



Telework Policy

Overview

Consistent with our institutional mission, Muhlenberg College is a residential campus, where our students expect connection, community, and in-person learning, support and service. Optimal operations and collaboration are best achieved on campus when we are all together.

However, Muhlenberg College recognizes the value of flexible work options and offers remote work up to two days per week, year-round for staff members whose departmental needs and position responsibilities may support such an arrangement. Additional remote work may be considered. Any requests for expanded remote work beyond 2-days per week require approval by the member of Senior Staff who oversees your area. Partial and extended remote work may not be suitable for all positions. Ensuring continuity of the College experience and operations, without disruption, will remain a priority.

Flexible work arrangements offer creative approaches to promoting balance between work and personal life. Such options may come with a number of other benefits for both the employee and the College, some of which include:

Telework Benefits

- Recruitment and retention of qualified employees;
- Improved work/life balance;
- Greater flexibility for employees and departments;
- Improved employee morale and job satisfaction;
- Reduced absenteeism;
- Continuity of College operations if the campus worksite is inaccessible;
- Decreased commuting time*
- Decreased fuel & other transportation expenses*
- Decreased energy consumption, air pollution, traffic, and parking congestion*

*Decreased time on our roadways also helps support the College's sustainability commitment to our campus community and beyond.

Telework arrangements are intended to have a net-positive effect on an employee's performance and team environment. Telework arrangements are not a benefit or entitlement, and do not change the terms and conditions of employment with Muhlenberg College. Telework arrangements are job-appropriate and accountability-dependent and are not suitable for everyone. Many positions require faculty and staff to be on-campus on a regular and/or daily basis. Either an employee or a supervisor can suggest telework as a possible work arrangement. The final decision to allow telework is at the discretion of the College.

Types of Telework Arrangements

Occasional Telework: This may occur in situations where an employee requests to work remotely, on rare occasions. Examples of occasional remote assignments are instances where an employee might not have transportation to work due to unusual circumstances or during times of inclement weather. The employee should notify their manager and secure approval to work remotely as soon as the employee anticipates the need for occasional telework.

Part-time Telework: Partial telework allows employees to work in a designated area other than the office (e.g., at home or other location) for part of their workweek, up to two days per week. Muhlenberg College considers partial telework to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the position responsibilities are suited to such an arrangement. The employee will have an established, predictable schedule. For example: telework will occur 1 or 2 days per week, on set days. (e.g., every Tuesday). The telework days are identified and agreed to at the outset.

Full-time Telework: Full-time telework requires approval by the member of Senior Staff who oversees your area, and should be limited to employees who live in states that the College is registered to conduct business in.

Eligibility for Telework

- Full-time employees working in positions budgeted at least 1560 hours per year;
- Telework is feasible considering the nature of position responsibilities;
- Demonstrated strong performance, dependability, and time-management skills;
- Quality of service within the department can be maintained for students, faculty, staff and other members of the campus community; and
- Specific work activities are portable and may be performed effectively outside the office.

Generally, telework requests will not be considered when position responsibilities require the employee's physical presence on campus; the efficiency of a multi-person office is compromised when the employee is not physically present to absorb a fair share of the on-demand workload; the employee requires close supervision as indicated, for example, by the need for frequent guidance on technical or other matters; the employee's assignments require frequent direction or input from others who are on-site; and/or the employee has demonstrated subpar performance, dependability, and/or time-management skills.

Duration

Any telework arrangement will be on a trial basis for the first three months. All telework arrangements are granted on a temporary and revocable basis, and may be discontinued by the College at any time and for any reason. Every effort will be made to provide 30 days' notice of such change to accommodate commuting, child care and other issues that may arise from the conclusion of a telework arrangement. There may be instances, however, when such notice is not possible. Similarly, an employee may also request conclusion of a telework arrangement. The employee agrees to return College equipment and documents within five days of termination of the telework agreement.

