**McNeese State University-Office of Human Resources**

**Guidance for Temporary Teleworking during COVID-19 Crisis—updated August 5, 2021**

McNeese State University is committed to protecting the health and safety of all students, faculty, and staff. This guidance is intended to be both effective and flexible and is meant to be used to address temporary telework arrangements that may develop during the COVID-19 crisis. Given the fluid nature of this health crisis, considerable discretion should be exercised as to the most appropriate actions to be taken for each situation.

As a business necessity, certain essential and nonessential employees may be required, or approved, to work and conduct business off-campus at their home or from other appropriate locations.

An Employee Telework Plan and Agreement Form must be completed and approved by the appropriate supervisor. This requirement is to ensure that both the supervisor and employee have a clear understanding of the work to be accomplished, and daily work schedule that is expected during the telework period. These plans are temporary and must be reviewed weekly by the supervisor and employee. All telework agreements must be approved by the University President or appropriate Vice President.

Employees who are required or approved to telework at a location other than a University-provided location will be required to designate an alternate workplace appropriate for the completion of their job duties. This may include the employee’s home or other private and isolated workspaces.

Employees approved for telework must complete the **Equipment Entrustee Form** and receive supervisor approval before removing any McNeese equipment from campus. <https://www.mcneese.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Equipment-Entrustee-form.pdf>

Employees required or approved to telework do so at the direction of the University and must immediately return to their regular work location, with all applicable University property, when directed by the University or their supervisor.

Telework arrangements may be considered on a case by case basis as a reasonable accommodation with appropriate COVID-19 reasonable accommodation forms. Please contact Human Resources or your supervisor for information on reasonable accommodation request forms and procedures.

**Teleworking agreements may be revoked at any time, without cause or notice.**

***Hours of Work and Leave:***

1. Teleworking employees are expected to maintain their normal work schedule, unless approval is granted for alternate hours and must follow normal University policies for time and attendance reporting.
2. Teleworking employees must maintain at least the same level of availability, levels of production and quality of work as though the employee is working from the primary worksite.
3. Teleworking may not be used **solely** for child or adult care or to perform other personal business during working hours, or for any purpose for which leave should be requested. If the employee is not performing official duties on behalf of the University, the employee must request leave as appropriate.
4. Should circumstances arise whereby an employee cannot work at the alternate work location (i.e., loss of electricity, Wi-Fi, home emergencies, etc.) the employee must report these issues to their supervisor. The employee may be required to report to the primary work location, if practical, or a different designated/alternate work location, or appropriate leave may be granted/considered. Supervisors should seek guidance on this issue from Human Resources before taking action.
5. Teleworking may not be used in place of annual, sick, FMLA, or any other type of leave. Requests to use leave must be approved according to normal University policy and departmental guidelines.
6. Employees may work overtime and must have normal approval to earn overtime or compensatory leave, in accordance with University policy. Supervisor pre-approval is required.
7. Employee must be able to perform their normal duties and maintain all duties as stated in their official position description.

***Equipment and Supplies:***

1. Out of pocket expenses for supplies customarily available through the University will not be reimbursed without prior approval of the employee’s supervisor and will be in accordance with normal purchasing policies. It is the University’s responsibility to maintain and repair any equipment that is supplied to the employee by the University. Should a delay in the repair or replacement of equipment occur or any other circumstance under which it would be impossible for the employee to telework, the employee must immediately contact their supervisor for further direction.
2. University-owned equipment, software, supplies, etc. at the alternate worksite shall be limited to that authorized by the University and used only for University business.
3. Employees assume responsibility for the physical security of University equipment, supplies, and information in their possession while teleworking.
4. The University will not be liable for damages to an employee’s personal or real property while the employee is working at the approved alternate worksite. The employee shall maintain their off-campus workspace in a safe condition, free from hazards and other dangers. When the employee uses personal equipment, they shall be responsible for equipment repair and maintenance.
5. Materials, documents, etc. that the employee transports to and from the primary work site to the off-campus location are their responsibility and must be kept confidential and secure. The employee agrees to protect the university records from unauthorized disclosure or damage and will comply with University policies and procedures regarding such matters.
6. Any equipment, supplies, software, hardware, etc., purchased by the university remain University property and must be returned after a teleworking arrangement ends or when requested by University management.
7. Employees on telework agreements accept financial responsibility for any McNeese equipment that is lost, stolen or damaged because of the employee’s negligence, misuse or abuse.
8. Employees using State-provided software will adhere to the manufacturer’s licensing agreements, including the prohibition against unauthorized duplication.
9. To protect the confidentiality and guard against data contamination, employees will follow University-approved data security procedures and use due diligence when connecting with the University network from the telework site.
10. At the end of the teleworking period, the employee shall return all state-owned equipment, software, data files, and other state assets. The employee must return these assets, or the University will be allowed to retrieve any assets within seven (7) calendar days of the termination of the teleworking agreement or take other measures allowed under state law or by University policy.

