



## West Liberty University Telework Program Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q1: Is the Telework Program voluntary?**

A1: Yes. Employees who do not wish to telecommute will not be forced to telecommute.

### **Q2: For what length of time can I request a telework agreement?**

A2: Employees who have been approved for a telework agreement will begin upon approval and expires at the end of the appropriate fiscal year (June 30). Each agreement shall be reviewed on an annual basis as the agreement has an end date of June 30 of the current fiscal year. HR will review the agreements with the appropriate Cabinet Member and supervisor(s) to determine if the agreement should continue for another fiscal year, or the agreement shall end on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Employees will sign a telework agreement on an annual basis; however, this agreement can be terminated by either University or employee at any time.

### **Q3: Will I have to give up my physical office space if my request to telecommute is approved?**

A3: Possibly. When an employee enters into a telework agreement, WLU reserves the right to determine, assign, or change workspace for the remote individual on-campus. Employees approved for a telework agreement will have a provided workspace at WLU.

### **Q4: I am a new employee at WLU; can I request a telework agreement upon my start date?**

A4: Yes. New employees do need to report to WLU for an on-site orientation upon hire. Before or during that orientation, a supervisor can determine whether or not to request approval for a telework agreement for the new hire. The Eligibility Questionnaire will assist in determining whether or not the individual can be issued a Telework Agreement.

### **Q5: Can I appeal a denial of my request for a Telework Agreement?**

A5: Yes. If the employee requests a telework agreement through their supervisor, and the supervisor denies the initial request, the employee can appeal the decision to the appropriate Cabinet Member. If the appropriate Cabinet Member denies the request, the employee may appeal to the President's Cabinet. The President's Cabinet's decision on appeals is final.

### **Q6: How often do I meet with my supervisor?**

A6: Teleworking employees and their supervisors must maintain frequent and regular communications throughout the workweek. Employees shall be available for meetings via video teleconference throughout the scheduled workday, in addition to any scheduled meetings. Supervisors are expected to check in with their employees regularly and to conduct periodic check-ins to ensure employees and their supervisors have mutual understanding of expectations and performance.



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### **Q7: What about my office phone? How will that work?**

A7: All WLU employees have been issued a designated phone number. WLU offers employees the ability to transfer their work phone number to a phone line of their choosing. The telework employee must provide their own phone or have access to a phone option as part of the agreement. Should an employee have any trouble with forwarding their phone number through the WLU system, they should be in contact with the WLU Help Desk.

### **Q8. What is considered “high-speed internet”?**

A8: The FCC defines high-speed broadband as download speeds of up to 25 megabits per second and upload speeds of up to 3 megabits per second (25/3 Mbps). This classifies all modern internet services including wireless, cable, DSL and satellite. To test your internet speeds, please visit: <https://www.speedtest.net/>

### **Q9: Is the use of my high-speed internet connection reimbursable by WLU?**

A9: No. Employees must have high-speed internet in order to be issued a Telework Agreement. WLU will not provide reimbursement for high-speed internet or issue a hot spot to an employee who wishes to work remotely but does not have high-speed internet.

### **Q10: Can my schedule be different on my telecommuting workdays?**

A10: Potentially yes, depending on the requirements of both the position, the individual and pending the supervisor’s approval. Employees are expected to be working and available by telephone and email during the employee’s scheduled work period. However, just as an employee would do when they are at the regular worksite, an employee who is telecommuting may request leave for a portion of the day.

### **Q11: What if my electricity or internet is out at my telecommuting location?**

A11: If the telework employee’s electricity or internet service is interrupted during the work day, the employee should work on an alternative assignment, move to an alternative workplace (potentially on-campus), or use the appropriate leave for any hours they did not work due to the service interruption. This is very similar to when these disruptions happen on-campus.

### **Q12: Can I use my own computer?**

A12: Yes. However, it is a violation of WLU University Policy 050: Acceptable Use to place or store confidential data and records on an employee’s personal computer or equipment. Also, VPN access will only be approved on a case-by-case basis for personal computers. VPN can be installed on WLU devices for use off-site (i.e. WLU issued laptop) and employees must follow all guidelines as outlined in Policy No. 050.



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### **Q13: Are Work-From-Home Logs still required?**

A13: It depends. The telework agreement essentially states that the employee is working under the same conditions as they would be on-campus, but in an alternate location. Accordingly, the methods used to track employee time and deliverables is up to the discretion of the employee's supervisor as it would be on-campus.

### **Q14: Who is responsible for maintaining and servicing equipment used at my alternate worksite?**

A14: WLU issued equipment is maintained by the WLU IT Department and employees may be required to report to campus for updates or repairs to this equipment. It is the employee's responsibility to maintain their designated workspace, including WLU's equipment, in a clean, professional, and safe condition, free from hazards and other dangers to the employee and his or her assigned equipment.

### **Q15: Can I take home my furniture, desk chair, filing cabinet or other items from my office?**

A15: Unless specifically approved, only office furniture of a personal nature are permitted to be removed from the office building. It is the employee's responsibility to provide the necessary items to establish a home-based work environment.

### **Q16: Is WLU required to check the safety and security of my alternate work location?**

A16: WLU reserves the right to make on-site inspections of the remote work area at a mutually agreed upon time. However, it is the employee's responsibility to maintain a clean, safe, and productive home office environment. If an employee has a work-related illness or injury requiring the individual to file a claim under Worker's Compensation, there may be the need to inspect the remote work area to investigate the claim.

### **Q17: Can my supervisor require me to come to campus on a day that I'm scheduled to telework?**

A17: Yes, when physically able to do so. Though supervisors endeavor to give advanced notice to employees to come to campus, and are likely to do so, all employees at WLU are deemed critical. This means that when WLU is faced with an institutional emergency, employees in such positions may be required to remain at their work location or to report to work on-site to protect, recover and continue operations at WLU. Please also note that travel between the alternate work location and the employee's WLU location is not reimbursable.



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### **Q18: Do I have to maintain an actual office at my alternate work location?**

A18: Not necessarily. Your alternate office must be a tidy location, free of distractions and away from areas of household activity and noise during the workday. This does not mean you have to designate an actual office in your home, but you do need to create a professional atmosphere that is appropriate to conduct business on behalf of WLU. Your telecommuting workspace must be free of any décor, photographs or other items that would not be appropriate in a traditional office setting, keeping in mind that personal items may be visible during video teleconferences.

### **Q19: Am I required to dress in work attire when telecommuting?**

A19: Telecommuting employees must dress in appropriate business attire for online meetings, as if they were meeting in-person. Employees are expected to maintain a professional appearance during the workday.

### **Q20: Does an employee who uses a portion of his/her home for business qualify for any Federal Tax deductions?**

A20: Employees are responsible to consult with a tax accountant about any tax deductions or expenses related to a home office. WLU will not provide tax guidance, nor will the school assume any additional tax liabilities as a result of a telework agreement.

### **Q21: If I have an ADA Accommodation that allows me to work from home, do I need to have a telework agreement?**

A21: Approved ADA Accommodations are through the ADA process. The telework program is separate from an ADA request and approval process.