

## **UAB/UAB MEDICINE TELECOMMUTING GUIDELINES**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Telecommuting is a voluntary work arrangement between management and an employee, not an entitlement, and is based on the needs of the job, work group and organization. The position's job duties, obligations, and responsibilities will remain unchanged. This arrangement is not a company-wide benefit, and in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the University of Alabama at Birmingham ("UAB") or UAB Medicine.

These Telecommuting Guidelines set minimum requirements. Departments or business units within UAB/UAB Medicine may adopt more stringent requirements for Telecommuting.

### **Telecommuting Definitions**

**Telecommuting:** A work arrangement in which supervisors direct or permit employees to perform their usual job duties away from their Assigned Workplace at an Alternative Work Location at least one day per week in accordance with a Telecommuting Agreement.

**Assigned Workplace:** An office or workspace provided by UAB/UAB Medicine where the employee will usually and customarily work

**Alternative Work Location:** A work site, other than an employee's Assigned Workplace, which includes, but is not limited to, an employee's home, on the road or in a satellite location where an employee may travel for business purposes.

**Telecommuting Agreement:** A signed written agreement, in a form approved by UAB/UAB Medicine, which governs the obligations while working at an alternative work location.

### **TELECOMMUTING GUIDELINES**

The Telecommuting Guidelines apply to all eligible UAB employees approved for Telecommuting.

## **AMENDMENT OF TELECOMMUTING GUIDELINES**

UAB/UAB Medicine reserves the right to amend the Telecommuting Guidelines in whole or part at any time, without notice.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR TELECOMMUTING**

Management will determine in its sole discretion which position(s)/and or employees, under their supervision, that meet the criteria necessary for telecommuting.

Eligible employees must complete the Telecommuting Agreement prior to starting a telecommuting arrangement. The Telecommuting employee and manager must sign the Telecommuting Agreement for it to be considered valid. The Telecommuting Agreement is subject to amendment or termination at any time by UAB/UAB Medicine.

Telecommuters must agree that they will be available via telephone and email during normal business hours, or as determined by their manager.

Telecommuting employees who are requested to report to their Assigned Workplace shall be given notice of the requirement to report to his/her Assigned Workplace. Telecommuters may be called to work at their Assigned Workplace, on their regular telecommuting workday(s), during their regular work hours to meet workload requirements or for any other reason deemed appropriate by management.

Telecommuting employees shall conduct business of the organization from their Alternative Work Location during their assigned work schedule, regardless of inclement weather or other circumstances that may effect on-campus operations, unless modified/approved by their manager.

Telecommuting employees who experience power outages or other issues at the Alternative Work Location that prevents them from completing assigned work must notify their manager immediately for further instruction.

If a workstation is needed at the Telecommuting employee's Assigned Workplace, a workspace shared with/by other telecommuters may be used.

Telecommuting employees shall not maintain hard copies of sensitive data at their Alternative Work Location in filing cabinets or other storage devices, unless they are actively working with that information and have received their manager's written approval. Once the Telecommuting employee completes a task whereby sensitive data was used, that sensitive data file(s) must be returned to the employee's Assigned Workplace, if necessary.

If a Telecommuting employee desires to return to their Assigned Workplace on a permanent basis and discontinue the Telecommuting Agreement, management must be notified before this change can occur. Management must also agree/approve this request. The Telecommuting employee should then be advised that they may be reassigned to another workstation/office upon their return to the Assigned Workplace if applicable.

Any employee who violates any portion of the Telecommuting Guidelines, or the Telecommuting Agreement may be subject to revocation of his/her telecommuting privilege and/or disciplined, up to and including termination of employment.

The Telecommuting employee must either already have access to a personal computer with appropriate applications or will be provided computer equipment by UAB/UAB Medicine. UAB/UAB Medicine will not be responsible for updating or modifying applications on a personal computer.

The Telecommuting employee must have available high speed internet access for remote computer access.

All equipment used must be tested and signed off on by the appropriate UAB/UAB Medicine Departmental Unit to begin Telecommuting.

The Telecommuting employee must be reachable by the approved method(s) of communication (telephone, fax, network access, and/or email) during the agreed upon work hours.

At a minimum, the Telecommuting employee must have no behavioral or job performance written disciplinary actions within six months preceding the Telecommuting Agreement.

At a minimum, the Telecommuting employee must have no written attendance disciplinary actions within six months preceding the Telecommuting Agreement.

Telecommuting days must not interfere with face-to-face client/customer meetings, where appropriate for client/customer support.

