



Hybrid/Remote Work Policy for Staff and Administration

Policy Statement:

While work performed at the University worksite is preferred to encourage collaboration and a lively presence on campus. There are times that a formal hybrid work arrangement, may create advantages for both the University and its staff and administration. Such advantages may include increased productivity and performance, enhanced employee recruitment and retention, environmental sustainability, greater work-life balance, and increased job satisfaction. The hybrid/remote work arrangements are voluntary and for the convenience of the employee.

Any hybrid/remote work agreement for a portion of the work week is at the discretion of the employee's supervisor and must be approved by the appropriate Vice President/Provost (or their designee) and by the Office of Human Resources.

Eligibility:

Employees in good standing and whose job duties and responsibilities are suitable for hybrid/remote work arrangements, may be considered for a voluntary hybrid/remote work schedule. Hybrid/remote work may be appropriate for some positions and not for others, during some operationally feasible periods of the year and not others and it is not an entitlement for any employee.

The student experience is paramount. Student-facing departments need to ensure adequate in-person coverage during normal business hours.

The suitability of the position for a hybrid/remote work arrangement must be assessed by reviewing the relevant position description(s), considering any necessary updates, and determining whether the essential job functions of the position or other necessary important functions cannot be performed in an effective manner remotely.

- Hybrid or remote work arrangements do not change the essential functions of an employee's position
- In some cases, it may be feasible and appropriate to reallocate tasks other than essential functions from one person to another based on a remote work arrangement, but in other cases, it will not be. (This will be determined by the supervisor, to ensure all required responsibilities continue to be completed in a timely manner.)

In considering employee eligibility, focus should be on the role (based on the position description and practical requirements of the work) and team and not the individual in the role. Considerations should include:

- How to achieve optimal team and department functioning and outcomes;
- How to ensure the best student education experience possible;
- Whether equipment, materials, files or other materials necessary to the position can be only accessed physically on University property;
- Whether in-person contact with supervisors, other employees, students or the public on University property is an essential or integral part of the position responsibilities; and
- Whether the position fills a need for sufficient available staff on campus or in an office or other location, when required.

Managers and supervisors should have an open dialogue with each staff member about the essentials of their role if a hybrid/remote work arrangement is being considered.

Considerations for Approving Employees for Hybrid/Remote Work Arrangements:

Each employee's suitability for a hybrid/remote work arrangement will be considered for all positions that are suitable if the employee has a record of satisfactory work performance in performing the duties of their current position, such that a hybrid work arrangement will not negatively affect internal or external constituents, work teams, or co-workers. The employee's demonstrated strengths should include, but are not limited to:

- Solid communication and transparency;
- Strong and reliable accountability and work ethic;
- Demonstrated ability to work independently with less supervision.

Approval, Implementation and Hybrid/Remote Work Acknowledgements:

Once the Vice President has determined that an employee is suitable for a hybrid/remote work arrangement, and following a discussion with the Associate Vice President of Human Resources, the supervisor/manager will meet with the employee to review this Policy, the hybrid/remote work requirements, and the Hybrid/Remote Work Arrangement document, which the employee must sign. The signed Arrangement document must be sent to the Office of Human Resources for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.

Periodic Review of Hybrid/Remote Work Arrangements, Performance and Modifications:

Hybrid/Remote work arrangements will be monitored by the supervisor and must be reviewed and evaluated at least quarterly, as established by the supervisor/manager and Division Head. This periodic review is intended to assess whether the arrangement is positively contributing to the overall function of the department.

The Vice President, Division Head, supervisor/manager and Associate Vice President of Human Resources may modify, replace or terminate a hybrid/remote-work arrangement as determined in their sole discretion for any reason and at any time with reasonable notice to the employee. The amount of notice that is reasonable will depend on the circumstances and may be a very short period of time if business needs require it. In addition, failure to fulfill work requirements or adhere to University policies and procedures while working remotely may also result in

modification or termination of the hybrid/remote work arrangement, a performance improvement plan (PIP), and/or other disciplinary measures, up to and including possible termination.

If the hybrid/remote work arrangement becomes infeasible or problematic for the employee at any time, it may be discontinued with reasonable notice.

Management:

Supervisors and managers who manage remote workers will provide the opportunity for employees to collaborate and connect with other employees in the department, so communication and collaboration remain a priority. Supervisors and managers are reminded of the importance of connecting their employees to the departmental team and keeping them engaged while working remotely. An inclusive department depends on guidance from and engagement by leadership. Supervisors and managers should develop a meeting infrastructure that facilitates regular communication among all employees. The same performance standards will apply to employees who have hybrid/remote work arrangements, and performance reviews, informal counseling, and disciplinary processes (where appropriate), consistent with applicable policies.

