TWU Alternative Work Arrangements Guide

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Contents

Alternative Work Arrangements

What are Alternative Work Arrangements?

Alternative work arrangements are when an employee is approved to work hours other than 8:00 to 5:00, on days other than Monday through Friday, or from a location other than the employee's regularly assigned place of employment at the University. Alternative work arrangements include flexible work schedules, telecommuting or a combined arrangement with a flexible schedule and telecommuting. Alternative work arrangements are designed to meet the operational and customer service needs of the university to ensure that business needs are met.

Types of Alternative Work Arrangements

Flexible Schedules

Flexible Schedules are an approved alternative work arrangement that offers flexibility in arrival, departure and/or lunch times. Flexible schedules permit an employee to work a predetermined and preapproved variation of the employee's standard work schedule. Flexible schedules do not alter the total number of hours worked in a week.

Telecommuting

Telecommuting is an alternative work arrangement that allows employees to work at an alternate location other than the employee's regularly assigned place of employment at the University. In general, employees who telecommute usually do so on a part-time basis (1–3 days per week), although telework can also be a full-time arrangement in limited circumstances.

Combined Flexible Schedule and Telecommuting

Combined Flexible Schedule and Telecommuting is an alternative work arrangement when an employee is approved to work hours other than 8:00 to 5:00, Monday through Friday, and a portion or all of the hours from a location other than the employee's regularly assigned place of employment at the University.

The following is an example of a combined flexible schedule and telecommuting:
- Employee works 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday in the Office and 4 hours on Friday at home telecommuting.
  - The 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday in the Office and 4 hours on Friday is a flexible schedule.
  - Working 4 hours on Friday at home is telecommuting.

Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to provide supplemental information to the [Alternative Work Arrangements for Staff Employees policy](#) which establishes the authority for the Chancellor and President, Executive Vice Provost, and Vice Presidents to provide flexibility to supervisors and non-faculty employees in performing Texas Woman's University (University) work at an alternative worksite, if it is in the best interests of the University.

The Chancellor and President, Executive Vice Provost, and Vice Presidents will have the option of establishing an alternative work arrangement for positions designated as eligible to perform work at an alternative worksite other than on the University's main or branch campuses or work a flexible schedule. Employees must be in a regular non-temporary status and the position must be designated as a position eligible to participate in an alternative work arrangement. Not all positions are eligible for an alternative work arrangement, and an alternative work arrangement is not a right and does not change the nature of the employment relationship or the terms and

conditions of employment. Alternative work arrangements may be rescinded at any time. Employees with alternative work arrangements are subject to the same University regulations, policies, or procedures as other University employees.

Benefits of Alternative Work Arrangements
Alternative work arrangements can:
- Increase employee productivity and effective use of staff work-time
- Improve employee morale and reduces stress
- Encourage work-life balance
- Reduce employee absenteeism
- Reduce tardiness
- Attract new workers and retain quality employees
- Lower overhead expenses
- Reduce the need for additional office space
- Maintain business continuity during an emergency or major disaster
- Benefit the environment due to reduced vehicle miles traveled

Alternative Work Arrangements Policy Requirement
The *Alternative Work Arrangement Guide* is designed as a resource for supervisors and employees to develop successful alternative work arrangements in accordance with URP 05.620 Alternative Work Arrangement Policy. Supervisors and employees are required to develop alternative work arrangements within policy parameters.

Alternative Work Arrangements Regulation and Procedure
Texas Woman's University departments, divisions, schools and colleges may allow staff employees to use alternative work arrangements subject to the following conditions:

Eligibility
Non-temporary staff positions may be suitable for an alternative work arrangement. Supervisors should consult with the Division Vice President to determine the Division Vice President's preferred level of involvement with reviewing and approving alternative work arrangements and determining what positions or employees may be eligible for alternative work arrangements.

Employees must have a performance evaluation rating of at least "proficient" with the exception of a new employee that has not participated in an evaluation cycle or if a division necessitates an employee to work an alternative work arrangement when required by the job duties.

