Telework Policy

Teleworking, or telecommuting, is the concept of working from home or another location on a full- or part-time basis. Teleworking is not a formal, universal employee benefit. Rather, it is an alternative method of meeting the needs of Walla Walla University. The University has the right to refuse to make teleworking available to an employee and to terminate a teleworking arrangement at any time. Employees are not required to telework.

The University’s policy for teleworking is as follows:

**Eligibility:** The manager of the employee, as well as Administration and Human Resources must approve the request to telework. The job functions and nature of the position must be suited to allow for telework. All teleworkers must abide by the requirements laid out in this policy. Telework is a potential work option, not a privilege.

**Compliance with Policies:** Regardless of work location, employees are expected to comply with Walla Walla University policies. This includes, but is not limited to, adhering to Walla Walla University’s policies on work hours, attendance, confidentiality, data protection, code-of-conduct/lifestyles, and anti-discrimination/harassment.

**Evaluation:** The employee shall participate in a performance evaluation every four (4) months to ensure that the needs of the department and Walla Walla University are being met by this Telework arrangement.

**Termination of Telework Arrangement:** Walla Walla University may discontinue the telework arrangement at any time for any reason including, but not limited to: 1) a change in business needs, 2) a determination by a manager that remote work is not in the best interests of the business, 3) the quality of the employee’s job performance is declining and/or not meeting expectations, or 4) the employee’s failure to abide by the remote work guidelines or other University policies.

A termination of the telework arrangement may not necessarily also terminate employment. At Walla Walla University’s option, the employee may remain employed at Walla Walla University, assuming the employee is willing and able to return to employment in person, in the office so designated, as of the date the telework arrangement is terminated. The employee must give Walla Walla University a written notice of intent, stating whether or not they will be continuing employment with WWU, ten (10) days after receiving notice from the manager that the telework arrangement will no longer be valid.

If the employee’s employment is not terminated with the telework arrangement, the manager will generally give the employee three (3) weeks’ notice that the telework arrangement will no longer be valid. This notice will be given in writing, explaining why the arrangement is not functioning and the date the arrangement will end.
**Equipment/Tools:** The University may provide specific tools/equipment for the employee to perform their current duties. This may include computer hardware, computer software, email, voice-mail, connectivity to host applications, and other applicable equipment as deemed necessary. Walla Walla University will not provide secondary equipment such as a printer, toner, computer monitors, telephones and cell phones. The University will not provide or pay for internet access for the employee.

The use of equipment, software, data supplies and furniture when provided by the University for use at the remote work location is limited to authorized persons and for purposes relating to University business. The University will provide for repairs to University equipment. When the employee uses her/his own equipment, the employee is responsible for maintenance and repair of equipment.

Equipment provided by Walla Walla University is University property. The employee must keep it safe and avoid any misuse.

**Office Supplies:** Office supplies will be provided by the University department, from its own stock, as needed. Out-of-pocket expenses for supplies will not be reimbursed unless by prior approval of the employee’s manager.

**Workspace:** The employee shall designate a workspace within the remote work location for placement and installation of equipment to be used while teleworking. The employee shall maintain this workspace in a safe condition, free from hazards and other dangers to the employee and equipment.

The University must approve the site chosen as the employee’s remote workspace. The employee is expected to submit photos and/or a video of the home workspace to management prior to implementation. Any University materials used in the home should be kept in the designated work area at home and not be made accessible to others.

The University has the right to make on-site visits (with 48 hours advance notice) to the remote work location for purposes of determining that the site is safe and free from hazards, and to maintain, repair, inspect, or retrieve University-owned equipment, software, data or supplies.

**Information Security:** Remote workers are required to have the latest operating system security patches applied in order to connect to university systems and data. Antivirus and malware protection is required. Hard drive encryption such as Windows bitlocker should be applied when possible to ensure that lost or stolen devices data is not compromised.

University data should remain on university controlled servers or services. Remote workers may not save university data to external devices, such as USB drives, unless a demonstrated need is submitted in writing to the information technology director prior to the copying of the data.

**Compensation and Benefits:** The employee’s status, benefits, and pay period will remain the same. The employee’s compensation may, at the University’s sole discretion, be reduced if the cost of living in the remote work location is less than College Place, Washington. The
employee’s compensation will not be increased if the cost of living in the remote work location is higher than College Place, Washington.

**Work Hours:** The amount of time the employee is expected to work per day and the work hours of the employee shall not change due to working remotely. The employee must be available by phone and e-mail during regular office hours. The employee must still be available for staff meetings and other meetings deemed necessary by management.

Teleworking is not a substitute for dependent care. Teleworkers will not be available during University core hours to provide dependent care.

**Non-Reimbursable Expenses:** Any changes made to the employee’s home to provide a designated workspace are non-reimbursable.

Teleworkers may be required to come onsite for short periods of time. The need for onsite work will normally be scheduled in advance at the discretion of the teleworker’s direct manager. All travel expenses to and from the campus will be a personal commuting expense that the teleworker will be responsible for and will not be considered business travel.

**Worker’s Compensation Insurance:** The employee’s home workspace will be considered an extension of the University’s workspace. Therefore, worker’s compensation insurance coverage will apply for job-related accidents or illnesses that occur in the employee’s designated work area of the home during the employee’s working hours.

Worker’s compensation insurance is only applicable in the designated workspace. It does not cover the employee’s entire home. The employee must also be engaged in a work-related activity to be eligible for coverage. The University assumes no liability for injuries occurring from the employee doing home repairs during the time they should be working.

Worker’s compensation insurance will also be adjusted based on the location the Worker is relocating to.

**Liability:** Walla Walla University is not liable for loss, destruction, or injury that may occur in or to the employee’s home. This includes family members, visitors, or others that may become injured within or around the employee’s home.

**Income Tax:** It will be the employee’s responsibility to determine any income tax implications of maintaining a home office area. Additionally, the employee may be subject to State or local income taxes depending on the employee’s remote work location. The University will not provide tax guidance. Employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss income tax implications.