



University of New Mexico (UNM)

## **Remote and Telecommuting Guidelines for Student Employees**

In-State Residents Only

Effective Aug. 23, 2021

### **OVERVIEW**

Telecommuting is an alternative work arrangement that allows a student employee to perform all or part of their work away from a UNM worksite within the state of New Mexico. With appropriate approvals, UNM Student Employment considers telecommuting/remote work to be a viable, flexible work option when both the student employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some student employees and jobs, but not for others. It is not an entitlement, and in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the University.

These guidelines describe the terms for remote work/telecommuting to assist student supervisors in assessing whether an alternative work arrangement is suitable for their department(s) or particular student employees in their department(s). Supervisors are encouraged to review these guidelines and communicate expectations for remote work/telecommuting that will provide equitable use across departments while maintaining business continuity. The specific conditions will be defined in the Student Employment Remote Work/Telecommuting agreement that is developed by the student employee and the supervisor.

The following are work categories defined by work site/location:

- Standard Work – Student employees whose regular work location is a UNM worksite.
- Telecommuting (working partly off-site) – Provides student employees and supervisors with requirements for established telecommuting work arrangements, including eligibility, work schedules, availability, communication, and worksite safety.
- Remote Work (working fully off-site) – Provides student employees and managers with requirements for established remote work arrangements, including eligibility, work schedules, availability, communication, and remote worksite safety.
- Situational Telecommuting (e.g. Pandemic Situation) – Provides student employees and supervisors with expectations and requirements for working remotely without a pre-established agreement. Duties and assignments, communication, work environment, safety, and equipment are all items to be addressed between the student employee and supervisor at the time situational telecommuting is needed.

### **DEFINITIONS**

- UNM Worksite: Physical UNM campus or a UNM-designated location.
- Student Employee Regular Worksite: Primary worksite location at which the student employee is expected to perform their work.

- **Telecommuting:** Working off-site, within commuting distance to the UNM worksite, that is part of an established arrangement that allows an eligible student employee (whose regular worksite is at a UNM worksite) to work on a regular, part-time basis at an alternate location other than a UNM worksite.  
The arrangement can be a set schedule or variable/upon request to be described in the agreement. Telecommuters may be provided a temporary work location or may be asked to reserve a space/office at the UNM worksite.
- **Remote Work:** Working off-site, within the state of New Mexico, that is part of an established arrangement that allows a student employee to work entirely at an alternate work location other than a UNM worksite. Remote work can occur anywhere in the state of New Mexico. In most situations, remote workers will not have an assigned UNM worksite. Out-of-state remote work is discouraged for student employees.
- **Situational Telecommuting:** Working off-site as determined by UNM and is NOT part of a previously established alternative work arrangement. In the event of circumstances in which conditions for remote work or telecommuting agreements are not feasible (e.g., a pandemic, natural disaster, strike, etc.), student employees will follow UNM Situational Telecommuting Guidelines. Situational telecommuting can also be used for occasional incidental remote work for a few days and approved by the supervisor.

## ELIGIBILITY

A remote work/telecommuting arrangement may be approved for student employees. The opportunity is at supervisor's discretion and must take into consideration numerous factors, including the job/position, nature of the work performed, operational needs, and impact on the department and student employee performance.

## PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING A TELECOMMUTING/REMOTE WORK ARRANGEMENT

- **Remote Work/Telecommuting Request for Student Employees:** The form is an electronic, fillable Adobe PDF form. It is recommended the student employee and supervisor develop the agreement together prior to submitting the agreement form.

Access the [Student Employee Remote Work/Telecommuting Request Form here](#).

\*Please do not use the Remote Work/Telecommuting Agreement for In-State Staff form since it is an Adobe Sign form that routes to UNM Human Resources.

## POLICIES

Remote work/telecommuting does not change the conditions of employment or applicability of University policies. The student employee will agree to abide by all UNM policies and procedures, just as they would if working at the regular UNM worksite.

## UNM STUDENT EMPLOYEE REMOTE WORK/TELECOMMUTING AGREEMENT

A Student Employee Remote Work/Telecommuting Request Form may be completed when a supervisor requires, suggests, or when the student employee requests an alternate worksite arrangement. The student employee and supervisor jointly develop the agreement that outlines specific conditions and agreed-upon work arrangements. It is at the discretion of the supervisor and is subject to ongoing review. Many university services are still directed toward students who are seeking an in-person experience.

