

## Michelle M Schoenecker

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**From:** Kathryn Dewitt <dewitt@umich.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 15, 2019 1:18 PM  
**To:** Michelle M Schoenecker  
**Subject:** Re: [RESADM-L] Telecommute/Remote Work Policies  
**Attachments:** Working Remotely and Severe Weather.docx; 5. UMOR Remote Work Agreement.pdf

Hi Michelle,

We recently had a rather lengthy discussion on this. We have a policy and requirements that allow for working from home which I have attached. The situation gets even more murky when your institution closes all non critical units for 2 days (ie the bitter cold we had in January). Our office is considered non critical and yet we asked for volunteers to work remotely. Upon our debriefing of the situation we as a unit came to an agreement that if the President of the University closes all non critical units we are Closed and if you chose to work from home during that time then non of it can be outward facing (no proposal submissions, emails that copy internal University personnel). Let me know if you want to chat on this.

Kathy

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Kathryn A. DeWitt

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**For U-M Personnel:** Please help us deliver quality service by providing a U-M identifier (such as a PAF, UFA or P/G number) and the Principal Investigator whenever you contact ORSP. Note too that eRPM provides up-to-date project status information.

## **Working Remotely/"Telecommuting" (Exempt Staff Only)**

Employee Classification: Salaried Exempt

Effective June 1, 2013

**Last Updated: December 5, 2018**

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The Office of Research and Sponsored Project's (ORSP) Working Remotely policy is intended to make ORSP more employee-friendly and promote employee satisfaction and retention, while simultaneously ensuring that ORSP's business needs continue to be met. Working remotely or "telecommuting" entails working outside of the office or University environment (for example, a work-at-home arrangement) for part of the work week. In general, working remotely is a privilege which is granted under certain circumstances, to high-performing exempt staff whose job responsibilities are suited to such an arrangement (note: working remotely is not allowed by ORSP for non-exempt staff).

Generally, requests to work remotely should NOT be contemplated when:

1. The job requires the staff member's full-time physical presence.
2. Working remotely would harm the department's efficiency or level of service to customers.
3. Working remotely would place an unfair burden on the remote worker's colleagues.
4. The staff member's position requires frequent on-site supervision, direction or input from others.
5. The staff member's evaluations do not indicate sustained high performance.
6. The staff member's tenure in ORSP is less than one year.
7. Exempt employees may request a remote work arrangement through their supervisor. This agreement is not meant to be a permanent arrangement. Staff members may be asked to return to their full-time, in-office location for a variety of reasons, including to allow another staff member to benefit from a similar arrangement. Only requests that conform to the ORSP Non-Standard Work Schedule policy and all other policies and procedures will be considered. (Requests from part-time staff will be considered on a case-by-case basis, consistent with the spirit of the ORSP Non-Standard Work Schedule policy.)

Expectations of employees who work remotely include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Employees remain readily accessible (e.g., responding to email messages, answering phone calls, and accepting video chat invitations as timely as when working in the office).
2. Employees temporarily [forward their work phone number to a private home or cell phone number](#).\*
3. Employees are able to use U-M's dual factor identification service (i.e., DUO) from home at no additional cost to ORSP.
4. Employees communicate their remote working arrangements to ORSP colleagues by:
  1. Placing a note on their office door indicating they are working remotely.
  2. [Adding an 8AM-5PM "Working Remotely" meeting on one's personal Google Calendar and the ORSP Out-of-Office Google Calendar](#).

5. Employees who are unable to work because of illness on a day they are scheduled to be at the remote site must use sick leave and must report their absence to their supervisor.
6. Employees who wish to use vacation or personal leave on a day they are scheduled to be at the remote site must secure the normal prior approvals from their supervisor.
7. Employees maintain their standard workload while working remotely.
8. Employees attend exclusively to ORSP-related matters when working remotely (i.e., no simultaneous juggling of ORSP and personal responsibilities).
9. Employees attend in-person those meetings that, due to their format or content, require the employee's presence (e.g., all-staff meetings, training sessions).
10. Employees maintain a consistent day of the week they are working remotely. The remote work day should not change unless there are extenuating circumstances and the employee's supervisor has granted his/her prior approval.

