

## GUIDE FOR TELEWORKING

COVID-19 – Effective, March 23, 2020

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### Statement

Northwestern State University, as a first priority, is committed to protecting the health and safety of the students, faculty, and staff at our university. Our continued monitoring of the spread of the COVID-19 virus makes clear that proactive guidance to our community members is essential. Recognizing the uniqueness of our University, we aim to provide guidance that is both effective and flexible. **To limit the number of employees on campus to help flatten the transmission curve of coronavirus, Northwestern State University will implement teleworking arrangements for most employees beginning Monday, March 23, 2020. Remember, we will still have some students on campus as residence halls and dining facilities are open, and we must continue to support them.** Given the fluidity of the current crisis, considerable discretion shall be exercised as to the most appropriate immediate actions to be taken.

### Guidance for Employee Teleworking

This guidance is for teleworking arrangements to be employed effective Monday, March 23, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 crisis. As a business necessity, all employees whose presence on campus is considered nonessential (full-time faculty and staff) are now to work and conduct business off-campus at their home or other appropriate locations. This may include the employee's home or other private and isolated workspaces. Teleworking is at the direction and discretion of the University. Employees must immediately return to their regular work location when directed by the University.

The following sections provide guidance to teleworking employees and supervisors of teleworking employees:

### Instructions for Notifying Human Resources

- A. Supervisors must notify Human Resources and their respective Vice President which of their employees will telework or take appropriate leave.
- B. Supervisors, please email Human Resources at [covid19hr@nsula.edu](mailto:covid19hr@nsula.edu) and cc your respective Vice President indicating your employees' intentions.

### Hours of Work and Leave

- A. Teleworking employees are expected to maintain their same work schedule, the same level of availability, levels of production, and quality of work as though the employees were still working at their primary worksite.
- B. Teleworking may not be used solely for child or adult care or to perform other personal business during work hours, or for any purpose for which leave should be requested. If an employee is tending to a dependent child or adult and not performing official duties, the employee must take leave as appropriate.
- C. Should circumstances arise whereby an employee cannot work at the alternate work location, (i.e., loss of electricity, home emergencies, etc.), the employee must contact their supervisor and they may be required to report to the primary work location or a different designated and approved alternate work location, or appropriate leave may be granted.

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- D. Teleworking may not be used in place of annual, sick, Family Medical Leave, or any other type of leave. Requests to use leave must be approved in following University policy and departmental guidelines.
  - E. Employees may work compensatory time/overtime only with supervisory approval under University policies.

### **Responsibilities of Teleworking Supervisors**

Supervisors whose employees are teleworking shall be responsible for the following:

- A. Supervisors must notify Human Resources and their respective Vice President which of their employees will telework or take appropriate leave.
- B. Supervisors, please email Human Resources at [covid19hr@nsula.edu](mailto:covid19hr@nsula.edu) and cc your respective Vice President indicating your employees' intentions.
- C. Establish expectations for and monitoring of employee performance.
- D. Ensure the employee has the appropriate equipment to telework and completes the Request for Temporary Removal of State Movable Property form if requesting use of University property/equipment (see attached).
- E. Establish how the teleworker will maintain regular contact with office coworkers and supervisors.
- F. Determine how the department will handle restricted access materials, security issues, and taking electronic or paper records from the primary workplace.
- G. Ensure practices are consistent and compliant with state and university procedures and state and federal law in the use of technology.
- H. Ensure that individual work schedules and reporting for non-exempt employees comply with Fair Labor Standards Act regulations and university procedure.

### **Responsibilities of Teleworkers**

Employees shall follow all guidelines of this procedure when working in the alternate work location.

- A. Consistently meet all performance expectations and standards set forth and agreed upon by their supervisor.
- B. Maintain satisfactory evaluations, attendance, and conduct.
- C. Follow all agreed-upon regulations concerning communication and reporting expectations.
- D. Follow all agreed-upon regulations concerning working hours, maintenance of equipment, and workplace safety and incident reporting.
- E. Complete the Request for Temporary Removal of State Movable Property form if requesting use of University property/equipment (see attached).

### **Confidentiality & Security**

All University documents, materials, and data that are removed from campus are the responsibility of the employee and must be kept confidential and secure at all times.

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## **Guidance for Employees Unable to Telework**

This guidance is for essential and nonessential employees (full-time classified and unclassified staff) who are unable to work, effective Monday, March 23, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 crisis. The following section provides guidance to leave usage for employees unable to work due to COVID-19.

### **Leave Procedures**

The following provisions apply to all full-time employees, classified and unclassified, and extend through April 12, 2020, unless extended by State Civil Service. Employees should direct any questions to Human Resources at [covid19hr@nsula.edu](mailto:covid19hr@nsula.edu).

### **Sick Leave**

Used when an employee is ill or becomes ill during a quarantine. Employees who exhaust their sick leave may use compensatory/annual leave. If all such leave becomes exhausted, the University President may authorize the use of paid special leave – Civil Leave (Act of God). Additionally, employees may qualify for the use of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

### **Annual Leave**

Used if an employee is caring for a dependent family member who may be ill or caring for those needing to stay at home because of school or daycare closures. The University President may authorize the use of sick leave if compensatory/annual leave become exhausted. Also, the University President may authorize the use of a special paid leave – Civil Leave (Act of God).

***\* Please continue to monitor emails from the University as the situation may change at any time. \****