STAFF WORK ARRANGEMENTS

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

is committed to fostering a work environment that reinforces consistent standards for a world-class teaching and research university built on collaboration and innovation. We thrive as a university community by connecting our students, faculty, and staff to the vibrance, energy, and power of being together on campus and in person. To build and maintain these strong connections to our community and purpose, it is important that our staff work where students come to work, learn, and live.

As a residential institution, the University will generally conduct its regular business, including, for example, teaching, research, and meetings, with faculty, staff, and students physically present on campus.

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS (FWA)

FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULE
An ongoing adjustment to an employee's regular schedule that varies the days or times that they work. The FWA should include planning for holidays, events, meetings, and other workplace commitments. Employees with approved flexible schedules may be required to work a more standard schedule when needed.

FLEXIBLE WORK LOCATION
Allows an employee to work specific days (per week, month, or during seasonal periods) at a location that is not their regularly assigned place of employment. Types of flexible work location arrangements include:

- Remote Hybrid – Working at both an on-campus and an approved off-campus location.
- Remote Full – Working from an approved remote work location.

Employees may be required to come to their assigned work location or other University location for events, meetings, and other commitments, and should be available promptly when needed.

QUICK LINKS

Assessing Eligibility

FWA Review Process

FWA Discussions

Supporting Hybrid Teams

Performance Management

FWA Resources

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ASSESSING ELIGIBILITY

Supervisors, Deans, and VPs will review the practice in their unit and determine what positions are eligible for flexible work based on the type of work, the employee, and the type of arrangement. Other factors include, but are not limited to:

- Student, faculty, staff, and/or stakeholder collaboration and service required of the position.
- Position responsibilities and required skillset.
- Employee's ability to work independently and effectively manage time.

- Employee conduct and performance.
- An appraisal rating of "Meets Expectations" or higher.
- Proximity to the regularly assigned work location.
- Supervisor's ability to manage the employee effectively.
- On-campus presence and staffing needs.
- Operational constraints (e.g., hours, location, equipment/tools, access to documents, etc.).
- Compliance with applicable state and federal laws, University policy, and operational practices for the college, school, or unit (CSU).

TYPES OF WORK

Review the sample eligibility considerations below. These serve as examples, only, and are not necessarily representative of a requirement for the listed job profiles.

Type of Work	Description	Examples	Remote Eligibility
Solo work	Work does not require immediate collaboration with others	Some accounting, analyst, and IT positions	May be eligible for Full Remote/Hybrid
Highly interactive	Regular engagement and collaboration are required in order to meet work objectives	Managers, directors, and other leadership positions, project work and some research	Generally, not eligible for Remote/Hybrid
Student-serving and patient-facing	Works directly with the residential student population in school, work, and life, or provides direct patient care	Academic Advisors, Admissions Counselors, Housing Coordinators, Testing Specialist, Medical Assistant, Registered Nurse, Advanced Practice Practitioners	Generally, not eligible for Remote/Hybrid
Employee/Faculty-serving	Supports faculty and staff via internal services	Desktop/IT Support, Human Resources, Occupational Health	May be eligible for Remote/Hybrid
Service delivery	Provides a direct service to the University community or property	Maintenance Worker, Plumber, Cashier, Food Server, Cook	Not eligible for Remote/Hybrid
Physical location requirements	Position is physically active on-site in the completion of job duties	UT Austin facilities that are off campus, i.e., UTLA, UTNY, etc.	May not be eligible for Remote/Hybrid

RESOURCES

Flexible Work Arrangements Terminology
Guidance for Flexible Work Tools
Job Considerations Chart (PDF)
Optional Flexible Work Arrangements (PDF)
Optional Flexible Work Arrangement Assessment (PDF)
Optional Flexible Work Arrangement Communication Plan Between Manager and Employee (PDF)
Remote Working Resources (PDF)
Types of Flexible Work Arrangements (PDF)

FWA REVIEW PROCESS

Read each of the sections below and check the box that most accurately describes the position, person, and place. If you answer mostly "yes," then FWA may be a viable option. If you answer mostly "no," an FWA may not work. If your answers are mixed, the position may require additional supervision to ensure productivity standards and goals are achieved.

REVIEW THE POSITION

- ☐ Can the position requirements and objectives be met through an FWA?
- ☐ Can performance be effectively evaluated remotely?
- ☐ Can the arrangement be achieved without impacting others' schedules or workload?
- ☐ Would an arrangement be supported by other members of the team?
- ☐ Would an arrangement be consistent with college, school, or unit best practice?
- ☐ Can the arrangement be achieved without impacting service to faculty, staff, or students?
- ☐ Will service quality or University operations be met?
- ☐ If the position has direct reports, can they effectively manage their team?
- ☐ Would the arrangements be consistent with similar positions in different units?

