Yeshiva University
Office of Human Resources

REMOTE WORK POLICY

General

This policy outlines the guidelines for employees who have been approved to work from a location other than the University campuses. It serves as a guide to the University's expectations for working remotely so that employees feel well-supported throughout their experience, and so that both the employee and the University benefits from the arrangement.

Remote working is a permanent, temporary or occasional arrangement between an employee and their Department Head (with the approval of Human Resources) to work from a non-campus location on a regular or occasional basis. Employees working remotely may be required to come to a campus or other site, from time to time, as required by the needs of their department or team, or for emergency situations. Accordingly, determining the individual's remote work location may be required for approval of a remote work arrangement.

Who is eligible?

With the approval of their Department Head and Human Resources, an employee may work remotely only if their job duties permit it and they are able to comply with the requirements set forth in this policy. Those employees who are obliged to come in direct physical contact with students, other departments or facilities, as well as those employees who generally need access to onsite materials and those employees who do not have the proper environment and equipment to work remotely (as reasonably determined by the Department Head and/or Human Resources), are not eligible to work remotely under this policy. Those employees whose jobs involve both in-person and remote work may request a partial remote work arrangement.

Reasons that could permit remote work include, but are not limited to:
- Department needs
- Greater efficiency
- Bad weather
- Emergencies
- Medical reasons (upon review by the Benefits Department)
- Work-life balance
- Overlong commute

How to determine whether an employee can work remotely.
Both the employee and the Department Head should consider these elements before requesting/approving remote work:
- Is the employee eligible by the nature of their job?
- Are there any cybersecurity or data privacy concerns?
- The Information Security Department must be consulted if the employee works with sensitive or personal information.

- Will it be possible for the employee to collaborate effectively with the employee's team and other University areas from their remote location?
- Does the employee have the necessary equipment and software to work remotely?
- What are the conditions of the employee's proposed remote workspace?
- Does the employee have the requisite work habits, such as reliability, responsiveness and ability to work independently, to successfully work remotely?
- How close is the employee's proposed remote workspace to the campus, especially if their physical presence on campus may be required from time to time?

If the employee and Department Head agree on a remote work arrangement, both of them must complete the Flexible or Remote Work Application, available in Human Resources, and submit a copy to Human Resources for review and final approval.

REMOTE WORK ELEMENTS

Environment

It is the responsibility of the employee to designate a remote workspace. No work should be performed outside of this designated workspace. The designated work location must meet OSHA safety rules for the workplace including smoke detector; working fire extinguisher; clear, unobstructed exits; removal of hazards that could cause falls; adequate electrical circuitry; and appropriate furniture. The University is not responsible for costs associated with the setup of this remote workspace, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, or otherwise to meet OSHA safety rules.

Homeowner's and other insurance and any changes in rates or coverage due to the remote workspace are the responsibility of the employee. Any increase in the employee's home utility is the responsibility of the employee.

If, while working from a designated workspace, the employee experiences technical issues with their equipment or internet access that prevent the employee from working remotely, the employee should immediately notify their Department Head to ensure coverage of the work and to get support for the issue as appropriate. Interruptions to work caused by internet outages may require the employee (as determined by their Department Head) to work from the campus or an alternate location for the remainder of the day, or until the outage is fixed. The University recommends using business class internet service in order to receive better service from the internet provider.

Employees are expected to make appropriate child-care arrangements during work hours. It is understood that occasional exceptions happen, and unexpected family issues come up, so employees should talk with their Department Head if there are any extenuating or temporary circumstances so appropriate one-time arrangements can be discussed.

Checklist to ensure that employee performance will not suffer in remote work arrangements:

- Quiet and distraction-free working space.
- Adequate internet connection.
- Dedicate full attention to job duties during working hours.
- Adhere to break and attendance schedules agreed upon with the Department Head.
- Ensure schedules overlap with those of their team members for as long as is necessary to complete job duties effectively.

