

## **Transylvania University Telecommuting Policy and Procedure**

### **Purpose**

Telecommuting allows employees to work at a location outside of the Transylvania University campus. Transylvania University considers telecommuting to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some employees and jobs but not for others. Telecommuting is not an entitlement, it is not an university wide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with Transylvania University.

### **Application**

These protocols apply to all faculty and staff employees until further notice.

### **Procedures**

Telecommuting can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term project or on the road during business travel, or a formal, set schedule of working away from the office as described below. Either an employee or a supervisor can suggest telecommuting as a possible work arrangement.

Any telecommuting arrangement made will be on a trial basis for the first three months and may be discontinued at will and at any time at the request of either the telecommuter or the University. Every effort will be made to provide 30 days' notice of such change to accommodate commuting, childcare and other issues that may arise from the termination of a telecommuting arrangement. There may be instances, however, when no notice is possible.

### **Eligibility**

Individuals requesting formal telecommuting arrangements must be employed with Transylvania University in a regular part-time or full-time faculty or staff position and must have a satisfactory performance record.

Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and manager, with the assistance of the human resource department, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

- Job responsibilities. The employee and manager will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement.
- Equipment needs, workspace design considerations and scheduling issues. The employee and manager will review the physical workspace needs and the appropriate location for the telework.

· Tax and other legal implications. The employee must determine any tax or legal implications under IRS, state and local government laws, and/or restrictions of working out of a home-based office. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.

If the employee and manager agree, and the human resource department concurs, a draft telecommuting agreement will be prepared and signed by all parties, and a three-month trial period will commence.

Evaluation of telecommuter performance during the trial period will include regular interaction by phone, e-mail and videoconferencing between the employee and the manager to discuss work progress and problems. At the end of the trial period, the employee and manager will each complete an evaluation of the arrangement and make recommendations for continuance or modifications. Evaluation of telecommuter performance beyond the trial period will be consistent with that received by employees working at the office in both content and frequency but will focus on work output and completion of objectives rather than on time-based performance.

### **Eligibility Guidelines**

Employees who might be at increased risk for severe illness as per the [CDC guidelines](#) may request to work and/or teach remotely. These requests will be reviewed and approved by human resources. A letter from a medical provider stating that the employee is high risk for COVID 19 is required.

Employees who live with family members who are at high risk for contracting COVID 19 as per the [CDC guidelines](#) may request to work and/or teach remotely. These requests will be reviewed and approved by human resources and the employee's vice president. A letter from a medical provider stating that the family member might be at increased risk for severe illness is required.

Employees who have childcare, elder care or other reasons for requesting to work and/or teach remotely may also apply for a telework arrangement. These requests will be reviewed and approved by human resources, the employee's vice president, and the president. Consistency across roles and departments will be taken into consideration.

### **Equipment**

On a case-by-case basis, Transylvania University will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, reliable internet access, phone and data lines and other office equipment) for each telecommuting arrangement. The human resource and information technology departments will serve as resources in this matter. Equipment supplied by Transylvania University will be maintained by the university. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the university, will be maintained by the employee. Transylvania University accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. Transylvania University reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the organization is to be used for business purposes only. The

telecommuter must sign an inventory of all Transylvania University property received and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment, all University property will be returned to the University unless other arrangements have been made.

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. Transylvania University will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.

### **Security**

Consistent with the University's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary university, student, and other stakeholder information accessible from their home office. Steps include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

### **Time Worked**

Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all hours worked using Colleague HR. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval of the employee's supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the immediate termination of the telecommuting agreement.

### **Ad Hoc Arrangements**

Temporary telecommuting arrangements may be approved for circumstances such as inclement weather, special projects, pandemic or business travel. These arrangements are approved by the employee's supervisor and human resources on an as-needed basis only, with no expectation of ongoing continuance.

Other informal, short-term arrangements may be made for employees on family or medical leave to the extent practical for the employee and the organization and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if appropriate.

All informal telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the University.

**Effective July 8, 2020**