

Augusta University

Policy Library

Telework Flextime Policy

Policy Manager: University HR Services

POLICY STATEMENT

Augusta University allows teleworking and flextime, on a voluntary basis at manager's discretion, to employees who fill job classifications/positions designated by the departments as eligible for telework and/or flextime. The Augusta University Telework and Flextime is an employer option, not an employee right and is appropriate only when it results in a mutual benefit to both the employee and to the institution.

The purpose of this policy is to define teleworking and alternative work schedules, hereinafter referred to as flextime, and the guidelines and rules under which it will operate. There are significant economic, personal, and production benefits of telework and flextime, but there are a number of potential downfalls. This policy will assist managers and employees understand the type of work environment and their associated rights and responsibilities. This policy and its accompanying guidelines provide a general framework for teleworkers and employees approved for flextime at Augusta University. This policy does not attempt to address the special conditions and needs of all Augusta University employees, nor will the policy interfere with faculty schedules driven by teaching, research, service and/or clinical responsibilities, which can vary daily.

AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS

Indicate all entities and persons within the Enterprise that are affected by this policy:

- Alumni Faculty Graduate Students Health Professional Students
 Staff Undergraduate Students Vendors/Contractors Visitors
 Other:

DEFINITIONS

Alternate Workplace – A work site other than the employee's usual and customary worksite (primary workplace). The alternate workplace may include the employee's home.

Core Operating Hours – All Augusta University full-time employees are required to work a minimum of 40 hours in a workweek, except when approved for leave. AU colleges, schools, divisions and/or departments may establish core operating hours according to the individual units' operating needs, during which full-time employees' are expected to work their required hours. All offices must be adequately staffed to transact business during the institutional operating hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm to provide the necessary and appropriate services.

Eligible Employees – An employee, in an eligible position, identified by the employee's supervisor as satisfactorily meeting performance standards, terms, and conditions of employment of their position. The

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employee shall have no active formal disciplinary actions on file (within the preceding 12 months of the date of a request under this policy).

Eligible Positions – A position having measurable quantitative or qualitative results-oriented standards of performance performed during a work period that may vary from the core work hours established for a department or school. For teleworking, the position performs independently of others and with minimal need for support and can be scheduled at least one day a pay period to participate in teleworking without affecting service quality or organizational operations. The eligibility of a position for teleworking or flextime may change depending on circumstances.

Flextime – A work period that may vary from the core work hours established for a college, school, division or department. Work schedule will include the core hours established by a unit, with the start and end times varying to ensure a 40 hour workweek. All schedules will include a minimum of a 30-minute meal break. Examples for flextime include 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with one (1) hour for lunch, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with 30 minutes for lunch, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with 30 minutes for lunch, or 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with one (1) hour for lunch. Additionally, a four, 10-hours per day, workweek can be considered by the manager when feasible for the department and position.

Flextime Agreement – The flextime agreement documents the agreement between the supervisor and the flextime worker. The agreement must include signatures from both parties prior to the start of the flextime arrangement with both parties agreeing to abide by the terms and conditions of the agreement. The agreement should be reviewed annually and renewed at least every other year to ensure that the guidelines for participating indicate continued eligibility and understanding. This agreement should be maintained in the departmental employee file. A supervisor maintains the discretion and authority to revise the agreement as the supervisor deems necessary. In addition, the flextime agreement should be reviewed and revised when there is a change in supervisor, job responsibilities, or change in work circumstances or performance. (see [Attachment A](#))

Mobile Worker – An employee whose current work location is his/her home or an assigned office in a location other than a campus facility or property, and who may regularly travel as part of their role. The duties of these positions generally require the employee to meet and work off-site with clients/customers who are dispersed throughout a geographic territory. For the purposes of this policy, mobile workers are not considered teleworkers. (see [Attachment B](#)). If a mobile worker resides outside of the state of Georgia and the employee's home location will serve as the employee's base, then the approval process must include the Out of State Employee process (please review the Mobile Worker Agreement for information on the approval process). Approval for mobile work in a state other than Georgia will be at the sole discretion of Augusta University.

Occasional Teleworker – A teleworker, who with the approval of his/her supervisor, works at home on an infrequent basis. Approval is usually task or project specific and normally approved at least the day before the employee teleworks. Occasional teleworkers do not telework on a scheduled basis. For the purpose of this policy, occasional teleworkers are considered teleworkers.

Primary Workplace – The teleworker’s usual and customary workplace.

Teleworker – A person who may, for at least one or more days in a particular pay period, work at home, or a satellite office, to produce an agreed upon work product. All teleworkers should complete the telework agreement and training. A teleworker is not a mobile worker. (see Attachment C) If a Teleworker resides outside of the state of Georgia and the employee’s home location will serve as the employee’s base, then the approval process must include the Out of State Employee process (review the Telework Agreement – Attachment C, for more detail). Approval for telework in a state other than Georgia will be at the sole discretion of Augusta University.