General Expectations/Requirements

- For part-time telework, a specific work schedule including work days and hours and the designated telework days per week must be agreed upon in advance.
- Should telework be approved, it is essential that the employee and manager maintain an easily accessible line of communication to ensure responsibilities are being met without disruption to team cohesiveness.
- Those working remotely must be available during business hours via email, video conferencing, and phone.
- Employee agrees to be on site as necessary to attend meetings, training sessions, or other occurrences that require in-person attendance, as directed by their manager.
- The needs of the College take precedence over telework arrangements: An employee must report to the primary work location on a scheduled work day when required. Advance reasonable notice will be provided, wherever possible.
- Employees in hourly/non-exempt positions who are approved for telework may not exceed their standard weekly hours; additional hours and overtime are not authorized.
- Non-exempt employees will record all hours worked and meal periods taken in accordance with regular timekeeping practices.
- Employees are expected to maintain accurate time records in accordance with College policy to support and substantiate their work hours and work deliverables.
- Employees who telework are expected to retrieve mail and deliveries, electronic or paper, on a regular basis in order to successfully perform to job expectations. The College will not be responsible for forwarding mail to a remote work location.
- Telework may not serve as a replacement for dependent care or other obligations that may impact one's ability to work as scheduled while at a remote location.
- Employee must maintain their usual workload on telework days.
- Failure to fulfill normal work requirements, in qualitative and quantitative terms, will result in

cancellation of telework.

- Employee will arrange for phone calls to their work number to be forwarded to a phone that is available to them while working remotely (e.g., cell phone).
- Employee must timely respond to email and voicemail while working remotely.
- Employees must be healthy and available to work at the remote work location as if they were working at the on-site location.
- Employees who are unable to work due to illness on a day they were otherwise scheduled to work remotely, will use sick time and report their absence to their manager and in Workday.
- Employees are not permitted to telework during periods of medical disability or medical related leave.
- Employees who wish to take time off for vacation on a day they were otherwise scheduled to work remotely must still use vacation time and record the time off in Workday.
- There is no additional pay for telework, nor will mileage be paid or transportation reimbursed between an employee's remote site and the College. Approved travel for business will be reimbursed from whichever work location (remote or on-campus) is closer to the destination.

Remote Workspace Materials and Equipment Requirements

- Telework is intended to be cost neutral. The employee will establish an appropriate remote work environment. Muhlenberg College will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the remote workspace.
- The College is not required to provide teleworking employees with materials or supplies needed to establish an alternate worksite (desk, chair, cell phone, internet service, fax, printer, copier, etc.) or to reimburse the employee for set-up or operating costs of connectivity services (telephone or internet services, etc.).
- With the exception of a College-provided laptop (if available), College property such as printers, fax machines, desks, chairs, and other equipment may not be used to equip a "home office" and are the responsibility of the employee who is requesting telework.
- The College assumes no responsibility for trouble-shooting or providing technical support for non-College owned property at the employee's remote worksite.
- Employee agrees that College equipment will be used for business-related work and not by anyone other than the employee. The employee will not make any changes to security or administrative settings on College equipment. The employee understands that all tools and resources provided by the company shall remain the property of the company at all times.
- Employees must return the equipment in the same condition in which it was originally received, minus normal wear and tear.
- Employee is personally liable for any missing equipment and for damaged equipment beyond normal wear and tear, and agrees to reimburse the College for the cost of such items, through the convenience of payroll deduction.

Safety Requirements

- Employee will complete the Telework Safety Checklist (see below).
- Employee agrees to comply with all of the safety precautions that apply to an on-campus work environment, including ensuring a safe work station, free of clutter, tripping hazards, slippery surfaces, and other unsafe conditions.
- [Workers' compensation](#) coverage is not applicable to employees that are injured when they deviate from the course and scope of the employee's work responsibilities or for injuries that occur at the remote work site outside of the employee's standard schedule.
- Employees are expected to contact their homeowners or renters' insurance carrier to ensure appropriate and continuous liability insurance for securing College property and information at their remote work location.
- Employee agrees to immediately report any injuries occurring at the remote work site, directly to the employee's manager and to [Human Resources](#).
- The College assumes no liability for injuries of the employee's family members, friends, or other visitors, which occur in the employee's remote workspace.
- The College assumes no liability for damage to personal property, which occurs in the employee's remote workspace.

