



The University of Washington has, and will always be, a place that advances knowledge, discovery, and innovation through face-to-face interaction. **We believe that we advance our public mission and our impact best – for our students, for our employees, for the public, and for our patients – by being in community together.** We also know that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought us new technology and tools that, when used intentionally and responsibly, can expand our reach, increase our impact, incentivize recruitment and retention, and enhance employee flexibility in ways we had not previously considered.

This document outlines guidance for how units evaluate, manage and approve staff and student employee telework arrangements after September 10, 2021, assuming health and safety guidelines (including distancing and density) allow for the University to largely resume in-person instruction and work safely. **If health and safety guidelines do not allow for the University to largely resume in-person instruction and work safely by September 10, 2021, the University will announce extensions of COVID-related telework flexibility at an appropriate time that allows for appropriate planning.** In the meantime, all units are strongly encouraged to start planning in anticipation for a return to largely in person instruction and operations for autumn quarter.

AUTUMN QUARTER PLANNING PARAMETERS

Each unit should start planning for a return to largely in-person instruction and operations by the start of Autumn Quarter. Units should develop and announce operational and/or instructional plans and expectations to their employees and discuss and update necessary employee telework agreements in accordance with guidance below. Units are expected to have new or revised telework agreements in place in the employee's unit personnel file at least prior to September 10, 2021 (when current [Back to Workplace guidance](#) expires) – or sooner as operational and instructional plans require.

- Plans should assume:
 - Space capacity is largely restored to pre-pandemic levels (6' distancing no longer required)
 - K-12 systems, childcare and transportation systems have largely normalized
 - All adults (ages 18+) have had the opportunity to be vaccinated, or have easy access to vaccination
 - Face covering and enhanced cleaning protocols remain in place
 - Accommodations for high-risk individuals have ended or, if they remain in place, follow a [separate process](#)
 - Buildings are back to being publicly accessible, and open public meeting requirements are in effect
- Plans should prioritize the following for in-person work:
 - Essential operations, including all clinical operations and operations that support health and safety of the campus environment
 - Instruction and instructional support services
 - Research and research support services
 - Student support services
 - Employee support services
 - Services provided to the public or that are public facing
- Plans should identify the suitability of positions or employees for ongoing remote or hybrid work, and managers or unit leads should seek approval, as necessary as indicated below.
- When developing plans and guidance, unit leaders, supervisors and managers are strongly encouraged to consult with their unit HR team or unit HR administrator to facilitate consistent guidance in telework determinations and

approvals. Special care should be given to approvals of new or revised telework agreements for staff within probationary periods or on performance improvement plans.

- When shifting an employee who worked onsite pre-COVID to a hybrid or remote work arrangement post-COVID, telework agreements must be reviewed no less than annually and should communicate they are subject to change after review and with appropriate notice.
- Plans that include the following may not be executed without prior consultation with central HR:
 - Employer-initiated hybrid or remote telework arrangements that include contract covered staff (Approval by Human Resources Consultant)
 - Significant shifts of whole teams, programs or services to ongoing, fully remote operations (Approval by the Vice President for Human Resources)

APPLICABILITY

This document applies to all university personnel in [APS 40.1](#), with the exception of academic personnel.

EXEMPTIONS

This document does not cover the following types of telework agreements:

- Telework requests as a **disability accommodation** follow the process outlined in the [UW's disability accommodation policy](#).
- Telework requests as an **employment accommodation for high-risk employees** under Governor's Proclamation 20-46 follow the [COVID-19 employment accommodation process for high-risk employees](#).
- Telework arrangements that were in place **prior** to the COVID-19 emergency, [however new telework agreements must be updated using new institutional forms](#).
- **Out-of-state or international remote work** follow the process outlines in [remote work location and out-of-state work policy](#).

DEFINITIONS:

- **Unit** is a unit or campus with an administrator reporting directly to the President or Provost. This includes UW Bothell, UW Tacoma, and UW Medicine.
- **Unit leader** is the administrator reporting directly to the President or Provost.

Telework designations	Features	Examples
Occasional	Infrequent, not regularly scheduled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unanticipated, personal disruption requires that the employee work from home (temporary child or other caregiving need, home repair that can't be coordinated in non-work hours, etc.) • Employee plans to work for a period of time during an approved vacation • Employee works from home due to a workplace disruption, inclement weather, or suspended operations
Hybrid	Ongoing telework, less than 100% of weekly scheduled hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee works from home during designated hours to support a specific childcare need or arrangement • Employee works from home every Friday to maximize productivity due to a difficult commute • Employee is a self-motivated, high performer who thrives in an independent work environment, but is also needed onsite for projects or team activities

Remote	Ongoing, 100% job duties performed at a remote work location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee is a self-motivated, high performer who thrives in an independent work environment, and is <i>not</i> needed onsite for projects or team activities • Employee possesses skills critical to unit functioning • Employee has compelling family health circumstances that impact their ability to report to work (outside of a disability accommodation) • Employee's job duties require them to be in a specific remote location
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DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY FOR HYBRID OR REMOTE WORK

The extended nature of the pandemic may have caused your unit to re-think or re-consider what types of work need to be done on campus or can be done successfully in a remote location. Similarly, some employees who were temporarily allowed to telework during the COVID-19 pandemic and who are in positions that lend themselves to telework may have become accustomed to teleworking and find it can benefit not only themselves, but the manager, team, and the University.