Teleworking – Working at a location other than the employee’s usual and customary workplace.

Teleworking Agreement – The telework agreement documents the agreement between the supervisor and the teleworker. The agreement must include signatures from both parties prior to the start of the telework arrangement with both parties agreeing to abide by the terms and conditions of the agreement. The agreement should be reviewed annually and renewed at least every other year to ensure that the guidelines for participating indicate continued eligibility and understanding. This agreement should be maintained in the departmental employee file. A supervisor maintains the discretion and authority to revise the agreement as the supervisor deems necessary. In addition, the telework agreement should be reviewed and revised when there is a change in supervisor, job responsibilities, or change in work circumstances or performance. (see [Attachment C](#))

PROCESS & PROCEDURES

Overview

Telework and/or flextime may not be suitable for all employees and/or positions. Departments may implement teleworking and/or flextime as a work option for certain eligible employees based on specific criteria and procedures consistently applied throughout the department. Members of the President’s Cabinet will be responsible for designating the positions under their supervision, which will be authorized to approve telework and/or flextime arrangements. Directors, Department Chairs, or other management personnel authorized to approve telework or flextime shall hereinafter be referred to as the Augusta University Telework or Flextime Manager for the purposes of this policy.

Provisions Specific to Teleworking

Augusta University Telework or Flextime Managers who choose to consider telework for employees shall be responsible for the following:

1. Establishing expectations for and monitoring of employee performance;
2. Identifying eligible positions suitable for telework;
3. Identifying eligible employees (see Employee Participation);
4. Determining if office-like space is required;
5. Determining if Augusta University equipment will be provided to the employee to use at home (see Equipment and Supplies)

6. Establishing how the teleworker will maintain regular contact with office co-workers and supervisors;
7. Determining how the department will handle restricted access materials, security issues, and taking electronic or paper records from the primary work place (see Security and Access to Information);
8. Ensuring that practices are consistent and compliant with state, Board of Regents, and Augusta University policy and state and federal law in the use of technology;
9. Delivering telework training to employees;
10. Ensuring that individual work schedules and reporting for non-exempt employees are in compliance with FLSA regulations and Board of Regents policy;
11. Ensuring that each employee's request to telework is considered in relation to the department's operating and customer needs;
12. Requiring a Teleworking Agreement (see Attachment C); and,
13. Ensuring that employees approved for telework record their telework days as Telework in the institutional time and attendance system.

Conditions of Employment

The teleworker's conditions of employment with Augusta University remain the same as for non-teleworking Augusta University employees. Employee salary, benefits, and employer-sponsored insurance coverage will not change because of teleworking. The employee shall adhere to all policies, rules and regulations of Augusta University, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, and State of Georgia while teleworking. Further, an employee must have the willingness of his/her supervisor to perform the necessary supervisory responsibilities required for teleworking. The employee agrees not to conduct personal business while in official duty status at the alternate workplace.

Telework Self-Assessment

A successful teleworker has particular traits, a job suitable for telework and a telework site that is conducive to the work assigned. A self-assessment helps an employee interested in teleworking decide whether telework is right for him or her. Augusta University may elect to provide the employee a self-assessment as part of the application to telework. See Attachment C for a sample self-assessment.

Work Site and Work Hours

A defined workspace and defined core work hours are necessary (1) to reduce Augusta University's exposure to risk, (2) to facilitate proper management of teleworkers, and (3) to ensure work is conducted in a productive environment.

Work Space

As a condition of permission to telework, the employee must verify that home facilities used for telework purposes are safe and suitable for purposes of the employee's work. The department may deny an employee the opportunity to telework if the alternate worksite is not conducive to productive work. The department should provide the employee a self-certification checklist, as part of the application to telework. The checklist is necessary to reduce Augusta University's exposure to risk

and liability and helps the employee know if his or her alternate workplace is conducive to productive work. A sample checklist is provided in Attachment D.

An employee approved to telework shall be responsible for setting-up an appropriate work environment within his/her home. Augusta University will not be responsible for any risk or cost associated with the setup of a home office. Upon request, Augusta University will consult with an employee on any modifications or requirements to operate Augusta University-owned equipment at the home office. An employee will be required to provide Augusta University with a statement within 10 working days of the request to telework confirming that he/she has met the reasonable standards to include health and safety requirements (including an ergonomically sound workstation) and promise to maintain it in the condition for the duration of the teleworking period.

Equipment and Supplies

Office supplies (e.g. pens and paper) shall be provided by the department and should be obtained during the teleworker's in-office work period.

The employee is expected to use his or her own furniture, telephone lines, internet and/or Wi-Fi services, other equipment, and/or materials. Any use of private facilities of the employee will be at the employee's discretion and not at the will or expense of Augusta University. This applies to all physical improvements and conveniences as well as services.