General Responsibility
Alternative work arrangements will be agreed upon by the employee and supervisor and must be predetermined and preapproved before implementation. However, the department or division may require an employee to work an alternative work arrangement when required by the job duties. Examples include telecommuting, flexible schedules, shift work, work on weekends and other schedules required by the job duties and responsibilities.

Alternative work arrangements may remain in effect for a maximum of twelve months and the alternative work agreements must be renewed annually, unless terminated in accordance with the procedures elsewhere in this policy. These agreements do not constitute an employment contract. Management, at any level, reserves the right to review all alternative work agreements at any time.

If conflicts arise with alternative work arrangements between employees and supervisors, an appeal may be made to the next level of management.

All alternative work arrangements must comply with the Alternative Work Arrangement policy and this guide.

Application and Approval
Alternative working arrangements require prior approval by the supervisor, department head and in the case of telecommuting arrangements and combined flexible schedules/telecommuting arrangements, Division Vice President approval. Refer to the "How to Apply" section in this guide for the required steps.

Office Hours and Work Schedules
The operational needs of the University take precedence over the employee's alternative work arrangement. Employees participating in alternative work arrangements must forego the arrangement if needed as determined by the supervisor. However, employees should be given as much notice as possible.

A department must maintain University hours and the department's regular hours of operation. The workday of personnel may be staggered; however, administrative offices will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each weekday, Monday through Friday, except on designated holidays. Offices shall remain open during the noon hours each working day with at least one person on duty to accept calls, receive visitors, or transact business. Departments must ensure office coverage during normal office hours.

The specific work schedule of an alternative work arrangement will be agreed upon by the supervisor and employee and described in the alternative work arrangement agreement. Supervisors may adjust employee work schedules based on the operational needs of the department. Alternative work arrangements are not intended to address the occasional or sporadic scheduling incidences within a workweek, but to address long-term arrangements where a flexible schedule or telecommuting is either required or requested and approved according to policy.

Adequate staff coverage and supervision, sufficient to meet the operating requirements of the University and ensure quality service, are required at all times. Both internal and external "customer" needs must be considered to determine adequate staffing.

State law sets the minimum workweek for regular full-time salaried employees at 40 hours. An alternative work arrangement does not limit the hours that an exempt employee must work to complete job requirements.

Telecommuting employees must maintain the remote worksite and perform the work in the State of Texas unless approved by the Division Vice President.

An alternative work arrangement does not alter an employee's work relationship with the University nor does it relieve an employee from the obligation to observe all applicable University rules, policies and procedures. All existing terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to the job description, salary, benefits, vacation, sick leave and overtime remain the same.

Timekeeping
Employees with alternative work arrangements will be required to maintain accurate documentation to support their hours worked and must submit regular timesheets. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure employees are working agreed upon hours and submitting timely and accurate timesheets. Employees who

misrepresent time and supervisors who knowingly allow misrepresentations on employees' timesheets are subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

In accordance with the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), non-exempt employees will be compensated in pay or compensatory time for overtime that has been approved by the supervisor in accordance with the provisions of the FLSA. All overtime must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor. Working unapproved overtime may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

If the employee misses work while alternative work arrangements are authorized, the employee must apply paid and/or unpaid leave to the employee's timesheet as appropriate.

Employees using an alternative work arrangement shall receive their allotted holiday hours based on the employee's regular work day. If additional hours are scheduled to be worked, the employee must either take additional hours of vacation or work additional hours during the work week to make up the difference. For example: If an employee has chosen the "4-10" work week (4 days at 10 hours per day), they would be paid eight hours of holiday and would have to claim two hours of vacation or work two additional hours during the workweek.

Equipment and Supplies
Employees will adhere to the following requirements regarding equipment and supplies for telecommuting or combined flexible schedules and telecommuting:

In general, Information Technology Solutions will provide a primary work computer to employees requiring access to information resources in order to perform their job duties. Information Technology Solutions has developed a standard specification for computers which will meet the needs of the vast majority of employees requiring a computer. Optionally, University departments may choose to provide additional equipment, funded by the department, to facilitate alternative work arrangements. Employees and supervisors will collectively work together to develop the alternative work agreement, which includes the identification of any equipment requirements above the standard specification for the University and will work with Information Technology Solutions on how best to meet these equipment requirements. Any additional equipment requirements will be reviewed and approved by the supervisor and Information Technology Solutions prior to purchase. Purchases will be provided in accordance with applicable University policies.

