

# TELECOMMUTING BEST PRACTICES



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# Telecommuting at Pepperdine

Telecommuting Policy (Section 39, University Policy Manual)

Telecommuting Procedures

Telecommuting Agreement



# Potential Benefits of Telecommuting

- Hiring and Retention
- Employee Productivity
- Work/Life Integration
- Autonomy
- Employee Monetary Benefits
- Introverted Employees Refreshed
- Business Continuity
- On-Site Space
- Environmental/Community Impact
- University Monetary Benefits



# Potential Challenges of Telecommuting

## Decrease in Pepperdine's Sense of Community

- Limit telecommuting days
- Determine periods throughout the year where there is no telecommuting
- Encourage your staff to be present during community building events



# Potential Challenges of Telecommuting

## New Employees' Lack Identification With and Commitment to the Mission

- New employees must work on-site for one year before telecommuting
- Encourage your staff to be present during community building events



# Potential Challenges of Telecommuting

## New Employees Have a Harder Time Getting to know Colleagues

- Ensure there are significant periods of time when no one telecommutes
- Schedule team meetings or other activities when all members are present to encourage interaction



# Potential Challenges of Telecommuting

## Resentment from Employees Unable to Work Remotely

- Be clear about your expectations up-front
- Telecommuting is a privilege, not a right
- Not all staff are able to participate
- Your decision will be based on the employee's role, responsibilities, performance, and ability to maintain service and contribute to the mission (possible impetus for opportunity for growth)



# Potential Challenges of Telecommuting

## Extroverts Lack Daily Interaction

- Encourage the use of cameras during scheduled meetings
- Intentionally communicate with telecommuters (check-in, meetings, etc.)





# Potential Challenges of Telecommuting

## Blurred Boundaries

- Too much work
  - Non-exempt employees must gain advanced approval to incur overtime
  - Communicate expectations about after-hours responses
- Too little work
  - Employees should avoid favors, errands, and chores throughout the day
  - Telecommuting does not imply a flexible work schedule
- Encourage a healthy routine



# Potential Challenges of Telecommuting

## Lack of Communication with The Supervisor

- Telecommuters may provide a daily progress report
- Telecommuting schedules should be arranged so there is overlap in the office for availability and meetings
- Have regularly scheduled face-to-face meetings when both are in the office
- Provide and solicit feedback



# Potential Challenges of Telecommuting

## Staff Spend Inordinate Time Catching-Up with Colleagues

- Schedule regular department meetings or activities to build in time for team camaraderie and socializing
- Limit telecommuting days throughout the week
- Identify periods throughout the year when there is no telecommuting



# Potential Challenges of Telecommuting

## Employees Adopt an Unhealthy Perspective About Telecommuting

- Clearly communicate expectations about telecommuting arrangements (i.e., telecommuting is a privilege, not a right; remote working days may not be substituted if missed; there may be times throughout the year when no one may telecommute, etc.)



# Potential Challenges of Telecommuting

## Employees Have Negative Perceptions About Their Career Development

- Continue to provide ongoing feedback to all employees
- Engage your staff members in conversations about their goals, performance, and development
- Telecommuters may intentionally lead departmental meetings or make presentations, as appropriate, to continue building relationships and maintaining visibility



# Potential Challenges of Telecommuting

## Constituents Experience a Lack of Service or Processes Become Unreasonable

- Build in regular check-ins with appropriate parties to discuss the telecommuting process – what is working and what is not (30 days, 3 months, etc.)
- Regular and timely communication may help quickly identify and address issues before they become insurmountable
- All telecommuting assignments must be re-approved at least annually
- Telecommuting assignments may be withdrawn at any time



# Best Practices

## Organize and plan telecommuting days.

- Go through the calendar for the past few weeks:
  - What tasks/activities could be performed off-site?
  - What kind of materials/equipment were used for certain tasks?
  - Can meetings or face-to-face activities be grouped together on office days?
- What challenges may arise that can be mitigated?



# Best Practices

## Communicate.

- Check-in with your staff regularly.
  - What is working well?
  - What challenges do they face?
- Address any issues in a timely manner so they may be resolved before they become problematic.





# Best Practices

Determine the most appropriate method of communication.

- Phone
- Chat
- Email
- Face to face
- Conference call



# Best Practices

## Understand best practices for your telecommuter.

- Develop a new routine and schedule
- Dealing with others
- Avoid becoming a workaholic
- Develop a new communication strategy
- Take breaks and lunch away from the workspace

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