

3357:13-16-28 Telecommuting Policy

A) Purpose

North Central State College considers telecommuting to be a viable alternative for; but not limited to situations such as College business continuity; campus emergencies, pandemic or other catastrophic incidents and situations; and Family and Medical Leave, to the extent practical for the employee and the College, and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if appropriate. All situations shall be considered on a case-by-case basis where the characteristics of an individual, a job and supervisor are best suited to such an arrangement, at the sole discretion of the College.

B) Definition

Telecommuting occurs when an employee works from home. Telecommuting is a work alternative that may be appropriate for some employees and for some jobs. It is not an entitlement; it is not a College-wide benefit; and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the College.

Effective: September 1, 2015

Expires: September 1, 2020

Review Dates: 9/1/15

Telecommuting Procedures:

Telecommuting is a work alternative and approval is at the sole discretion of the College. Telecommuting situations shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. These procedures serve as guidelines for formal telecommuting arrangements.

A) Eligibility

The approval of a telecommuting work alternative is on a case-by-case basis, and it is at the sole discretion of the College. Telecommuting may be a viable alternative for; but not limited to situations such as College business continuity; campus emergencies, pandemic or other catastrophic incidents and situations; and Family and Medical Leave, to the extent practical for the employee and the College, and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if appropriate.

B) Suitability

1. Before entering into any formal telecommuting agreement, the employee and manager, in collaboration with the division Vice President and Director of Human Resources, will evaluate the suitability of such arrangement with particular attention to the following:

Employee Suitability - the employee and manager will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, compared to traits customarily recognized as appropriate for successful telecommuters including, but not limited to:

- a. Benefit to the College – the arrangement assists in the completion of the College's goals.
- b. Employee suitability – the supervisor will assess the needs and work habits of the employee compared to traits customarily recognized as appropriated for successful telecommuting.
- c. Job responsibilities – the supervisor will review the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriated for a telecommuting arrangement.
- d. Supervisor's ability to effectively manage the employee's duties.
- e. Equipment needs, alternate work site space and design considerations and scheduling issues.
- f. Tax and other legal implications for the business use of the employee's alternate location on IRS and state and local government restrictions. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.

Generally, requests to telecommute will not be approved when:

- a. The nature of the job requires the employee's physical presence (e.g. telecommuting may not be appropriate for an employee who closely supervises the work of other

employees or requires face-to-face contact to provide effective customer service), or when efficiency is compromised when the employee is not present.

- b. The employee's performance evaluations do not indicate sustained high performance.
- c. The employee's observed productivity levels are problematic.
- d. The employee requires close supervision as indicated, for example, by the employee's consistent need for guidance on technical matters.
- e. The employee's current assignment requires frequent supervision, direction or input from others who are on-site.
- f. The employee has received disciplinary action or has a demonstrated attendance problem.

C) Trial Period Evaluation

Evaluation of employee's telecommuting performance during the trial period will include daily interaction by phone and e-mail between the employee and the supervisor, and weekly face-to-face meetings to discuss work progress and problems. At the conclusion of the trial period the supervisor will complete an evaluation of the arrangement and make recommendations for continuance, modifications or discontinuation. Evaluation of telecommuting performance beyond the trial period will be consistent with that received by employees working on-site in both content and frequency and will focus on work output and completion of objectives. The trial period shall be 3 months but may be ended sooner or extended at the discretion of the supervisor

D) Work Schedule

The employee and supervisor will agree on the number of days of telecommuting allowed each week, the work schedule the employee will customarily maintain, and the manner and frequency of communication. All employees are expected to work their designated number of hours per week. Employees are expected to follow supervisor-approved work schedules. The supervisor shall make the final decision regarding an individual's work schedule. The employee agrees to be accessible by phone or other agreed upon method within a reasonable time period during the agreed upon work schedule.

E) Equipment

The supervisor will determine the appropriate equipment needs for each telecommuting arrangement on a case-by-case basis. Human Resources and Information Technology departments will serve as resources. Equipment supplied by the College will be maintained by the College. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the College, will be maintained by the employee. The College accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. The College reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the College is to be used for business purposes only. The

telecommuting employee shall submit an inventory of all office property and agrees to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment all College property will be returned.

The College will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) for successful completion of job responsibilities. The College will also reimburse the employee for all other business-related expenses such as phone calls, shipping costs, etc. that are reasonably incurred in accordance with job responsibilities subject to compliance with the College's reimbursement process.

F) Work Environment

The employee will establish an appropriate environment for work purposes. The College will not be responsible for any costs associated with initial setup of the employee's remote work space including, but not limited to, remodeling, furniture, lighting, phone service, Internet service, repairs or modifications to the remote work space, etc. Employees will be offered appropriate assistance in setting up a work station designed for safe, comfortable work through the Human Resource and Information Technology departments.

G) Security and Confidentiality

Consistent with the College's expectations of information security for employees working on-site, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary College, student and customer information accessible from their alternate work site. Steps include, but are not limited to, use of secured locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other steps appropriate for the job and the environment.

H) Safety Inspection

A representative of the College may visit the employee's remote work site to inspect for possible work hazards and suggest modifications. Repeat inspections may occur on an as-needed basis.

I) Illness and Injuries

Injuries sustained by the employee while at their remote work location and in conjunction with regular work duties are normally covered by Workers' Compensation. Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying their supervisor or Human Resources of such injuries in accordance with College worker's compensation procedures. The injury will be reviewed/investigated for work-relatedness. Also, the employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to their work site.

Employees cannot work from an alternate work location during medical leave without their physician's written authorization.

J) Liability

The College assumes no liability for injuries occurring in the employee's alternate work location outside of work hours. Employees should review their homeowner insurance policies as they may not automatically cover injuries arising out of, or relating to, the business use of their home. For the employee's protection, employees should have their homeowners/tenants liability policy endorsed to cover bodily injury and property damage to all third parties arising out of or relating to the business use of their home. Employees who live in rented property should be aware that their lease may not permit business use of the premises.

The College accepts no responsibility whatsoever for the safety, security or suitability of any alternative work site. The College also accepts no responsibility for the personal property of any employee.

K) Communication Plan

An appropriate level of communication between the telecommuter and supervisor will be agreed to as part of the discussion process and will be more formal during the trial period. After conclusion of the trial period, the manager and telecommuter will communicate at a level consistent with employees working on-site or in a manner and frequency that seems appropriate for the job and the individuals involved.

L) Overtime

The performance standards for employees working at an alternate worksite shall be the same standards used when employees are working on campus. Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to record all hours worked in a manner designated by the College. Employees in positions that are designated as eligible for overtime must have advance approval from the supervisor for overtime work. Failure to comply with this requirement can result in the immediate cessation of the telecommuting agreement.

M) Termination of Agreement

Telecommuting is not intended to permit employees to have time to work at other jobs, run their own businesses, or to accommodate child care needs. A telecommuting employee's failure to fulfill both qualitative and quantitative work requirements may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The availability of telecommuting as an alternated work arrangement can be discontinued at any time at the discretion of the College.

N) Other

Mileage shall not be paid for transportation between a telecommuting employee's alternate work site and the College should the need arise for them to come to the College.