- The College does not authorize, and explicitly prohibits visitors including but not limited to students, faculty, staff, and other members of the campus community to an employee's remote workspace for the purposes of conducting College business of any kind, including dropping off College mail and other materials.

Security of College Information and Resources

- Employee agrees to use secure connections (not public access wi-fi) when conducting College business remotely and to notify the [Office of Information Technology](#) immediately in the event there is a system failure and/or lost or stolen equipment.
- Employee agrees to maintain any confidential materials, College documents, or proprietary information securely and dispose of information appropriately, following OIT procedures regarding the security of confidential information.
- Employee agrees to use malware/virus-protection on any non-College-owned devices used to conduct College business.

If you are interested in Telework:

- Step 1: Review the Telework policy in its entirety.
- Step 2: Talk with your manager to discuss your request.
- Step 3: If your manager supports the request, complete the Telework Safety Checklist and Telework Request form (available below).
- Step 4: Obtain your manager's signature (and if required, Senior Staff Signature) on the Telework Agreement.
- Step 5: Email the completed forms to Human Resources: hr@muhlenberg.edu.
- Step 6: Human Resources will evaluate the telework request. If approved, HR will sign the agreement, keep a copy for the personnel file, and return a copy to the employee and manager.
- Step 7: If approved, the manager and employee must ensure that all department team members are aware of the arrangement and know how to contact the employee on telework days.
- Step 8: Begin telework!

Updated 9/30/22

Telework Safety Checklist

Employee Name (please print): _____

Remote Work Address: _____

General

- 1. Workspace is away from distractions and accommodates your work needs? Yes No
- 2. File drawers, if any, are not top-heavy and do not open into walkways? Yes No
- 3. Cords/wires are safely secured and not a tripping or fire hazard? Yes No
- 4. Temperature, ventilation, and lighting are adequate? Yes No
- 5. All stairs with four or more steps are equipped with handrails? Yes No
- 6. Workspace is free of tripping hazards and hazardous materials? Yes No
- 7. Radiators/portable heaters, if any, are located away from flammable items? Yes No
- 8. There is a working smoke detector in the workspace area? Yes No
- 9. A multi-use fire extinguisher, which you know how to use, is available? Yes No
- 10. Hallways and doorways are unobstructed? Yes No

Electrical Safety

- 1. Sufficient electrical outlets are accessible and adequate? Yes No
- 2. Computer equipment is connected to a surge protector? Yes No
- 3. All electrical plugs, cords, outlets, and panels are in good condition? Yes No
- 4. Equipment is turned off when not in use? Yes No

Workstation

- 1. Your back is adequately supported by a backrest? Yes No
- 2. Your feet are on the floor or adequately supported by a footrest? Yes No
- 3. You have enough leg room? Yes No
- 4. There is sufficient light for reading? Yes No
- 5. Your screen is at eye level and free from glare? Yes No

Security Measures

- 1. Files and data are protected from damage and unauthorized access? Yes No
- 2. Materials/equipment are protected from damage and unauthorized access? Yes No
- 3. Personal computers use up-to-date anti-virus software? Yes No

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Muhlenberg College Telework Agreement

Employee Name (please print): _____

Part-time Telework Request:

Effective Date: _____

Remote work day(s): _____

Remote work daily schedule (specific hours): _____

To occur (choose one): weekly biweekly other (please describe below)

Occasional Telework Request:

Remote work daily schedule (specific hours): _____

All requirements and expectations for remote work as outlined in the remote work policy, apply to occasional telework as well.

Full-time Telework Request*

*Full-time telework requires Senior Staff approval and is available in states that the College is registered to conduct business in.

Effective Date: _____

Remote work daily schedule (specific hours): _____

I have fully reviewed the College's telework policy (4 pages) and telework safety checklist (1 page), understand the contents of each document, and agree to their terms and conditions. I have also had an opportunity to ask any questions regarding the College's telework policy and telework safety checklist. I understand that employees permitted to work remotely, from home or offsite, remain subject to the terms and conditions of employment set forth in the [College's Handbooks](#) for Staff employees.

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Manager Approval: _____

Date: _____

Senior Staff Approval: _____
(full-time telework only)

Date: _____

Human Resources Approval: _____

Date: _____