The Telecommuting employee must be willing to come in to his/her Assigned Workplace as needed or if connectivity is down and no off-line work is available.

When required, the Telecommuting employee must maintain a task list of work performed or where required, be accountable based on system reporting on Telecommuting day and be prepared to discuss with management during or after the assigned work day.

## **RECOMMENDED QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR ELIGIBILITY**

### **Managers**

Below are recommended questions for managers to consider when determining the feasibility for telecommuting:

- Does the employee...
  - meet or exceed performance standards?
  - have any recent or pending corrective or disciplinary actions?
  - appear to be well organized, self-motivated and results oriented?
  - work well independently and possess effective time management traits?
  - show s/he is organized and dependable?
  - have a job characterized by clearly defined tasks or deliverables?
  - have a job where work can be monitored by output, not time spent doing the job?
  - have a job where absence from the Assigned Workplace will not be detrimental to productivity or work quality of other employees?
  
- Will allowing telecommuting ....
  - positively or negatively impact the department/unit?
  - still enable the department to achieve its goals?
  - affect the level of service provided by the department/unit?

### **Employees**

Below are recommended questions for employees to consider when determining the feasibility for telecommuting:

- While in the program, will I be able to...
  - provide the same level or a higher level of service and productivity?
  - complete all current job duties?
  - effectively manage my time and resources?

If departmental management determines it is appropriate to consider Telecommuting arrangements, it may be best to define a short-term period (< than 6 months) to test the agreement. This will provide an opportunity to determine long-term feasibility with measured outcomes and feedback since requirement outcomes are different.

## **SYSTEM ACCESS**

Telecommuting employees may access the system(s) through the normal channels as s/he would if they were working at the Assigned Workplace. Telecommuting employees

are required to adhere to all UAB/UAB Medicine policies and procedures related to accessing IT systems. Key security requirements for Telecommuting are noted below:

- Telecommuting employees should use an approved wireless or wired network to connect to the network via VPN to work.
- The user's local IT unit must provide, maintain, and support a computer with an approved configuration as defined by either UAB IT or UAB HSIS departments. The configuration must address the Information Security Requirements for Telecommuting Arrangements which includes items such as current security updates and anti-virus capability, removal of administrative rights, proper firewall configuration, and security incident reporting requirements.
- UAB/UAB Medicine Telecommuting employees may be required to use only the UAB provided computer for telecommuting or may be given administrative access with appropriate approvals.
- Telecommuting employees must protect any computer issued to them and any sensitive data that it might contain.
- Telecommuting employees may not store sensitive information on the computer unless authorized to do so, and even then, must only store the absolute minimum required.
- Telecommuting employees may not transfer sensitive data to non-UAB/UAB Medicine owned systems or removable media, and they may not allow unauthorized users to use the computer issued for Telecommuting.
- UAB/UAB Medicine provided workstations must be located in a physically secure environment.
- Users must immediately notify their manager and either UAB Enterprise Information Security at [datasecurity@uab.edu](mailto:datasecurity@uab.edu) or UAB Health System Information Security at [infosecadmin@uabmc.edu](mailto:infosecadmin@uabmc.edu) support if a system used to telecommute is lost or stolen or if the system is compromised or suspected of being compromised by a computer virus or hacker.
- The Telecommuting employee must never provide non-employees access to the UAB/UAB Medicine network or share network access passwords.
- The Telecommuting employee is not permitted to leave a computer connected to the network unattended unless properly locked to prohibit unauthorized access.

## **CONFIDENTIAL AND SENSITIVE INFORMATION**

Telecommuting employees are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality and security of any information created or accessed via Telecommuting arrangements and for adhering to UAB/UAB Medicine rules, regulations, policies and procedures regarding security and confidentiality for the computer, its data and information, including sensitive

data such as FERPA, FISMA, HIPAA, PCI and PHIA, and any other information handled in the course of work. See the *Data Protection and Security Policy* for more details.

## **LIABILITY**

UAB/UAB Medicine accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to employee-owned equipment.

The Telecommuting employee is covered under UAB's On-The-Job Injury/Illness (OJI) Program/UAB Medicine Workers Compensation if injured in the course of performing official duties at the Alternative Work Location. Telecommuting employees must report an injury immediately but no later than two business days from date of injury and complete all required forms.

UAB/UAB Medicine assume no responsibility for injuries occurring in a Telecommuting employee's Alternative Work Location outside the agreed upon work hours, or for liability damages to employees' real or personal property resulting from participation in a Telecommuting arrangement.

