**General Workplace Policy**  **UPPS No. 04.04.01**

**Issue No. 17**

**Revised Date: 02/23/2024**

**Effective Date: 07/27/2021**

**Next Review Date: 07/01/2024 (E4Y)**

**Sr. Reviewer: Associate Vice President for Human Resources**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

*Texas State University is committed to providing equitable workplace conditions for all employees.*

**01.** **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

01.01 The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and expectations for work schedules, work locations, and other general workplace conditions. Specifically, this policy addresses:

1. working hours and schedules;

1. place of work and remote working;

1. notification of absence or tardiness;

1. children, non-business visitors, and phone calls in the workplace;

1. dress code;

1. disclosure of social security numbers;

1. criminal offense reporting obligations;

1. publication of employee photos; and

1. dissemination of this policy.

**02.** **DEFINITIONS**

02.01 Alternate Work Location – an approved, non-university worksite where some or all the work assigned to an employee is conducted. Such worksite could be an employee’s home.

02.02 Flexible Work Schedule – a work schedule that allows employees to work hours other than the normal operating hours of the university. For example:

1. 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday-Friday (with a 30-minute lunch);

1. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Friday (with a one-hour lunch); or

1. 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday (with a one-hour lunch).

02.03 Hours Worked – all time spent by a staff member that is primarily for the benefit of the university and is controlled or directed by the university. Such time includes:

1. required on duty;

1. time which an employee is permitted to work, even if not requested or required;

1. waiting, idle time, break periods, or other breaks of short duration (from five to 20 minutes);

1. time spent traveling on official business; or

e. time spent in training directed or approved by the supervisor.

02.04 Long-Term Remote Work Arrangement (telecommuting) – the long-term performance (greater than 30 workdays in a fiscal year) of some or all duties assigned to an employee conducted at an approved non-university worksite. A formal agreement with vice presidential approval is required.

02.05 Regular Work Location – a worksite on the university campus or on property under control of the university where an employee usually and customarily reports to work.

02.06 Short-Term Remote Work Arrangement – the occasional or short-term (maximum of 30 workdays per fiscal year) performance of normal work duties at a location away from the employee’s regular work location, most often the employee’s home. Prior approval by the employee’s direct supervisor and logging remote work time via the timesheet is required.

02.07 Standard Full-Time Workweek – a workweek no less than 40 hours. For full time equivalents (FTEs) below 100 percent, the standard full-time workweek is equivalent to the number of hours proportionate to the FTE's appointment status.

02.08 Work Schedule – the employee’s regularly assigned work hours in a university or approved non-university worksite.

**03.** **PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING WORKING HOURS AND SCHEDULES**

03.01 Normal Working Hours

As directed by The Texas State University System (TSUS) Board of Regents, the university will be open to conduct essential services during the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday (except official university holidays). Essential services include university administrative and executive offices, the president’s office, the library, the registrar, fiscal and business offices, the police department, the financial aid office, the admissions office, academic offices, facilities, and any other essential operational offices.

A normal workweek begins at 12:01 a.m. Sunday and ends at midnight the following Saturday. State law sets the minimum workweek for regular, full-time salaried employees at 40 hours. The workday for personnel may be staggered; however, administrative offices will be open to conduct essential services, at a minimum, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each weekday, Monday through Friday, except on designated holidays.

Service department personnel and certain special groups may be subject to different office hours and schedules, including standby schedules, due to the nature of their work.

Supervisors are responsible for setting their employees’ normal work hours.

03.02 Timekeeping and Holidays

For timekeeping purposes, employees will record and round work hours to the nearest quarter hour.

University holidays are based on an eight-hour day. For this reason, when a holiday falls on a 10-hour workday, only eight of those hours will be counted as holiday. The remaining two hours must be charged to accrued leave (e.g., vacation, state comp, FLSA overtime) or worked on another day during that workweek. If a holiday falls on an employee’s normal day off, the employee still receives the holiday hours. Supervisors may change the employees’ normal work hours for that workweek.