With that in mind, supervisors will need to consider many factors when approving remote work and telecommuting arrangements, including:

- Evaluation for equitable program participation, which include:
  - Impact to operational/business needs;
  - Office coverage;
  - Equitable distribution of work;
  - Number of student employees requesting remote work/telecommuting;
  - Days and times requested for remote work/telecommuting.
- The position has tasks which are portable and can be performed away from the main worksite.
- The student employee is a successful performer, works independently and does not need to be on campus for meetings with campus staff/PIs or internal meetings on a daily basis. If personal contact is intermittently required, the supervisor must outline how the student employee can meet the requirements for necessary face-to-face contact required by the job.
- The student employee has the requisite technical skills and has a designated space at the off-site location which would be necessary for the completion of tasks. By 'requisite technical skills,' the student employee must be able to access all needed applications and data, and be able to accomplish basic trouble-shooting from the off-site location.
- Work of the position can be monitored with quantifiable tasks; quantity and quality should be measured as is currently being done in the office; for non-quantifiable or project-oriented tasks, measuring normally involves: establishing the nature and objective(s) of the tasks; setting a deadline or due date; and setting progress or status report/meeting dates.
- It is expected that if the off-site internet connection will be down for more than two hours, the student employee will travel to the campus location. Travel time is not counted as work time.
- Consideration may include approved accommodation requests.

An agreement may be voluntary or a requirement of the position, which may be subject to modification or termination at any time based on performance, operational or business needs and may be withdrawn or terminated with approval or by the supervisor. Every effort will be made to provide a minimum of one (1) weeks' notice prior to modification or termination of an agreement.

## **WORK SCHEDULE**

The student employee will maintain regularly-scheduled and approved work hours as agreed upon in the agreement, not to exceed 28 hours per week, and will be fully accessible during those hours.

Work schedules are subject to ongoing review, and changes are at the supervisor's discretion (in a manner that meets the specific requirements of the department and whenever possible that meets the needs of the student employee). Any requests by the student employee for changes to an approved schedule or alternate work location must be reviewed and approved by the supervisor in advance. Student employees may be required to work at the UNM worksite or temporarily revise the work schedule for business continuity reasons (i.e. attend meetings, trainings, workforce coverage, etc.) at the discretion of the supervisor.

While telecommuting/remote working, the student employee is expected to maintain a presence using agreed upon technology and to be available to their supervisor, department staff, coworkers and customers with the same response times and available hours as if at the regular UNM worksite.

Student employees must not work more than the agreed upon hours without prior approval from their supervisor and are required to accurately report work hours and strictly adhere to required rest and meal breaks in full compliance with UNM policies, and federal, state and local guidelines.

## **DUTIES AND ASSIGNMENTS**

While remote working/telecommuting, the student employee is expected to maintain the same productivity, performance, communication and responsiveness standards as if working at the regular UNM worksite.

The student employee and supervisor will establish an agreed upon work plan outlining general remote work/telecommuting applicable standards (e.g. variable schedules, communication requirements, office coverage, electronic meeting protocols, shared office space, how assignments will be received and returned, phone coverage and reporting in to the supervisor).

The student employee's job responsibilities, standards of performance and performance reviews remain the same as if working at the regular UNM worksite. The supervisor reserves the right to assign other appropriate work, as necessary, at any worksite.

## **WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

While remote working/telecommuting, the student employee is responsible for ensuring a worksite environment suitable for accomplishing their regular job duties during scheduled hours of work and, if applicable, arranging for appropriate dependent care.

When developing a remote work/telecommuting arrangement, supervisors should consider the availability of UNM worksite space and technology that will provide capabilities at the UNM worksite for a remote work/telecommuting student employee to join department meetings and communicate with coworkers.

## **SAFETY**

The student employee is responsible for completing a Self-Certification Safety Checklist and maintaining a safe and secure work environment, including maintaining the alternate worksite in an ergonomically sound manner. The student employee is responsible for reviewing resources that provide information on a safe and ergonomically sound work environment at <https://ehs.unm.edu/occupational-safety/ergonomic-requests.html>.

The University's liability for job-related accidents will continue to exist if the injury was incurred in the course and scope of the student employee's job duties and during the student employee's scheduled hours of work (as articulated within the agreement) since the student employee's alternate worksite shall be considered an extension of the regular University worksite.

The student employee is responsible for reporting any work-related injuries to the supervisor at the earliest opportunity, and injuries will be handled in the same manner as reports of injury at a regular University worksite.

The student employee will agree to hold the University harmless for injury to others at the alternate worksite. The student employee may not conduct in-person work-related meetings at the alternate worksite.

## EQUIPMENT AND RECORDS

The University may provide equipment, software, data, supplies and materials for use during the remote work/telecommuting assignment, based on the position requirements and within the resource limitations of the department. For most positions, the ability of the department to provide equipment capable of supporting the student employee joining audio and video of web conferencing meetings with the supervisor and coworkers will be a requirement for supporting an agreement. The student employee will be responsible for ensuring that they have a reliable and secure network connection to support these activities.

If the student employee will have custody of UNM-owned equipment at a location other than a UNM worksite, the items being removed must be logged on an [Student employee Equipment Checkout Form](#) to ensure accurate tracking of all tagged and untagged UNM property.