***Mileage Reimbursement:***

The employee may not submit nor receive reimbursement if traveling to a designated alternate work location outside of their home.

***Liability:***

The employee’s home workspace, when used for teleworking, is an extension of the department workspace. The University’s liability for job-related accidents, which occur during the normal scope of duties, will continue to exist during the approved work schedule and in the employee’s designated work location.

If an injury occurs during teleworking work hours, the employee shall immediately report the injury to the supervisor, who will report to Human Resources. Claims are filed with the Louisiana Office of Risk Management and approved by this agency/or third party vendor for consideration of payment.

***Terms and Conditions of Employment***:

The teleworker’s conditions of employment remain the same as for non-teleworking employees. Employee salary, benefits, and employer-sponsored insurance coverage will not change as a result of teleworking. The employee shall adhere to all policies, rules, and regulations of the University.

***Responsibilities of Teleworking Supervisors:***

1. Supervisors must ensure an ***Employee Telework Agreement Form*** is completed by the employee with the appropriate duties and dates of telework agreement. <https://www.mcneese.edu/hr/telework-agreement-form/>
2. Ensure that you contact Human Resources when the teleworking agreement is ended and the employee is scheduled to return to normal worksite.
3. Ensure that you contact IT or UCS to end any University accesses that were provided to an employee on their personal computer.
4. If a telework agreement is ended, and the employee is returned to the normal worksite, ensure that any University guidelines associated with returning to work during COVID-19 are followed.
5. Ensure the employee has the appropriate equipment/resources to telework and completes the Equipment Entrustee Form to both remove property from the campus and return property to the campus and ensure that this form is submitted to Property Control when equipment is returned.
6. Ensure that the employee has an updated job description and understands job responsibilities related to the teleworking assignment and that all job responsibilities can be performed while teleworking.
7. Establish how the teleworker will maintain regular contact with co-workers, University personnel, general public, and supervisors.
8. Establish expectations for and monitoring of employee performance/work hours/leave hours while teleworking.
9. Determine how the department will handle restricted access materials, security issues, and taking of electronic or paper documents from the primary workplace following all university related policies.
10. Ensure teleworking practices are consistent and compliant with state/federal law and University procedures in the use of technology and/or resources.

***Responsibilities of Teleworkers:***

1. Consistently meet all performance expectations and standards set forth and agreed upon by the supervisor.
2. Maintain satisfactory performance, attendance, and conduct.
3. Perform all job duties as stated in the official position description.
4. Follow all agreed-upon regulations concerning communication/reporting/contact with and to supervisor and other campus personnel, as required.
5. Follow all University policies while teleworking.
6. Submit the ***Employee Telework Agreement*** ***Form*** and adhere to any guidelines within the agreement form. <https://www.mcneese.edu/hr/telework-agreement-form/>
7. Complete and submit the Equipment Entrustee Form when removing any university equipment and follow all regulations in the university ***Property Control Policy***. When property is returned to custodial department or person, confirm return by completing the **Return Receipt** portion of the Equipment Entrustee Form and submit to supervisor.