

Remote Work Location

Operational Guide for Managers & Supervisors

SECTION 1: Overview

The operational guide is intended to be a tool to assist supervisors and managers in identifying positions that could be assigned to a remote work location, in obtaining required approval(s) for the remote work location, and in implementing remote work operations.

The Remote Work Location regulation ([REG 05.55.11](#)) requires that management decisions regarding remote work locations must focus on organizational needs. A position's assignment to a Remote Work Location will generally be based on one of the following:

- The nature of the work in a particular position requires the work to be conducted off-site. (Example: position's duties require conducting research at an off-site laboratory.)
- The position requires no on-site (on campus) work and the duties of the position may be performed effectively from a remote work location.
- In limited circumstances, the duties of the position may be performed at a Remote Work Location for a temporary period of time while the person in the position is either relocating to or from an on-site location.

Approval of a remote work location changes the position's assigned duty station to an entirely off-site location, with no expectation of performing any work on-site. A Remote Work Location assignment differs from a Flexible Work Arrangement, which is based on business need but considers an employee's interest in working from an alternate work location. [Flexible work arrangements](#) do not change an employee's on-site duty station, as they require the employee to be on-site for some portion of their work schedule and have an expectation that some of the work is to be performed on-site. Remote work under the Remote Work Location regulation does not require regular on-site work. However, employees with full remote work assignments may include a requirement to report on-site for certain events, meetings, or activities, but not as part of a regular schedule.

SECTION 2: Assessment of the Position's Attributes

Position Reviews

For a position to be assigned to a Remote Work Location, management must determine if, based upon the nature of the work being performed, a position is suitable for assignment to a Remote Work Location. All Colleges and divisions reporting under the Office of the Provost will undergo its own approval process and will receive additional guidance from the Provost's Office.

All supervisors or managers assessing the feasibility of 100% remote work options for a unit should consider the following questions when determining if a position is suited for assignment to a remote work location (this is not an exhaustive list).

1. What are the operational needs of the university and the work unit related to this position? Would assignment of the position to a Remote Work Location align with the university's mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities?
2. Does the position require any in-person contact or physical presence on-site to perform the job effectively?
3. Does the position require any in-person (not virtual) communication with anyone on campus?
4. Does the position require any on-site work activity to perform the job effectively?
5. Are there time, location, or protocol (when, where, and how) restrictions on the manner in which the position's work must be performed?
6. What is the position's degree of autonomy and independence? Will the employee be able to conduct work independently or need constant oversight which may be better executed onsite?
7. Is the position designated as exempt from the wage and hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA-exempt)? As a supervisor can you ensure that the employee is not working overtime if they are subject to FLSA wage and hour provisions?
8. If applicable, can the supervisor continue to assure compliance with federal and state wage-hour regulations regarding work that occurs outside the supervisor's regular schedule and away from the on-site work location?
9. Can all required work-related data or files be accessed in a secure and confidential manner from a Remote Work Location? Will the security and confidentiality of this information be assured, as required by University policy and best practices?
10. Can the Remote Work Location be adequately equipped for full access to the necessary tools, software, and other required equipment needed to perform the job?
11. Does the Department have the funds to cover the additional costs incurred? Management should have sufficient budget to provide necessary office supplies, equipment, and expenses incurred based on the work location (e.g., additional taxes, benefit charges, and/or fees if out of state) for a Remote Work Location?
12. Does Management have the ability to effectively monitor an employee's work that occurs from a Remote Work Location?
13. Will the employee be able to conduct business meetings with University or other personnel via telephone, tele-conference, and/or videoconference?
14. Is this position designated as mandatory or essential regarding any requirement to be on campus during adverse weather or emergency situations? Is the position required to perform work onsite during an emergency instead of being able to perform their duties remotely during an emergency?
15. Does this position working remotely impact other position(s) in the unit or require those positions to perform tasks to account for this position working remotely?

Once it has been determined that the position can perform all of the required work while operating from a Remote Work Location, the manager/supervisor can determine if this arrangement is recommended and should move to the next steps for approval. Each college

and division may establish college/division specific procedures to address remote work approval considerations. Please be sure to contact your college/division human resources representative before making final decisions regarding remote work assignments.

