements. Managers should ensure that they offer flexible work arrangements in a non-discriminatory manner and that their decisions do not adversely impact protected classes of employees.

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENT OPTIONS

While assuring essential operations and business needs are met, managers may authorize an alternative work arrangement with approval from the appropriate vice president. Alternative work arrangements include the following:

- **Flexible scheduling:** When employees daily starting and ending work times may change periodically and may differ from the department's standard operating hours (e.g., Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).

- **Compressed workweeks:** When employees scheduled workweek is condensed into fewer days than normally scheduled (e.g., four (4) days/ ten (10) hours or four (4) days/ nine (9) hours and one (1) day/ four (4) hours, etc.).

- **Telework:** When employees perform some or all job duties off-site while being connected to the workplace. When performing telework in any capacity, an employee may still be required to come on-site on an as-needed basis, as directed by a manager.

  - **Remote Work:** Performing 100% of job duties off-site.

  - **Hybrid Work:** Performing some percentage of job duties off-site, while performing on-site for the remainder of the time.

For the purpose of these guidelines, flexible work arrangements will not exceed twelve (12) months and should be formalized by completing the Flexible Work Sharrangement Form. Request for extensions will be considered based upon the needs of the operation and supervisory recommendation.

Determining Feasibility of Flexible Work Arrangements

Below are the criteria that should be considered by managers when determining whether a flexible work arrangement is appropriate.

- **Operational Requirements:** What operational requirements must be met to ensure student and other stakeholder needs are met? What must the function/work area/role accomplish? How is success currently measured?
  - What are the core business hours and will they be appropriately covered?
  - Will this flexible work arrangement negatively affect business performance or customer needs in any way? If so, how? And are there solution-based options that can implemented?
  - How will this flexible work arrangement impact customer service or a customer's expectations?
  - Would measures need to be put in place to ensure stakeholder accessibility to THE employee? If so, what are those measures?
  - How will collaboration between the employee and other university colleagues and stakeholders be maintained?
  - Does the flexible work arrangement align with our business strategies? If not, why?
  - Are there any potential financial costs incurred or savings expected?

- **Core Functions of the Job:** Flexible work may not be suitable for every job, as some jobs cannot be performed off-site or during non-traditional hours.
  - Review the position description to ensure it accurately reflects the current duties, and review for possible flexible work opportunities.
  - Management
    - Does the job have any supervisory responsibilities?
    - Does the job require constant on-site supervision?
    - Can the on-site management responsibilities be shared by other leaders
  - On-site Work
    - Does this job require an employee's physical presence for optimal performance?
    - Does the job require working with equipment or other resources that is either only on-site, or can be kept at an alternative site (if applicable)?
    - Can the on-site responsibilities be shared?
    - In the event of an emerging crisis, are other resources available when the employee is not available on-site?
  - Work during core business hours:
    - What percentage of the work is required to be done during core business hours?
    - What percentage of work should be done during core business hours to achieve the best results?
    - Can the remaining % be done outside of core business hours without having a negative impact on operations?
    - Can the work be "scheduled" or otherwise handled differently for a period of time?

- Who else performs this work?
  - Are the job functions shared by others in the department?
  - Can work be tackled by a group of individuals within the department so that these on-site responsibilities are shared, or is this truly an individual contributor?

- **Employee Work/Life Alignment:**
  - Does the flexible work arrangement assist the employee with wellness needs and personal demands?
  - Does the flexible work request involve supporting an employee's existing or upcoming child care, eldercare needs (non-medical)?

- **Performance Management & Productivity:** Individuals who meet or exceed performance standards are typically good candidates for flexible work arrangements. Individuals in their probationary period, in corrective action or on a performance improvement plan may not be eligible for flexible work arrangements. It will be important to set clear expectations at the outset of any flexible work request and reiterate throughout the arrangement to ensure success.
  - Does the position have clearly defined and measurable goals/tasks?
  - Is the employee currently meeting or exceeding performance expectations?
  - Has the employee demonstrated the ability to work independently and produce results?
  - Does the employee have proven organizational and time management skills for a flexible work arrangement?
  - Does the employee maintain close and frequent communication with stakeholders (e.g., management, co-workers, customers, etc.) to ensure operational needs are being met?
  - Is the employee self-motivated?
  - Would measures need to be put in place to ensure appropriate reporting and communication with employee and vice versa?

- **Data Security:**
  - Can the employee exercise flexible work options and still ensure compliance with the University's data policy and procedures?

- **IT Equipment & Other Resources**:
  - What tools/equipment/resources will be necessary for work off-site?
  - What tools/equipment/resources should the work unit provide for employee?
  - What will employee be required to provide to benefit from flexible work?

WORKING REMOTELY: GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS

1. Formalize the arrangement by completing the Telecommuting (Telework) Worksheet/Agreement.
2. Establish a regular time for contact in order to update the employee and determine the status of work assignments, as well as the condition of the employee.
3. Ensure employees have the proper tools and resources to work effectively away from campus.

4. Be mindful that many employees have a less than ideal office space (no privacy) exacerbated at times by children and others in the household due to the pandemic and parents having no other care/school options.

5. Set clear expectations – ask employees what they are working on each week and be clear about what you expect to be completed; define the scope, deadlines, and deliverables of each task or project; be supportive ("What do you need?" or "How can I help?"); do not micromanage.

6. Provide frequent, honest feedback.

7. Understand that remote workers can often feel isolated and need to have regular interactions with other workers and supervisors.

WORKING REMOTELY: GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYEES

1. Complete the Telecommuting (Telework) Worksheet/Agreement upon request.

2. Prepare a written assignment list and review with your supervisor to ensure clear understanding of expectations while working remotely.

3. Ensure that you have adequate technology, including internet connectivity, to perform your job tasks remotely. Make sure that you are able to forward your work number to a cell phone during assigned work hours.

4. Designate a specific work time in a private location in which you are on task for the duration of the time period that has been established for your position (full time or part time, etc.)

5. Communicate regularly with colleagues and your supervisor in order to maintain contact with University activities, calendar, and related issues.

6. Remote work is not intended to be used as a substitute for ongoing caregiving needs.

7. Customarily, Shawnee does not provide home internet service to support remote work arrangements, nor guarantee access to a computing device for the arrangement. In instances in which the university has provided equipment, software, furniture, and all other resources, the use is limited to the purposes of remote work and is not intended for personal use. The decision to remove or discontinue use of resources rests entirely with the university.

8. In the event that an employee ceases employment with Shawnee, or the arrangement is discontinued for any reason, the employee must return all Shawnee property within a university-determined timeframe.

9. University property insurance will not cover any personal property that is used a home, and will only cover university equipment brought to a defined off-site location that has been documented as university property.

10. Workers' compensation applies only to injuries arising out of and in the course of employment as defined by Ohio State Workers Compensation Law. Shawnee is not responsible for injuries unrelated to such work activities that might occur in the defined off-site work location or elsewhere.

11. Employees who work remotely must adhere to all university policies. Especially relevant are policies related to information technology, computer security, and data protection. Policy 5.30 and related Procedure 5.30:1 provide requirements for maintaining, securing, and achieving legal and appropriate use of the information technology infrastructure and confidential data.

12. Employee benefits may be affected by a flexible work arrangement. If hours per week are reduced, some benefits will be reduced proportionally (retirement contributions, accrual of vacation and leaves, and educational benefits).