In addition to the URP 04.700: Computer & Software Acceptable Use Policy, employees will adhere to the following requirements:

Employees will seek approval from their supervisor prior to taking any equipment and supplies from their office to an alternate work location for telecommuting purposes. The University will not reimburse employees for out-of-pocket expenses for materials and supplies that are reasonably available at the regularly assigned place of employment.

Employees are required to use University owned and provided computers while telecommuting. Exceptions will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. If personally owned equipment must be used, the personally owned equipment must be enumerated, and rationale or justification documented as part of the alternate work agreement. Employees utilizing personally owned equipment must adhere to the same mandated security requirements, and ensure their computer is up to date with patches.

University equipment located at the alternate work location is subject to all policies and restrictions related to use of state owned property. Participating employees are responsible for any equipment and software that is used at the alternate work location and accept financial responsibility for any equipment that is lost, stolen or damaged because of the employee's negligence, misuse or abuse.

When using University owned equipment for telecommuting, employees will provide for the physical labor, transportation and installation of equipment at the designated alternate work location.

Employees will bring University owned computers back to campus for updates, technology replacement, or troubleshooting when remote assistance is infeasible or unsuccessful.

Employees will utilize University owned and provided technology only for the purposes of performing their duties, and limit incidental usage as defined in the URP 04.700 Computer & Software Acceptable Use Policy. Employees will ensure that University owned computers are connected and accessible remotely from the alternate work location, such that patches and updates can be applied.

Employees shall notify their supervisor and Information Technology Solutions immediately upon the discovery of any inadvertent loss of confidential or sensitive information, or a security incident resulting in the unintentional exposure of University information.

Workplace Injury and Property Damage
Employees will agree to the following:

Employees with telecommuting work arrangements or combined flexible schedules/telecommuting are expected to maintain the same standards of health and safety at their remote workplace as their regularly assigned place of employment. Employees are subject to University policies, regardless of work location.

The University specifically assumes no liability for injury to any other person who would not be in the work area if the duties were being performed at the designated headquarters.

The University retains the right to pre-arranged on-site inspections of this work area during work hours.

Irrespective of work location, Worker's Compensation benefits, as determined by the State Office of Risk Management, may apply to injuries arising out of and in the course of employment within an employee's established work hours. An employee who sustains a work-related injury must notify the supervisor immediately and complete all requested documents regarding the injury.

The University will not be liable for damages to employee-owned equipment being used in telecommuting or that may result from telecommuting. The University will not be responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, or any other incidental costs (e.g. utilities, telephone, insurance, etc.) associated with the use of the employee's residence or designated alternate work location, when used for telecommuting purposes.

The University will not be responsible for cost, damages or losses associated with transporting University property.

Responsibilities
Department head/supervisor responsibilities:

- Consult with the Division Vice President to determine the Division Vice President's preferred level of involvement with reviewing and approving alternative work arrangements and what positions or employees may be eligible for alternative work arrangements.
- Alternative work arrangements must be approved in writing by the Supervisor and the Department Head. Employees should use the *Alternative Work Arrangement Agreement* form to apply for a flexible schedule, telecommuting or combined flexible schedule and telecommuting arrangement.
- Approvals:
    - Flexible schedule: Supervisors will ensure arrangements for flexible schedules are documented on an *Alternative Work Arrangement Agreement* form and approved by the department head.
    - Telecommuting: Supervisors will ensure arrangements for telecommuting are documented on an *Alternative Work Arrangement Agreement* form and approved by the department head and
    - Division Vice President.
    - Combined flexible schedule and telecommuting: Supervisors will ensure arrangements for combined flexible schedule and telecommuting are documented on an *Alternative Work Arrangement Agreement* form and approved by the department head and Division Vice President.
- Ensure alternative work arrangements are administered consistently and equitably.
- Ensure that the regulations, procedures and coverage requirements are understood and adhered to.
- Manage employees' schedules resulting from alternative work arrangements.
- Plan and schedule job assignments, ensuring that sufficient staff are available to meet the operating requirements of the university.

