

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY
ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Definition. Alternative Work Arrangements, including telecommuting, is a work arrangement in which some or all of the work is performed at an off-campus work site such as the home or in office space near home. Communication may be by one of several means, such as a computer, phone, modem, fax, and pager. Equipment may be owned and maintained by the employee or by the university.

Authority. Deans, Directors, Chairpersons or their designee have the authority to establish telecommuting arrangements in cooperation with Human Resources. Arrangements may be authorized only when it is in the best interest of the university to do so. The Provost or the appropriate Vice President must approve the final arrangements.

Process. These steps are to be followed:

1. A request for Alternative Work Arrangements or Telecommuting may be initiated by either the employee or the department.
2. If the employee initiates the request, the employee shall complete the checklist, "Developing a Proposal for a Telecommuting Arrangement," before requesting an appointment with the supervisor to discuss the proposal.
3. If and when Deans, Directors, Chairpersons or their designee agrees to a telecommuting arrangement, the department must complete a formal written agreement, using the Telecommuting Guidelines and the Model Telecommuting Agreement.
4. Once the Provost or the appropriate Vice President approves the request, the employee shall be given a copy of the document, and the original will be maintained by Human Resources with copies to the Employee and the Departmental file.
5. As questions arise, they should be directed to Human Resources.

Resources. In establishing telecommuting arrangements, departments shall complete the FAU checklist before entering into detailed discussions with supervisors.

TELECOMMUTING GUIDELINES

A telecommuting agreement should be voluntary. However, there may be instances in which business needs dictate a telecommuting agreement.

The arrangement must be in the best interests of the university. It should benefit, or at least not cause significant problems, for the department as well as the employee. In evaluating benefits to the department, these are some factors to consider:

Does the nature of the work lend itself to telecommuting?

- Jobs that entail working alone or working with equipment which can be kept at the alternate work site are often suitable for telecommuting. Examples: writer, editor, analyst, word processor, programmer.
- Jobs that require physical presence to perform effectively are normally not suitable for telecommuting. Examples: receptionist, student academic advisor, child care worker, custodian, maintenance worker.

What potential costs and savings are expected?

- Space is often saved. However, juggling shared space among several part-timers may be difficult, especially if there is much turnover.
- Equipment costs may be saved at the office (as when existing equipment is freed up for use by others). However, costs may be incurred at the alternate work site, depending on the nature of the agreement. For example, the department may need to buy, or support the costs of maintaining, a computer, modem, fax, or phone lines.
- Staffing costs may be saved if the arrangement helps the department to recruit or retain a valued employee, or if the employee becomes more productive as a result of the new work arrangement. (Employees often produce more if they are freed from constant interruptions.) On the other hand, some work requires constant interaction with coworkers. In addition, telecommuting by one employee may affect the workload or the productivity of others.

Is the employee a good candidate for telecommuting?

- ✦ Telecommuting during the probationary period will not be normally approved because of the need to clarify job responsibilities, establish relationships with co-workers and clients, and assess suitability for continued employment.
- ✦ Employees who have performance problems, or who require close supervision, are not good candidates for telecommuting.
- ✦ Some employees are not comfortable with physical isolation from other employees, or do not work well independently, or cannot create a home work space that is safe (for them and for university equipment and files) and is free from distractions.
- ✦ Sometimes employees who telecommute feel that they are "out of the loop" and are overlooked when it comes to various kinds of workplace opportunities. (For this reason, it is advisable to limit telecommuting to two (2) – three (3) days per week).

3. The focus in telecommuting arrangements must be on results. The supervisor should communicate in advance what assignments or tasks are appropriate to be performed at the telecommuting site, and what assessment techniques will be used to measure success in meeting performance standards.
4. The agreement should be as specific as possible. It should include:
 - Days and hours the employee is expected to be working in the department
 - Hours the employee is expected to be working and reachable at the telecommuting site
 - Methods of contact (such as dedicated phone line, voice mail, modem, fax, beeper, VPN connection, etc.)
 - Times and frequency of contact (in both directions)
 - Who owns and maintains required equipment and supplies
 - Who pays for on-going expenses, such as phone lines
 - A statement that the employee agrees to maintain a safe work environment, and that the employee agrees to hold the university harmless for injury to others at the telecommuting location
 - A statement that the employee agrees to provide a secure location for university-owned equipment and materials, and will not use, or allow others to use, such equipment for purposes other than university business; and that the university is entitled to reasonable access to its equipment and materials
 - A statement that management retains the right to modify the agreement on a temporary basis as a result of business necessity (for example, the employee may be required to come to campus on a particular day), or as a result of an employee request supported by the supervisor
 - A statement that the arrangement is voluntary, and may be terminated at any time by either party, with specified notice
5. The agreement should be in writing and should be signed and dated by the employee, the supervisor, and the department director or designee. A copy should be given to the employee; the original should be kept in the employee's file.
6. Questions should be directed to an Employee Relations Team member in Human Resources.

Technology Requirements and Support

If an Alternative Work Arrangement is to be established, the technology required will need to be evaluated to assure the **employee** can carry out his/her assigned responsibilities from the alternative work site. Issues such as:

1. Equipment Needed
2. Access to Databases such as Banner
3. Security Profile
4. Current Internet Connection Configuration and monthly costs
5. Cost of paper, toner, supplies
6. The Individual's Technical Skill Capabilities
7. IRM Support to/at the Alternative Work Site

Most positions that will request telecommuting approval will need approximately the same equipment. However, there might be significant required modifications to the traditional set-up.