No Contract Rights; At-Will Employment:

Neither this policy, nor any approval of a Hybrid/Remote Work Arrangement, creates any contractual rights or entitlements. Nothing in this protocol is intended to, or shall, affect the at-will nature of any employee's employment relationship with the University.

Hybrid/Remote Work Requirements and Protocols:

See Appendix A (below) for Hybrid/Remote Work Requirements and Protocols.

Temporary Arrangements:

The University's approval of a temporary remote-work arrangement for any employee or group of employees (e.g., in an emergency or during inclement weather) does not mean that the essential functions of any particular job can, in fact, be performed remotely or in a hybrid format.

Hybrid/Remote Work as a Disability Accommodation:

Requests for hybrid/remote work arrangements as an accommodation for a disability or pregnancy-related condition are not reviewed pursuant to this policy. All requests for accommodations for a disability or pregnancy-related condition must be processed through the Office of Human Resources under the University's Reasonable Accommodations Policy.

Office of Human Resources:

The Office of Human Resources remains available as a partner or resource to department supervisors/managers, VPs, and employees as they assess considering roles and the ongoing effectiveness of hybrid/remote work arrangements. Contact the Associate Vice President of Human Resources for assistance with any part of this process.

Appendix A

Hybrid/Remote Work Requirements and Protocols

All Policies Apply:

All policies applicable to employees of the University and to the individual employee remain in effect at all times, irrespective of whether an employee has a hybrid/remote work arrangement.

Job Duties:

Employees must continue to perform all of their assigned job duties, and work for the full duration of their established daily or weekly schedule, while working in a hybrid/remote work arrangement. Department heads and supervisors continue to have the authority to adjust such duties based on the needs of the University. To the extent possible, department heads and supervisors should give their employees advanced notice of any change in an employee's job duties.

Schedule and Availability:

Employees working in a hybrid/remote work arrangement are required to follow and be available during their normal work schedule, except to the extent that schedule alterations are approved in writing, in advance, by a department head or authorized supervisor. Employees who reasonably foresee that working in hybrid/remote work arrangement will require a schedule adjustment should communicate immediately with their supervisor, so that department heads and supervisors can determine whether and to what extent such adjustments will be permitted. Personal business and/or childcare must not interfere with an employee's work responsibilities. If childcare becomes an issue, the employee must use vacation time when not working to care for children.

Hourly employees with hybrid/remote work arrangements are required to maintain at least the same level of frequency of communication with their colleagues and supervisors. Likewise, employees are required to be available for virtual meetings and conference calls during normal working hours. If the exigencies of hybrid/remote work arrangements are likely to require adjusting communication frequency or timing, or the schedule, duration, or nature of meetings and conference calls, employees must communicate with their supervisors to determine what adjustments, if any, will be made, with the goal of minimizing inefficiency and disruption of normal work activities. Supervisors and department heads must communicate their expectations, including, but not limited to, deadlines, attendance at meetings, and responsiveness to constituent inquiries. Supervisors should provide the best way for employees to contact them.

Employees may be required to come to campus at any time. Therefore, employees with hybrid/remote arrangements should be prepared to come to campus upon reasonable notice including, but not limited to, required meetings, programs or events on campus or immediately in the event of exigent circumstances.

Suitable Work Location:

The employee has a suitable hybrid/remote work arrangement location in an Approved Hybrid/Remote Work State. A suitable hybrid/remote work arrangement location must have a reliable and secure internet connection and phone service and provide enough privacy when needed to permit the employee to comply with the University's policies on confidentiality and information security. In addition, the suitable work location should not impose additional costs on the University.

Reporting Time Worked (Hourly Employees):

Hourly employees who have hybrid/remoted work arrangements must timely and accurately report all time worked through established procedures or, if directed, through modified procedures applicable during the period they have a hybrid/remote work arrangement. Department heads and supervisors must diligently ensure that employees are timely and accurately reporting their time worked. Any apparent time-reporting or hourly pay discrepancies or errors identified by supervisors or employees must be raised and addressed immediately. Employees who fail to accurately report time, or who work additional time without prior approval of the supervisor, may be subject to disciplinary measures.