Telecommuting employees are responsible for setting aside a space in their Alternative Work Location for work. It is the employee's responsibility to make certain that the Alternative Work Location provides workspace that is free of safety and fire hazards and complies with all building codes and health and safety requirements. To ensure that safe working conditions exist, UAB/UAB Medicine may verify that the Alternative Work Location meets these requirements. The Telecommuting employee is responsible for any injuries and liabilities from his/her negligence.

UAB OJI program/UAB Medicine Workers Compensation will not apply to non-job related injuries that occur in an Alternative Work Location or to third parties including family members at the Alternative Work Locations.

UAB/UAB Medicine is not liable for damages to employees' property that results from participation in Telecommuting. By participating in Telecommuting, employees agree to hold UAB/UAB Medicine harmless against any and all claims, excluding OJI claims/Workers Compensation claims, arising out of and/or related to participation in Telecommuting, including employees' performance of work from their Alternative Work Location.

## **INTERNET LIABILITY**

The Telecommuting employee remains responsible for all files, links, and data they transmit via the Internet. The employee agrees to follow guidelines and rules of conduct regarding data and the internet as if they were working from their Assigned Workplace.

UAB/UAB Medicine will not assume responsibility for virus attacks or other intrusions via the Internet to Telecommuting employee-owned equipment.

### **TAX CONSEQUENCES**

Telecommuting employees will be subject to any city or municipality tax associated with their Alternative Work Location. If the employee is required to report to UAB/UAB Medicine during any part of the work week, s/he will be subject to Birmingham city taxes. Telecommuting employees are required to provide daily work location logs. This process is managed by UAB/UAB Medicine Payroll Services and will be communicated to the employee and department.

Each employee is encouraged to consult with a tax professional for any specific guidance.

### **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**

UAB/UAB Medicine agrees to provide employees who telecommute with a reasonable amount of office supplies. Office supplies include, but are not limited to, pens, pencils, note pads, computer paper, ink cartridges, and other desk supplies. The supplies should be obtained at the UAB/UAB Medicine worksite. Location will depend on the number of working days off-site and will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Office supplies that need to be replaced should be ordered through normal departmental channels after prior approval.

Office equipment purchased outside of the normal departmental channels will not be reimbursed by UAB/UAB Medicine unless approved by management prior to purchase.

UAB/UAB Medicine will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the manager, the appropriate equipment needs for each Telecommuting arrangement on a case-by-case basis. The HR and IT Departments will serve as resources in this matter. Equipment supplied by the organization will be maintained by the organization. If problems arise that cannot be solved via remote access, then the employee may be required to bring the equipment to the department for maintenance.

Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the organization, will be maintained by the employee. All expenses must be approved by the Telecommuting employee's manager prior to purchase.

UAB/UAB Medicine 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 Telecommuting employee should sign an

inventory of all office property and agrees to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of Telecommuting Agreement or employment, all UAB property will be returned to UAB/UAB Medicine immediately, unless other arrangements have been made.

UAB/UAB Medicine reserves the right to discipline employees as a result of any damage to or loss of equipment or data in which the Telecommuting employee was deemed to have been negligent in protecting the equipment and/or data.

Employees must agree to use equipment provided by the department and supplies for business purposes only, and to notify the department head immediately of equipment malfunction in order to initiate repair or replacement. Employees are responsible for properly securing all equipment used in accordance with IT standards. All UAB/UAB Medicine equipment located at an employee's alternative work location is fully insured by UAB/UAB Medicine. Any damage or theft of the equipment must immediately be reported to the supervisor. Intentional damage, or theft as a result of negligence, may subject the employee to financial responsibility for the equipment and immediate termination of employment.

Employees must agree to provide a secure location for UAB/UAB Medicine-owned equipment and materials, and will not use, or allow others to use, such equipment for purposes other than UAB/UAB Medicine business.

UAB/UAB Medicine owned or leased equipment and property that was issued to the Telecommuting employee must be returned immediately to the applicable UAB/UAB Medicine department upon supervisor demand or termination of the Telecommuting Agreement.