Your answers to the questions above will help determine if the position may or may not be appropriate for assignment to a Remote Work Location. It is important to consider your responses to all of the questions to determine whether assignment of a position to a Remote Work Location will meet overall operational needs and be of benefit to the university.

NOTE: If the proposed Remote Work Location is outside of the State of North Carolina, the department must receive approval from UHR for an exception for [remote work out of state](#). If the proposed remote location is outside of the State of North Carolina, the department must consider the additional HR employment law implications for that state, payroll and tax-related costs, as well as setup time required to employ the individual. These issues will be part of the analysis for approval.

In-State Remote Work Locations

- 1) Manager/Supervisor completes the position review and determines the position is eligible for assignment to a Remote Work Location.
***Note:** When establishing new positions, the UHR Classification and Compensation department must be notified that the position is intended for a Remote Work Location.
- 2) The Manager/Supervisor forwards the request through the college/division's internal review process where applicable.
- 3) The final approving authority must approve the Remote Work Location request and submit the approval (or a copy of the approval) to the college/division's human resources representative.
- 4) The College/Division HR representative must ensure that the approved position has the correct work location address entered into the PeopleSoft system for the corresponding position.
- 5) All proposed fully remote work requests must route to the Provost Office via x form for approval.
- 6) The Provost Office will return an approval or denial to the unit.
- 7) Any changes (i.e., relocation to a new city or state) to the approved Remote Work Location must be re-submitted and approved through the unit's internal process at least 60 days prior to the change. If the change requires a position that was approved through the in-state process and now needs to be approved for out-of-state, then the out-of-state approval process must be followed.

Note: Staff who work in an academic department or in a non-academic department which ultimately reports to the Provost, requires approval of the remote assignment from the Dean, Vice Provost, or Senior Vice Provost of the corresponding area prior to submitting a final request for approval to the Provost.

Out-of-State (outside of the State of North Carolina) Remote Work Locations

Steps 1-3 of the procedure outlined above for approval of in-state Remote Work Locations are followed for approval of out-of-state Remote Work Location requests and are repeated below. All out-of-state requests must be approved by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources or their designee. The AVC of HR will not review requests that have not been approved at the College/Division or Provost level designated approvers as determined by the position.

- 1) Manager/Supervisor completes the position review and determines the position is eligible for assignment to a Remote Work Location.

**Note:* When establishing new positions, the UHR Classification and Compensation department must be notified that the position is intended for a Remote Work Location prior to finalizing the creation of the position.

- 2) The Manager/Supervisor forwards the request through the college/division's internal review process where applicable.
- 3) HR Lead attests that the Dean or VC has approved it, then it routed to the Provost's Office
- 4) The final approving authority must approve the Remote Work Location request and submit the approval (or a copy of the approval) to the college/division's human resources representative.

Note: The final approving authority is outlined in section 3.2 of the [Remote Work Regulation 05.55.11](#). An assignment to a 100% remote work location must be approved by the Vice Chancellor (or designee) for staff that report up through that senior leader. An assignment to a 100% remote work location must be approved by the Provost (or designee) for all faculty and staff who report up through the Office of the Provost.

- 4) UHR will return the decision to the college/division's Dean or Vice Chancellor with a copy to the unit's HR representative (and Provost for Faculty positions).

- 5) The College/HR representative should ensure that the correct work location address has been entered into the PeopleSoft system for the corresponding position

Any changes (i.e., relocation to a new city or state) to the approved Remote Work Location must be re-submitted and approved through the unit's internal process and then submitted to UHR. If a position that was approved through the out-of-state process is changing to an in-state Remote Work Location, then only the in-state approval process needs to be followed. It is extremely important to ensure that the change of work location is updated in the HRIM system.

SECTION 3: Additional Considerations for Positions Reporting Under the Office of the Provost

Considerations for Faculty and Staff Who Report Through the Provost's Chain of Command

Review and approval for assignment to a Remote Work Location of faculty or staff positions that fall under a reporting structure to the Provost require additional considerations.

Staff Under the Provost's Office Reporting Chain

Staff who work in an academic department or in a non-academic department which ultimately reports to the Provost, requires approval of the remote assignment from the Dean, Vice Provost, or Senior Vice Provost of the corresponding area prior to submitting a final request for approval to the Provost.