Liability

It is the responsibility of the employee to maintain a safe, professional remote work site that is free from potential safety problems. Employees must certify that their remote work location is free from workplace hazards by completing the Safety/ Security checklist below and submitting it to Human Resources together with the Flexible Work Form Remote Work Policy Application Form. Employees must remain in compliance with these requirements during the course of the remote work arrangement and must promptly cease remote work if they fail to comply.

During work hours and while performing work-related duties in the designated workspace, remote employees are covered by workers' compensation. If an employee sustains an injury while working, they should notify their Department Head of such injuries as soon as possible and follow University policy for job-related injuries.

The University assumes no liability for injuries to the employee in the employee's designated workspace that are outside of the employee's agreed-upon work hours or not work-related. The University also assumes no liability for loss, destruction, or injury that may occur in the employee's residence and/or designated workspace except as expressly provided in the preceding paragraph, including injury to family members, visitors, pets, or any of employee's or third parties' personal and/or real property.

Compliance with University Policies

Remote employees must follow the same code of conduct and other policies as their campus based colleagues. The Code of Conduct and other policies are posted here: Human Resources | Yeshiva University (yu.edu) Employees are expected to be familiar and adhere to all policies. In particular, remote employees should review:

- Dress Code
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Email Policy
- Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy

- Outside Employment Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Record Retention Policy

Remote employees remain subject to disciplinary action – up to and including termination of employment—for failure to comply with University policies.

Specific Remote Work Policies

Remote employees are expected to adhere to the provisions set forth in this policy, as well as to the following remote work policies:

- It is generally expected that remote employees will appear on screen during Teams meetings unless unforeseen bandwidth disruptions require that video be suspended. (Remote workers should ensure that they generally have sufficient bandwidth for video meetings.)
- Remote employees must dress appropriately while visible on Teams meetings
- There should generally be no interruptions during Teams meetings (such as by pets and children). If disruptions do occur, the employee should mute their mic and turn off the camera to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.
- Remote employees should choose appropriate backgrounds for Teams meetings. (When in doubt, they consult with their Department Head.)
- At times, the employee may be required to work onsite for meetings, events and other situations deemed necessary by their Department Head, or for emergency situations. They will not be entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses.
- The employee must provide reasonable prior notice to their Department Head if they are moving or changing work locations, and the Department Head and Human Resources must confirm the continuation of the remote work arrangement at the new location.

Regular Communication and Work Hours

Because remote employees are not working in physical proximity to team members, they should err on the side of over-communication. Teams, email, phone calls, and other communication channels are available.

Department Heads will also have expectations for communication and response times. Employees and Department Heads must review and understand these expectations prior to beginning the arrangement.

It is generally expected that work hours comply with Eastern Standard Time (New York time). For those working in different time zones or in other countries, any deviation must be set in advance with their Department Head.

Equipment and Supplies

Remote employees may be reimbursed for reasonable office supplies as long as the expenditure was pre-approved by their Department Head and is in accordance with University policy and departmental budgets.

From time to time in its sole discretion, the University may decide to issue an employee a University-owned device to use for remote work purposes. These devices are the property of the University and may be reviewed and monitored by University personnel at any time without employee permission.

Employees are expected to know and comply with all policies about the use of software and devices in the appropriate ITS handbook available here: **www.yu.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/ITS%20handbook%20-%20Admin%20 Faculty %20and%20Staff.pdf**

Employees in possession of University resources may not allow any other person (including family members) access to the assigned device unless that person is specifically authorized by the University to access such device. Devices may not be used for personal use, except to the extent described in the ITS handbooks. Employees are responsible for the physical security of all ITS resources in a manner consistent with their function and so as to minimize the possibility of damage and/or loss. Employees must report the loss of device or possible security breaches immediately to the ITS Helpdesk and complete the appropriate documentation that will be provided.

Only ITS is authorized to dispose of University-owned electronic resources. Upon termination of employment, or sooner if requested by the University, the employee must return the ITS resources in person or by approved carriers within seven (7) work days of their last day of work.

In some cases, remote employees may have to provide their own equipment. When using personal equipment or devices for University work, employees must comply with the University's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy available on the ITS website.