REVIEW THE PLACE

- ☐ Can the location support remote work with no distractions?
- ☐ Can the employee work a flexible schedule without impacting operational hours?
- ☐ Does the remote location allow the employee to report to the office within a reasonable period of time if needed?
- ☐ Can the arrangement be achieved without impacting needed access to documents or other information that is located on campus?
- ☐ Have you consulted with Human Resources regarding any out-of-state requests? Out-of-state arrangements are by exception and must be reviewed prior to approval to ensure compliance with applicable laws.

FWA REVIEW PROCESS

Review the Position

Review the Person

Review the Place

REVIEW THE PERSON

- ☐ Does the employee consistently meet or exceed expectations?
- ☐ Does the employee have a satisfactory attendance record?
- ☐ Does the employee self-motivate and manage their time productively?
- ☐ Does the employee communicate effectively?
- ☐ Can the employee effectively collaborate with staff, faculty, and students remotely or during non-traditional work hours?

FWA DISCUSSIONS

Once the FWA has been approved and the Flexible Work Agreement has been fully acknowledged, you should schedule a meeting with the employee to ensure they understand when they are expected to work on-site and the relevant workplace expectations.

You may also need to communicate with someone that their FWA request was **not approved**.

- Explain why the person, position, or place is not eligible for remote or hybrid work.

- Allow time for the employee to ask questions about the decision.
- If the employee will be allowed occasional flexibility for personal needs, explain the request process.
- Discuss core business hours and expectations for in-person work.
- Discuss how the employee will engage with others who may have a hybrid or remote work arrangement.
- Make a plan to regularly evaluate the request for a staff work arrangement.

HYBRID POSITIONS

- Identify clear scheduling and space management solutions.
- Remind the employee that their primary work location is on campus and review the required in-person days.
- Discuss core business hours and identify any needs for flexibility of work hours.
- Discuss how the employee will engage others who may have a different work arrangement.

- Identify the tools needed for hybrid collaboration (i.e., headset, access to conference rooms, virtual collaboration tools, etc.).
- Remind the employee that they are responsible for purchasing equipment for a remote office space.
- Make a plan to regularly evaluate the work arrangement's effectiveness.

MAKING IT WORK

As a manager, you agreed to the Flexible Work Arrangement, so you are also responsible for making it work with your employees through:

- Setting clear expectations
- Encouraging collaboration among the team
- Checking in regularly
- Monitoring effectiveness
- Providing feedback

FULLY REMOTE POSITIONS

In addition to the talking points for hybrid positions, be sure to discuss the following with employees who will be working fully remote:

- If the employee will be required to travel to the office, explain how they will be notified.
- Review the University's Business and Travel Expense policies.

You should also work with each employee to communicate the Flexible Work Arrangement to clients, coworkers, and management who may be affected by the new schedule.

SUPPORTING HYBRID TEAMS

CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Be clear on location. Clearly state if the meeting is virtual, hybrid, or in person.

Test the technology. Test the audio-visual set up – both on campus and for remote employees.

Turn on your camera. If the meeting is virtual, encourage team members to turn on their cameras to build a sense of togetherness.

Leave space at the beginning of the meeting. This allows remote employees time to troubleshoot any issues and allows time for casual conversation.

Leave time before and after meetings. This allows employees who are on campus time to travel to the meeting site.

Mind participation. Give each employee the opportunity to participate in the meeting.

TECHNOLOGY & TOOLS

Collaboration tools are essential to effectively engage a team with various work arrangements. UT has access to a variety of tools to facilitate effective communication. The list of tools and resources can be found below:

- Teams Phone enables you and your team to make and receive calls from your office phone from anywhere.
- Microsoft Teams is the only centrally supported university-wide chat and collaboration tool.
- Outlook calendaring options include creating and accepting meeting invitations with colleagues. Group, or resource, calendaring is available for coordinating vacation schedules among a team.
- Duo is required to sign in for many services on campus, including Workday and the UT Directory.
- Connecting to the VPN once a week will keep your workstation secure.
- UT Box and Microsoft One Drive will ensure that your work is securely saved from anywhere.

COMMUNICATION BEST PRACTICES

Schedule regular 1:1 meetings to follow project progress and updates.

Use shared calendar features to improve transparency.

Establish regular on-site schedules.

Encourage video or phone calls over email whenever appropriate.

You may not be in the office together, but you are working toward the same goal.

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

Foster Trust and Flexibility
Be clear about when employees are to be on campus or be available and establish communication expectations.

Celebrate Culture
Engage the team in activities and celebrate milestones. Encourage social connections through informal interactions.

Encourage Meaning
Help employees see the big picture and the connection between efforts and impact.

Have Open Discussions
Ask employees how they are doing and remember that adjusting to a new work arrangement can be challenging.

Learn Signs of Stress
Some signs include reduced participation, procrastination, and disconnection. Take time to listen when your employee expresses concerns.

