Remote Work Policy

Date Adopted:
Date Revised:
Date Reviewed:

References:

The College of Micronesia-FSM is committed to promoting a healthy work life balance and exploring flexible work practices of its employees. This policy provides guidelines and eligibility requirements for remote work.

A. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and procedures for remote work arrangements at the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM). This policy aims to support a flexible work environment that enhances productivity, work-life balance, and operational efficiency while maintaining the college's standards of performance and accountability.

This policy applies to all eligible employees of COM-FSM who wish to request and participate in remote work arrangements.

A. Eligibility

Employees may be eligible for remote work arrangements based on the nature of their role, job responsibilities, and performance history. Eligibility will be determined by the respective supervisor and approved by the relevant vice president and/or the president.

Eligibility Criteria for Remote Work

Employees may be eligible for remote work arrangements based on the following reasons, among others:

1. **Job Role Suitability:** Employees whose job responsibilities can be effectively carried out remotely, without significant impact on team collaboration, operational efficiency and others, may be eligible for remote work.

2. **Performance History:** Employees with a consistent history of meeting or exceeding performance goals and demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility may be considered for remote work.

3. **Health and Well-being:** Employees with medical conditions, health concerns, or disabilities that could be better managed through a remote work environment may qualify for remote work arrangements.

4. **Child or Elderly Care:** Employees who need to provide care for children, elderly family members, or dependents may be considered for remote work to better manage their caregiving responsibilities.

5. **Inclement Weather or Natural Disasters:** During adverse weather conditions or natural disasters that hinder safe travel, remote work may be allowed to ensure employee safety and continuity of operations.

6. **Focus-Intensive Tasks:** Employees working on projects that require deep concentration and minimal interruptions may be permitted to work remotely for enhanced focus.

7. **Project-Based Work**: Employees working on individual projects that do not require constant on-site presence may qualify for remote work during the project duration.

8. **Technology Availability:** If an employee has access to the required technology and tools needed to perform their tasks remotely, they may be considered for remote work arrangements.

B. Remote Work Arrangements

1. Types of Remote Work Arrangements

Employees may be considered for the following types of remote work arrangements:

a. **Full-Time Remote Work**: In exceptional cases, an employee may be approved to work remotely on a full-time basis. This requires a thorough assessment of job responsibilities, technology needs, and performance indicators.

b. **Part-Time Remote Work:** Employees may be permitted to work remotely for a portion of their regular workweek, subject to office, division, or departmental needs and prior approval.

c. **Ad Hoc Remote Work:** Occasional or ad hoc remote work may be approved for specific circumstances, such as emergencies, health-related concerns, or inclement weather.

2. **Approval Process**

   a. Employees interested in remote work arrangements must submit a written request to their supervisor or department head, outlining the reasons for the request and the proposed arrangement.

   b. The department head, in consultation with the relevant dean or supervisor, will assess the feasibility of the remote work arrangement based on the employee's job responsibilities, technology requirements, and impact on team collaboration.

   c. Approval or denial of remote work arrangements will be communicated in writing to the employee, outlining any conditions or expectations.

D. Expectations and Responsibilities

1. **Performance and Accountability**

   a. Remote employees are expected to maintain the same level of performance and productivity as they would while working on-site.

   b. Clear performance goals and expectations will be established for remote employees, and regular check-ins will be conducted to review progress.

   c. Remote employees must adhere to COM-FSM's code of conduct, policies, and guidelines while working remotely.

2. **Communication and Accessibility**

   a. Remote employees must ensure they have reliable internet access and the necessary technology to perform their duties effectively.

   b. Remote employees must be reachable during established work hours and respond promptly to emails, calls, and messages.

   c. Regular communication with team members, supervisors, and colleagues is essential to maintain collaboration and teamwork.

E. Limitations of Remote Work Arrangements

These limitations are designed to ensure remote work aligns with the college's goals while maintaining performance and accountability standards.

1. **Job Role Suitability:** Not all job roles are conducive to remote work. Positions that require consistent on-site presence, direct client interaction, or access to specialized equipment may not be eligible for remote work arrangements.

2. **Operational Needs:** Remote work arrangements should not compromise the college's ability to deliver essential services, meet deadlines, or maintain operational efficiency. Departments must consider their workflow and staffing requirements before approving remote work.

3. **Collaboration and Communication:** Remote employees must maintain regular communication with their team members and supervisors. Excessive isolation or lack of communication may impact collaboration and teamwork.

4. **Data Security and Confidentiality:** Some roles involve access to sensitive or confidential information. Departments must ensure that remote employees adhere to data security protocols and protect sensitive information from unauthorized access.

5. **Performance Monitoring**: Remote employees' performance will be closely monitored to ensure they meet established goals and maintain productivity. If performance declines, the remote work arrangement may be reevaluated.

6. **Technology Reliability:** Remote employees are responsible for ensuring they have reliable internet access and the necessary technology to perform their duties effectively. Technical issues that impede work may be grounds for reconsidering remote work.

7. **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Remote work arrangements require employees to be adaptable to changing work conditions and may require adjustments as operational needs evolve.

8. **Duration and Renewal:** Remote work arrangements may be temporary or project-based. Departments should specify the duration of remote work, and arrangements may need to be renewed periodically.

9. **Termination of Arrangement:** The college reserves the right to terminate or modify remote work arrangements based on operational needs, performance concerns, or changes in job responsibilities. Employees should be prepared to return to on-site work if required.

10. **Legal and Tax Implications:** Remote work arrangements may have legal and tax implications based on the employee's location and the jurisdiction in which the college operates. Employees must comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

11. **Health and Safety:** Remote employees are responsible for creating a safe and ergonomic workspace. The college is not responsible for any injuries sustained while working remotely.

12. **Communication Accessibility:** Remote employees are expected to be accessible during established work hours. Failure to respond to communications in a timely manner may impact the success of remote work arrangements.

F. Data Security and Confidentiality

Remote employees must adhere to COM-FSM's data security and confidentiality policies and guidelines. This includes protecting sensitive information and using secure communication and data storage methods.

G. Termination of Remote Work Arrangements

The college reserves the right to terminate or modify remote work arrangements at any time based on operational needs, performance issues, or changes in job responsibilities.

H. Reevaluation and Review

This policy will be periodically reviewed referenced to the college's Board Master Planning Calendar, and updated as necessary to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with the college's goals and objectives.