

Office of Finance and Administration
Office of Human Resources
March 15, 2020



Dear Faculty and Professional Staff,

The University of New England leadership continues to monitor developments regarding the coronavirus, known as COVID-19. In an effort to continue operations and address the needs of our employees during the pandemic, UNE is instituting this temporary policy on telework/flexwork. This policy may be discontinued at any time at the sole discretion of UNE, and shall be discontinued when the acute pandemic risk is determined to have diminished. This policy is administered by the Office of Human Resources.

As a reminder, WHO recommendations for the general public to maintain health and reduce exposure include:

- Avoid close contact with people suffering from acute respiratory infections including fever and cough.
- Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water; wash face regularly with soap and water and avoid touching face throughout the day.
- When coughing or sneezing, cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue — throw tissue away immediately and wash hands.
- If you have fever, cough and/or difficulty breathing, seek medical care early and share previous travel history with your health care provider.

Finally, we want to reiterate that If you have a fever, cough and/or shortness of breath, we ask that you stay home from work and seek medical care immediately.

Sincerely,

Nicole L. Trufant
Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration

Annmarie Allen
Associate Vice President for Human Resources, CHRO

Telework/Flexwork – Temporary Policy to Address COVID–19

Policy statements

The University of New England leadership continues to monitor developments regarding the coronavirus, known as COVID-19. In an effort to continue operations and address the needs of our employees during the pandemic, UNE is instituting this temporary policy on telework/flexwork. This policy may be discontinued at any time at the sole discretion of UNE, and shall be discontinued when the acute pandemic risk is determined to have diminished. This policy is administered by the Office of Human Resources.

Employees Eligible for this Policy

Faculty and professional staff (“employees”) are eligible to request telework/flexwork, provided they meet one or more of the criteria specified below (student employees and independent contractors are not eligible for this policy). Approval of telework/flexwork arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis by the department manager, senior administrator, and the Office of Human Resources, considering the nature and responsibilities of the employee’s position, and any other relevant factors. Employees whose circumstances warrant the use of sick leave are required to use such leave.

Telework/flexwork requests will be considered only in the following circumstances (subject to change based on current federal and state guidance):

- The employee is responsible for the care of a household member with a confirmed case of COVID-19 and thus has been exposed to the virus.
- The employee has traveled within the past 14 days to a country or area for which the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued a Level 2 or 3 Travel Health Notice or to an area that is considered highly contagious with a significant number of cases.
- The employee is in a group considered at higher risk for severe illness (over age 60 and/or has a serious chronic medical condition, including but not limited to heart disease, lung disease, diabetes) or are living with individuals who are considered high risk for severe illness.
- The employee has children whose school or childcare center is closed.
- The employee has been advised by the Office of Human Resources (based upon guidance from medical professionals), public health officer or medical advisor to refrain from attending work, but the employee is still able to perform work.

Depending on the employee’s particular circumstances, it may be determined that options other than telework/flextime are more appropriate, such as moving the employee’s work location or engaging in more significant “social distancing” in the workplace.

Definitions

Flexwork is any variation in work hours or work week from the standard schedule of the department in which the employee works, approved by the department manager and the Office of Human Resources. Flexwork may include options such as the following:

- Flex time – Start and departure times that differ from the standard schedule for the department, either on a day to day or fixed schedule.
- Compressed work week – Regularly scheduled hours worked are fixed over fewer than five days a week.
- Reduced work schedule and/or responsibilities – Reduction of hours worked and/or responsibilities per week for a period of time (with commensurate reduction in pay).
- Core office hours – Block(s) of time within the work day or work week, determined by the department based on business needs and student needs, during which all employees are expected to be at work and/or available for meetings and other departmental activities and student needs.

Telework is an arrangement for an employee to perform their job duties at an alternate location, such as a home office. Telework may also include flexing an employee's work schedule based on the particular circumstances and as approved by the department manager and the Office of Human Resources. Telework is not practical or possible for all types of work or for all positions. The telework provision of this policy does not apply to positions that are not amenable to working remotely.

