



# Northern Marianas College Procedure

Procedure No.: 5010.26    Procedure Title: Telework  
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Office of Origin: Human Resources Office  
Procedure Approval Authority: President  
Board Policy No. associate with this procedure: 5010  
This Procedure Supersedes/Replaces: Procedure effective 3/31/2020

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*The written steps necessary to appropriately and uniformly perform a task in carrying out policies and activities of the College.*

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**Overview/procedure description** Northern Marianas College (NMC or “College”) provides telework arrangements to employees that request to work from home or from another off-campus location away from the usual workplace through telecommunications technology. Arrangements may vary and telework may have all, or a portion of an employee’s work schedule. This procedure defines remote work, indicates requirements for a Telework Agreement and outlines the responsibilities of both remote workers and NMC. This procedure ensures a productive and inclusive work environment while promoting flexibility for employees.

**Areas of Responsibility** Supervisors will work with their direct reports to establish a telework schedule and complete the Telework Agreement form. The arrangement for teleworking must be mutually agreed to between the employee and those approving such requests. The Telework Agreement form must be submitted to the Human Resources Office (HRO), and will be placed in the employee’s file.

**Procedure details** Teleworking can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term project, or a formal, set schedule of working away from the office as described below. Either an employee or supervisor can suggest telework as a possible work arrangement. Telework is not an entitlement or benefit, and in no way changes the terms and conditions of an employee’s employment with NMC.

A telework arrangement may be granted on a temporary basis, upon approval of the employee’s supervisor, and in some situations, the President of the College.

### **Telework Eligibility**

Telework eligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis, considering the nature of the employee’s function and the feasibility of teleworking. A position’s suitability for telework is based on operational needs and the duties and responsibilities of the position as defined in the employees job description.

It is the responsibility of the supervisor to designate positions as typically telework eligible or telework ineligible. Positions which can be designated typically telework eligible are those where all or a significant portion of the duties of a position can be accomplished through telework. Supervisors could consider restructuring jobs not currently eligible for telework in a way that would allow employees to telework on a situational basis, and the College encourages such innovation where it is possible. Work-study employees are not eligible for telework under this procedure. They should refer to the department that handles the College's work-study program.

### **Purpose**

NMC supports and allows telework arrangements where appropriate to maintain a culture of mobility and flexibility, meet employees where they are strongest, promote a positive work-life balance, provide continuity of operations during worksite disruptions, and increase administrative efficiencies.

Requesting to telework off-island for non-medical, extended periods may not be accommodated as it may require an arrangement beyond this Telework procedure. Such requests should be directed to the Human Resources Office and the appropriate Dean. The President will determine final approval.

### **Definitions**

- **Telework** is an alternate worksite such as a residence or any off-campus location.
- **Telework Agreement** is a formal agreement between the supervisor and the employee to specify consistent, long-term telework conditions for the employee.
- **Situational Telework** is a situational or short-term telework request due to unforeseen situations and are approved on a case-by-case basis.
- **Hybrid Telework** is one where the employee has both regular telework arrangements and also reports onsite.
- **Regular Telework** is one where the employee works 100% off-site.

### **Remote Work Requests for Medical Reasons**

Employees requesting a remote work arrangement due to a medical condition should be directed to the Human Resources Office to discuss potential workplace accommodations in accordance with Federal laws.

### **Types of Telework**

#### **1. Situational Telework**

Situational Telework arrangements are approved on a case-by-case basis and do not require a Telework Arrangement. A written agreement of the approval should be documented. Approval for such requests are arranged between the employee and their supervisor.

Situational Telework:

1. Arrangement where an employee is approved by their supervisor to telework on a case-by-case basis as the need arises.
2. The availability of situational telework is usually specified in a written agreement between the employee and employee's supervisor.
3. Various scenarios in which an employee can be approved for this type of telework.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a. An employee with a short-term need for uninterrupted time to complete work on a complex project;
- b. An employee with temporary dependent care responsibilities;
- c. An employee recovering from illness or an injury who is able to perform work, but temporarily unable to physically report to their official worksite.

Situational Telework is not appropriate as a substitute for sick time off and should not be used when the employee or the employee family member's illness or injury interferes with the employee's ability to perform their work.

**2. Hybrid or Regular Telework**

Hybrid or Regular telework arrangements must be supported by a Telework Agreement that specifies the requirements and details of the arrangement. This arrangement may include a hybrid schedule of regular telework and reporting to campus. The College worksite remains the official work location. The arrangement can last for a defined period or can continue indefinitely with regular review by the Supervisor.

Situational telework becomes Hybrid or Regular telework once it becomes regularly occurring and should be adjusted by the supervisor.

Supervisors are responsible for considering proposals for these types of telework objectively and fairly, and are not obligated to approve requests.

