# Telework and Alternative Work Schedules Policies
## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)
*(Updated August 11, 2019)*

1. **Define the policy terms:**
   a. Telework
      The ability of employees to perform their work duties from a location other than their normal workplace.
   b. Long Term Alternative Work Schedule  (Flex Time)
      The ability of employees to perform their work duties on a fixed alternative work schedule for a semester or more.
   c. Short Term Alternative Work Schedule (Temporary)
      The ability of employees to perform their work duties on a fixed alternative work schedule, or with intermittent, incidental adjustments in their work schedule, for less than a semester.

2. **When are the Telework and Alternative Work Schedules Polices effective?**

   August 11, 2019

3. **Who is eligible? Who approves?**

   All Unclassified Professional Staff (UPS) and University Support Staff (USS) employees are eligible.
   a. Telework must be approved by the employee's Division Head (VP or President, if President's Division).  It requires a signed Telework Agreement provided by the President's Office.  Requests for Telework should be routed through the appropriate organization hierarchy.
   b. Long Term Alternative Work Schedules (Flex Time) must be approved by the employee's supervisor and Dean/Director.
   c. Short Term Alternative Work Schedules (Temporary) must be approved by the employee's supervisor.

4. **What happens if my request is denied? Is there an Appeal Process?**

   There is no further review is a request for Telework is not approved by the Division Head (VP or President, if President's Division).

   If a request for a Long Term or Short Term Alternative Work schedule is not approved, the employee may request a further review of their request by the next level PSU line manager. To request further review, the employee must provide a written request (paper or email) to the next level PSU line manager.  Employees may contact HRS to determine who the next level PSU line manager is.

5. **Does this apply to faculty?**

No. Faculty's attendance rules and schedules are covered by their union agreement and class time demands. Graduate Assistants and student employees are not eligible. The Flex Schedule policy only applies to University Support Staff (USS) and Unclassified Professional Staff (UPS) employees.

6. **What is the process? Is there a form?**

   The employee will submit a written request for a Long Term Alternative Work Schedule (Flex Time) or Short Term Alternative Work Schedule (Temporary) to their supervisor. The supervisor has the option to approve or disapprove. If the supervisor approves a Long Term Alternative Work Schedule (Flex Time), the appropriate Dean or Director must approve.

   The employee will submit a Telework Agreement to their supervisor. The President's Office can provide a Telework Agreement template. The Telework Agreement is forwarded through the appropriate organizational chain to the Division Head (VP or President, if President's Division) for action.

7. **How does our office handle more than one employee working Alternative Work Schedules and/or Telework?**

   Any UPS or USS employee can voluntarily request to work an Alternative Work Schedule or a Telework schedule. A request for a Short Term Alternative Work Schedule (Temporary) must be approved by the employee's supervisor. A request for a Long Term Alternative Work Schedule (Flex Time) or Telework Agreement must be approved by the employee's supervisor and the appropriate Dean or Director. Telework or Alternative Work Schedules may not interfere with the office's ability to serve students and customers during traditional office hours.

8. **What technology do I need to work remotely?**

   You will need the same kind of hardware and connectivity to do your job offsite as you need to do it onsite. This will include at the very least a computer, phone, meeting software (e.g. Skype) and a fast internet connection. However, extra software like VPN (Virtual Private Network) may need to be used when accessing University data from outside the University's network. A complete list of necessary software or hardware will be a part of your Telework Agreement and will be based on the kind of University data you need to do your job.

9. **Is an office of one employee eligible?**

   Telework and Alternative Work Schedules may not interfere with the office's ability to serve students and customers during traditional office hours. Requests will be reviewed looked at many factors.

**10. Are Telework and Alternative Work Schedules considered a benefit?**

Telework and Alternative Work Schedules are not considered benefits of employment. They are considered work options, and will not be appropriate for all positions. (Similar to the employee tuition assistance program – every employee has access, but not all will utilize.)

**11. How does this differ from Summer Hours?**

During the designated Summer Hours period, campus offices close on Fridays at noon. While this does not change the number of hours that employees work, it changes office availability to the public. Alternative Work Schedules must be designed to ensure that all PSU offices are open and operational during the defined campus hours.

**12. What should the employee consider before requesting Telework?**

a. Can you perform your duties in a remote location?
b. Do you have all of the equipment (electronic and other) needed, including high-speed internet?
c. Do you have a landline?
d. Do you have a "Plan B" if you internet is down and you need to do work?
e. Do you have a dedicated workspace?
f. Will you maintain work hours based on Central Standard Time?
g. What work schedule do you request (work days and work hours)?
h. Will you continue to check phone messages?
i. What is the acceptable response time for emails and phone calls?
j. Can employees and customers contact you on your cell phone?
k. Will you use SKYPE for business?

**13. What should the supervisor (line manager) consider before approving a request for an Alternative Work Schedule or Telework?**

a. Can the employee's duties be performed in a remote location or during hours outside their regular work hours?
b. Does the employee exhibit the ability to work independently?
c. If telework, is the employee expected to maintain work hours consistent with PSU's regular business hours?

**14. Can an employee work fewer hours on an Alternate Work Schedule?**

Alternate Work Schedules do not reduce the percent time of the position. Employees are expected to maintain work hours and schedules as appropriate based on their position's percent time.

**15. How does an employee on an Alternate Work Schedule report leave?**

Vacation leave, sick leave, compensatory time taken and holiday comp time taken will be reported in the same manner as they are if the employee is not on an Alternate Work Schedule. Leave should be reported in accordance with the current Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) rules and the 40 hour work schedule.

This link to the Payroll Information from the Human Resource Services web page may provide more information: http://www.pittstate.edu/office/hr/payroll-information/general-reporting-guidelines.dot

Sick leave should only be used for appropriate absences and should never be used to "make-up" time if the employee is out of other types of leave.  Here is more information on the sick leave policy:

http://www.pittstate.edu/office/hr/employee-benefits/sick-leave-university-support-staff.dot and/or http://www.pittstate.edu/office/hr/employee-benefits/sick-leave---unclassified.dot

Refer to the GUS HR Training resources page for reporting leave on your time card: http://pittstate.edu/office/hr/gus-cloud-training-resources.dot

**16. Miscellaneous for Employees with Telework Agreements**

a.  You may need a landline to use as a backup in case your cell service is not adequate.
b.  You may also need a plan B for internet access if you have problems with your home internet.
c.  Watch when your PSU Single Sign On passwords expire.  Ideally, you are connected to the PSU network when you change your password.  If you are not, you will have to logon to your device with your "old password" but then use your new password when logging onto applications UNTIL you are connected to the PSU network.