Telework & Flexible Work Arrangements Guidelines for Professional and Staff Employees
Statement

Flexibility in the workplace is a business practice to manage people, time, space and workload more effectively, efficiently and responsively supports a variety of university goals related to recruitment and retention, sustainability, excellence, financial savings and well-being.

Ball State University will allow teleworking and other flexible work arrangements on a voluntary basis, to employees who hold positions that are conducive to these arrangements. This program is an employer option, not an employee right and is appropriate only when it results in a benefit to the institution and may be terminated at any time.

Reason for Guidelines

The university provides guidance on various forms of workplace flexibility, balanced with required actions and legal concerns. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a framework to help supervisors and employees understand the principles and key components to consider to reach the personal and productive benefits of telework and flexible work arrangements and avoid potential downfalls since flexible work arrangements are not be suitable for all employees and/or positions. Employee requests for flexible work arrangements due to a health related issues are managed by University Human Resource Services and are not included in these guidelines. These guidelines do not apply to temporary or occasional work arrangements due to inclement weather or instances where the employee is approved to work from home for one to two days as these types of arrangements may be made by the supervisor on an as-needed basis. Flexible work arrangements generally last at least one month in duration.

The adoption of these guidelines is determined by each Vice President and does not automatically confer the right of a flexible work arrangement to employees. In addition, each Vice President may elect to implement additional guidelines beyond those included in this document.

GUIDELINE PRINCIPLES

1. Document the scope of the arrangement and that the agreement may be modified or terminated at any time.
2. Establish Communication Expectations
3. Establish Performance Expectations
4. Ensure appropriate Technology & Data Security
5. Conditions of Employment
Forms of Flexible Work Arrangements

Alternate Arrival/Departure times: The core hours for a position are typically identified by a unit or department for a temporary or a consistent basis, and does not typically alter the total number of hours per week the employee works.

Compressed work: 40-hour work week compressed into fewer than five work days. This arrangement is only suitable for non-exempt employees, since exempt employees may regularly work beyond 40 hours and 5 days per week as employment arrangements are defined in terms of getting the job done versus working a set number of hours.

Flextime: Fixed start/end times that change periodically, along with consistent core hours, or the establishment of a regular schedule outside of regular business hours.

Flexible work arrangements: Any work structure that alters the time and/or place that work gets done, such as flextime and telecommuting.

Reduction in Time Commitment: An employee may seek to reduce their time commitment to the university on a permanent or temporary basis to accommodate personal life transitions (e.g., preparing for retirement, pursuing a degree, etc.) Supervisors will consider the feasibility, duration of time, impact on duties, pay and benefits and determine if there are any university policies that may apply to the request.

Telecommuting or Remote work: A work arrangement in which some or all of the work is performed at an off-campus work site such as the home or in office space near home for a specified number of hours per week and for a preset, limited duration.

Eligibility

While all professional and staff employees are eligible to request flexible work arrangements, not all positions or employees may be approved to participate in these programs. Employees with performance related issues as determined by the supervisor may not be granted telecommuting as an option.

Positions that require regular face-to-face contact with employees supervised, students or members of the University community or public are likely not suited to telecommuting. Positions that require routine access to information or materials that are available only at the primary worksite are likely not suited for telecommuting either.
Process

Employee submits the request. Employees who desire to request a flexible work arrangement shall complete a Flexible Work Application and submit it to their supervisor.

The supervisor reviews the request. The request for a flexible work arrangement must meet the needs, requirements, and constraints of both the department and the employee. The decision to authorize flexible work is within management’s discretion based on the nature of the work being performed and other business considerations. The supervisor will take into consideration:

- the nature of duties and overall ability to perform the primary duties
- the volume of work needed along with operational and customer needs of the department
- the type of communication needed for successful completion of duties, such as meetings, consultations, presentations, conferences, and other approved flexible work arrangements
- the applicant's demonstrated conscientiousness about work time and productivity, and their work habits, including their ability to be self-motivated with minimal face-to-face daily supervision

The supervisor may alter the request, with the employee’s input, should the original request not meet the department’s needs.

Approval begins with immediate supervisor and progresses to area Vice President.

If the immediate supervisor approves the Flexible Work Application, it must be approved by the next level of supervision and submitted to the Vice President/Provost for final approval. The Flexible Work Application will include an agreement section applicable to those approved for telecommuting in which the employee acknowledges that they will abide by established communication and performance expectations, comply with all general provisions and related IT policies. The arrangement does not alter an employee’s work relationship with the University nor does it relieve an employee from the obligation to observe all applicable University rules, policies and procedures. Existing terms and conditions of employment remain unless a substantial reduction in work hours is approved, then salary and benefits may be adjusted commensurate with reduction in work hours. The supervisor and employee will review the arrangement and make adjustments to address concerns/challenges. Ongoing reviews should be scheduled routinely with an annual documented review of the arrangement. The arrangement may be terminated at the supervisor's discretion. The final copy will be sent to University Human Resource Services and placed in the employee’s personnel file.

Appeal Process. In the event the employee would like to appeal the supervisor's decision, they may submit their appeal to the next level supervisor and if necessary, would progress through the chain of command, with the Vice President as the final decision maker.

Contacts

University Human Resource Services 765-285-1834, humanresources@bsu.edu