Employee will:
- Discuss alternative work arrangements with the supervisor prior to completing an Alternative Work Arrangement form.
- Complete the Alternative Work Arrangement form, if the supervisor is open to the alternative work arrangement, and forward it to their department head and Divisional Vice President as appropriate. Note: Flexible schedule arrangements do not require vice president approval; however, telecommuting arrangements or combined flexible schedules/telecommuting arrangements require vice present approval.
- Not set their own random schedule to accomplish their required amount of hours worked. Schedules must be discussed and approved by the supervisor in advance.
- Adhere to any meeting requirements established by their supervisor. The attendance requirements may be via video conference, phone or face-to-face at the regularly assigned place of employment or alternate work location.
- Not utilize alternative work arrangements to serve as a substitute for child day care or adult care.
- Secure all information and materials related to university business from unauthorized access and disclosure regardless of the employee's work location.

Job Sharing
Job sharing or work sharing is where two people are retained on a part-time or reduced-time basis to perform a job normally fulfilled by one person working full-time. Compensation is apportioned between the workers, thus leading to a net reduction in per-employee income.

Two current employees may agree that they would both benefit from job sharing and jointly apply for this arrangement. To initiate the arrangement an employee must first discuss with their supervisor their desire to participate. Supervisors should contact the Division Vice President to discuss the request and determine if a job

sharing plan is appropriate. If the decision is to proceed, a request form with details of the arrangement will need to be developed and submitted for approval. In addition, management must be given time to arrange the work schedules or to hire a second person interested in job sharing. The approval of a job sharing arrangement is completely at the discretion of management.

<u>Modifications or Termination of Alternative Work Arrangement</u>
A supervisor may need to suspend the alternative work arrangement to provide adequate coverage during periods of high usage of vacation time or during peak work periods. It is recommended, when possible, that supervisors notify the employee regarding modifications to the alternative work arrangement within fourteen (14) calendar days.

The University reserves the right to terminate the agreement if the University determines in its sole discretion that the alternative work arrangement is no longer in the best interest of the University. It is recommended, when possible, that supervisors provide the employee fourteen (14) calendar days' notice. The University also reserves the right to terminate the alternative work agreement without a notice period for any violations of University policy, a violation of the conditions of the agreement or when there is a relevant change in University policy or law. Reasons for termination of the alternative work arrangement may include but are not limited to:

- Adverse Impact – A negative impact to the University due to an employee's physical absence from the official worksite. This would include, but is not limited to, the following:
  - A reduction of the department's productivity. Examples include:
    - An employee's or department's inability or reduced ability to perform required tasks.
    - An employee's or department's failure to meet performance goals.
    - An employee's or department's unsuitability for alternative work.
    - A reduced level of department teamwork and communications.
    - Physical or technological barriers to productivity at an alternative worksite.
    - A reduced level of services provided to the University's customers. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
      - Not enough worksite staffing.
      - An employee's or department's inability or reduced ability to provide essential services, products, and support to the University's customers.

- An increase in the cost of University operations. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - The cost of authorized overtime to carry out unit operations.
  - Not enough resources to provide ongoing communications, data security, or other University equipment and resources needed to perform tasks at the alternative worksite.

An employee may request the alternative work agreement be terminated by written notice. The University in its sole discretion may approve or deny the request based on whether the job duties necessitates an alternative work arrangement as designated by the Division Vice President.

When a telecommuting alternative work arrangement or combined flexible schedule/telecommuting arrangement is terminated, the employee must promptly return all related telecommuting University property in the employee's possession.

The University is not responsible for costs, damages, or losses associated with the termination of the agreement, unless specifically approved in advance.

How to Apply

Department heads who want to propose for their departments flexible work schedules, telecommuting or a combined arrangement with a flexible schedule and telecommuting should discuss alternative work schedules with the Division Vice President prior to initiating or approving a flexible schedule arrangement.