Whether the position or person is suitable for remote or hybrid work is based on the nature of job duties, employee readiness for telework, and/or manager and team readiness for telework. Determinations are at management discretion and should be made thoughtfully, not based on any one factor alone (cost savings, employee preference, etc.), and reviewed with the employee for any changes or updates at least annually. Determinations should also be made and in a consistent, fair and transparent way that prioritizes equity and employee engagement.

Position suitability

Position(s) suitable for telework is one that has responsibilities that can be conducted through telework, using basic telecommunications technology at home without affecting service quality or organizational operations.

UWHR has developed “flags” in Workday that will indicate which staff job profiles are typically suitable for telework. These “flags” are meant as a guide as units consider which staff positions to flag as typically suitable for telework based on position duties. When hiring new employees and transitioning current employees to new telework agreements units are not prohibited from executing telework arrangements for staff employees in positions without a flag, but it should be an indicator that any agreement should be carefully considered.

Characteristics of positions that DO NOT lend themselves to telework:

- Job duties require access to specific personnel, onsite files, or specialized space/equipment/technology in order to effectively perform the job
- The position had regular in-person client/customer/student interaction pre-COVID which became less efficient or effective in a remote environment.
- Position's job duties require participation in onsite meetings or presentations.
- Telework relationship adds additional cost to the employer. For example, a remote telework arrangement should not typically result in the duplication of office equipment.
- Employee's continued telework negatively impacts team performance.

Characteristics of positions that DO lend themselves to telework:

- Job duties can be conducted outside of the worksite
- Teleworking does not affect the service quality or organizational operations
- Teleworking does not add additional cost to the employer.
- Teleworking does not negatively impact team performance.

Employee suitability

1. Hybrid work suitability criteria:

Some employees may be better prepared than others to manage the unique requirements of teleworking. When evaluating a new telework request or a request to extend an existing telework agreement, managers should consider whether the employee has a record of satisfactory performance in the workplace and has demonstrated the ability to:

- Prioritize work to meet deadlines.
- Display self-discipline and accomplish job duties with minimal supervision/direction.
- Consistently follow UW policies and team norms regardless of work location.
- Understand their role and expectations.
- Be organized, highly disciplined and self-motivated.
- Communicate and coordinate effectively with clients, stakeholders, and team members over phone, email, and Zoom/Teams.
- Manage time effectively.
- Meet work performance and/or productivity levels whether onsite or teleworking.

Before approving a telework request, consider any changes needed to ensure your team continues to meet its objectives. Ensure that the employee and work product will be as effectively managed as their on-site colleagues.

Additional considerations include:

- Whether the employee has space that supports and is conducive to successful telework
- Whether regular onsite meetings or in-person client/customer/student interactions preclude a hybrid arrangement may depend on their frequency and degree to which they are within the teleworking employee's control (e.g., a consultant or trainer may be able to schedule sessions for days they are onsite, whereas an advisor whose students "drop in", or an employee at a customer service window cannot).

2. Remote work suitability criteria

Remote work agreements (100% telework) are supported by compelling policy, critical skill-based requirement, or family health circumstances.

In addition to considering the worker criteria above for hybrid telework, evaluate the employee's performance based on the following additional criteria:

1. Has the employee's work performance and/or productivity during COVID remote work remained stable or improved?
2. Is this a key employee to retain for your organization because of significant institutional knowledge or unique expertise that is hard to replace/replicate?
3. Does the cost of recruitment for and training of a new employee outweigh the impact to team culture and any challenges with telework?
4. Will the employee's continued telework jeopardize the performance of a team? Does the employee manage a large or complex team?

Approval processes and documentation:

Telework designation	Approval process	Documentation
Occasional	Employee's direct supervisor	Telework agreement not required, but written approval/documentation is required.
Hybrid	Unit leader, or as otherwise formally designated by the Unit leader	Telework agreement required, annual review required
Remote	Unit leader Sub-delegations beyond the unit leader are permitted for UW Bothell, UW Tacoma, and UW Medicine, with approval from the Executive Office	Telework agreement required, annual review required.