

Chemical Engineering Departmental Telecommute Policy

The department's policy for allowing staff to telecommute falls under the umbrella of the University of Washington's policy:

<http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/roles/mgr/flexwork/telework/index.html>.

The Department recognizes that telecommuting (also known as Telework) can foster enhanced productivity, trust, and autonomy. Where appropriate, the use of Telework can attract and retain a diverse and talented work force, reduce costs, encourage affordable traffic mitigation, improve productivity among employees, and better address work and family demands. The Department supports telecommuting as an alternative work arrangement and allows supervisors to implement telecommuting arrangements, where appropriate, for eligible employees.

Telecommuting Eligibility:

1. An employee's work must be of a nature that face-to-face interaction with internal and external customers or project workgroups is minimal and the employees' tasks can be performed successfully away from the office.
2. The need for specialized material or equipment in order to telecommute should be minimal. Employees interested in telecommuting must already have a safe and ergonomic home office environment and the primary materials and equipment needed at their home in order to telecommute.
3. Employee characteristics include demonstrated conscientiousness about work time and productivity, self-motivation and ability to work well alone.
4. The employee communicates effectively with supervisors, co-workers, support staff and clients.
5. The employee operates computer or other equipment independently, to the degree that will be required to work from their home.
6. The employee must be performing currently at an overall satisfactory level or above in their position.

Telecommuting is not appropriate for all employees. No employee is entitled to, or guaranteed the opportunity to, telecommute. Offering the opportunity to work at home is a

management option, based on the discretion of the employee's immediate supervisor. An employee's participation is strictly voluntary.

To highlight, there are two types of telecommute options:

1. A regularly planned telecommute schedule with specified core hours.
2. Periodic times when telecommuting is essential for maximum productivity and/or safety (such as inclement weather).

Staff in the Chemical Engineering Department may propose a plan for either option.

1. Regularly planned telecommute schedule with specified core hours

If choosing option #1, an agreement must be made between staff and supervisor for the work to be accomplished and expectations for coverage in the office. Note: No more than 1 staff member may be assigned the same regularly scheduled telecommute schedule.

To propose a telecommute schedule:

- (a) Complete the Telework Feasibility Worksheet:
<http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/forms/telework/telewkfeas-wksht.doc>
- (b) Write a brief summary of the work to be accomplished, including the preferred days/times and an explanation of why the work can be more optimally performed via telecommute.
- (c) The supervisor will review the documentation, and if approved, move forward with a work agreement:
<http://www.washington.edu/admin/hr/forms/telework/agrmnt-telewkvol.doc>

Any changes to the written arrangement must also be documented in writing, signed by the employee, approved by the employee's immediate supervisor and the department administrator.

All telecommuting agreements must meet the criteria in this policy and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the immediate supervisor (although it is recommended that a two-week notice be given if possible).

If telecommuting agreement is terminated or refused, requests for reconsideration may be submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor at a later date.

After an employee begins a telecommuting arrangement, supervisors should conduct periodic reviews with the employee to evaluate the success of the arrangement. It is recommended that a first time telecommuter would be reviewed during the first 45 days, at the end of three months and after one year.

Employees may, at the discretion of their immediate supervisor, be called to work at their regularly located worksite on their regular telecommuting workday during their regular hours to meet workload requirements.

The duties, obligations and responsibilities of an employee who telecommutes are the same as employees at the regularly located worksite.

2. Periodic telecommute for maximum productivity and/or safety (such as inclement weather).

To propose an occasional telecommute day, prepare a summary for your supervisor and give at least 3 working days' notice. Note that approval may be based on other staff members' scheduled leave. Requests to telecommute due to inclement weather will be handled as they arise.

To propose a periodic telecommute schedule:

- (a) Write a brief summary of the work to be accomplished, including the duration and the reason for telecommuting
- (b) The supervisor will review the documentation, and approve or deny the request.

Employees may, at the discretion of their immediate supervisor, be called to work at their regularly located worksite on their regular telecommuting workday during their regular hours to meet workload requirements.

The duties, obligations and responsibilities of an employee who telecommutes are the same as employees at the regularly located worksite.

Hardware, Software, and Supplies

Telecommuting employees may use, and be responsible for the maintenance and repair of their own personal computer equipment. Office furniture will not be provided to employees who telecommute. The Department will not purchase or reimburse employees for the cost of an internet service provider or internet use. Department information stored on an employee's personal computer may be subject to public disclosure requirements.

Telephones

The Department will not reimburse the employee for local or long distance telephone calls or service.

Confidential Information

The employee will maintain the confidentiality of UW and Department information and documents, prevent unauthorized access to any University system or information, and dispose of work related documents in a manner that will not jeopardize the interests of the University or Department.

Employee's Responsibilities

Employees who telecommute or plan to telecommute are responsible for:

1. Ensuring that a high level of University service is maintained, and that abuses of this policy do not occur.
2. Initiating a written request if they are interested in entering into a telecommuting agreement.
3. If approved, signing the telework agreement and forwarding the documentation to the supervisor for review.
4. Reporting to their immediate supervisor as early as possible if they are unable to work on a telecommuting day.
5. Establishing and maintaining an adequate, safe and ergonomic work space in their home.
6. Maintaining appropriate care and security of any University equipment used at the employee's home. Employees who telecommute from home are subject to the same internal UW and Department policies regarding the use of UW provided equipment (hardware and software) and services as that of employees at regularly located worksites. Employees shall return all UW provided equipment promptly upon completion of their telecommuting agreement. Employees are responsible for the maintenance and/or repair of their own equipment.
7. Maintaining the confidentiality of UW and Department information and documents, preventing unauthorized access to any University system or information, and disposing of work related documents in a manner that will not jeopardize the interests of the University and department.

8. Abiding by all of the terms of the UW telecommuting policy.

Supervisor's Responsibilities

1. Ensuring that a high level of University service is maintained, and that abuses of this policy do not occur.
2. Reviewing employee requests for telecommuting, denying requests or forwarding eligible requests to the department administrator for final approval.
3. If approved, signing the telework agreement.
4. Providing written notice granting or denying requests and written notice for termination of agreements to employees.
5. Communicating to the employee performance expectations and monitoring accomplishment of those expectations.

Administrator's Responsibilities

1. Ensuring that a high level of University service is maintained, and that abuses of this policy do not occur.
2. Reviewing employee requests for telecommuting and denying or approving requests.
3. If approved, signing the telework agreement.
4. Abiding by all terms of the UW telecommuting policy.