

## Western Iowa Tech Community College

### Flexible/Remote Work Policy-Pilot

#### **Policy Background/Objective:**

Western Iowa Tech Community College (WITCC) acknowledges the changing dynamic of the work environment. In the interest of employee work/life balance, flexible and remote work options may be considered, pursuant to this policy.

Approved flexible schedules and remote work options:

- Do not otherwise change the terms and conditions of employment at WITCC.
- Are subject to a 60-day trial period to assess their impact and effectiveness.
- Will be reviewed at least semi-annually.
- May require that employees depart from their flexible schedule/remote work agreement to perform duties on-campus, as necessary.
- May be suspended or cancelled at any time at the sole discretion of the College
- Require written approval from the College, including for any change or cancellation of the flexible/remote work agreement.

#### **Guidance:**

- WITCC has a physical campus where many of the students support services and classes are offered in-person and on-campus.
- It is considered essential for WITCC employees who provide service and support to students to have a presence on campus to facilitate the educational experience and meet the needs of the campus community.
- Many, including essential, job responsibilities cannot be effectively performed remotely.
- Responsibilities such as participation in committees, attendance at department and college meetings, and collaborations with colleagues are often more productive when done in person and on-campus.
- Flexible/Remote Work agreements may not be available for all positions or individuals. No employee is entitled to, or guaranteed the opportunity to, flexible/remote work.
- Flexible/Remote Work will only pertain to the associated non-instructional responsibilities.
- Flexible/Remote Work must be cost-neutral to the College.

Normal business days/hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. However, certain departments may require hours of operation outside of normal business hours. Additionally, WITCC may modify its normal business days/hours outside of the academic year (such as Summer Fridays).

Flexible/Remote Work does not alter the otherwise assigned or expected employee work schedule. Full-time employees are expected to work, at a minimum, forty hours per week (holidays and approved leave excluded).

To determine if a flexible/remote work request is appropriate, the College will assess the impact on work production, quality, and absenteeism, as well as the best interest of the department, College, and employees.

Flexible/remote work agreements are not appropriate for all employees or positions and are not a guaranteed benefit. The employee's responsibilities and work must be conducive to a flexible schedule without causing disruption to performance, department operations, delivery of services, or workload of co-workers. In order to minimally be considered for a flexible/remote work agreement, the employees must have:

- Been employed for a minimum of 6 months at WITCC
- Have a satisfactory attendance record
- Meet all performance expectations in their current role
- Consistently demonstrate the ability to complete tasks and assignments independently and in a timely manner.

### **Remote Work Options:**

Remote work occurs when part or all of the employee's scheduled work week is performed at an off-campus location, such as the home or office space not located on college property. Occasional, short term (1 day) remote work requests should be managed by the supervisor with prior approval. Subject to College approval, the following remote work arrangements may be available:

- Temporary Remote Work: a temporary remote work situation of no more than two weeks, which may be due to unforeseen circumstances.
  - For a Temporary Remote Work situation, no formal Remote Work agreement is necessary. However, the details of the arrangement must be mutually agreed on by the employee, their supervisor and executive council member, documented in writing and emailed to Human Resources for approval.
- Hybrid Remote Work: a remote work arrangement that provides the option of working from an off-campus location for full day(s) as part of the employee's regular work week, with the remainder of the workday(s) occurring on-campus.
  - The weekly schedule for each location (on-campus and off-campus) must be consistent and approved by the employee's supervisor, Executive Council, and the College President.
  - Scheduled remote work for employees may not exceed 40% of the regularly scheduled work hours.
- Fully Remote Work: a remote work arrangement where an employee works from an off-campus location, away from a regularly assigned on-campus work location, for all available work.
  - Fully Remote Work arrangements will be considered in rare circumstances and reviewed on a case-by-case basis with approval by the College President.

## **Work Schedule and Responsibilities**

Salary/wages, job responsibilities, and the total number of hours that remote work employees are expected to work will not change, regardless of the work location. Remote work arrangements are not designed to eliminate the need for child-care, elder-care, or to attend to personal matters during regular work hours. An employee allowed to work remotely shall comply with all existing job requirements and employer policies as are in effect in the office. Supervisors may require employees to report on-campus as needed for work-related meetings or other events.

Employees approved for remote work must be available during their approved working hours. Use of approved leave is required when not available for work during these hours. Remote work may not be used in the place of sick leave, vacation/personal leave, family sick leave, or other types of leave.

Employees working remotely under this arrangement must be able to perform their job duties effectively while working remotely, must be responsive to the areas they serve, and must respond to emails and phone calls in a timely manner.

Employees approved for remote work are required to report to Campus for meetings or other work-related purposes as required by their supervisor and/or other higher-level authority. Employees approved for remote work may be required to attend professional development activities in person.

A plan for assessing productivity and job performance must be developed and agreed upon by the supervisor and employee prior to approval. The employee is expected to communicate regularly and effectively with supervisors, coworkers, and others to the same degree that would be achieved if working from the office. The employee must demonstrate a conscientiousness about time management, productivity and accountability for their work quality and deadlines. A failure to do so can result in the College recalling or assigning the employee to an onsite location. The College reserves the right to monitor network access logs to verify activity.

## **Equipment**

WITCC will provide equipment and materials needed by employees to perform their duties, however, the college will not duplicate. Other household members or anyone else are not to use the equipment and software. College-owned software may not be duplicated or copied except as formally authorized. The College will be responsible for insurance and maintenance of all company-provided materials. Only College provided computing devices may be used for remote work. Employees must run all updates as released.

The College will not assume responsibility for operating costs, home maintenance, or other costs incurred by employees in the use of their home as a remote work location. Employees are expected to maintain appropriate services and utilities for remote work, including an adequate internet connection.

## **Internet Connection**

Employees must not connect to an unsecured Wi-Fi network with College equipment or to perform College work.

When connecting to a Wi-Fi network, employees must use only the pre-approved VPN solution.

A high-speed Internet connection is required. Employees will provide the Internet service at their own expense. The internet connection must be of sufficient bandwidth to allow the employee to efficiently perform their regular job functions.

Wireless networks must be secured with a strong password, consisting of 14 or more characters.

### **Workspace**

Employees are responsible for maintaining a safe and ergonomic working environment while working remotely. Any work materials taken home should be kept in the designated work area at home and not be made accessible to others.

Remote employees shall not hold in-person business meetings at their personal residence. Employees shall not conduct any unauthorized work or personal business during their remote work schedule.

Workers compensation will not apply to non-job related injuries that occur in the home. The College will not be responsible for injuries to third parties or members of the employee's family that occur on the employee's premises. In the event of a work-related injury, the employee will allow home office inspections conducted by the College.

### **Taxes**

It will be the employee's responsibility to determine any income tax implications of maintaining a home office area. The College will not provide tax guidance nor will the College assume any additional tax liabilities. Employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss income tax implications.

### **Confidentiality**

It is the employee's sole responsibility to maintain the confidentiality and proper storage of College information, to prevent unauthorized access to any College system or information, and dispose of work-related documents in a manner that will not jeopardize the interests of the College. The printing of confidential information at a remote location is not permitted.

Violation of this will result in revocation of remote work privileges and disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Application**

To request a remote work option, an employee will complete a Remote Work Request form and submit it to their supervisor. The supervisor will discuss the request with the appropriate Executive Council Member, and Human Resources. Approval will be finalized once all required parties have signed, and the decision has been communicated to the employee.

Temporary Remote Work arrangements must be approved by the supervisor and reported to Human Resources.