All requests to work remotely should include the following:

1. Description of the request (days/hours to be worked remotely each week, the proposed location for the work).
2. Period of time the remote work schedule is requested to be in place.

The supervisor will discuss the proposed arrangement with other ORSP supervisors and the employees impacted by the altered schedule. If the request is denied, an explanation will be provided. If the proposed arrangement is approved, written documentation will be produced in the form of a letter including:

1. A detailed explanation of the new work schedule including the weekday and hours of remote work.
2. A clause calling for a review of the remote working arrangement every six months thereafter to ensure the altered schedule is meeting the needs of ORSP and the employee (ideally these reviews would be coordinated with regularly scheduled performance reviews when possible).
3. A fully completed and signed "OVPR Remote Work Agreement" form.

Remote work arrangements are granted on a revocable basis, and ORSP or the employee may discontinue them at any time for any reason unless the arrangement is a condition of employment.

**Severe Weather Policy**

**Employee Classification: Salaried Exempt and Non-Exempt**

**December 13, 2018**

*As winter weather arrives, here is a reminder from campus leaders about U-M's severe weather policy.*

The university's severe-weather policy encourages all employees to make a reasonable effort to report to work as scheduled.

**In the event of severe weather:**

- Campus officials will attempt to keep the university open for classes and maintain regular operations because most students live on or near campus.
- If operations are being maintained in a staff member's department, he or she should report to work or notify his or her supervisor if reasonable attempts to do so fail, according to the university's [Standard Practice Guide on Emergency Closure and Emergency Operations Reduction](#), SPG 201.27.
- Students, faculty and staff members who live a distance away are asked to make every reasonable effort to get to campus so that essential services can be maintained. At the same time, they are advised to use good judgment about the risks of travel.
- U-M employees are expected to take vacation time or Paid Time Off if they miss work. Staff members also may elect time off without pay.
- If the university declares an emergency closing, SPG 201.27, states: During the first two days of an emergency closure or reduction, pay and benefits will continue for regular faculty and staff. Regular staff who are required or approved and do report to work during an emergency closure or operations reduction will, in addition to their regular compensation, have added to their vacation accrual an amount of time equal to the hours actually worked. Regular staff members who work beyond their normal schedule will be paid in accordance with the university's overtime policy (SPG 201.38). Pay issues are determined after the impact of the storm is assessed.

- In the event severe weather begins after staff members are at work, it is up to the department to determine whether employees may leave early.

**ORSP-specific:**

- If U-M declares an emergency closing, then there is no expectation that staff report to work.
- If U-M remains open during a severe weather event and you have made a reasonable effort to come to work but cannot make it in, then please contact your supervisor to discuss whether working from home is an option. Working from home requires your supervisor's approval. Approval will be based on your workload and team staffing needs for the day, as well as the degree to which you have the necessary tools to work from home effectively (e.g., access to a computer, the Internet, a phone, etc.).

**Office of Research  
Remote Work Agreement**

**Remote Work Agreement: Part I**

**Employee Information**

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee ID #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Uniqname: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee FLSA Status: \_\_\_\_\_  
OVPR Unit: \_\_\_\_\_  
Unit Director: \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Direct Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

**Remote Work Location**

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax number: \_\_\_\_\_

Location Type (business/personal residence): \_\_\_\_\_

Detailed description of workroom and workspace at remote location:

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## **Work Schedule**

Total work hours per week: \_\_\_\_\_

Regular telecommuting work hours (or hours that on-site staff know they would be able to reach the telecommuter on a regular basis):

<u>Weekday</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location (circle)</u>
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Monday:	_____ to _____	Remote / Onsite
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Tuesday:	_____ to _____	Remote / Onsite
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Wednesday:	_____ to _____	Remote / Onsite
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Thursday:	_____ to _____	Remote / Onsite
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Friday:	_____ to _____	Remote / Onsite
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## **Equipment**

University assets to be used at remote work location (if any) (including hardware, software, etc.):

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## **Remote Work Agreement: Part II**

### **Work Hours**

It is the employee's responsibility to give accurate and up-to-date information to the supervisor regarding work location and hours. The employee will maintain, for the purposes of Worker's Compensation liability, the hours of work stated in this Agreement. Timely and accurate completion and submission of time statements is the responsibility of the employee.

