

UCSC Staff Employee Situational Telecommuting Guidelines

Summary

The University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC) is committed to supporting employees in caring for their health and practicing physical distancing to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. The University recognizes that effective telecommuting strategies will help keep our employees safe while they continue providing critical services to the University.

This current state of affairs has created a “situational” telecommuting environment, in which many University staff employees are working off-site temporarily, without an established alternative work arrangement. The following guidelines provide a general framework appropriate for this situation with the intention of offering the flexibility needed to adjust to changing circumstances as the current public health situation continues to evolve.

Definitions

- **UCSC worksite:** Physical UCSC campus or a UCSC-maintained location other than campus.
- **Employee’s Regular Worksite:** The primary worksite location at which the employee is expected to perform their work.
- **Situational Telecommuting:** Working off-site that is NOT part of a previously established alternative work arrangement and therefore is subject to situational telecommuting guidelines.

Policies

Situational telecommuting does not change the conditions of employment or applicability of University policies. Additional policies are included throughout these Guidelines. Employees are required to abide by all UCSC policies and procedures, including Personnel Policies for Staff Members (PPSM) and collective bargaining agreements regarding overtime, holidays, vacation leave and sick time.

Schedule

While situational telecommuting, the employee is expected to maintain regularly-scheduled and approved work hours as agreed upon with their manager and be fully accessible during those hours. Exempt employees will agree to be available during specific agreed-upon core hours.

Work schedules are subject to ongoing review, and changes are at the manager’s discretion (in a manner that meets the specific requirements of an individual employee).

Non-exempt employees must not work overtime without prior approval from their manager and are required to accurately report work hours and strictly adhere to required rest and meal breaks in full compliance with policies or [collective bargaining agreements](#) and federal, state and local guidelines.

Duties and Assignments

While situational telecommuting, an employee’s duties, obligations, responsibilities, conditions of employment and standards of performance remain the same as when working at the regular UCSC worksite unless changes are approved by the manager.

The manager reserves the right to assign work as necessary at any worksite (in a manner that meets the specific requirements of an individual employee).

Communication

While situational telecommuting, the employee is expected to maintain a presence using agreed-upon technology and to be available to their manager, coworkers and customers with agreed-upon response times.

Working Environment

While situational telecommuting, the employee is encouraged to maintain a worksite environment suitable for accomplishing their job duties during scheduled hours of work.

Safety

While situational telecommuting, the employee is responsible for maintaining a safe and secure work environment, with support and guidance from [Ergonomics](#).

The University's liability for job-related accidents will continue to exist if the injury was incurred in the course and scope of the employee's job duties and during the employee's scheduled hours of work (as agreed-upon with their manager) since the employee's alternative shall be considered an extension of the regular University worksite.

The employee is responsible for reporting any work-related injuries to the manager at the earliest opportunity, and injuries will be handled in the same manner as reports of injury at the primary worksite.

The employee will agree to hold the University harmless for injury to others at the alternate worksite. Employees may not conduct in-person work-related meetings at the alternate worksite.

Equipment and Records

The University may provide equipment, software, data, supplies and materials for use during situational telecommuting, based on the position requirements and within the resource limitations of the department.

If the employee will have custody of UCSC-owned equipment at a location other than a UCSC worksite, the manager is required to complete a [UCSC Non-Inventorial Equipment Removal Request Form](#).

University-owned equipment, records and materials may be used for purposes of University business only and must be protected against unauthorized or accidental access, use, modification, destruction, loss, theft, or disclosure. Incidental personal use is not permitted to interfere with the use of the equipment for University business.

The University will provide for repairs to University equipment when damage to that equipment is incurred by an employee during the course and scope of their job duties and the employee's work hours. When the employee uses personal equipment, software, data, supplies and furniture, the employee is responsible for the maintenance and repair of these items unless other arrangements have been made in advance and in writing with the manager.

The employee will agree to allow the University access to maintain, repair, inspect or retrieve University-owned equipment, software, data, supplies and furniture at the alternate worksite, upon reasonable notice.

All University-owned equipment must be returned to the University by the employee for inspection, repair, replacement, or repossession with 14 days' written notice.

