



## TELECOMMUTING POLICY

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### I. POLICY

Telecommuting provides employees with an opportunity to work from an alternative work place instead of their primary location at Harvey Mudd College. Telecommuting should be voluntary on the part of the employee (unless it is a condition of employment), must not interfere with regular office or department functions, benefit the department and College, and requires management approval. The quality of an employee's work and services must not be compromised as a result of telecommuting.

### II. DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY TO TELECOMMUTE

Telecommuting is normally reserved for employees in exempt positions. However, a nonexempt employee may request and receive approval to telecommute with the understanding that the employee continues to be responsible for accurately recording daily work hours, start and stop times for meal periods and otherwise comply with College policies regarding employment and work hours such as rest breaks and overtime.

The following should be taken into consideration in determining eligibility to telecommute:

- A. **Business Rationale** – How will this arrangement benefit the work team, office and the College? Justification may include, but is not limited to, increased productivity, decreased distraction, improved customer service, enhanced employee morale, more efficient use of space or equipment, improved work-life balance, and/or lowering operating costs.
- B. **Impact on Service** – How will services be affected because the employee is not on campus? How will requests for immediate on-campus assistance be addressed on days on which the employee is telecommuting?
- C. **Supervisory Oversight** – Telecommuting requires a focus on results and productivity rather than face time, and requires trust and effective communication between a supervisor and employee.
- D. **Position** – Supervisors and employees should thoroughly analyze job descriptions, responsibilities, and how the work is performed. Appropriate positions may be those that:
  - 1. Require independent work
  - 2. Require little customer, student or co-worker interaction or require interactions that can be effectively managed by email and/or by phone
  - 3. Do not affect the ability of other College departments or offices/units within a department to provide services, instruction and/or to conduct business
  - 4. Do not affect the employee's supervisory responsibilities and interactions with direct reports
  - 5. Require concentration
  - 6. Result in specific, measurable outcomes

7. Can be evaluated by output
  8. Require equipment and technology that can be easily accessed
- E. **Employee** – Supervisors and employees should also consider employee work style and performance history. Characteristics indicative of success may include:
1. The ability to work productively on one's own
  2. Self motivation and flexibility
  3. Thorough knowledge of job responsibilities
  4. A low need for face-to-face social interaction
  5. Consistent effective and successful performance evaluations
  6. Excellent organizational and time management skills
  7. Effective communication skills
  8. Honesty and dependability

### **III. REQUEST AND APPROVAL PROCESS**

A. **Request to Telecommute**

An employee who is interested in telecommuting should complete the Telecommuting Request and Agreement and submit it to the supervisor and schedule a time to discuss the request.

B. **Duration and Continuation**

A request to telecommute may not exceed 12 months in duration from the date on which an approved agreement commences. Continuation of a telecommuting arrangement beyond the approved end date is neither automatic nor guaranteed and is subject to the processes outlined in section III.A. Request to Telecommute and section III.C. Approval.

C. **Approval**

The supervisor forwards the employee's request to the Vice President for the department, who in turn will assess the feasibility of the request and its impact on services provided to the College. Depending on the employee's position, a request to telecommute may require review by the President's Cabinet to assess impact and determine whether the position is appropriate for a telecommuting agreement. Final approval rests with the Vice President with the concurrence of the supervisor, subject to approval by the President's Cabinet as considered necessary. The Telecommuting Request and Agreement must be completed in full and signed by the employee, supervisor and Vice President prior to it taking effect.

Harvey Mudd College retains the right in its sole discretion to determine if a position is appropriate for telecommuting and approve an employee's request.

Telecommuting is not an entitlement and the decision to grant an employee's request is determined and approved on a case-by-case basis. Prior approval to telecommute given to an employee does not guarantee future requests will be approved.

#### IV. TERMINATION OF A TELECOMMUTING AGREEMENT

The College reserves the right to change or terminate a Telecommuting Request and Agreement at any time, without cause or advance notice. Likewise, an employee may terminate a telecommuting agreement at any time by providing written notice to a supervisor.

An employee must return College equipment, records, and materials within three days of the termination of a telecommuting agreement.

#### V. GENERAL CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT WHILE TELECOMMUTING

- A. **Hours of Work** - Unless otherwise agreed in the Telecommuting Request and Agreement, an employee's regular hours and days of work will not change. If an employee needs to modify the agreed-upon schedule, the employee must notify the supervisor in advance of the change. The employee is expected to perform duties and responsibilities during work hours as he/she would do if the employee was on campus. Authorized campus closures or early release programs and their terms apply to eligible employees who telecommute.
- B. **Work Environment and Dependent Care** –It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that a proper work environment is maintained (e.g., dependent care arrangements are made so as not to interfere with work; personal disruptions, such as personal telephone calls and visitors are kept to a minimum, etc.).