Departmental/unit requirements take precedence over the schedule and remote work arrangements specified in this Agreement if there is a scheduling conflict. Management will provide the employee with advance notice, if at all possible, when flextime schedules or telecommuting must be curtailed.

Vacation time, sick leave, and all other exception time must be authorized by the direct supervisor/unit director consistent with Unit, OVPR and University policies.

Time for preventative appointments should be taken during remote work hours whenever possible to reduce the amount of additional time away from the office.

Technical, supervisory, or collegial support cannot be assured beyond 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., when most regular working hours are scheduled.

### **Insurance**

A designated work space shall be maintained by the remote worker at the alternate work location. Worker's compensation liability will be limited to work-related injuries at this work space as opposed to applying to all areas of the remote location.

### **Health and Safety**

Remote workers may have to participate in periodic health and safety inspections of their work site to make sure it meets University standards laid out in "Arranging Your Workstation to Fit You" (available through the Risk Management Office). Remote workers must review and sign the attached "Remote Work Safety Checklist" prior to starting a remote work schedule.

### **Training and Meetings**

Certain meetings are mandatory and will require the remote worker to come to the office. Reasonable notice of upcoming meetings will be given to those employees. If a face-to-face work group meeting is necessary, it is the remote workers responsibility to attend the meeting at the office.



### Equipment

Prior to finalization of this remote work agreement, it shall be established that the staff member will verify that s/he has appropriate equipment, software and connectivity to adequately complete his/her duties.

U-M equipment is for University-related projects only. You may not use University equipment for unlawful purposes or for work for other employers, or may other persons use it.

Any hardware or software purchased by the University remains the property of the University and will be returned to the University on request; products developed while remote working are the property of the University.

Equipment provided by U-M will be maintained by the University. The Unit/OVPR is not responsible for the temporary loss of remote workdays due to equipment maintenance or repair, and the remote worker is expected to report to the office or obtain approved leave in such a circumstance.

Equipment no longer used by a remote worker must be returned on his/her next day in the office.

Software used by a remote worker is subject to the same U-M restrictions on duplication and unauthorized use as software used in the office. Software and configuration for work at a remote work location on non-University-owned equipment is the responsibility of the staff member. Computing Support will provide general documentation but will not troubleshoot connectivity issues.

The University assumes no responsibility for the repair, maintenance, or replacement of personally-owned equipment used for remote work. If loan equipment is available during the repair period, then the employee may continue work remotely. However, if there is no available loan equipment, then the employee must work at the office.

### Visits

Health and safety inspections of the remote work location may need to be arranged between the employee and U-M. The University reserves the right to visit the employee remote work location without notice in order to retrieve equipment that the employee has not returned after being requested to do so.

### Security of Information

Employees may not compromise the confidentiality or security of University information due to remote work, remote computer access, and so on. The employee must comply with the policies and guidelines of proper use of information technology found in the *Standard Practice Guide* and any other guidelines issued by the University in general or by the Unit/OVPR in particular. Breaches of information security, whether by accident or design, while telecommuting must be reported promptly and may be cause to abrogate the option and/or for disciplinary action.

#### Reimbursements and Remote Work Expenses

Remote workers must obtain supplies stocked at the Unit and will not be reimbursed if they are obtained elsewhere. The Unit/OVPR/University will not provide reimbursement for internet, telephone or other expenses associated with working off-site.

Expenses not specifically covered above will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the reasonableness of the expense and the overall budget for the program(s). The employee cannot be assured of reimbursements for expenses not approved in advance.