Faculty with Primarily Teaching Responsibilities

It is necessary to distinguish between faculty who exclusively have online/distance education teaching responsibilities as opposed to faculty positions that have full-time teaching and other pertinent research-, extension-, outreach-, or student-related responsibilities. Faculty positions that include only online teaching responsibilities may be appropriate for consideration for fully remote work location. These situations require approval from the Provost Office. Faculty who are full-time usually have assignments in multiple realms of responsibility and/or expectations that require on-site performance of duties. There may be extenuating circumstances leading to request a full-time faculty positions being classified as remote. These situations are extremely rare and require approval from the Provost's Office.

Scholarly Reassignment or Other Forms of Leave for Faculty

This regulation does not cover faculty opportunities in which a full-time faculty member may have unique scholarly opportunities or other extraordinary situations that require them to be off-site for a semester or more. Scholarly Reassignment or Leave Without Pay requests for faculty should follow established processes for approval.

Faculty with Primarily Research Responsibilities

The unique and highly specialized nature of research conducted by some members of the faculty may justify the request for a full remote work location. These situations are uncommon and require approval from the Provost's Office.

Faculty with Primarily Extension Responsibilities

The work of faculty primarily involved in extension work is often conducted off-campus. However, conducting work in a remote location sometimes does not require a fully remote work location in every situation. Extension work may require a full remote work location in very specific circumstances and should be considered on a case-by-case basis. These situations are uncommon and require approval from the Provost's Office.

Remote Work Location Considerations

- Positions assigned to work at a Remote Work Location, such as an employee's residence or another off-campus work site, must be approved by their supervisor and then at the following next level: (Dean for Colleges, Vice Chancellor or Senior Vice Provost/Vice Provosts for non-academic units. The Provost has final approval for all faculty and staff positions that report up through the Provost's Office).
- All Remote Work Locations must comply with the requirements established by OIT Security & Compliance and with Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) workplace safety standards. Please review the [OIT remote work resources and guidelines](#) for instruction on keeping university data secure and accessing technology for remote work. EHS provides references on working [alone restrictions](#) and [ergonomics](#).
- Employees working remotely must have the appropriate resources, e.g. access to university systems and/or software needed to complete their work assignments. Computer access must be university-owned when necessary for complying with data security controls outlined in the [end point protection standard](#). The access of university systems for work purposes must follow OIT protocol using VPN and/or trusted networks.
- Units implementing full remote work positions are responsible for equipping and maintaining the Remote Work Location with the necessary equipment needed to perform the essential functions of the job.
- Due to the impacts on work units, on-site and off-site space requirements, fiscal and budgetary concerns, it is suggested that all new assignments to a Remote Work Location should be piloted for at least three (3) months prior to making the assignment on-going.

Determining Remote Work Locations

- 1) Is the remote location dictated by the position duties itself?
- 2) Is the remote location within the State of North Carolina?
- 3) Is the remote location outside of the state of North Carolina?
 - a) Research conducted in that state or region where the position must be located
 - b) There is an MOU or contract in place that designates a specific location
 - c) NC State has an offsite presence in a location
 - d) Temporary request as the employee transitions into or out of the state of North Carolina
- 4) During recruitment to fill a position, if a top tier candidate lives within the State of North Carolina, but lives outside of the commutable work location, the hiring manager must determine if the employee/applicant's work location fits the eligible criteria.
- 5) If a top tier candidate is out of state and is not intending to move to the State of North Carolina, the hiring manager must submit an [out of state work request](#) (prior to making an offer or submit as part of the hiring proposal?). This request must have approval of college/division leadership and will be reviewed by UHR. Please plan to allow approximately three weeks for out of state reviews due to the complexity of the review standards.

- 6) If the employee changes remote location, a new request must be submitted (eg. original request was to work in Asheville, then employee moves to TN)
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SECTION 4: Approvals

Approval Process for Remote Work Locations

All Colleges and divisions may establish internal review processes that align with internal needs and the required approvals outlined in this document.

All requests for full in-state remote work (i.e, 100% of the work is conducted from an off-site work location) must be approved as outlined below:

- a. Non-Faculty Staff: The Provost or Vice Chancellor (or their designee) that oversees the employee's unit must approve a Remote Work Location assignment.
- b. Faculty: The Provost (or designee) must approve a Remote Work Location assignment.

