

NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Remote Work Arrangements

Background

Most positions at NSU require an onsite presence to support students, accomplish work across departments, and fulfill the university's mission to be a responsive, student-oriented institution. However, under certain circumstances, an employee's work may be accomplished from a location other than an NSU worksite without negative impacts on quality or efficiency of work for the individual, the department, or across functional processes. The mission of the university is a primary consideration when evaluating potential adjustments to work arrangements.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the conditions under which NSU administration may consider and approve an employee request to work from a specific non-NSU site (in most cases, the employee's home). These conditions are intended to maintain security and consistency of university operations, while promoting employee satisfaction.

Scope and Limitations

This policy addresses remote work arrangements for NSU staff, including both classified and unclassified employees. This policy does not apply to:

- Wages of labor employees
- Graduate assistants
- Student employees
- Volunteer workers

Remote work arrangements for some cases are covered under a separate policy or through contractual arrangements. These cases include:

- Faculty (including adjunct instructors)
- [Employees with accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\).](#)

Definitions

Certain terms are used throughout this policy and associated procedures.

1. Remote work – Work performed at a defined location other than an NSU worksite. This does not include work performed during university-authorized travel, occasional (ad hoc) work performed from home as approved by a supervisor, or any other work covered under other policies or contract terms. NSU recognizes two types of remote work – hybrid and fully remote.
2. NSU worksite – Includes the Natchitoches campus, Shreveport instructional site, Leesville instructional site, Alexandria/CENLA instructional site, Marksville instructional site, and all NSU clinical locations.
3. Remote worksite – Approved location for an employee to perform remote work.
4. Hybrid work – An employee works from the remote worksite no more than three (3) days per week and has an established work location at an NSU worksite.
5. Fully remote work – An employee works from the remote worksite four (4) to five (5) days per week, has no established work location at an NSU worksite, but is assigned an NSU domicile for travel purposes.

6. Eligible job positions – Those positions determined by Human Resources as meeting the criteria to be considered for remote work. These positions are evaluated on standard criteria and documented by position number.
7. Remote Work Agreement - A standard document outlining expectations for the remote work arrangement, including such topics as communication response times, NSU property, visitors, environmental requirements, tax implications, and more.

Statement of Policy

NSU will consider remote work a viable option when appropriate for the position and the employee, and when it imposes no additional work or inconvenience on colleagues, faculty, or students. Timely and quality completion of work is expected regardless of work location.

1. Eligibility - The position must be suitable for remote work and the employee must be skilled for remote work.

Position considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR has designated the Position Number as eligible for remote work. • Supervisor has determined that specific job duties can be performed remotely without negative impact on team or processes.
Employee considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee has been employed in position for at least 10 months. • Employee is not on a performance improvement plan. • Supervisor has determined that the employee has demonstrated a readiness for remote work through consistently strong performance, dependability, ability to work independently, and excellent communications practices.

2. Request and Approval - A formal Remote Work Agreement must be signed and approved by the employee, the supervisor, and the appropriate senior executive (VP, Executive Director, CIO, or CFO). This agreement may be terminated at any time by the employee or the university, but where possible at least 30 days’ notice should be provided.
3. Employee Responsibilities - Policies and procedures in place for the university at large, such as leave reporting, information security, accident reporting, etc., will continue to be in effect at the remote worksite.
 - a. The employee should expect to participate in all required meetings, whether onsite or by teleconference. If by teleconference, the employee must have video enabled unless otherwise arranged.
 - b. Employee will bear any costs associated with remote work such as outfitting a home office, office supplies, internet connection and charges, travel to assigned NSU worksite, etc. NSU will bear no incremental costs associated with the remote work arrangement.
 - c. The remote worksite must be appropriately configured to prevent interference from household disturbances and appropriately secured to prevent unauthorized access to sensitive or confidential information.
 - d. Internet speeds at the remote worksite must be comparable to the NSU worksite.

- e. Employee must arrange to have the work phone forwarded to a dedicated landline at the remote worksite, to a personal cell phone, or to operate via MS-Teams.
 - f. Emails and voicemails must be responded to as soon as possible but no later than the end of the workday.
 - g. University equipment is provided solely for the use of the employee and is not to be used by other individuals at the remote worksite.
 - h. Employee is responsible for ensuring regular software updates are implemented as required to keep equipment operating properly and securely. Technical issues must be reported via a ticket at <https://support.nsula.edu/> . If the issue cannot be resolved remotely, the employee must bring the university-owned equipment to IT in Roy Hall. Personal devices are the responsibility of the employee.
 - i. The university, department, or supervisor may require the employee to be present at certain meetings, training sessions, or events. These requirements will take precedence over remote work arrangements. In these instances, the supervisor will provide as much advance notice as possible.
 - j. Employee understands that the remote worksite will remain free from interruptions or distractions from other household members or pets. Remote work arrangements are not permitted to be used as a means of dependent caregiving.
 - k. Compensation and benefits are not affected by remote work arrangements. Employee may wish to consult a tax professional for any potential impacts on personal returns related to business use of home.
 - l. Employee understands that visitors or colleagues may not be hosted at the remote worksite.
 - m. Employee acknowledges that a Remote Work arrangement is structured on a trial basis, with ongoing review and feedback to determine whether adjustments are needed. If it is determined that the arrangement should be terminated, reasonable efforts will be made to allow for 30 days' notice of such a change.
 - n. Termination of a Remote Work arrangement will require the employee to return all NSU property and equipment within three (3) working days to the appropriate location. If NSU is required to take action to retrieve property or equipment, the employee will be responsible for any direct or indirect costs, including attorney fees or other legal costs.
4. Supervisor Responsibilities – The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that proposed remote work arrangements are evaluated and carried out in alignment with the mission of NSU.
- a. Consider employee request to work remotely and make recommendation to approving authorities.
 - b. Consider similarly situated staff and team culture prior to approval of arrangements.
 - c. Coordinate with other related functions to determine technical and operational feasibility of remote work arrangements for the employee prior to recommending approval.
 - d. Ensure all required steps, approvals, and preparations are complete before allowing employee to begin remote work.
 - e. Review, discuss, and renew Remote Work Agreement with employee at end of any trial period and at least annually thereafter.

- f. Oversee remote work performance and provide timely feedback to the employee when adjustments are needed.

Related Policies

- [Staff Handbook: Reporting Accidents](#)
- [Departmental Movable Property User’s Guide: 2.07 - Home Use/Temporary Removal of State Property](#)
- [Human Resources: Request for Accommodations](#)

Related Procedures

- How to Request Remote Work Arrangements
- How to Administer Remote Work Arrangements
- [Human Resources: Work Schedule Form](#)

Information and Assistance

For additional information or assistance with this policy, contact Veronica M. Biscoe, Executive Director, Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Human Resources, at ramirezv@nsula.edu or 318-357-6359.

Approvals

Approved by: _____
 Name: _____
 Title: _____
 Date: _____

Associated Resources

These documents and other resources were used in the formulation of this policy.

- Insurance coverage documents
- Job Position descriptions
- List of Job Positions eligible for Remote Work Arrangement consideration

Revision History

Version	Date Revised	Revisions
1	8/6/23	Original policy as proposed.