The employee is responsible for reviewing University policies and guidelines for proper record management:

[Records Management Requirements](#).

[Proper Management of Electronic Communications as Records](#).

[FAQs on Electronic Messages](#)

Reimbursable Expenses

Employees working from home or other alternate locations are not on travel status and not eligible for meal reimbursement. Similarly, meals taken at home or other alternate locations (or delivered) during a Zoom business meeting are not reimbursable based on guidance received from the UC Office of the President, per policies [G-28](#) and [BUS-79](#). Only business-related equipment that can be returned to the office at the end of the arrangement will be reimbursed. If any item needs to be installed, charges related to the installation are the responsibility of the employee. Other expenses (utilities, rent, furniture, etc.) will not be reimbursed.

Departments will evaluate on a case-by-case basis where reimbursement is necessary for employees with specific needs not already met with existing resources and only allowable if the University-issued office equipment (e.g., computer, printer, keyboard) can't be relocated or the employee doesn't already have personal equipment at the alternate worksite to enable them to perform work duties.

An employee may request reimbursement for the business use of an internet or similar service if it is needed for the employee to perform their job duties and it would not be practicable or cost-effective for the University to separately purchase and the internet or similar service does not currently exist in the employee's alternate remote workspace. Reimbursement shall be made for partial business use of internet, cellular or similar services purchased with an employee's own funds if the individual incurs additional charges over the plan limit related solely to the business use. An employee may request reimbursement for the business use of a cellular phone or similar device purchased with the employee's own funds if the individual incurs additional charges. In such a case, the reimbursement will be at the excess minute rate, contingent upon receipt of supporting documentation. No reimbursement will be made for business calls or a percentage of total business calls made within the package minutes covered under the employee's plan.

Expenses will be reimbursed only if the manager agrees to the purchase in advance. Below are University of California policies on reimbursable expenses:

[Travel Regulations](#)

[Expenditures for Business Meetings, Entertainment, and Other Occasions](#)

[Guidelines for the Purchase and Use of Cellular Phones and Other Portable Electronic Resource](#)

Security

The employee is responsible for the safety and security of University-owned all equipment, records, and materials at the alternate worksite. This includes remaining up-to-date with [Information Technology Services Security Guidances](#) and maintaining data security and record confidentiality in the same manner as when working at the regular University worksite.

The employee will implement steps for good information security in the alternate worksite location and will check with their manager when security matters are an issue. The employee must report to the manager any instances of loss, damage, or unauthorized access at the earliest opportunity.

The employee must follow all IT policies, including not duplicating University-owned software and adhering to manufacturer's licensing agreements. Restricted-access materials must not be taken out of the office or accessed through the computer unless approved in advance by the manager and department head/senior manager. The employee must ensure information is not disclosed in violation of [FERPA](#) or other state or federal laws, regulations, or UC policies and practices and is responsible for reviewing University policies and guidelines for protecting information, including:

[Safe Computing while working remotely](#)

[How to Stay Secure](#)

[UCSC's Acceptable Use Policy](#)

[UCSC Implementation of the UC Electronic Communications](#)

[UCSC Email Policy & Privacy](#)

[IT Policies & Guidelines](#)

Other

An employee's personal vehicle may not be used for University business unless specifically authorized in writing by the manager in advance of such use. If approval is received and pursuant to UC Business and Finance Bulletin [G-28](#), the employee must maintain throughout the term of situational telecommuting and at their own cost and expense, a policy of auto liability insurance with limits of \$50,000 per accident, \$100,000 per occurrence, and \$50,000 property damage. An employee may use personal vehicles while on travel status.

The employee will be solely responsible for any and all tax and/or insurance consequences/deductions, if any, of this arrangement and for conformance to any local laws/regulations (including but not limited to local zoning laws regulations). The University will not provide any individual guidance to the employee regarding potential tax or insurance implications arising from situational telecommuting, nor any guidance regarding any local laws/ regulations that may apply. Should the employee have any tax, insurance, or legal questions relating to situational telecommuting, the employee is encouraged to consult with his/her own legal and/or tax professional.