03.03 Flexible Work Schedules

Texas State endeavors to foster a work environment that maximizes productivity and flexibility for supervisors and staff. The university allows flexible work schedules, at the discretion of supervisors, to enable employees to serve customers, meet institutional and departmental goals, and balance professional and personal responsibilities.

A flexible work schedule is a privilege and not a right. The availability of flexible work schedules is not intended to change a department’s regular hours of operation, nor does it alter the responsibility or diminish the authority of supervisors to establish and adjust work schedules.

Individual work schedules must meet departmental operating and service needs. Eligibility for participation in a flexible work schedule is based upon an assessment by the supervisor that the employee can continue to fully meet all job responsibilities and performance expectations. The supervisor is responsible for determining the best use of a flexible work schedule, considering the impact on work effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity.

Flexible work schedules are normally approved by the supervisor but may be changed at any time at the discretion of the department head or higher-level authority.

The decision to approve or deny a flexible work schedule is at the sole discretion of the university and is not subject to appeal.

03.04 Rest and Meal Periods

Rest and meal period policy and procedure can be found in [UPPS No. 04.04.16](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/04-04-16.html), Overtime and Compensatory Time Policy.

03.05 Break Time for Nursing Mothers

Nursing mothers of children less than one year of age are eligible for additional break periods and private space to express breast milk during the workday. Additional guidance is provided in [UPPS No. 04.04.61](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/04-04-61.html), Mother-Friendly Worksite.

**04.** **PLACE OF WORK AND REMOTE WORK PROCEDURES**

04.01  This section applies to university staff positions and is in accordance with Texas Government Code, [§658.010](https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/htm/GV.658.htm) and [§659.018](https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/htm/GV.659.htm). It does not apply to faculty positions or positions that require student status as a condition of employment.

The university normally requires that work be performed on university property or property controlled by the university. To promote general work efficiencies, the university may permit or direct employees to work at alternate work locations for all or part of the workweek.

Texas State may allow short- or long-term remote work arrangements at the discretion of the university to enable employees to serve customers, meet institutional and departmental goals, and balance professional and personal responsibilities. Remote working arrangements may be implemented as a means of achieving administrative efficiency, improving productivity and job performance, supporting business continuity plans, and supporting the hiring and retention of a highly competent workforce.

All remote working arrangements must be approved by the direct supervisor. Long-term remote work arrangements must also be approved by the appropriate divisional vice president.

Approved short-term remote work arrangements may not exceed 30 total workdays in a fiscal year. Exceptions require vice president approval.

A remote work arrangement is considered a privilege and not a right. These work arrangements do not change the conditions of employment or required compliance with policies. These arrangements do not constitute an employment contract and do not create a property interest in employment.

Remote work may also be considered on a case-by-case basis as a reasonable accommodation for qualified employees with disabilities, as provided by [UPPS No. 04.04.60](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/04-04-60.html), Workplace Accommodation.

\*04.02 General Provisions

Compensation and Benefits – An employee’s compensation and benefits will not change as a result of implementing a remote work arrangement, including paid holidays.

Hours of Work – The total number of hours that an employee is expected to work will not change as a result of a remote work arrangement. All remote work arrangements will identify the work schedule hours that an employee will be expected to be working. Any non-work time within these hours must be charged to the appropriate leave category, as provided in [UPPS No. 04.04.30](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/04-04-30.html), University Leave Policy.

The alternate work location must be free of distractions. Remote work arrangements are not intended to serve as a routine substitute for child or adult care. For long-term remote work arrangements only, if children or adults in need of primary care are in the alternative work location during the employee’s work hours, some other individual must be present to provide the care.

Attendance at Meetings – Supervisors may require employees to report as needed, either electronically or physically, to a designated site for work-related meetings or other events; or may meet with employees in the alternate work location as needed to discuss work progress or other work-related issues.

