

Social Distancing and Alternative Work (Telework) Guidelines During a Pandemic and Communicable Disease Event

In the event of a pandemic, communicable disease, or other serious public health threats declared by public health officials to be a public health emergency that affects the NC State community (“a pandemic and communicable disease event”), social distancing measures may be implemented.

Policy References

Based on the UNC System Policy on Pandemic and Communicable Disease Emergency ([300.2.15](#)), as well as the Communicable Disease Emergency Policy in the NC State Human Resources Manual ([Section 8, page 25](#)) and in concurrence with public health officials, the Chancellor has the authority to isolate ill or symptomatic employees from the workplace. Social Distancing is defined by the UNC System Policy on Pandemic and Communicable Disease (300.2.15 H) as “[A]ctions taken to reduce the opportunities for close contact between people in order to limit the spread of a disease.” In order to minimize transmission from person to person, social distancing provisions including alternative worksites or teleworking may be implemented.

Eligibility

Eligible employees:

- All SHRA, EHRA non-faculty, full-time and part-time, probationary and time-limited employees.
- EHRA Faculty are subject to the provisions outlined in their contracts and/or their statement of faculty responsibilities (and under direction of the Dean and/or Provost’s Office must be in alignment with the Provost’s online and distance education academic continuity requirements)
- Temporary employees (not contractors receiving 1099s for completed work to the university) are subject to the terms of their original contract and their work location can be modified based on the terms listed in these procedures. Temporary employees are only eligible to utilize these procedures when the UNC System or the Chancellor of NC State has implemented social distancing practices under the UNC System Policy on Pandemic and Communicable Disease Emergency.

Social Distancing Provisions

In a pandemic and communicable disease event, alternative work arrangements and procedures may bypass normal requirements under the social distancing provisions. The

purpose of social distancing telework and alternative worksite arrangements is to limit the spread of disease by helping to facilitate measures that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Reducing face-to-face exposure by using audio and/or video conferencing.
- Avoiding unnecessary travel (non-mandatory conferences, large group meetings, and/or commuting through potentially affected areas).
- Scheduling a reduced number of employees on shifts to reduce the numbers of individuals in shared workspaces.
- Alternating work schedules to avoid mass transportation during peak hours.
- Canceling meetings, workshops, training sessions, and other scheduled events.
- Adhering to current university travel guideline restrictions (see Restricted Travel Policy on ncsu.edu/coronavirus).

A college, division, department or administrative unit may elect to implement alternative work procedures. These procedures are comprised of two types of alternative work options:

- Flexible Scheduling; and
- Alternative Work Locations (“Remote Work” or “Telework”).

Flexible Schedules

- The college/division/administrative unit must establish core work hours.
- Core work hours are the primary operating hours for the unit. The regular work hours for the university are 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., however, some divisions or departments across campus may have different core hours established based on their essential work activities (e.g., the NC Veterinary Hospital which has evening and night shifts).
- During a pandemic and communicable disease event, employees may be allowed or required to shift their work hours within two (2) hours of the core business hours in their unit based on operational need. For example, a shift in a department with core hours of 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. may allow some employees to work from 6 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Another employee in the same unit may work from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. In this example, operations are covered during the core hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- All schedules must be approved by the supervisor and modified schedules can be changed or stopped by the supervisor immediately upon a change in public health conditions or the college/division/administrative unit’s needs.

Alternative Work Locations (“Remote Work” or “Telework”)

- Employees may be allowed or required to work at an alternative work site such as their home or another approved work location.
- Supervisors can approve alternate work locations, however, the feasibility of these locations must be monitored regularly and may be changed due to various public health emergency conditions. Please review the OIT checklist at <https://oit.ncsu.edu/help-support/training/telecommuting-tips/>.

- Employees will not be reimbursed for personal expenses to maintain work activities provided under an alternative work arrangement.

Tips for Managers/Supervisors:

- All supervisors must ensure that employees working remotely have the appropriate resources (computer/laptop access, access to university systems and/or software needed to complete their work assignments, etc). The access of university systems for work purposes must follow OIT protocol using VPN and/or trusted networks.
- All supervisors should implement mandatory schedule expectations and regular communication check ins. For example, the expectations of your unit might be:
 - Telephone coverage must be in place five days a week, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 - All staff must attend staff meetings (via conference call) and/or be available for a weekly check-in at a mutually convenient time; and
 - All staff are required to ensure that their contact information in Employee Self Service is up to-date and that they must be reachable by phone, email, web meetings, or other electronic resource, during regular business hours.
 - All staff are expected to be available as if they were in the office, and accessible using a variety of modes of communication (e.g., forwarded phone, email, voicemail) from the alternate work location.
- Establish core work hours: Communicate the hours in a work day when all staff are needed. Meetings are typically scheduled during this time.
- Establish bandwidth work hours: Define the earliest and latest time periods during a day that employees should be working remotely to meet operational needs. Additionally define the number of allowable telework days. For FLSA non-exempt employees, it is important that work start and stop times are specifically defined so overtime is not incurred unless approved.
- Establish core obligations and business requirements: Set expectations for communication, work expectations, equipment, systems security, and safety requirements.
- Set expectations for deliverables of work performed remotely and ask employees to provide updates or share documents to monitor their progress on completing these deliverables remotely.

Accounting for Absences, Leave, and Pay During a Pandemic and Communicable Disease Event

Employees required to work under social distancing alternative work arrangements will receive regular pay. Please visit the [WolfTime FAQs](#) for information on timekeeping options and instructions.

Please refer to the NC State Guidelines on Pandemic and Communicable Disease for guidance relating to absences, leave and pay during a pandemic and communicable disease event.

Additional Requirements

- All policies, regulations, and procedures that apply to the primary workplace remain the same for staff working from alternate work locations.
- Telecommuting assignments do not change the conditions of employment or required compliance with all policies, regulations, and rules.
- The University's liability for job-related accidents continues to exist during approved hours at the alternate work location, and staff must report any injury immediately to their supervisor. The supervisor must ensure that university-owned materials, equipment, and furniture used by staff for work-related purposes at the alternate work location comply with safety standards.
- University-owned property remains the property of the University and must be returned within five (5) working days of termination of approval of an alternate work location.

Additional Resources

Please refer to the [University Human Resources website](#), for additional alternative work resources for employees, managers and supervisors.