Furthermore, telecommuting is not intended as a substitute for child care or care for another adult. If a child or adult needs care during work time, another responsible individual is expected to be present. If dependent care circumstances change, the employee is required to notify the supervisor.

- C. **Attendance at Meetings** – The employee is expected to attend all required meetings (in-person, conference calls or web-based), and may be required to report for work-related events on or off-campus or to meet with the supervisor in the alternate location, if needed.
- D. **Performance Expectations** - Performance expectations and evaluations are neither changed nor waived because of a telecommuting arrangement. An employee's job performance will be evaluated in accordance with College guidelines and procedures.
- E. **Salary and Benefits** – An employee's salary and benefits will not be affected by telecommuting.
- F. **Tax Consequences** – The employee is responsible for any tax and insurance consequences associated with the telecommuting agreement and for observing any municipal zoning ordinances regulating the performance of work at home for telecommuting purposes.
- G. **Use of Personal Vehicle** - While telecommuting, an employee may not use his/her personal vehicle for College business unless specifically authorized by a supervisor.

- H. **College Policies, Practices and Procedures** – The employee is responsible for complying with College policies, practices and policies while telecommuting.
- I. **Use of Leave** – The employee is responsible for reporting absences and submitting requests for leave in accordance with department procedures and College policy.

Telecommuting is not to be used in place of sick leave, however, in consultation with Human Resources, a supervisor may choose to offer telecommuting arrangements as an opportunity to accommodate the partial or full return to work based on College policy and the criteria normally applied to decisions regarding the approval of telecommuting and requests for reasonable accommodation due to pregnancy and/or disability.

- J. **Changes in Employment** - The Telecommuting Request and Agreement does not automatically transfer or continue with an employee who (a) accepts a different position at the College, (b) has a change in job duties, work schedule or other job-related functions/requirements, (c) apply to a position that is vacated and was previously approved for telecommuting, or (d) when there is a change in supervision.

## **VI. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES ASSOCIATED WITH TELECOMMUTING**

- A. The Telecommuting Request and Agreement will specify any costs the College will cover and will reimburse the employee for agreed upon expenses necessary for performing work assignments at the telecommuting location in accordance with College Policy and provided advance authorization has been obtained. Equipment may be owned and maintained by the employee or by the College. HMC will not be responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, or any other incidental costs including cost of utilities, associated with the use of the employee's residence as a telecommuting location.
- B. In accordance with the College's Conflict of Interest Policy, an employee who telecommutes is expected to use college-owned equipment, records, and materials for purposes of College business only, and to protect them against unauthorized or accidental access, use, modification, destruction, or disclosure. The employee is required to notify a supervisor of loss, damage, or unauthorized access at the earliest reasonable opportunity.

## **VII. SECURITY OF INFORMATION**

- A. Employees working in an alternate work location and their supervisors must adhere to all applicable security procedures in order to ensure confidentiality and security of data.
- B. An employee's work computer shall be in compliance with College guidelines for uses of hardware and software including virus protection software, licensing provisions, system security and passwords.
- C. The employee will protect all confidential College documents from unauthorized access.
- D. All products, documents and records that are used, developed, or revised while telecommuting remain the property of Harvey Mudd College.

- E. The College may provide hardware and software support, however, internet connection is the responsibility of the employee.

#### **VIII. TELECOMMUTING SAFETY**

- A. The employee is solely responsible for ensuring the safety of the alternative work location. The Telecommuting Request and Agreement requires an employee to confirm that the alternate work location is, to the best of the employee's knowledge, free of recognized hazards that could cause physical harm. Employees are expected to practice the same safety habits they would use while at the College and to maintain safe conditions in their alternate work location.
- B. The College is legally obligated to provide its employees with a workplace that is free from hazards that might cause serious harm or injury and, therefore, the College reserves the right to periodically inspect the employee's alternate work space. Any such inspection will be preceded by advance notice and an appointment will be scheduled.
- C. Employees who telecommute are covered by the College's Workers' Compensation insurance if injured while performing official duties on campus or at the alternate work location. As such, employees are required to immediately report any injuries that occur while working by completing an accident report form available at [www.hmc.edu/hrforms](http://www.hmc.edu/hrforms).
- D. The employee shall be liable for any injuries that occur to third parties at or around the employee's alternative work location.