All managerial requests to designate an out-of-state Remote Work Location are additionally subject to approval by the Associate Vice Chancellor for University Human Resources (or designee).

SECTION 5: Supervisor and Employee Responsibilities

Manager/Supervisor Responsibilities

- Assess the suitability of implementing full remote work for a particular position or set of positions based upon operational needs.
- Conduct position assessments for a Remote Work Location based on objective and unbiased criteria (see "Position Reviews").
- Implement consistent 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 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 - All staff must attend staff meetings (via telephonic conferencing or in-person) and/or be available for regular check-ins at a mutually convenient time.
 - 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 physically on-site, and accessible using a variety of modes of communication (e.g., forwarded phone, email, voicemail) from the Remote Work Location.

- Establish core work hours based upon service expectations: Communicate the hours in a work day when all staff are expected to be available to meet essential business needs. 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. For employees who are subject to the wage and hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA non-exempt), start and stop times must be specifically defined so overtime is not incurred unless pre-approved.
- Establish core obligations and business requirements: Set expectations for communication, work expectations, equipment, systems security, and safety requirements.
- Conduct/review an assessment of positions to determine eligibility for the various work options available.
- 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.
- Whenever possible, supervisors should give employees no less than 30 calendar days written notice of a change or end to their approved Remote Work Location unless there is an immediate business need or public health emergency. A change in work location may have significant impacts on the employee. Consult with Employee Relations prior to issuing notice to the impacted employee(s).
- Performance reviews should be conducted in the same intervals established by policy. Unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet expectations by an employee assigned to a Remote Work Location should be addressed as a performance issue.
- Regularly review operations of personnel and unit to ensure consistent and successful service delivery.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees who have been assigned to a Remote Work Location are subject to the same terms and conditions of their position as employees who are assigned to an on-site work location. Employees are responsible for:

- Adhering to the time and attendance criteria in place for their position.
- Satisfactory performance and completion of their work assignments.
- Regular communication with their supervisor as defined by their performance management plan and/or position description.
- Employees with a Remote Work Location must be able to balance their duties with other external obligations and must perform their duties free of external and/or frequent interruptions to the greatest extent possible. Assignment to a Remote Work Location is not a substitute for child or elder care
- Complying with all university policies, regulations, rules, and procedures, to include continual compliance with known university work rules, data security, and safety procedures at the Remote Work Location.
- Identifying a dedicated workspace that meets the data security and workplace safety requirements.
- Maintaining and protecting any university-owned equipment that they are using at any Remote Work Location.

- Securing and maintaining adequate infrastructure to support work demands (e.g. internet access and speeds must be sufficient to perform all aspects of work including video meetings, downloads/uploads, etc.)
 - Any expenses arising out of assignment to a Remote Work Location, unless directed by the university.
 - Notifying the university within 120 days if the employee is moving to a different location (especially a different state) than that of the approved Remote Work Location. Changes to Remote Work Locations are subject to university review and approval.
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SECTION 6: Considerations for Out of State Remote Work Locations

Out-of-State Remote Work Locations:

As NC State is intended in part to contribute to the economy of the State, to the greatest extent practicable, employees will reside within the State of North Carolina. In addition, employees with positions assigned to an out-of-state Remote Work Location may be subject to the laws and regulations of other states or localities where the employee is located; Accordingly, employing individuals who work remotely outside of the State of North Carolina should be avoided and only pursued or maintained in extraordinary circumstances or exceptional situations. Such situations are described below. All out-of-state work locations must be reported in the HR Information Management System and must be approved by the Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources or their designee.

Requests for positions to be assigned to out-of-state Remote Work Locations must meet the following criteria and costs incurred by the remote location will be the responsibility of the college/division:

- Demonstrate a clear operational rationale that the position/work requires the employee to work at the proposed Remote Work Location.
 - Examples:
 - Site-specific research or university business (i.e. research/business that requires an employee/position to be in a specific off-site location)
 - NC State presence / worksite at that location as established by formal agreements such as research contracts, MOU/MOAs, etc.
 - Pre-existing work arrangements (prior to the establishment of this regulation) that cannot be reasonably altered or transitioned to on-site within North Carolina

