

MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION Policy and Procedures Manual

SUBJECT: PERSONNEL
Policy 715 – Remote Work Arrangements
Adopted: November 18, 2022

Board Policy:

A. Policy Statement:

Remote work is the practice of employees performing their university jobs from a location other than a central office on campus or premises operated by the Montana University System (MUS). Such locations could include an employee's home, a co-working or other shared space, a private office, or any other place outside the traditional office building on campus. Allowing for flexibility in the workplace for remote work opportunity provides a strategy to recruit and retain highly capable employees to serve students and the public with excellence. The default work arrangement expected by the MUS for all employees is on campus and in person.

Any Remote Work Arrangement (RWA), whether temporary or in place for an extended period, must advance the university's mission and shall not reduce or impede the quality of instruction or service provided to students, co-workers, or members of the university community. Working remotely is not a right and not every position is eligible for an RWA. It is an option extended at management discretion, and, if approved by an authorized supervisor, is subject to individualized conditions that may be amended or revoked at any time without advance notice.

Campus administration shall develop guidelines, forms, and procedures that are necessary for administering this policy at the institutional level. The campus guidelines, forms, and procedures shall be subject to approval by the campus President, Chancellor, or Dean/CEO of Great Falls or Helena College.

For academic faculty, this arrangement is limited to, but not necessarily required of, those academic faculty who are hired to teach solely in online degree programs. The process for approving these types of RWA for faculty should be addressed in campus guidelines and procedures. RWA for academic faculty is restricted to academic faculty who teach solely in online degree programs or to part-time non-tenure-track faculty who teach online courses only.

B. Types of Remote Work Arrangements

1. Temporary Short Term Remote Work (10 or fewer workdays)
A temporary RWA allows a remote option for 10 or fewer workdays. This is subject to approval by the immediate supervisor and the next-level manager. An RWA agreement is not required for this temporary situation, but the details of the arrangement must be documented in writing. For example, documentation may include email between the employee, the supervisor, and the next-level manager.
2. Hybrid Remote Work Arrangement
A hybrid RWA allows a remote option that provides occasional work from an off-campus site (e.g., home or other off-campus location) for part of the employee's assignment, with the remainder of the work being performed on campus. The schedule for each location must be consistent and approved by the immediate supervisor. An RWA agreement is required for a hybrid RWA and must be approved by the supervisor and appropriate appointing authority as designated in campus policy. It is the responsibility of the individual approving the agreements to ensure that departments and work units are adequately staffed throughout the week (e.g., Mondays and Fridays should not be the only days for RWA).

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3. Entirely Remote Work Arrangement

This is an option where the employee works from home or from another off-campus location that is not operated by the MUS for all available work. Such an arrangement must be reviewed and specifically renewed annually according to campus procedures.

C. Accountability

Remote work shall not reduce or impede the quality of service or instruction provided to students, co-workers, and the public. Remote work arrangements can be denied, amended, or revoked at any time. An employee may submit a written request for reconsideration of a supervisor's decision on remote work to the next-higher level of supervisor, who shall be the final level of review. The administration of this policy must comply with all other applicable Board of Regents policies and pertinent state and federal employment statutes.

Related principles including but not limited to:

1. Leaders (managers and supervisors) must be engaged and present whether remote or in-person for the success of the personnel and units they lead.
2. Faculty and staff who provide and support in-person education and services must be engaged and present to deliver a successful educational experience.
3. MUS institutions and agencies are part of Montana state government and must maintain offices open to the public from Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., except on authorized state holidays.
4. Schedules for positions that support university infrastructure, health, life, and safety must ensure delivery of in-person services that meet the needs of the university community.
5. The RWA is a non-traditional working arrangement that maintains the university's teaching, research, scholarly, creative, entrepreneurial, service and business needs without disruption or interruption.
6. Every RWA requires adequate supervisory contact, employee accountability, and a level of service to students and the university community that is equivalent to or better than in-person / on-campus work performance.
7. Employees with a RWA are subject to all university and MUS policies and procedures, and federal and state laws.
8. Standards of performance are the same whether working on-campus or remotely.
9. Any Hybrid Remote Work Arrangement or Remote Work Location (Section B2 and B3 of this policy) in which the employee's work site is outside the state of Montana is subject to approval by a campus Vice President or Vice Chancellor (or Associate Dean in the case of Great Falls or Helena Colleges) in consultation with the campus chief human resources officer.
10. All Remote Work Arrangements shall include documentation of university-owned equipment and any personal equipment that is used to perform work duties.
11. Employees are responsible for completing any required work location assessment and training by university Information Technology or Risk Management authorities and for complying with related university policies.
12. Employees shall hold MUS information that is received or stored at remote work locations in strict confidence except as required for the performance of job duties in accordance with MUS policy and state or federal statutes.

History:

Adopted November 18, 2022, Item 203-102-R1122.