



**Monroe Community College**

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

*MCC VALUES:*

*INTEGRITY.*

*EXCELLENCE.*

*EMPOWERMENT.*

*INCLUSIVENESS.*

*COLLABORATION.*

*STEWARDSHIP.*

# MCC Telecommuting Program Pilot Guidelines

Updated November 4, 2021

# Contents

MCC Telecommuting Program Pilot Guidelines.....	1
Pilot Overview .....	3
Program Dates.....	3
Definitions.....	3
Employee Participation.....	4
Applying to Telecommute .....	4
Telecommuting Start Date .....	4
Modifying, Suspending, or Cancelling a Telecommuting Arrangement.....	4
Employee Appeal Process.....	5
General Guidelines.....	6
Supervisor/College Considerations.....	8
Employee Responsibilities.....	9
Equipment and Supplies .....	10
MCC Policies/Security of Information .....	11

## Pilot Overview

MCC supports telecommuting where it is reasonable to do so based on the College's mission, operational and program needs. These guidelines are the basis for a telecommuting program pilot that is beneficial to MCC operations and student success, and consistent with the College's values: Integrity, Excellence, Empowerment, Inclusiveness, Collaboration, and Stewardship.

The purpose of this pilot is to explore the implementation of telecommuting at MCC by establishing guidelines designed to clearly articulate employee and College expectations.

1. Each application to telecommute under the pilot program will be considered on an individual basis.
2. Employees approved to telecommute will be expected to have a regular in-person presence at the official work location.
3. The number of days and which days an individual employee may be allowed to telecommute is determined by the College based on operational need.
4. The maximum allowable days per pay period that may be approved for telecommuting is 5 (five) workdays under this pilot.<sup>1</sup>

## Program Dates

This MCC Telecommuting Program is a pilot effective October 25, 2021 through February 25, 2022, unless extended by MCC. Where required by exigent operational concerns, MCC reserves the right to suspend or terminate this telecommuting program prior to that date. Should the President or their designee determine that such action is necessary, advance consultation with affected unions and reasonable advance notice to program participants will be provided to the greatest extent allowed by the exigent operational concerns on which the President's determination is based.

## Definitions

1. Telecommuting – An alternate work arrangement that allows employees to conduct some of their work away from the official work site.
2. Official Work Site – The employee's MCC-provided, on-campus, workstation. This is the employee's usual and customary work address.
3. Alternate Work Site – A specific location away from the MCC-provided work site where the employee is authorized to conduct business.
4. Telecommuting Application – An application form, furnished by management, and completed by the employee requesting or being assigned to become an approved telecommuter. Each approved application shall be effective for a specified period, not to extend beyond the effective dates of this program.
5. Telecommuting Work Plan – A document, part of the telecommuting application, completed by the employee requesting or being assigned to become an approved telecommuter which identifies the specific work to be performed on telecommuting days, consistent with the employee's normal obligation.
6. Campus Senior Leadership – Cabinet level employee at the campus who has authority over the department/division reviewing/approving telecommuting.

---

<sup>1</sup> Some MCC employees have expressed a desire to telecommute for more than 5 (five) days per pay period. While this pilot does not allow for telecommuting beyond 5 (five) days, the College remains open to this possibility for specific positions, pending the outcome of the pilot and the operational needs of the College.

## Employee Participation

Telecommuting is not an employee entitlement and is not operationally feasible for many job titles and functions. Determinations as to which job functions are eligible for telecommuting is subject to management discretion and based on operational need. *Such determinations are **not** grievable under any collective bargaining agreements.* These determinations will be informed by the Workplace Location Decision Tree (attachment).

### ***Applying to Telecommute***

1. Applications may be submitted at any time; there is no specified application period.
2. To request to participate, an interested employee must submit a completed Telecommuting Application to their immediate supervisor/manager.
  - a. The employee should identify the preferred number of days and which days per week/pay period they wish to telecommute in the application, not to exceed 5 (five) workdays.
3. The immediate supervisor/manager will review the employee's Telecommuting Application, including the specified days per week, to make an initial determination about whether an employee meets the criteria. The initial determination will be communicated to the employee in writing within 7 (seven) calendar days of receipt.
  - a. Any possible modification by the supervisor/manager to the number of days or identified days requested by the employee should be discussed with the employee prior to forwarding the application to the Department/Division Leader.
4. The application then will be sent to the Department/Division Leader or their designee for review. The Department/Division Leader's approval or denial will be communicated to the employee in writing within 7 (seven) calendar days of receipt.
5. Thereafter, the application will be sent to Cabinet or their designee for review. Cabinet approval or denial will be communicated to the employee in writing within 7 (seven) calendar days of receipt.
6. If the request for telecommuting is denied, an explanation of the basis for the denial will be provided to the employee. Reasons for denial include but are not limited to: operational needs, program needs, not feasible for employee's core job functions, employee has demonstrated ineffectiveness in performing work functions in a telecommuting setting, etc.

### ***Telecommuting Start Date***

Participation and start dates may be subject to equipment availability and management discretion. A telecommuting work arrangement shall not commence until it has received written final Cabinet approval.