Workers’ Compensation Liability – The university may be liable for job-related injuries or illnesses that occur during an employee’s established work hours in their alternate work locations. Employees are responsible for maintaining a designated workspace in a clean, professional, and safe condition at the alternate work location. The university specifically assumes no liability for injury to any other person who would not be in the work area if the duties were being performed at the designated headquarters. The university retains the right to pre-arranged, on-site inspections of this work area during work hours. Worker's compensation benefits will apply to injuries arising out of and in the course of employment. An employee on a remote work arrangement who sustains a work-related injury must notify their supervisor immediately and complete all requested documents regarding the injury.

Timekeeping and Leave – Employees are required to submit regular time reports as specified by the supervisor and in accordance with [UPPS No. 04.04.30](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/04-04-30.html), University Leave Policy. In accordance with university policy, employees must obtain supervisory approval before taking leave.

Overtime and Compensatory Time – All employees must abide by the provisions of [UPPS No. 04.04.16](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/04-04-16.html), Overtime and Compensatory Time Policy. All employees must obtain approval before working overtime.

Equipment and Security – Employees must abide by all university policies and guidelines for standards and ethics, per [UPPS No. 04.01.01](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/04-01-01.html), Security of Texas State Information Resources and [UPPS No. 04.01.05](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/04-01-05.html), Network Use Policy, and adhere to policies regarding the use of state property. Employees are responsible for ensuring the confidentiality, safety, and integrity of data, documents, and software used at the remote worksite. University assets required for remote work must be documented in accordance with [UPPS No. 05.01.01](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/05-01-01.html), Texas State University Property and Equipment. Employees are required to follow all Texas State information security policies, copyright laws, and manufacturer licensing agreements. Software may not be duplicated except as allowed under law and licensing agreements.

If a problem arises in relation to the telephone or internet service provider (ISP), employees will contact and obtain support from their service provider. Payment for repairs is the responsibility of the subscriber of the service.

Employee-Owned Hardware and Software – All computers connecting to the university’s network through an ISP are required to use a properly configured virtual private network and be running current virus protection software. Employees on remote work arrangements must use only approved software when connecting with the university network. The university will not be liable for damages to employee-owned equipment resulting from participation in a remote work arrangement, and will not be responsible for operation costs, home maintenance, or any other incidental costs (e.g., utilities, basic telephone service, insurance) associated with the use of the employees' residence.

Supplies – The provision of supplies and equipment will be at the discretion of the supervisor. Reimbursement to employees will not be approved.

04.03 Departmental Responsibilities

Supervisors should assure that the positions eligible for remote work are adapted easily to this arrangement. Jobs that are adapted easily consist of writing, reading, researching, independent thinking, editing, and working with data.

Supervisors should evaluate both the characteristics of the position and the employee. Ideal candidates are self-motivated and responsible; have a reliable and consistent history of being results-oriented and comfortable setting priorities and deadlines; able to work independently; need minimal supervision; successful in current position; knowledgeable about office procedures; an effective communicator who takes initiative; adaptable to changing routines and environments; and committed to the remote work arrangement. 

Supervisors should also consider the ability to measure or assess work performed, availability and costs of needed equipment, assessment of other employees in the work unit performing similar responsibilities who might have an interest in remote work, and the effect on the rest of the work group, unit, or department.

As with any employee, performance expectations, goals, and results for each workweek must be established and met.

Supervisors should research and identify resources needed and should schedule regular meetings to assess needs, give feedback, and discuss problems. Supervisors should review the remote work arrangement periodically, but not less than once every six months, and make necessary adjustments to address any changing business demands.

Supervisors may approve or deny a remote work arrangement that is proposed by the employee. If the supervisor and the employee do not agree on aspects of the schedule, then the employee will continue to work their standard hours at the regularly assigned place of employment. In general, remote work arrangements are a privilege, which may be granted under appropriate circumstances for high-performing employees whose job responsibilities are suited to such arrangements. Each request to deviate from the normal schedule or location will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Generally, requests for remote work arrangements may be considered when:

a. the remote work arrangement adds value to the operations and outcomes of the department and university;

b. the employee has demonstrated sustained high performance and when the supervisor believes the employee can maintain the expected quantity and quality of work;

c. quality of service can be maintained for students, faculty, and other

members of the university community; and

d. remote work is appropriate considering the nature of the position.