Requests for Telework/Flexwork

Employees are expected to discuss their request with their department manager, and then to submit a COVID-19 Temporary Telework/Flexwork Agreement to the Office of Human Resources for consideration. The decision as to whether to approve telework/flexwork is at the complete discretion of UNE. The employee and manager will develop an individualized telework/flexwork plan. All individual plans must be approved by the employee's manager and senior administrator. A copy of the plan, along with the Telework-Flexwork Agreement, will be sent to HR. The duration of each agreement is subject to periodic review by Human Resources.

In addition to any other relevant issues pertaining to the particular department, managers will consider the following in assessing telework/flexwork requests:

- Identify the technology tools that the team will use to communicate with each other and ensure everyone is trained on how to use the technology. Information regarding available tools (Zoom, phone conference calls) and training on how to use the tools can be found on the UNE IT website <https://une1.sharepoint.com/sites/CTR>.
- Establish preferred methods and frequency of communication, as well as expected response times.
- Establish regular team check in and meeting times. During this time, it will be important to communicate regularly. Consider setting up a regular morning team check and also daily productivity reports to be submitted at day's end.
- Social Connections: During this time in which teams might be dispersed, with some working from home, some working in the office and working in other parts of the campus, it is

Important to remember to maintain social connections. Make sure each team member feels valued as an individual and is included in the team.

The General Requirements for Telework are included in the Telework-Flexwork Agreement

Responsibilities

Human Resources

- Approval of Telework and Flexwork Agreement forms
- Maintenance of Telework and Flexwork Agreement forms

Department Supervisors

- Completion and submission of Telework and Flexwork Agreement forms

Related Documents and Forms

Telework and Flexwork Agreement form

Contacts

Subject	Contact	Title	Contact Information
Policy Clarification	Annmarie Allen	Associate Vice President of Human Resources	207-602-2339

Subject	Responsible Executive	Title	Responsible Department
Ownership	Nicole L. Trufant	Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration	Human Resources

Appendix

General Requirements for Telework.



INNOVATION FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET

COVID-19 Temporary Telework/Flexwork Request

Employee Name:

Employee Title:

Employee Email:

Employee Phone:

Manager:

Manager Title:

Do you fall into one or more of the following categories: Yes No

- Those who have been caring for someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19
- Those whose child(ren)'s schools have been closed
- Those who have traveled to a CDC Level 2 or 3 area of concern or to an area that is considered highly contagious with a significant number of cases.
- Those who have high-risk medical issues (over age 60 and/or has a serious chronic medical condition, including but not limited to heart disease, lung disease, diabetes) or are living with individuals who are considered high risk for severe illness.
- Those who have been instructed to refrain from attending work by UNE Human Resources or public health official.

Request: **Telework** **Flextime**

This agreement must be reviewed with Human Resources before approved or denied.

Completed by employee requesting telework:

Please detail when, where and how you will complete your job responsibilities. Include in details of the technology you currently have and might need to be able to complete your job responsibilities:

Completed by employee requesting flex work:

Please detail requested work schedule. If there will be an impact on your completing your job responsibilities, please detail how those responsibilities will be completed.

I understand and agree to the Temporary Telework And Flexwork Guidelines (restated below). I understand that this is a temporary arrangement in light of the COVID-19 situation and will not be an

on-going accommodation. This decision is made at the discretion of my supervisor/manager. Telework and Flexwork arrangements are subject to ongoing review and may be subject to termination at any time based on performance concerns, organizational needs, or team structural changes.

Employee Signature:

Manager Signature:

Senior Administrator Signature:

HR Signature:

Check here to indicate you are sending email approvals in lieu of ink or Adobe Digital Signature

General Provisions/Guidelines for teleworking and flexworking:

- Employees requesting to work remotely must be able to fulfill their work responsibilities remotely.
- The employee is responsible for having adequate internet and other accessible technology to be able to complete their tasks.
- While teleworking, the employee shall be reachable by telephone, Zoom or email during agreed upon work hours. The employee and supervisor will agree on expected turnaround time on responses.
- All University and department policies, procedures and standards of conduct that apply to employees working on campus apply when an employee telecommutes.
- The teleworker will have regularly scheduled work hours agreed upon with the supervisor. These hours will include regular core hours for accessibility. The agreed upon work schedule will comply with FLSA regulations. The teleworker will attend job-related meetings, training sessions and conferences, as requested by supervisors. This could be accomplished through the use of technology-Zoom, conference calls, etc.
- The employee will ensure the confidentiality of University data, records, and other information used, stored, or accessed at home.
- Ideally, the teleworker must establish and maintain a dedicated workspace that is quiet, clean, and safe, with adequate lighting and ventilation. The teleworker will not hold business visits or meetings with professional colleagues, customers, or the public at the home worksite. Meetings should be held at the campus office or via technology such as Zoom or conference calls, not at home.
- The teleworker is responsible for having an ergonomically appropriate workspace.
- Home worksite furniture and equipment shall generally be provided by the teleworker. In the event that equipment and software is provided by UNE at the telework-site, such equipment and software shall be used exclusively by the teleworker and for the purposes of conducting UNE business. Software shall not be duplicated.
- The University will not reimburse the employee for the cost of expenses related to the work area, including heat, water, electricity, and any insurance coverage not provided by the University. Personal tax implications, if any, related to the work area shall be employee's responsibility.

- The ability to work in an off-site location is a matter of the University's absolute and unilateral discretion and exists for no purpose other than the convenience of the University and employee.
- Any University equipment provided for an employee's home use should be documented as University property and will be returned by the employee when the telecommuting agreement concludes or the employee's employment with the University ends. If necessary, the employee will bring University provided equipment to a University-designated location for maintenance and repairs. The employee will be responsible for:
 - any intentional damage to the equipment;
 - damage resulting from gross negligence by the employee or any member or guest of the employee's household;
 - damage resulting from a power surge if no surge protector is used;
 - maintaining the current virus protection for software.
- UNE may pursue recovery from the teleworker for UNE property that is deliberately, or through negligence, damaged, destroyed, or lost while in the teleworker's care, custody or control. Damage or theft of UNE equipment that occurs outside the employee's control will be covered by UNE. Teleworkers should check their homeowner's/renter's insurance policy for incidental office coverage. UNE does not assume liability for loss, damage, or wear of employee-owned equipment.
- The University will provide supplies for the employee's use while working from home consistent with supplies provided to other employees.
- Typically, telework is not a substitute for childcare or other dependent care. Teleworkers should make or maintain childcare arrangements to permit concentration on work assignments. However, during this time of the COVID-19, which have resulted in schools closing and other child care arrangements being impacted, the teleworker should work to family demands with work tasks. Maintaining open and regular communication between the teleworker and manager is vital.
- The employee will be covered by workers' compensation for job related injuries that occur in the designated workspace, including the teleworker's home, during the defined work period. In the case of injury occurring during the defined work period, the employee shall immediately report the injury to the supervisor. Workers' compensation will not apply to non-job related injuries that might occur in the home. UNE does not assume responsibility for injury to any persons other than the teleworker at the telework-site. In case of injury, theft, loss or tort liability related to telework, the teleworker must allow agents of UNE to investigate and/or inspect the telework site. Employees should note that some homeowner's policies do not automatically cover injuries arising out of, or relating to, the business use of a home. For the employee's protection, employees should have their homeowner's/tenant's liability policy endorsed to cover bodily injury and property damage to all third parties arising out of or relating to business use of their home.
- Actions that the telecommuter may take during break periods from working and actions not directly related to working in the home approved work site will not be covered under Workers' Compensation. These non-covered actions include, but are not limited to, all actions that the employee would not be able to perform in his/her regular cubicle or office, or which are directly related to the operation of the home. Examples of such non-covered actions include caring for children, pets, domestic tasks, yard work, retrieving mail, etc.
- Products, documents, and records developed while teleworking are the property of UNE.
- The teleworker must obtain supervisor approval before taking leave time in accordance with UNE policy.
- Overtime eligible employees must report all worked time and must receive prior approval by their supervisor to work overtime.

Employee's initials, indicating understanding and agreement of guidelines: _____

Return this document and emailed approvals to: HR-COVID19Questions@une.edu