## **COMPLIANCE WITH POLICIES**

Employees approved for Telecommuting must agree to and abide by a Telecommuting Agreement. Telecommuting does not in any way negate an employee's obligation to abide by all other UAB/UAB Medicine policies and procedures. Telecommuting employees remain subject to all UAB/UAB Medicine policies and procedures. Violation of the Telecommuting Agreement or any other UAB/UAB Medicine policy or procedure may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

## **HOURS OF WORK**

The amount of time the Telecommuting employee is expected to work per pay period will not change due to participation in a Telecommuting Agreement. Hours of work must remain the same unless specified in the Telecommuting Agreement. The established



procedures for approval of overtime and the approval and use of leave must also be followed by a Telecommuting employee.

Telecommuting employees are expected to work at their Alternative Work Location during their agreed upon work hours. Any changes to the agreed upon work schedule or work site must be approved by the manager in advance of the change.

Any time off requested by the Telecommuting employee that is to occur during the scheduled work week shall follow the same procedures as employees at the Assigned Workplace have.

Telecommuting employees are responsible for reporting all hours worked each week. Failure to report time and/or failure to obtain approval for overtime, can result in the termination of the Telecommuting arrangement or other disciplinary action. Supervisors should periodically remind Telecommuting employees of their record-keeping duties, and must promptly discuss with the Telecommuting employee any discrepancies that arise between the work product and the hours reported.

Management has discretion to require Telecommuting employees to maintain a minimum on site attendance at the employee's Assigned Workplace.

## **ROLE AND COMPENSATION**

Telecommuting employees' classification, compensation, and benefits will not change solely based upon their acceptance of a Telecommuting Agreement.

## **PRIMARY CARE**

Telecommuting is not designed as a substitute for child or adult care. If children or adults in need of care are present at the Alternative Work Location during the Telecommuting employee's working hours, another individual must be present to provide the primary care.

## **TERMINATION OF THE TELECOMMUTING AGREEMENT**

UAB/UAB Medicine management reserves the right to end the Telecommuting arrangement at any time. Telecommuting employees may be required to return to their Assigned Workplace immediately upon violating any policy or procedure, if deemed as having performance problems, or if management feels it is in the best interest of UAB/UAB Medicine or the Telecommuting employee to end the arrangement, either permanently or temporarily.

## **EXPENSES**

UAB/UAB Medicine are not responsible for operating costs, such as electric bills, home maintenance, or other costs incurred by Telecommuting employees in the use of their homes as an Alternative Work Location.

## **INSPECTION AND ACCESS**

UAB/UAB Medicine management is entitled to reasonable access to its equipment, materials, and other property at any Alternative Work Location. In case of injury, theft, loss, or tort liability related to Telecommuting, the Telecommuting employee must allow agents of UAB/UAB Medicine to investigate and/or inspect the Alternative Work Location.

## **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Work product, documents, and records prepared, created or developed while Telecommuting are the property of UAB/UAB Medicine.

## **TRAVEL**

Telecommuting employees will not be paid for time or mileage involved in travel between the Assigned Workplace and the Alternative Work Location.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Telecommuting employees are responsible for:

- Establishing an appropriate work environment within his/her home for work purposes if the home is the Alternative Work Location. UAB/UAB Medicine will not be responsible for costs employed with initial setup of the Telecommuting employee's home office such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.
- Complying with the Telecommuting Guidelines, the Telecommuting Agreement, and all UAB/UAB Medicine policies and procedures.
- Meeting productivity and service quality goals and objectives as required by management.
- Completing all required UAB/UAB Medicine training.
- Notifying management of change in address
- Submitting time worked timely and accurately.
  - Communicating at a level consistent with employees working at the Assigned Workplace or in a manner and frequency that is appropriate for the job and the individuals involved.

Managers of Telecommuting employees are responsible for:

- Striving to ensure that productivity and service quality goals and objectives are met by the Telecommuting employee.
- Establishing and scheduling on-going, regular, periodic reviews with the Telecommuting employee to evaluate the success of the Telecommuting arrangement.
- Complying with the Telecommuting Guidelines, the Telecommuting Agreement, and all UAB/UAB Medicine policies and procedures.
  - Management shall meet with each Telecommuting employee prior to the start of the Telecommuting assignment to set and document appropriate performance goals (productivity, accuracy, responsiveness, etc.).

Information Technology is responsible for:

- Providing IT equipment (where applicable) and system access.
- Administering and monitoring system access and IT equipment use as directed by UAB/UAB Medicine IT procedures.

Human Resources is responsible for:

- Providing consultation to management and employees regarding the contents of the Telecommuting Guidelines and the Telecommuting Agreement and its application at UAB/UAB Medicine.
- Providing assistance to Telecommuting employees and management regarding the Telecommuting arrangement as needed.