University-owned equipment, records and materials may be used for purposes of University business only and must be protected against unauthorized or accidental access, use, modification, destruction, loss, theft, or disclosure. Incidental personal use is not permitted to interfere with the use of the equipment for University business or add any more than an immaterial cost to the unit reference [Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 2500: Acceptable Computer Use](#).

The University will provide for repairs to University equipment when damage to that equipment is incurred by a student employee during the course and scope of their job duties and the student employee's work hours. When the student employee uses personal equipment, software, data, supplies and furniture, the student employee is responsible for the maintenance and repair of these items unless other arrangements have been made in advance and in writing with the supervisor.

The student employee will agree to allow the University access to maintain, repair, inspect or retrieve University owned equipment, software, data, supplies and furniture at the alternate worksite, upon reasonable notice.

All University-owned equipment must be returned to the University by the student employee for inspection, repair, replacement or repossession with 14 days' written notice. The student employee must agree to return University equipment, records, and materials within 14 days of termination of the remote work agreement.

The student employee is responsible for reviewing [Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 6020: Records Management, Retention, and Disposition](#).

## REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Student employees working from home or other alternate locations are not on travel status and not eligible for meal reimbursement. Similarly, meals taken at home or other alternate locations (or delivered) during a web conferencing business meeting are not reimbursable.

In telecommute agreements, where the student employee arranges a workday to be divided into a block worked at home and a block worked at the office, separated by a block reserved for the student employee to use for their own purposes, the reserved time is not compensable as travel, even if the student employee uses some of that time to travel between home and the office or vice versa.

Departments will evaluate on a case-by-case basis if reimbursement is necessary for student employees with specific needs that are not already met with existing resources and only allowable if the University-

issued office equipment (e.g., computer, printer, keyboard) can't be relocated or the student employee does not already have personal equipment at the alternate worksite to enable them to perform their work duties. Only business-related equipment that can be returned to the University at the end of the arrangement may be reimbursed. If any item needs to be installed, charges related to the installation are the responsibility of the student employee.

Student employees may request UNM provided equipment. Departments have the discretion to evaluate reimbursement of costs in accordance with the below policies:

- [Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 4030: Travel](#)
- [Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 4000: Allowable and Unallowable Expenditures](#)
- [Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 4320: Purchasing Goods Off Campus](#)

## SECURITY

The student employee will be responsible for the safety and security of all University-owned equipment, records, and materials at the alternate worksite. This includes remaining up-to-date with [Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 2550: Information Security](#) and maintaining data security and record confidentiality in the same manner as when working at the regular University worksite.

UNM student employees working with UNM data from any computer or mobile device, whether UNM-owned or personally owned, onsite or offsite, should comply with the [Working with UNM Data guidelines](#). The student employee must check with their supervisor when there are specific questions about the security of information systems or data. Additionally, the student employee must report any instances of loss, damage, or unauthorized access to UNM's Information Security and Privacy Office ([ispo.unm.edu](http://ispo.unm.edu)) and to the supervisor as soon as possible.

The student employee must follow all UNM policies, including not duplicating University-owned software and adhering to manufacturer's licensing agreements. Restricted-access materials will not be taken out of the office or accessed through the computer unless approved in advance by the supervisor and department chair/director. The student employee must ensure information is not disclosed in violation of FERPA, HIPAA, or other state or federal laws, regulations, or UNM policies and procedures and is responsible for reviewing University policies and guidelines for protecting information, including:

- [UAP 2000: Responsibility and Accountability for University Information and Transactions](#)
- [UAP 2500: Acceptable Computer Use](#)
- [UAP 2520: Computer Security Controls and Access to Sensitive and Protected Information](#)
- [UAP 2550: Information Security](#)
- [UAP 2560: Information Technologies \(IT\) Governance](#)
- [UAP 2580: Data Governance](#)
- [Information Privacy and Security Awareness Training](#)

## OTHER

The student employee will be solely responsible for any and all tax and/or insurance consequences/deductions, if any, of this arrangement and for conformance to any local laws/regulations (including but not limited to local zoning laws regulations). The University will not provide any individual guidance to the student employee regarding potential tax or insurance implications arising from the remote work request nor any guidance regarding any local laws/regulations that may apply. Should the student employee have any tax, insurance, or legal questions relating to remote work or routine telecommuting, the student employee is encouraged to consult with his/her own legal and/or tax professional.

## REFERENCES

- Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and [UAP 3110: Reasonable Accommodation for Employees, Job Applicants, and Participants with Disabilities](#)
- [UNM Student Employment Handbook](#)
- [UAP 3630: Workers' Compensation](#)
- [UAP 2520: Computer Security Controls and Access to Sensitive and Protected Information](#)
- [UAP 7730: Taking University Property Off Campus](#)
- [UAP 2500: Acceptable Computer Use](#)
- [UAP 3300: Paid Time](#)
- [UAP 4030: Travel](#)
- [UAP 3270: Suspected Impairment](#)