Security and Confidentiality

All employees are responsible for keeping documents, sensitive business data, confidential information, personal information and other work-related materials confidential and secure in their remote work location. As always, employees are expected to comply with the guidelines of proper use of information technology. No work may be performed on a public internet connection. Employees must comply with the password policies described in the IT handbooks and may not disclose passwords to anyone. Employees must use the University email client for University communications. Employees must report security breaches immediately to **infosec@yu.edu**

Performance Expectations

The performance expectations for a remote employee are no different than for an in-office employee. Employees and Department Heads should determine long-term and short-term goals. They should frequently meet (either online or in-person when possible) to discuss progress and results.

Compensation and Benefits

Compensation is determined by job role. The University reserves the right to adjust an individual's salary, depending on any changes in responsibilities as a result of remote work, or otherwise as the University may reasonably determine (such as increased payroll expenses due to the employee working outside of New York).

Hourly Staff must record all hours and breaks in the time entry system, such as meal periods during the workday. They must obtain pre-approval from their Department Head to work overtime. Any flex time within the agreed number of work hours must be communicated and approved in writing by their Department Head. Vacation time must be approved in advance by their Department Head. Sick time should be communicated by them to their Department Head as soon as is practical.

Salaried staff members must record all time off in the time entry system. Vacation time must be approved in advance by their Department Head. Sick time should be communicated by them to their Department Head as soon as is practical.

Individual tax implications related to a remote workspace shall be the responsibility of the remote employee. New York State income tax withholding laws have not changed due to COVID-19, and, as a result, employees who live outside of New York State have been taxed in New York State as their primary work state and will continue to be subject to NYS withholding requirements, whether or not they are now working remotely from outside New York State. Since state income tax laws can vary by state, if an employee is working remotely outside New York State or relocates to another state, even temporarily, they should consult a tax advisor to determine whether they will be subject to additional state or local tax liability for days worked in that remote location.

Benefits are not altered by remote work, however, health plans for employees eligible for and enrolling in the University's health plans are primarily accessible in the New York area. While the current provider networks may have some national providers, there is no guarantee that employees working outside of the New York metropolitan area will have access to the Yeshiva University network providers.

Termination of the Remote Work Arrangement

Both the University and the employee have the right to terminate the remote work arrangement at any time for any (or no) reason—by prior written or verbal notice to the other.

This policy may be amended or terminated at any time by the University in its sole discretion.

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Safety/Security Checklist

GENERAL

- ☐ Lighting adequate for assigned tasks
- ☐ Cords, cables or other items are arranged to prevent a tripping hazard
- ☐ The workstation is arranged to be comfortable without unnecessary strain on backs, arms, necks, etc.
- ☐ Workstation chair is adjustable
  - Exertion (lifting, carrying, moving) are within physical capacity. Use proper lifting techniques, lift objects by bending the knee and keeping the load close to the body rather than using the back
  - Break up long periods of continuous activity by changing position, changing tasks or stretching
  - Work area is child and pet proof

FIRE

- ☐ Fire exits are clearly defined and unobstructed
- ☐ There is a charged and accessible dry chemical fire extinguisher
- ☐ There is a working smoke detector covering the designated workspace
- ☐ There is a working carbon monoxide detector covering the designated workspace
- ☐ The workspace is kept clean from trash or other combustible materials

ELECTRICAL

- ☐ Sufficient electrical outlets are accessible
- ☐ Computer equipment is connected to a surge protector
- ☐ Electrical system is adequate for office equipment
- ☐ All electrical plugs, cords, outlets, and panels are in good condition. There is no exposed/damaged wiring
- ☐ Equipment is placed close to electrical outlets
- ☐ Extension cords and power strips are not daisy-chained, and no permanent extension cord is in use Equipment is turned off when not in use
- ☐ Three wire grounded outlets or circuit breaker power strips are used

OTHER

- ☐ Files and data are secure as approved by Information Security Department
- ☐ Materials and equipment are in a secure place that can be protected from damage and misuse
- ☐ Employee maintains an inventory of all University equipment in the remote workspace including serial numbers

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