

Valparaiso University

Remote Work Policy

In recognition of the diversity of our workforce and to foster a more desirable and productive work environment, the Telework Program (the “Program”) offers eligible full-time staff employees the potential opportunity to work remotely within specific guidelines set forth in this Policy. The Program is just one possible way to support staff and their work-life effectiveness while maintaining the operational needs of the University. The Program is not an alternative to Family Medical Leave Act (Leave), appropriate use of sick time, vacation time or any other leave of absence, or a request for a reasonable accommodation to accommodate a disability.

Not all positions will qualify for the Program, and working remotely is a privilege and not a right, and only available to eligible staff in positions designated by the department head as qualifying for the Program. For current employees to work remotely, their position must qualify for the Program, the employee must request to work remotely, and their request must be approved by their supervisor as outlined by this Policy. New hires can be hired into the Program and be immediately eligible to work remotely to the extent determined by the University.

I. Qualifying for the Program

Staffing needs, the nature of a position’s duties, and operational demands across the university vary by department. Recognizing this, not all positions will qualify for the Program. Deans, department heads, and supervisors must work with the Office of Human Resource Services in identifying which positions are eligible for the Program, taking into account many factors including the operational needs of the department, the extent to which the job duties can be performed remotely, and the resources of the department. Because of the numerous factors that must be taken into account, the fact that they can change and/or differ from department to department, a position in one department may qualify for the Program while a similar position in another department may not qualify for the Program. In addition, a position may qualify for the Program but later become disqualified because considering factors change or it’s later determined that the position does not or should not have qualified for the Program. Department heads and supervisors, working with the Office of Human Resource Services, should identify each position eligible for the Program, via the Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ), noting any job functions or processes that are not able to be performed remotely.

II. Requesting to Work Remotely and Working Remotely

A current employee in a position that qualifies for the Program must request to work remotely by submitting the “Telework Request Form” to his/her supervisor. The form will be reviewed and approved/denied, in part or in full, by the supervisor, dean, vice president or president, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources and consistent with the PDQ. The employee will receive notice of the approval or denial.

For new hires in positions that qualify for the Program, the supervisor, dean, vice president or president must submit the Telework Request Form to the Office of Human Resource Services for final review prior to the new hire’s first day of work. The Office of Human Resources, in consultation with the submitter,

will send a final determination to the employee and supervisor as soon as feasible. No new hire can work remotely until the final determination is made.

The supervisor, dean, vice president or president can deny the Request in whole, or in part, or revoke the employee's remote work privileges in whole, or in part at any time and for any reason. Factors considered in determining if an employee can work remotely or continue to work remotely include, but are not limited to:

- The extent to which the job duties can be performed remotely;
- The employee's past performance and/or the extent to which working remotely is or will negatively affect the employee's performance;
- The employee's willingness to work specified schedules when necessary, and to report to campus when job functions would require it, or as requested to do so by the supervisor;
- The extent to which the employee's remote work site(s) accommodates remote work;
- The responsiveness of the employee while working remotely and the extent to which the employee makes him/herself available during working hours;
- The extent to which oversight over the employee is needed over the employee for him/her to best perform the duties of the job; and/or
- Legal, tax, compliance, insurance, or safety considerations.

Working remotely cannot diminish or potentially diminish the employee's ability to perform his/her job or otherwise cause an undue burden to the University. In addition, a supervisor over the employee can request, at any time and for any reason that the employee be on campus for any work related function, activity, or endeavor. Consistent with the University's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, employees working remotely are expected to ensure proprietary company and customer/student information accessibility from their alternate location(s) and all such information and work documents are stored, transmitted, and accessed electronically on the University's system. All emails from remote work locations must occur through the University's email system. The University's Information Technology department must assess the requesting employee's hardware and access to assure proper remote access and is available to assist an employee with these technological requirements.

Employees must have the proper equipment and proper access (including internet and electronic) to perform their job duties at the remote work location(s) and the employee's on-campus work phone must be forwarded to his/her cell phone with an active voicemail that must be regularly monitored. If funds are available, the supervisor may, but is not required to, purchase equipment that enables an employee to work remotely. Otherwise, the University is not responsible for the costs of services or equipment used at remote work locations, including, but not necessarily limited to computers, telephones, internet services, phone services, office supplies, or costs associated with travel to or from the campus.