Flexible Schedules
If the Division Vice President is open to flexible schedules, the *Alternative Work Arrangement* form should be completed and routed for review. Alternative work arrangement forms with flexible schedules only do not require approval by the Division Vice President.

Telecommuting
If an employee makes a request, verbally or in writing, or the supervisor has a request for specific positions to telecommute, the department head should discuss potential telecommuting arrangements with the Division Vice President prior to approving an alternative work arrangement.

If the Division Vice President is open to telecommuting, the *Alternative Work Arrangement* form should be completed and routed for review. Once the agreement is approved by the department head, the department will send the agreement to the Division vice president for approval.

Combined Flexible Schedules and Telecommuting
If the Division Vice President is open to combined flexible schedules and telecommuting, the *Alternative Work Arrangement* form should be completed and routed for review. Once the agreement is approved by the department head, the department will send the agreement to the Division vice president for approval.

Additional Considerations
It is important to have candid conversations about alternative work arrangements when a proposal is not approved. Supervisors should give feedback about why a proposal is denied, i.e. because the position itself is not suitable for an alternative work arrangement, due to performance concerns, etc.

Contact Human Resources regarding health or disability issues related to an alternative work arrangement request to determine if the request should be considered under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or should be explored under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

A pilot period (three to six months) may be helpful to determine if an alternative work arrangement will be successful.

Flexible Schedules Development and Implementation

Department heads should consider which positions and employees are suitable for flexible schedule arrangements. Not all positions and employees are suitable for flexible schedules. For example, a position may not be suitable for a flexible schedule due to the requirements of an office presence.   Due to department office space limitations, employees may be required to share office space or be reassigned to alternative office space while participating in a flexible schedule arrangement. In addition, employees that are currently not meeting

performance, conduct and/or attendance standards may be suitable for flexible schedules.

Examples of Flexible Schedules

- Employee has approval to work an alternate arrival and departure time, for a total of eight hours of work per day. For example:
    - 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday-Friday (with an hour lunch)
    - 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (with an hour lunch)

- Employee has approval to work extended daily hours in order to take a portion of a day or a full day off during the work period. For example:
    - The "4-10" (or "4-40") work week (4 days at 10 hours per day)
        - 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. or
        - 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

    - The "4-9-4" work week (4 days at 9 hours per day, and one 4-hour day)
        - 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and 4 hours on Friday
        - 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and 4 hours on Friday

Lunch hours will remain 1 hour unless preauthorized by the supervisor.

Flexible Schedule Considerations

Ensure the following are addressed when implementing flexible schedules:

- A method to track and monitor schedules to ensure the department is aware of employees' schedules, i.e. shared outlook calendar, Excel spreadsheet.
- The workload is appropriately managed and covered.
- Staff are available to assist walk-ins, telephone calls and timely responses.
- Flexibility and fairness regarding office presence/coverage.
- The decision making for flexible schedules is based on business necessity and is fair and equitable to the department employees.
- The job can be effectively performed outside the range of the traditional work hours.
- Customers' needs are met.
- Required supervision or access to an immediate supervisor is available at all times.

Telecommuting Arrangement Development and Implementation

The following information should be considered as telecommuting arrangements are developed.

Selection (Position, Employee and Supervisor Characteristics Needed for Telecommuting)

The first step when considering telecommuting is to determine which positions and employees are eligible to telecommute. The characteristics of the position, employee and supervisor should be considered to determine if telecommuting is likely to be successful.

Additionally, identify employees that are currently not meeting performance, conduct and/or attendance standards. These employees are the most likely to struggle with telecommuting and therefore should not be considered for telecommuting, if possible. However, if telecommuting will be implemented for the entire department, develop a strategy to manage these employees.

<u>Position Characteristics</u>

Positions with characteristics that may be suitable for telecommuting:
- have job functions that can be performed at a remote site without diminishing the quality of the work or disrupting the productivity;
- do not require an employee's daily presence at the regularly assigned place of employment;
- allow for an employee to continue to be effectively supervised; and
- have minimal need for specific materials or equipment available only at the regularly assigned work site.

