

PPP-73 Telecommuting Policy Statement for Non-Faculty Employees

East Tennessee State University (ETSU) does not unilaterally endorse TBR Policy No. 5:01:01:20, Telecommuting, for implementation at ETSU. As TBR policy states, telecommuting is not a universal employee benefit or employee right. Policy permits each institution the flexibility to identify those positions eligible for telecommuting, and establish the parameters of telecommuting assignments.

Telecommuting is defined as a work agreement in which supervisors direct or permit employees to perform their usual job duties away from their central (campus) workplace. The agreement changes the core work area of the employee. Telecommuting is not to be confused with the work performed by administrative employees from home that is in addition to their 37.5 hour work week. As noted in TBR Policy No. 5:01:00:00, General Personnel Policy, full-time administrative personnel shall be required to devote sufficient time to complete their assigned duties and responsibilities.

Several issues have been identified that make a telecommuting policy difficult to endorse, monitor and support at ETSU:

- Workers' compensation liability;
- Health and safety issues of home offices;
- Monitoring of time worked in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA);
- Safeguarding of restricted-access information and materials.

Because of these important issues, the use of telecommuting by ETSU employees will only be permitted in a case-by-case basis for extraordinary circumstances, and/or under a university declared emergency. Vice-presidents will recommend any required telecommuting assignments in their respective areas to the University President for final approval. Following approval, a Telecommuting Work Agreement and a Safety Checklist will be completed (available in the Office of Human Resources).

Departments who are currently permitting employees to telecommute are required to stop those assignments and return the core work area of the employee to the campus. Please contact the Office of Human Resources at 423-439-5825 for further clarification. Thank you for your cooperation.

Source: Approved by President's Council, September 16, 2009.