Requesting, Using and Reporting Paid Time Off (All Employees):

Employees must accurately report time off for sick leave, personal days, floating holidays or vacation leave. All time off policies continue to apply while an employee has a hybrid/remote work arrangement. All employees should continue to request time off and seek approval from a supervisor in advance, as required by applicable policies. Employees are required and expected to accurately report any leave or other time off used during the period they have a hybrid/remote work arrangement. If an employees' child or a family member requires care because they are sick, or due to a school/daycare closures or other emergencies, employees who must attend to such care should do so by reporting such time as sick time, if appropriate, or as vacation or other paid time off, consistent with applicable policies.

Non-Reimbursable Expenses: Business Expenses:

Any changes made to the employee's home to provide for a designated workspace are non-reimbursable. Employees will not be reimbursed for home office costs (e.g., costs of connecting to the internet, costs for cell phone service, home maintenance, property or liability insurance or other incidental expenses).

Employees must seek approval from the department head or supervisor before authorizing, purchasing, or incurring a business expense for which reimbursement will be sought, consistent with existing policies. Employees may not deviate from standard practices for incurring business expenses while working in a hybrid/remote work arrangement and written authorizations must be received from department heads or supervisors before incurring any reimbursable business expense.

Environmental Health and Safety: Worker's Compensation:

The employee is responsible for complying with current environment health and safety rules and should request assistance from the University for guidance with this requirement, as necessary. The University reserves the right to inspect any area where an employee is working for safety and security reasons, such as if an employee is injured working. The University will prearrange such visits, if any, with the employee, and the employee is expected to provide the University with reasonable access to the alternate workplace.

University employees are expected to be safety-conscious if granted a hybrid/remote work arrangement. If an employee is injured while working, such injury must be reported promptly consistent with applicable reporting procedures because worker's compensation may be implicated.

A University employee with a hybrid/remote work arrangement is covered under the applicable workers' compensation law of the Commonwealth, should injury occur in the course and scope of employment at the alternate workplace. Consistent with applicable law, workers' compensation applies only to work-related injuries at the specific workspace and does not apply to all areas of the employee's residence or property.

It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that their homeowners or renters insurance covers any non-University-owned furnishings or personal property in their alternate workplace.

Technology Needs:

Department heads and supervisors must determine (and, if necessary, consult with their employees about) the technology needs of their employees so that such employees can perform all of their job duties and responsibilities in a hybrid/remote work arrangement. This requires department heads and supervisors to determine whether and to what extent employees need University-provided computers or devices (e.g., laptops, iPads); VPN access to the University's network; and/or call-forwarding services to ensure that calls to a University phone line are received at home or on a cell phone. Likewise, department heads and supervisors must determine whether employees require training, written or oral instructions, or other IT-provided support in order to set up, access, or use any such devices or services. Questions regarding the availability of equipment, VPN access, call-forwarding, and other technology-related issues should be directed to IT. Equipment supplied by Assumption University is to be used for business purposes only.

Employees must ensure that they are able to connect and have a reliable internet connection if they are working from a hybrid/remote work arrangement location. The University reserves the right to appropriately monitor each employee during their hybrid/remote work arrangement in accordance with University policies. The employee must ensure that all internal and external constituents who may need to reach them know that they are working remotely, which may include a "Working off-campus" indication on the employee's online calendar.

Technical Support:

Assumption University provides IT helpdesk support during business hours. Employees experiencing technical difficulties should send an email to the help desk at Helpdesk@assumption.edu.

Information Security and Confidentiality:

Employees who are given access to University property and equipment (e.g., laptops, desktop computers, scanners, printers, fax machines) must keep such items in a secure and clean location and not somewhere vulnerable to environmental factors that would damage the equipment such as water or extreme temperatures. The use of equipment when provided by the University may only be used by authorized persons and for purposes related to University business only. Employees are responsible for safeguarding and proper handling of such items and for the confidentiality and integrity of non-public University, student and other sensitive or private information and data security, and confidentiality laws (federal and state) and applicable University policies and procedures.

Storage of University documents or data on personal computers or devices is not authorized. Storage of personal information on University computers or devices is strongly discouraged, and the University has no responsibility for such information or the maintenance or return of such information.

Personal Taxes and Zoning:

Personal taxes and zoning implications, if any, relating to an employee working in a hybrid/remote work arrangement are the responsibility of the employee. There may be negative tax implications in certain circumstances. Employees are encouraged to consult with pertinent experts, if desired, at their own expense. By signing the hybrid/remote work arrangement acknowledgement, the employee is certifying that they will take responsibility for tax and zoning compliance in their hybrid/remote work arrangement location.

Visitors at Remote Work Location:

Employees shall not receive or meet with individuals, other than University employees approved in advance by their supervisor, in their hybrid/remote work arrangement location for the purpose of conducting University business.