#### Business Travel

Travel from the remote work location to the office (U-M) is ***not*** business travel and is not reimbursable. These expenses are solely the responsibility of the employee.

Reimbursement for approved business travel is governed by SPG 507.10-1 “Travel and Business Hosting Expense Policies and procedures for Concur Users”.

#### Domestic Care

During established work hours, the remote worker agrees that family care demands shall not compete with work except in the case of an emergency (see “Work Hours,” above). Remote work will not be a substitute for day care provision. Dependent care must be arranged using a primary caregiver other than the employee prior to the start of a remote work arrangement.

#### Tax Liability

Any and all tax implications of remote work are entirely the responsibility of the remote worker. Remote workers are encouraged to seek professional advice in this area.

#### Local Zoning Ordinances/Property Restrictions

The remote worker is responsible for observing any municipal zoning ordinances and/or property restrictions regulating the performance of work at the remote location for remote work purposes.

**Certification**

The information I have provided in Part I of this Remote Work Agreement is accurate and will be followed on a regular basis or under the discretion of my direct supervisor/unit director. If any information changes, it is my duty to inform my direct supervisor/unit director and initiate the completion of an updated agreement. I understand that my up-to-date remote work agreement will be in my Human Resources personnel file.

I have read and understand Part II of this agreement, and I agree to the duties, obligations, responsibilities, and conditions for remote workers described in these documents. I understand that all U-M policies apply to off-site work locations.

I agree that, among other things, I am responsible for establishing specific remote work hours (times that staff know they will be able to reach me); furnishing and maintaining my remote work space in a safe manner; employing appropriate remote work security measures; and protecting University assets, information, confidential materials, and systems.

**Duration and Termination of Agreement:**

I understand that my direct supervisor/unit director or OVPR may at any time change any or all of the conditions under which I am permitted to telecommute, or withdraw permission to telecommute for any reason or no reason. I also understand that I may at any time request a change or changes to my work hours, work days, or work location for consideration by my direct supervisor/unit director and OVPR. Any such changes to the terms agreed upon herein are subject to written approval by OVPR.

**Limitations and Liabilities:**

The remote worker understands and agrees that the remote worker is liable for property damages and injuries to the remote worker and third persons at the remote work site. The remote worker agrees to indemnify and hold the University and all or any of its representatives harmless from and against any and all claims, demands, judgments, or liabilities (including any related losses, costs, expenses, and legal fees) resulting or arising from or in connection with any injury and damage (including death) to any person or property, caused directly or indirectly by the remote worker's willful misconduct, negligent actions or performance of the remote worker's duties and obligations under this agreement, except where liability arises solely from the negligence and misconduct of the University.

Employee's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Direct Supervisor's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Director's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

OVPR Approval (signature/printed name): \_\_\_\_\_

## **Remote Work Safety Checklist**

### **General Recommendations**

- Dedicate an area in your remote work site that you will use for the sole purpose of maintaining your workstation. You should clearly identify this area prior to beginning work at the remote location.
- Agree with your direct supervisor/unit director on the hours you will consider “work time.” If you must be present in the office periodically, clearly identify when the office workstation is the place of employment when applicable.

### **Workstation Design**

- Adjust your computer screen so that it is approximately 18-26 inches from your eyes and its height is slightly below eye level.
- Reduce the risk of an injury by keeping your work area clean.
- Keep walkways clear and avoid clutter to reduce the risk of a slip or fall.
- Use power strips to avoid tangled extension cords.
- Ensure that all electrical cords are in good condition.

### **Postural Considerations**

- Keep your head straight and elbows bent at 90 degrees when using a keyboard. Always keep wrists in a neutral (straight) position.
- Keep feet flat on the floor and relax neck and shoulder muscles to minimize stress.
- Alternate work tasks, rotate activities, and take periodic mini-breaks to rest muscles.
- Sit with your head, neck, and back upright. Support your lower back with a pillow, if needed.
- When lifting, keep the load against your body and lift with your legs, not just your back.

I have read, and will do my best to comply with, these health and safety recommendations.

Employee's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_