

Supervisor Guidelines for Implementing the Telework Policy, 2.15(b)
Chapter 2: Personnel

Purpose:

The College recognizes that for certain positions, or under certain circumstances, teleworking can be an effective management tool to promote increased productivity, energy conservation, preservation of the environment, disaster preparedness, and work/life balance. The following procedures serve as guidelines for supervisors to implement the Telework Policy.

I. General Considerations for Supervisors

When an employee expresses interest in telework, the supervisor should provide a copy of the Telework Policy; direct the employee to complete the Feasibility Assessment, which helps determine if telework is appropriate by identifying and evaluating criteria relevant to the position and the employee; and obtain the appropriate signatures. Supervisors that need advice and guidance on establishing a telework arrangement should consult with the Executive Director of Human Resources.

II. Identifying Appropriate Positions

Certain positions or responsibilities thereof do not lend themselves to telework. Supervisors should consider the tasks and functions associated with a position before considering whether a specific employee is a good candidate for a telework arrangement. Positions that lend themselves to telework are generally those that require independent work that can be performed autonomously. To ensure effective leadership presence on campus, positions overseeing departments or divisions may not be suitable for long-term telework arrangements.

The following is an illustrative list of tasks that may or may not be able to be successfully executed via telework:

Possible	Difficult
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT system administration with tasks that can be done remotely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any task that requires face-to-face communication with internal or external constituents Any student facing tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication design work, writing, editing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project, staff, or work group meetings, discussions and planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Software development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hardware-related services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual, non-collaborative work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any task that requires the use of onsite equipment or material
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative tasks (e.g., writing reports, budget reconciliation, reading email, institutional data research) Web design and development Preparing training curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities maintenance tasks/projects Campus security tasks/projects Close supervision of employees Administrative oversight of departments or divisions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual / Phone appointments or meetings with students or employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face appointments or meetings with students or employees
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III. Identifying Appropriate Employees

Factors to consider when assessing an employee’s suitability for telework include:

- a. Does the employee have effective written and verbal communication skills?
- b. Can the employee work independently and without constant supervision and have a willingness to document evidence of work completed for accountability purposes?
- c. Is the employee highly productive?
- d. Does the employee have strong problem solving capabilities?
- e. Is the employee well organized?
- f. Is the employee able to work within timelines and meet deadlines?
- g. Is the employee an overall good performer?
- h. Other relevant criteria to be determined by the College

On balance, the collective weight of “yes” answers should outweigh “no” answers to justify telework.

See Feasibility Assessment for addition considerations and guidance.

IV. Managing Employee Performance

Managing employee performance breaks down into three main categories:

- a. What expectations do you have for the employee?
 - i. In setting expectations for employees who are teleworking, follow the same approach you would in any other supervisory situation. Ensure that the standards are specific, measurable, accepted by you and the employee, and realistic. Review, with the employee, their current performance standards and determine if they are relevant for the telework environment.
- b. How will you assess if the employee is meeting expectations?
 - i. Performance should be assessed against the expectations that are set forth in the Telework Agreement. Because telework does not lend itself to in-person observation, supervisors should also focus on results-based assessment. One way to accomplish this is to have the employee turn in a work log documenting the work completed on days the employee is teleworking. Another method is to set up regular discussions during which the supervisor and employee can review completed items and the status of items in progress.
- c. How will you provide feedback?
 - i. Regardless of how work is documented, regular feedback is vital to the success of the telework arrangement. This is especially true when problems arise. Problems should be addressed and resolved quickly before they escalate to the detriment of the telework arrangement.
 - ii. Give feedback as you would with any employee. It should be direct and offer examples of where the employee is meeting, or

failing to meet, expectations. Feedback should also give the employee an opportunity to seek clarification.

V. Morale

In some instances, the physical absence of an employee from the regular work location may create a morale problem. This is sometimes caused by a lack of communication to other employees about the telework arrangement. To avoid this problem, supervisors should notify employees in advance that a particular employee will be teleworking, and provide contact information (including telephone numbers) so that coworkers may feel free to contact the teleworking employee as they normally would if the employee were at the regular work location.

VI. Trial Periods

A trial period can be a valuable tool to assess the feasibility of a proposed telework arrangement. In regular telework situations, a trial period of 30-60 days, depending on the frequency of telework, is an ample amount of time. In occasional telework situations, it may be necessary for the employee to have at least one or two instances of teleworking to sufficiently demonstrate his or her ability to successfully telework. The Telework Agreement can be entered into on a trial basis, with the dates or number of allotted instances of the trial period noted in the agreement.

Related Policies or Procedures:

[Telework Policy 2.15](#)

[Telework Procedure 2.15\(a\)](#)

Telework Agreement Form

Telework Feasibility Assessment

[Remote use of Rhodes State College Resources Procedure 2.15\(c\)](#)

History:

	Date:	Reason:
Issued:	04/19/2022	Original Issue Date
Revised:	MM/DD/YY	

This policy and / or procedure provides operating principles for Human Resources issues at Rhodes State College. It supersedes any prior policy covering specific subject. This policy and / or procedure may be suspended, modified or cancelled as determined by the College. This policy and / or procedure does not create a contract of employment, nor is it a condition of employment between the College and its employees.