\*04.04 Employee Responsibilities

Employees participating in remote work arrangements are responsible for adhering to all terms of the arrangements as outlined in the approved agreement.

Employees who have an approved remote work arrangement shall:

1. review the [[Remote Work and Collaboration Resources website](https://itac.txstate.edu/remote/staff.html)](https://itac.txstate.edu/remote/staff.html) in preparation for the remote work assignment;
2. provide and maintain a healthy and safe environment at the remote worksite;

1. use only university-approved software for connecting with the university's network from the remote worksite;

1. run current anti-virus software at all times and follow all university information security rules, copyright laws, and manufacturer licensing agreements;

1. comply with the university's property administration procedures, including completion of required documents and information resource policies and procedures;

1. maintain accurate time and documentation to support and substantiate their work hours and work products; and

1. comply with all other university policies and procedures that would apply in the absence of a remote work arrangement.

04.05  Procedures for Requesting Short- or Long-Term Remote Work Arrangements

Short-term remote work arrangement requests must be entered on the employee’s timesheet and approved by the direct supervisor.

Long-term remote work arrangements require the submission of a remote-work agreement, via the [SAP Employee Self-Service portal](https://ibis.sap.txstate.edu/irj/portal), and must be approved by the divisional vice president.

In either instance, approval must be obtained prior to engaging in remote work.

The long-term remote work agreement should address all aspects of the remote work arrangement, including but not limited to the following:

1. how the arrangement benefits the university, improves efficiency or effectiveness, or enhances customer service;

1. the duration of the agreement;

1. the work schedule and how it may be changed;

1. how leave is to be requested by the employee and approved by the supervisor;

1. how routine communication between the employee, supervisor, co-workers, and customers will be handled;

1. the employee's performance goals and expectations;

1. the equipment and supplies that will be used, and who is responsible for providing and maintaining them;

1. applicable data and university resources security procedures;

1. applicable safety requirements; and

1. a requirement that employees permit their supervisor access to the alternate work location during normal work hours as defined by the agreement.

\*04.06 Termination of Agreement

Every effort should be expended to ensure a remote work arrangement is successful. However, the need may arise to terminate a remote work arrangement or revoke remote work privileges for reasons including, but not limited to performance deficiencies, or changes in department needs. A remote work arrangement may be terminated by the employee’s department head, vice president, or at the employee’s request subject to approval by the department head. Upon termination of the arrangement, the employee must return to a designated worksite on campus or property controlled by the university and must immediately return all equipment, supplies, and any other university-owned property in the employee’s possession or control from the remote work site. The university will not be held responsible for costs, damages, or losses associated with the termination of the remote work arrangement.

**05.** **PROCEDURE FOR NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE OR TARDINESS**

05.01 Punctual and regular attendance is expected of all university faculty and staff. When unable to report for work, faculty and staff are expected to notify the immediate supervisor or other appropriate individual as soon as possible.

**06.** **PROCEDURES REGARDING CHILDREN AND OTHER NON-BUSINESS VISITORS AND PHONE CALLS IN THE WORKPLACE**

06.01 Children

University employees may bring their children to the workplace, provided that the visits are infrequent, brief, and planned in a fashion that limits disruption to the workplace. Clear expectations regarding the presence of children in the workplace must be discussed and established within each college or department in advance of such needs.

Supervisor approval is required and may be granted on a case-by-case basis given the college or department’s capability to effectively provide service and support to our students, faculty, and staff. Supervisor approval may be reviewed and altered as necessary by a higher organizational authority.