Positions with characteristics <u>not</u> suitable for telecommuting are those that:
- require regular in person interactions with a supervisor, other employees, members of the University community or the public,
- are temporary positions; or
- require access to information, materials or equipment that are available only at the regularly assigned place of employment.

<u>Employee Characteristics</u>

Employees with characteristics that may be suitable for telecommuting:
- demonstrate a thorough knowledge and understanding of the job duties for which he or she is responsible;
- demonstrate the ability to work under minimal supervision;
- are self-motivated;
- have a consistently high rate of productivity;
- have a reliable work history;
- demonstrate the ability to establish priorities and manage time;
- have strong organizational and time management skills;
- have access to a remote work site that is safe and free from interruptions;
- are able to provide the security necessary to protect any University equipment; and
- have a current performance evaluation rating of at least "proficient" with the exception of a new employee that has not participated in an evaluation cycle.

<u>Supervisor Characteristics</u>

Supervisors with characteristics that may be suitable for telecommuting:
- demonstrate a positive attitude about telecommuting;
- are well organized;
- have a flexible management style;
- are skilled at supervision and communication;
- trust the integrity and professionalism of their employees;
- evaluate performance by results; and
- support work-life balance.

Telecommuting Worksite Requirements
Supervisors and employees are required to commit to the following worksite requirements:
- Telecommuting employees will maintain a healthy and safe environment at the remote worksite. Employees must submit to their supervisor a picture or floor plan of the worksite area showing the location of the furniture and equipment along with the telecommuting agreement.

- At the discretion of the University, the supervisor or member of the Risk Management Office may schedule a visit to the telecommuter's proposed remote work site to evaluate it prior to approving the telecommuting agreement.
- Employees must ensure that all protective software and other firewall technology are installed and used on all equipment at the remote location.
- Supervisors must ensure that all sensitive and confidential information is protected and secured when accessing information from the remote location.
- Employees that maintain a telecommuting arrangement may not be guaranteed TWU campus office space, may be required to share office space or may be reassigned to an alternative worksite on-campus office space.

Work Schedule

In addition to the Office Hours and Work Schedules guidelines outlined above, supervisors and employees will agree to the following:

- During the agreed upon work schedule, it is expected that the participating employee will perform telecommuting work at the approved remote worksite and be available for contact by phone, email, electronic messaging such as Skype, Teams, Ring Central or video conferencing such as Ring Central, Zoom, Google Meet, etc. or other electronic messaging as determined by the supervisor.
- Supervisors may require employees to report as needed for work-related meetings or other events or may meet with employees in the alternate work location as needed to discuss work progress or other work related issues.

Developing a Telecommuting Plan

Supervisors will work through the following questions and document responses to develop a telecommuting plan for their department. Refer to the *Developing a Telecommuting Plan* form in the appendix.

- What routine responsibilities/tasks can or cannot be fulfilled while working remotely and how will these impact operations or other people? What are ways to reduce the impacts?
- How will you establish, and clearly communicate, the expectations of work that needs to be accomplished?
- How you will communicate with your remote team members (Email, Zoom, Teams, Google Meet etc.).
- How will you establish and track core work hours? Will you allow flex work along with telecommuting for individual employees (i.e. flex work: 7-4 Monday-Friday, 4-10 hour days, etc.)? Note: University policies and procedures regarding vacation, sick leave, overtime and comp time still apply to telecommuting employees.
- How will you create a protocol for managing/approving hours?
  - Set communication process for discussing need for time off or other issues that will require you to be unavailable.
  - If you manage non-exempt employees – please be certain they are taking lunch breaks; otherwise, they are accruing overtime.
- What are the expectations of response time to supervisors, teammates, customers?
  - What are the expectations with utilizing technology and university resources throughout the day (i.e., Active on Skype, Teams, etc.)?
- Define check-ins
  - How often (i.e., daily, weekly, monthly)
  - How – Skype, Ring Central, Teams, Text, Email, Phone Call, Zoom, Google Meet, etc.
  - How will you document check-ins?