In no situation, should Augusta University owned equipment, be installed in an employee's home. Augusta University, however, may give written permission for designated equipment, for example: computers and pagers checked-out and used at the alternate worksite. As Augusta University equipment is the property of the State, Augusta University must retain the responsibility for the inventory and maintenance of State-owned property following state laws and procedures.

As outlined in the [Acceptable Use of Information Technology Policy](#), Augusta University expects all users of computing resources to use them responsibly and productively, even when working remotely. While incidental personal use of electronic resources is not necessarily unacceptable, personal use must not adversely affect the performance of an employee's official duties, must not be disruptive of co-workers, must be of limited duration and frequency and should be restricted to matters that cannot be addressed during non-duty hours. To the extent an employee is forced by business circumstances to make personal use of the Augusta University owned devices, such use should be incidental and immaterial and never add costs to the enterprise.

Work Hours

Each employee who teleworks shall develop a work schedule with the employee's supervisor and the employee's supervisor must agree in advance to any changes to the employee's work schedule. Exempt and non-exempt employees who telework will record telework days in the time and attendance system. Non-exempt employees subject to mandatory overtime must record all time worked and obtain approval from their supervisor before performing overtime. A non-exempt employee working overtime without such approval may cause the department to terminate the

teleworking option and/or take other appropriate action. The employee must obtain approval in advance from his or her supervisor before taking leave during a designated telework day.

The employee must maintain contact with the office as specified in the work schedule, department policy, and telework agreement. An employee's activities outside the time of work or outside the place designated for work will be deemed to be in the employee's own personal time and place, unconnected with work activities.

Expenses

Employees are encouraged to utilize Microsoft Teams when communicating with someone who does not have a local number or other forms of virtual communication where charges will not be incurred. The teleworker (not Augusta University) is responsible for the cost of maintenance, repair, and operation of personal equipment.

Liability

The employee's home workspace when used for telework is an extension of the department workspace. Augusta University's liability for job-related accidents will continue to exist during the approved work schedule and in the employee's designated work location. The teleworker is covered under the State's Workers' Compensation Law for injuries occurring in the course of the actual performance of official duties at the alternate workplace.

If an injury occurs during teleworking work hours, then the employee shall immediately report the injury to the supervisor. The employee, supervisor, and agency should follow the Augusta University policies regarding the reporting of injuries for employees injured while at work.

Augusta University is not responsible for any injuries to family members, visitors, and others in the employee's home. The teleworker may not have business guests at the alternate workplace.

To the extent permitted by law, the employee will not attempt to hold Augusta University responsible or liable for any loss or liability in any way connected to the employee's non-work related use of his or her own home.

The teleworker is responsible for contacting the teleworker's insurance agent and a tax consultant and consulting local ordinances for information regarding home workplaces.

Telework Coordination

Augusta University's Telework Coordinator (Director of Employee Relations) will serve as a liaison to departments and will provide guidance and clarification on the policies, procedures, and guidelines.

Security and Access to Information

The teleworker is responsible for maintaining confidentiality and security at the alternate workplace, as the teleworker would at the primary work place. The employee must protect the security and integrity of

data, information, paper files, and access to agency computer systems. All Augusta University policies on Information Technology and Internet and technology use apply to teleworking, as they would in the primary work place.

Child and Dependent Care

Teleworking is not a substitute for childcare or dependent care. The teleworker shall continue to make arrangements for child or dependent care to the same extent as if the teleworker was working at the primary workplace.

Provisions Specific to Flextime

Augusta University Telework or Flextime Managers who choose to consider flextime for employees shall be responsible for the following:

1. Establishing expectations for and monitoring employee performance;
2. Identifying eligible positions suitable for flextime;
3. Identifying eligible employees (see Employee Participation);
4. Ensuring that each employee's request for flextime is considered in relation to the department's operating and customer needs; and,
5. Requiring a Flextime Agreement (see Attachment A)

Employee Participation

Offering the opportunity to work at home or according to a flextime schedule is a management option and is not an employee right. An employee's participation in telework and/or flextime is generally voluntary; however, telework and/or flexible scheduling may be required when circumstances warrant. The supervisor or manager may terminate teleworking or flextime without cause. Teleworking and flextime are work arrangements between an individual employee and his/her supervisor. A supervisor may require an employee to telework or work flextime when circumstances necessitate such arrangements, such as an emergency situation that makes the main work location inaccessible or other emergencies in which working from home supports public safety.

REFERENCES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Flextime Agreement ([Attachment A](#))

Mobile Worker Agreement ([Attachment B](#))

Telework Agreement ([Attachment C](#))

Telework Self-Assessment ([Attachment D](#))

Work Space Self Certification and Safety Guidelines ([Attachment E](#))

RELATED POLICIES

[Acceptable Use of Information Technology Policy](#)

APPROVED BY:

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Augusta University
Date: 4/16/2021

President, Augusta University

Date: 4/16/2021