

TELECOMMUTING PROCEDURES FOR CSCU MANAGEMENT AND CONFIDENTIAL PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

Overview

These procedures describe the guidelines, the eligibility criteria, application process, appeal process, and termination clause for telecommuting arrangements for Management and Confidential (M/C) employees of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU).

Guidelines for Participation

- Telecommuting does not change the nature of the work an employee is expected to perform, their normally scheduled hours they are expected to work and be available, the employee's official work site or the employee's obligation to comply with laws, regulations and state/CSCU policies.
- All telecommuting arrangements will be reviewed initially after the first 90 days to determine if the work being performed is suitable for this telecommuting arrangement and will be reviewed thereafter on a six (6) month basis.
- Any equipment or supplies purchased by CSCU constituent units and used at the alternate work site will remain CSCU's property and must be returned at the conclusion of the telecommuting period. CSCU-owned equipment at the alternate work site may not be used for personal purposes. The employee must have reliable phone and internet services in place at the alternate work site to be available to their agency and to conduct work duties. CSCU does not assume responsibility for software or hardware updates, damage, or wear of personally owned equipment or supplies used while telecommuting. All costs associated with a home office will be the responsibility of the employee. To the greatest extent possible, those approved for telecommuting should use CSCU-provided equipment and supplies to leverage system-wide software updates, hardware/software warranties, etc.
- The employee is required to provide their agency with the phone numbers where they can be reached on telecommuting days. Telecommuting employees must be readily available by phone, Teams, WebEx, and email during their core work hours. The employee and supervisor shall agree on expected work turnaround time and the medium response times after the employee was initially contacted. The costs of providing a phone and internet are the responsibility of the requesting telecommuter with an understanding that they are not agency reimbursable.
- Employees should be available no more than a four-hour (½ workday) car drive away should the supervisor unexpectedly need the employee to be present at their official work site.
- Employees will take all precautions necessary to secure and preserve privileged information and prevent unauthorized access to any CSCU system. Breaches of information security while telecommuting, whether by accident or design, may be grounds to immediately terminate the telecommuting agreement and may be cause for disciplinary action.
- It is the employee's responsibility to provide and ensure a safe and secure telecommuting worksite. The telecommuter shall maintain their alternate work site in a safe condition, free from hazards and other dangers to the employee and equipment.
- The employee must provide a copy of their homeowner's or renter's insurance declaration page to ensure adequate personal and property liability coverage should their alternate work site location be at their home.
- It is the employee's responsibility to ensure compliance with any local zoning ordinances related to working at home or maintaining a home office.

- Employees may not submit nor receive reimbursement for travel if requested to report to their official work site.
- Employees who telecommute are subject to the same rules for using sick leave, vacation, personal leave and other leave as non-telecommuting employees.
- An employee shall not use telecommuting to provide family care. The telecommuter shall make arrangements to have dependent children or elders cared for by other individuals. If there are any changes in the telecommuter's family responsibilities or child-care or elder-care arrangements, the telecommuter must promptly notify their supervisor.
- Telecommuting may be scheduled from one to three days a week depending on the needs of the department with the balance of the work week being scheduled at the employee's official work site.
- A mutually established telecommuting schedule must be defined for the employee. The schedule must include at least a ½ hour lunch break during the shift. Modifications to the agreement can occur at any time during the approved agreement period.
- The employee will be expected to attend in-person office meetings (in consultation with their supervisor), training sessions, and conferences as requested by supervisors that are scheduled on a day when an employee is scheduled to telecommute. The supervisor will use telephone conference calling or virtual meetings whenever possible as an alternative to requesting attendance at "short-notice" meetings.
- The State will continue to provide benefits and coverage to the telecommuting employee as governed by the Connecticut General Statutes, provided the alternate work site has been approved in the telecommuting agreement.
- The approval of one telecommuting request shall not create any rights or expectations that the agency will approve a subsequent request from the same employee or a request from a different employee in the same or different job classification. Denial of a request to telecommute is not subject to appeal. Telecommuting agreements are subject to review at least semi-annually (every 6 months) if applicable.
- The supervisor and telecommuter will formulate objectives, expected results, and evaluation procedures for work completed while the employee is telecommuting. The supervisor and employee will meet at regular intervals to review the employee's work performance.
- When the telecommuter uses their own equipment, they shall be responsible for equipment repair and maintenance and installation of software and tools necessary to establish connectivity and support of remote employees.
- If a situation arises at the telecommuter's official work site that interferes with the ability of non-telecommuting employees to work at the official work site (e.g., power failure, weather conditions, lack of heat in the building) while the telecommuter is working at their alternate work site, the telecommuter is not excused from duty for this period as he/she would not be affected by these conditions. If the network is not available to accept connections from their telework location or the employee's equipment/service provider is interrupted, the telecommuter will report to their official work site that day or utilize personal or vacation time.

Eligibility for Telecommuting

- Full-time employees must have been performing their current job duties for at least one year and the manager assesses the capability of the employee to perform the duties remotely.

- Each division or department leader will determine what job roles, if any, are eligible for telecommuting. Not every employee within a job classification will necessarily receive permission to work remotely.
- A determination has been made that the employee's absence from their official work site is not detrimental to office operations, overall productivity, or the working conditions of other employees.
- The employee has achieved a “meets expectations” or better on their most recent performance evaluation. The employee has not had any performance or disciplinary issues within the last year.
- The employee has a suitable place at their alternate work site to ensure that a safe, confidential and appropriate work environment is maintained.

Application/Process to Request Permission to Telecommute

Employees who wish to request permission to telecommute should submit a formal request through the CSCU’s Telecommuting Form to their supervisor, which will include a description of the scope of work that will be undertaken and accomplished at their alternate work site at least five business days in advance, when possible. This description may be general or include specific tasks.

The employees must certify that the remote site has reliable phone and internet services available, installed and tested.

The supervisor will review the request with the employee and must approve or deny the request in writing within five (5) business days prior to the requested telecommuting period, or sooner if the request is made due to unforeseen circumstances. The employee, supervisor, and the next level of management when appropriate must mutually agree to, approve, and sign the Telecommuting Form.

Termination of Telecommuting Agreement

- The Supervisor, division head/VP, or President/CEO retains the right to terminate an employee’s participation in the telecommuting program for any reason including but not limited to performance issues, operational changes, strategies, enhancements to programs or the conclusion that the termination of such agreement would be in the best interest of the employee or CSCU. Remote arrangements may be cancelled with two weeks' notice to the employee.
- An employee may request that their participation from the program be terminated by notifying their supervisor and the division head in writing.
- Nothing in this policy precludes the President/CEO or division head/VP from taking any appropriate disciplinary action against an employee who fails to comply with the provisions outlined in the telecommuting agreement in addition to the cancellation of the telecommuting arrangement.
- Once the telecommuting agreement is terminated, the employee shall return all CSCU equipment in his/her possession at the end of the approved agreement but not later than 5 business days. The employee may not modify, alter, or change employer equipment without the employer’s written consent.
- Cancellation of the telecommuting agreement is not subject to appeal.

Please note: It is understood that unforeseen circumstances may necessitate the request for short-term telecommuting arrangements to be made with limited advance notice. Temporary changes to existing telecommuting agreements may also be necessary to accommodate unexpected work obligations.