**Approval process and required documentation**

Telework designation	Approval process	Required documentation
Situational	Employee's supervisor.	Telework agreement not required, but written approval/documentation is required.
Hybrid or Regular	Employee's supervisor, Department head or appropriate Dean.	Telework Agreement.

### **Expectations**

To the extent possible, an employee's job duties and responsibilities will not change due to temporary teleworking. Professionalism in performance of job duties, work output and productivity, and service to the employee's department, clients, students and/or other constituencies as applicable, and related communications must be maintained at the standards set by NMC and the employee's supervisor.

Teleworking employees should be available during business hours through email and phone for communication as necessary. To the extent possible, the amount of time an employee is expected to work and/or productivity expectations will not change due to teleworking, though temporary telework schedules may include work hours outside of regular business hours to allow for flexibility.

Open and ongoing communication between the teleworking employee and his/her supervisor is key to a successful telework arrangement. It is expected that the employee and supervisor work together to keep each other apprised of events or information obtained during the working day. Employees must communicate with their supervisor to identify in advance, and on an ongoing basis, any job duties or responsibilities that cannot be effectively performed during temporary telework.

### **Considerations for Telework**

When determining whether or not telework is appropriate, supervisors must consider whether or not it is operationally feasible for the employee to perform the core duties of their job away from the worksite. Supervisors should also consider whether the work performed can be adequately assessed to ensure that work is being performed and whether or not teleworking would pose any adverse risks to the operations of the department. Specifically, supervisors should consider if the employee has demonstrated the ability to:

1. Prioritize work to meet deadlines.
2. Accomplish job duties with minimal supervision.
3. Understand their role and expectations.
4. Be organized, highly disciplined and self-motivated.
5. Communicate effectively with students, stakeholders, and team members.
6. Manage time effectively.

### **Requirements for Teleworking**

If the employee's request to telework is approved, they are required, but not limited to the following:

1. The employee must continue to adhere all NMC policies and procedures.
2. The employee must continue to follow all NMC required timekeeping procedures and submit their timesheets indicating that they were teleworking.
3. The employee must work their regularly scheduled hours, or agreed scheduled hours, for each telework day.
4. The employee must check-in with their supervisors, and respond to emails periodically throughout the day and must be available via email and phone. Access to the internet and/or to a phone is the responsibility of the employee, however, the College will work to identify assistance when possible and reasonable in this regard.
5. The employee must complete a Telework Agreement form which is attached to this procedure. The agreement also provides, among other things, that NMC is not responsible for the costs of the employee's personal equipment and facilities utilized during telework, including without limitation home office space, internet, computer and phone equipment.
6. The employee must comply with all local and federal laws as it relates to their work. This includes the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
7. Employees must safeguard NMC's confidential information, including student, organizational, financial, and other information. NMC will identify procedures to recover any confidential information an employee takes home for purposes of telecommuting.
8. Any or all parts of this procedure may be amended at any time by NMC.

### **Requests for Leave**

Unless a flexible schedule is agreed to and unless earlier communicated, employees should not permit non-work-related events and activities to disrupt or interfere with scheduled work time. Requests to use health leave, annual leave or other leave must be approved in the same manner as the employee who does not telework. For example, if an employee becomes ill while teleworking, the employee must report the hours actually worked and use health leave for those hours not worked due to illness.

### **Teleworking Equipment and Supplies**

NMC shall provide any necessary equipment and office supplies. Out-of-pocket expenses for supplies normally available in the office will not be reimbursed unless pre-approved by their supervisor. All supplies should be secured in the remote work site and must not be used for personal purposes.

On a case-by-case basis, and subject to change at any time, NMC will determine what equipment, if any, to provide to the employee to facilitate the teleworking arrangement. Any equipment that NMC provides to an employee as part of a telework arrangement shall remain the property of NMC, and NMC will maintain that equipment. This equipment must be used for business purposes only. The employee will be responsible for any theft, damage, or loss of property belonging to NMC.

**Modification / Cancellation of Telework**

The supervisor, employee, or the HRO may terminate or modify any Telework Agreements at any time, with at least a 30-day notice, unless it is for alleged misconduct or an emergency, in which case, it may be terminated immediately. Employees who are unable to abide by the terms of this procedure and their Telework Agreement, must notify their supervisor immediately. The supervisor, in consultation with HRO, is responsible for determining if the employee can continue to telework.

**Exception to Procedure for Adverse Working Conditions**

The President may temporarily allow more flexible and widespread remote work arrangements during adverse working conditions, such as a typhoon, fire, or public emergency. As such, it may be necessary to temporarily lift specific requirements of this procedure, such as a formal Telework Agreement, during all or a portion of the condition deemed appropriate by the President. Supervisors must still consider telework arrangements on a case-by-case basis to determine whether telework is a feasible option. Refer to the Telework Eligibility to make this determination.

**Forms used for this Procedure**

Telework Agreement (rev June 2024)