- Demonstrate an extraordinary/significant value/benefit to the university gained from assignment of the position to the Remote Work Location, benefits the advancement and/or continuity of research, clearly outweighs any costs or risks associated with the out-of-state Remote Work Location.
 - Demonstrate a temporary time period of transition
 - Relocating to the position's on-site (on-campus) location (for a period of less than 6 months); some permanent hires may be given an extended period of time to relocate and may begin work assignments remotely with the understanding that when public health conditions permit, they will relocate to the institution's on-site location for the position as a condition of continued employment. The offer letter and/or the terms and conditions document should include this requirement as an additional term or condition of employment.
 - Departing the university for a temporary transition period of time (less than 12 months).
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SECTION 7: Equipment

Equipment and Materials

NC State may provide an employee assigned to a Remote Work Location with necessary office supplies and equipment, if the college/division deems appropriate and necessary to perform the essential functions of the job. An inventory of all university-owned equipment used by an employee at their Remote Work Location must be maintained. All university-owned resources provided to the employee must be used primarily for university business and in accordance with applicable NC State policies, regulations, and rules, including but not limited to all requirements around data security and IT regulations. The employee will take reasonable steps to protect all university-owned equipment from theft, damage, or misuse.

Common examples of university provided equipment:

* Marked items are noted as standard equipment more routinely provided to full remote workers. Other items should be evaluated based on needs of the position and unit.

- LAPTOP
- MONITOR (1 OR 2)
- MOUSE
- KEYBOARD
- DOCKING STATION
- CAMERA (PORTABLE)
- PRINTER
- SCANNER/FAX
- HEADPHONES/MICROPHONE
- CABLES
- CELL PHONE (UNIVERSITY-OWNED)

University-owned equipment used for work at a Remote Work Location remains the property of

NC State and must be returned within five (5) business days of separation from employment or reassignment to an on-site work location. Management has the discretion to determine that employees moving to an on-site work location still require use of certain equipment to complete their job duties and responsibilities. In such situations, managers are expected to establish the timeframe for which equipment must be returned (if applicable).

Note: Special requests for ergonomic equipment may be provided pursuant to an approved ADA accommodation, or at management's discretion.

SECTION 8: Additional Considerations

Accounting for Absences, Leave, and Pay

Employees working at a Remote Work Location are subject to the same time and leave policies as on-site employees. Please visit the [WolfTime FAQs](#) for information on timekeeping options and instructions.

Remote Work Locations and ADA or Religious Accommodations

If an employee requests assignment of their position to a Remote Work Location as a reasonable accommodation in employment, they should be directed to the [Office for Institutional Equity & Diversity](#).

Advertisement (posting) language and Offer Letters

When posting positions, hiring managers may indicate that a position "is eligible for remote work" or "may be eligible for remote work." in the "Job Location" field (it can be listed in other areas as well, but must be listed in the Job Location field). It is advised a hiring manager selecting candidates for interview who reside outside of the state of North Carolina, should confirm during the interview if the employee is willing to relocate to North Carolina. If the posted position has already been approved for out of state work, then contacting UHR in advance with the state(s) of the finalists will help expedite the hiring process.

Offer letter language to include safety requirements and tracking mechanism for these requests:

Due to business/operational needs and in the best interest of the institution, you will be allowed to work from an off-site work location as outlined in the attached Acknowledgement of Off-site Work Location. Please acknowledge your acceptance of this appointment by signing this letter, and its incorporated Terms and Conditions, the Acknowledgement of Off-site Work Location and returning it to me by (Insert Date).

Managing Full Remote Teams - Building Engagement and Collaboration

It is important to find ways to connect more personally with employees working from remote work locations.

- Build in time for casual conversation at the start or end of individual or group meetings.
- Use icebreakers and fun interactive tools to insert personality into meetings occasionally. You can create fun poll questions in zoom or use break out rooms with larger groups so people can have small group discussions then return and report out to the group on important takeaways or ideas shared.
- Hold regular meetings with remote employees, especially team meetings to give the team opportunities to interact with each other. Encourage employees to keep their cameras on for meetings to increase connections.
- Create a phrase, mantra, or repeat a mission statement together at every gathering. Create something that is unique to the team and helps them build a bond.
- Have a hat day. Pick a day that everyone wears a hat to the meeting. Or maybe everyone wears red. Pick something that everyone can participate in and build camaraderie.