Know the Available Resources
Review available resources on the HealthPoint Work/Life Balance Services page.

MANAGING YOUR TEAM

- When leading a hybrid team, it is helpful to create **virtual office hours**. The ability for employees to connect with their managers will help to enhance engagement.
- Structure time for **collaborative efforts** in a predictable, recurring way so that everyone knows what to expect and how to prepare.
- Create a **shared calendar** where employees can record their schedules and see their team's availability.
- Ask flextime employes to **add work schedules** to email signatures to inform colleagues of their availability and create an out-of-office message to communicate alternate schedules.
- Set clear expectations but **avoid micromanaging**. Let the employee figure out how and when to get the work done.
- Engage in **transparent two-way communication**. Remind remote employees that they should be reachable.

PROVIDING FEEDBACK

- Do not assume "no news is good news." A lack of regular communication can lead to confusion about an employee's performance.
- Choose the best medium to communicate. Although Teams and email can be quick and easy, one-on-one conversations may be more effective.
- Get specific about positive and constructive feedback. "Good job," is fine sometimes, but specific details will be more meaningful to show your employees what they can do to be successful.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Frequent communication with hybrid and remote teams is vital for maintaining cohesion, clarity and productivity within the team and ensures that everyone is aligned on team goals. It fosters a sense of belonging, reducing feelings of isolation sometimes felt by employees who are remote. Frequent communication allows for quicker problem-solving, feedback, and a culture of transparency and accountability for the team.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

When you approve an employee's Flexible Work Arrangement, you are committing to manage performance effectively for that employee as well as for your team.

- The approach to setting clear expectations with staff is the same regardless of where the employee performs their work.
- Review the expectations of the position, invite input from your employee, and address any questions they have. Give an example of what success would look like for each expectation and how it advances the unit's goals.
- Following the discussion, ask your employee to think about the expectations for a few days and to follow up with you if they want clarification or have new questions.
- Expectations should be documented by updating the position responsibilities in Workday. Managers may choose to provide additional documentation to the employee outside of Workday.

FORM A CONNECTION

The key to employee engagement is the relationship the employee has with their manager. Some best practices include:

- Assuming the best of your employee. Allow metrics, customer feedback, turnaround time, project completion, and timely responses to speak to the employee's performance not how many hours they sit in front of a computer.
- During 1:1 meetings, use a few moments for social interaction.
- Conduct periodic Stay Interviews with high-performing staff. The goal is to discover what the employee values about their role and what they would like to change.
- Pay attention to nonverbal cues that can help you to know when to ask clarifying question. Nonverbal cues may be crossed arms, lack of eye contact, voice tone, shoulder shrugging, or just a different way of reacting than is typical. This can be more challenging for a manager to read in a virtual environment.
- Watch for burn-out. Some employees who work from home find themselves working more hours because the commute does not start or stop the workday.

TYPES OF FEEDBACK

Praise

Improve & Develop

Corrective

PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Setting clear expectations is only successful if it is accompanied by giving regular feedback on how the expectations are being met

- Carving out time during 1:1s to give feedback lets employees know what they need to keep doing and where they need a mid-course correction.
- Ask employees how they are feeling about the FWA. What is working well? What presents a challenge? Share how it is working for you as their manager and adjust as needed.

FWA RESOURCES

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

Occasional Parking Program
A low-cost option exclusively for University employees. This is a great option for staff with a remote or hybrid work arrangement who do not need to park in a University garage every day

HR Managing People Training
This training series equips managers with best practices and resources related to managing staff with all varieties of Work Arrangements

Learning & Development Resources
There are many helpful resources provided by The University Learning & Development team, including:
- How to lead impactful meetings
- Managing a hybrid work model
- Remote work resources for managers and employees

LINKEDIN LEARNING

LinkedIn Learning contains many helpful course collections related to flexible and hybrid work.
- Hybrid Work Environments Learn about leading employees with varying work arrangements while building effective teams
- Remote Work Foundations Includes courses on managing virtual teams, leading virtual meetings, and other tips for working remotely
- Productivity, Focus, and Workload Management How to find your productive mindset and get things done.

- Technology tools training, such as Zoom Essentials and Microsoft Teams Essentials.

Individual Courses include:
- Building Hybrid Competence How to work fluidly and effectively across on-site and remote work locations
- Finding Flow in Hybrid Work Strategies to better structure your time, approach your work, and increase team synergy
- Connecting and Collaborating in a Virtual or Hybrid Workspace How to effectively engage in virtual and live environments

HR RESOURCES

Staff Work Arrangements

Strategic Workforce Solutions

Performance Management

WORKDAY RESOURCES

For Employees:
- Request, View, and End Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA) – Workday Instructional Guide

For Managers:
- Add, View, and End Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA) for a Worker – Workday Instructional Guide