In no case should children be unsupervised or left unattended in the work environment. The parent or guardian is solely responsible and cannot ask others to care for or supervise the child. In no cases should children be allowed in dangerous or controlled environments such as, but not limited to, laboratories where personal protective equipment is required, utility service areas, storage areas for hazardous materials or weapons, or construction or trade shops.

If a child’s presence in the workplace becomes problematic, the employee will be advised and expected to take corrective action.

06.02 Visitors and Non-Business Phone Calls

Supervisors may deny or restrict workplace access to non-business visitors and employee family members during both work and non-work periods. Supervisors may also limit or restrict non-business telephone usage. Supervisors are encouraged to adopt reasonable provisions for their particular work situations. However, supervisors have full discretion in determining appropriate policies for these matters.

**07.** **DRESS CODE**

07.01 Department heads and supervisors may determine the dress code requirements for faculty, staff, and student employees under their supervision. They are encouraged to adopt reasonable requirements that are in keeping with the job functions, environment, and situations of the workplace. However, department heads and supervisors have full discretion in determining the appropriate dress code requirements for all employees under their supervision.

07.02  The employee may not consider time missed to change clothing as time worked.

**08.** **PROCEDURE FOR DISCLOSURE OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS**

08.01 The university requires its employees to furnish their social security numbers to verify their identities. The university's recordkeeping system was established prior to January 1,1975, pursuant to the authority given to the TSUS Board of Regents, in [Section 95.21 of the Texas Education Code](http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.95.htm#95.21), and solicited under the statutory authority of [42 U.S.C.A., Section 405(c)(2)(C)](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ssa.gov%2FOP_Home%2Fssact%2Ftitle04%2F0405.htm&data=04%7C01%7Cdey.rossell%40txstate.edu%7C01f6b62cee1342b5180b08d93b08dfaa%7Cb19c134a14c94d4caf65c420f94c8cbb%7C0%7C0%7C637605731558935467%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=etSwFQddV2KanWucEUZRy4iKSriM5l%2FDZYPD01X%2BoKo%3D&reserved=0).

University employees with access to social security numbers will protect them from disclosure to anyone who does not have a legitimate business need for the information.

**09.** **CRIMINAL OFFENSE REPORTING OBLIGATIONS**

09.01 All Texas State employees have an obligation to report actual or suspected crimes such as physical harm, theft, fraud, embezzlement, destruction of property, or other irregularities resulting in the loss of cash, property, or other assets of the university to the University Police Department. Procedures for reporting criminal offenses are outlined in [UPPS No. 01.04.40](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/01-04-40.html), Reporting Criminal Offenses.

09.02 Employees are expected to cooperate with police and internal audit investigations. Investigations conducted by these offices are confidential.

**10.** **PROCEDURES FOR PUBLICATION OF EMPLOYEE PHOTOS**

10.01 Use of an employee’s photograph on a university website or other publication should be on a voluntary basis. As such, the employee should sign a release authorizing use of their image for this purpose. Photo and video release forms are available from University Marketing.

10.02 Photos taken at a public location for a university-related event may be used without the employee’s consent or signed release.

**11.** **PROCEDURES FOR DISSEMINATION OF THIS POLICY**

11.01 The provost and vice president for Academic Affairs will ensure that all policies in this document applicable to faculty are published in the [Faculty Handbook](https://www.provost.txst.edu/resources-faculty.html).

11.02 The associate vice president for Human Resources will ensure that all policies in this document applicable to staff are published in the [Staff Handbook](http://www.hr.txstate.edu/staffhandbook.html).

**12.** **REVIEWERS OF THIS UPPS**

12.01 Reviewers of this UPPS include the following:

Position Date

Associate Vice President for July 1 E4Y

Human Resources

Chair, Staff Council July 1 E4Y

Chair, Faculty Senate July 1 E4Y

**13.** **CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

This UPPS has been approved by the following individuals in their official capacities and represents Texas State policy and procedure from the date of this document until superseded.

Associate Vice President for Human Resources; senior reviewer of this UPPS

Executive Vice President for Operations and Chief Financial Officer

President