In order for **an employee** to work off-site, he/she must have the following:

1. FAU standard computer setup (<http://www.fau.edu/irm/desktop/hardware.php>)
2. FAU standard software (http://www.fau.edu/irm/desktop/std_desktop.php)
3. Departmental Specific Software Scanner (as defined by the assignment)
4. Remote desktop connection software and equipment (VPN Concentrator)
5. Ability to do remote desktop software upgrades
6. A printer/copier/fax combination
7. Internet Connection (DSL or Cable, dial-up will be too slow)
8. Small Hub/Router (for more than one computer hookup)
9. Work Only Telephone & Line by the computer for conference calls
10. Office Furniture, as needed
11. Ability to adhere to FAU security requirements i.e. sensitive or confidential data will be secure online and documents shredded.
12. Business continuity (backup arrangement in the case of not being able to work from home i.e. no power)
13. IRM Support (depending upon resources, this might need to be outsourced)

MODEL AGREEMENT

This agreement specifies the conditions applicable to an arrangement for performing work at an alternate work site on a regular basis. The agreement begins on DATE and continues until DATE or INDEFINITELY. It can be withdrawn with X DAYS written notice by either party.

1. Days and hours when the employee is normally expected to be in the department are SPECIFY DAYS AND HOURS.
2. The alternate work site is SPECIFY LOCATION. Days and hours when the employee will normally work at this alternate work site are SPECIFY DAYS AND HOURS.
3. Additional hours involving overtime at any work site must be approved in advance by the supervisor.
4. Duties and assignments authorized to be performed at this alternate work site are SPECIFY DUTIES. The supervisor reserves the right to assign work as necessary at any work site.
5. Recognizing that effective communication is essential for this arrangement to be successful, the following methods and times of communicating are agreed upon:
[SPECIFY: who (include backup and emergency contacts), when, how often, during what time frames, how (phone, fax, beeper, face-to-face, etc.)]
6. The employee agrees to remain accessible during designated work hours, and understands that management retains the right to modify this agreement on a temporary basis as a result of business necessity.
7. Regarding space and equipment purchase, set-up, and maintenance where appropriate, the following is agreed upon:
[SPECIFY: purchase, set-up, maintenance, provision of supplies, insurance arrangements (consulting Environmental Health & Safety as necessary), etc., for each piece of equipment, furniture, phones, etc.]
8. The employee agrees to maintain a safe and secure work environment. The employee agrees to allow the university access to assess safety and security, upon reasonable notice.
9. The employee agrees to report work-related injuries to the supervisor at the earliest reasonable opportunity. The employee agrees to hold the university harmless for injury to others at the alternate work site.
10. The employee agrees to use university-owned equipment, records, and materials for purposes of university business only, and to protect them against unauthorized or accidental access, use, modification, destruction, or disclosure. The employee agrees to report to the supervisor instances of loss, damage, or unauthorized access at the earliest reasonable opportunity.
11. The employee understands that all equipment, records, and materials provided by the university shall remain the property of the university.
12. The employee understands that his/her personal vehicle will not be used for university business unless specifically authorized by the supervisor.

13. The employee agrees to return university equipment, records, and materials within X DAYS of termination of this agreement. All university equipment will be returned to the university by the employee for inspection, repair, replacement, or repossession with X DAYS written notice.
14. The employee understands that she/he is responsible for tax consequences, if any, of this arrangement, and for conformance to any local zoning regulations.
15. The employee understands that all obligations, responsibilities, terms and conditions of employment with the university remain unchanged, except those obligations and responsibilities specifically addressed in this agreement.
16. The employee agrees not to provide personal care for a child or dependent adult during the schedule work hours unless approved as part of the work plan.
17. The university has the right to inspect the alternate work location during normal working hours (with prior notice) to ensure that the equipment and alternate work location are properly/adequately set-up and maintained.

I hereby affirm by my signature that I have read this Alternate Work Arrangement Agreement, and understand and agree to all of its provisions.

Employee	Position Title	Date
Supervisor	Unit/Department	Date
Provost/Vice President		Date

FOR HR USE ONLY

Campus/ Home Org: _____ **Request Received in HR:** _____

Status of Request by Provost/Vice President: Approved [] Denied [] **DATE:** _____

Effective Date of Arrangement (*must not precede approval date*) _____

HR Assistant VP/Designee:

NOTES/COMMENTS:

DEVELOPING A PROPOSAL FOR AN ALTERNATE WORK AGREEMENT

___ Determine what arrangement would best meet the University's needs:

- Where do you propose to work (home, alternate site)?
- What is the work schedule (days and hours on campus, days and hours at telecommuting site)?
- Which of your duties do you propose to perform at the telecommuting site? Which do you propose to perform in the department?
- If only a minor adjustment can be made to your work arrangements, what adjustment would be most valuable to you? (Examples: telecommute one day a week; be available to come in on short notice; suspend telecommuting during busiest times of the year.)

___ Anticipate what problems this arrangement may cause for the organization. (Include the effect on your own assignment and how your role affects others, both within the unit and externally.) Try to work out potential solutions to these concerns.

- How will you communicate with your supervisor, co-workers, clients?
- How will materials be kept readily available to those who need access?
- How will you be able to respond to emergencies or other unexpected events in your department?
- How will you assure the security of university materials and equipment?
- Can you provide a workplace that is as safe as your departmental work site, so as to minimize the likelihood of injury?

___ Outline ways in which your proposed arrangement might benefit the organization.

- Will service hours be extended?
- Will you be more productive? In what ways, and how will this be measured?
- Will your department be able to free up equipment and space?

___ Come up with a plan that addresses your own concerns and, to the extent that you can, those you anticipate from your supervisor, co-workers, and clients.

___ Request a meeting with your supervisor to explain what arrangements you would like and why.

Discuss possibilities with your supervisor; actively listen and be prepared to revise your plan. (Flexibility works both ways!)

___ Suggest a trial period of X months.

___ Develop a plan and timetable for monitoring the effectiveness of the arrangement.