- ▪ Utilize check-in templates
  - o How will you prepare for and ensure timely 6-month follow up session?
    - ▪ Utilize templates and completed one-on-one check-in forms
- How will professional development be continued?
- Does the department have customer walk-ins? If so, what coverage is required to meet an acceptable office presence?
  - o Will you be breaking your staff into teams to meet office presence requirements?
  - o How will you schedule your teams to ensure flexibility and fairness regarding office presence/coverage?
- How will your department foster connectedness and belonging?
  - o What is your plan for the whole team to meet together face-to-face?
- How will you communicate your telecommuting plan to your department?
- How will you ensure your decision making for telecommuting is based on business necessity and is fair and equitable to the department employees?

Regular Check-ins

- **Tools for check-ins**
  - o Consider utilizing the *One-on-One* form for daily, weekly, and monthly check-ins to track tasks, projects, obstacles, next steps and completion timelines. Refer to the *One-on-One* form in the appendix.
- **Daily check in with supervisor**
  - o Predetermined time established between supervisor and employee or random times
  - o Determine allowable methods of check-ins (i.e. Skype, Ring Central, Teams, Text, Email, Phone Call, Zoom, Google Meet, etc.)
  - o Define expectations of check-ins
    - ▪ Status updates and challenges
  - o Utilize the time to foster the supervisor/employee relationship by connecting
    - ▪ Ensure the remote worker(s) feel part of team
    - ▪ Make time to connect and foster belonging by encouraging individuals to share
- **Weekly check-in with supervisor/team**
  - o Communication about what is going on with the University
  - o Discuss department goals, challenges and news
  - o Review project updates and challenges
  - o Utilize the time to connect and foster belonging by encouraging individuals to share
- **Monthly check-in (if not more)**
  - o Discuss status of projects/tasks
  - o Review next steps/barriers to be removed
  - o Identify completion dates
  - o Establish next month's goals

Telecommuting Assessments

The assessment plan is a three-part evaluation that includes a department telecommuting assessment, the individual telecommuting self-assessment and supervisor's telecommuting employee assessment.

Department Telecommuting Assessment

Supervisors, in consultation with the department head, should conduct an overall assessment of the telecommuting plan's impact on their department's operations, morale and productivity. This six-month

assessment can be conducted by each supervisor, department head or a combined effort by the department's leadership team. Refer to the appendix for the *Department Telecommuting Assessment* form.

Individual Telecommuting Self-Assessment
Individual self-assessments are an opportunity for employees to evaluate their own telecommuting experience over the six- month assessment period. Refer to the appendix for the *Individual Telecommuting Self-Assessment* form.

Supervisor's Telecommuting Employee Assessment
Supervisors will complete an evaluation of each individual employee participating in a telecommuting program. When completing the Supervisor's Telecommuting Employee Assessment, employees must score proficient or above on all assessment questions to continue in the telecommuting program without an adjustment to the telecommuting plan for this employee for the following three to six months. If there is no improvement, the telecommuting plan should be rescinded, where applicable. Some issues revealed in the employee assessment may require supervisors to utilize the corrective action process. Contact the Office of Human Resources for assistance with the corrective action process. Refer to the appendix for the Supervisor's Telecommuting Employee Assessment form.

Telecommuting Tips
It requires careful planning and discipline to be a successful telecommuter. Employees who telecommute often learn that working remotely is different from expected, requiring specific skills and habits. Refer to the appendix for *Employee Telecommuting Tips*.

Combined Flexible Schedules and Telecommuting Development and Implementation

When developing a combined flexible schedule and telecommuting arrangement, ensure the above information in the flexible schedule and telecommuting sections are reviewed and considered. Employees and supervisors should adhere to the guidelines provided in the flexible schedule and telecommuting sections.

Appendix: Links for Forms to Complete

URP 05.620: Alternative Work Arrangements for Staff Employees
Developing a Telecommuting Plan form
Alternative Work Arrangement form
One-on-One form
Department Telecommuting Assessment form
Individual Telecommuting Assessment form
Supervisor's Telecommuting Employee Assessment form
Employee Telecommuting Tips