### ***Modifying, Suspending, or Cancelling a Telecommuting Arrangement***

An individual's participation in the telecommuting arrangement can be modified, suspended or cancelled at any time by the College with 30 calendar days' advance written notice to the employee where feasible and consistent with operational and program needs.

An employee may suspend or cancel their participation with 30 calendar days advance written notice to their immediate supervisor/manager unless the immediate supervisor/manager agrees to a shorter period of time.

Employees who have had a telecommuting arrangement cancelled or suspended may reapply 6 (six) months from date of cancellation or suspension.

## Employee Appeal Process

If an employee in a job function deemed eligible for telecommuting has their telecommuting application denied, they may appeal to the Executive Director, Human Resources and Organizational Development or their designee in writing within 7 (seven) calendar days following receipt of the denial.

The appeal shall state the reasons for disagreement with management's determination to deny the telecommuting application.

A decision on the appeal shall be rendered by the Executive Director, Human Resources and Organizational Development or their designee within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of the appeal stating the reasons for the decision if denied.

Employees who have had an application denied may reapply 6 (six) months from date of the decision on the appeal referenced herein.

*Denials of applications for telecommuting under the Telecommuting Program are **not** grievable under any collective bargaining agreements.*

## General Guidelines

1. Telecommuters must comply with all applicable NYS, SUNY, and MCC laws, rules, regulations, [policies](#), and guidance required at the official work site. Failure to abide by applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies and guidance may result in modification, suspension, and/or cancellation of a Telecommuting Arrangement and/or including disciplinary action in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements, up to and including termination.
2. Employees approved to telecommute must complete an orientation and/or other telecommuting-related training if one is provided, before any telecommuting is permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, training in the use of any software required for remote access, data security procedures, and any necessary orientation to the process of submitting work plans and progress reports.
3. Telecommuters are responsible for submitting telecommuting work plans as part of their telecommuting application to their immediate supervisor/manager which identify the specific work to be performed on approved telecommuting days. The work plan originally submitted with the telecommuting application may be modified at a later date by the immediate supervisor/manager, with written notice to the employee.
4. Telecommuters are responsible for submitting biweekly progress reports to their immediate supervisor/manager which describe work completed while telecommuting.
5. Telecommuters will treat telecommuting days like regular workdays and will be expected to maintain their normal work schedule/workday (including overtime when appropriate and authorized in advance) and routine while telecommuting. Immediate supervisors/managers should make clear expectations for meeting core service to students, partner offices, as well as internal and external constituents while remotely working.
6. Telecommuters must request time off in advance and submit all leave requests as currently required regardless of whether the requested date off is a day they are scheduled to telecommute or a day they scheduled to work at the official work site. All current laws, regulations, contract provisions and standard rules governing employee work schedules apply including, but not limited to, existing call-in procedures and timekeeping procedures.
7. Telecommuters may be required to report to the official work site on a scheduled telecommuting day to engage in functions which require an in-person presence and cannot be scheduled for an in-office workday, when necessitated by operational or program needs. Departments should provide 48 hours' notice where operationally feasible. It is understood that in the case of an unexpected/unplanned absence of a colleague scheduled to work in person on a particular day, it may be necessary to request that a scheduled telecommuter report in person; in such cases, 48 hours' notice may not be feasible.
8. When telecommuters are required to report to the official work site on a scheduled telecommuting day, there is no expectation that the telecommuter will be granted a substitute telecommuting day in return. However, with flexibility as a key component of the pilot, with management approval in advance, a scheduled telecommuting day may be changed within the same pay period.
9. Telecommuters required to report to their official work site on a day scheduled for telecommuting will not be paid or reimbursed for their commute to/from the official work site.
10. Telecommuters must be available via all College-approved methods of communication throughout the workday. Should a telecommuter not be available through official channels, management may contact the telecommuter via their personal contact information provided in the work plan.
11. Telecommuters may be required to forward their official work site phone to the phone that will be used while telecommuting.

12. Telecommuters are prohibited from conducting in person College-related business meetings at the telecommuter's alternate work site. This restriction does not preclude a telecommuter from participating in, or being required to participate in, phone or web-based meetings from their alternate work site.
13. Telecommuters agree that in limited circumstances necessitated by a health or safety emergency or a data security breach MCC may access their alternate work site following 48 hours' advance notice to the telecommuting employee, unless exigent circumstances require less notice. In such circumstances, notice of the need to access a telecommuter's alternate work site will be provided to the individual employee and a representative of the employee's bargaining unit, if applicable.
14. Unless otherwise directed, telecommuters will not be excused from work when a directed departure is issued for the official work site, such as when the College is closed due to a weather event or power outage, for example.
  - a. Conversely, if an emergency occurs at the telecommuter's alternate work site and the telecommuter is unable to work at the alternate work site that day or if the telecommuter is unable to, for any reason, continue working during their scheduled hours, the immediate supervisor/manager may direct the telecommuter to come to the official work site or grant authority to charge appropriate leave banks.
15. Employees must safeguard all passwords used in connection with agency/facility/campus service files or programs and ensure sensitive information is protected in accordance with MCC policy.

## Supervisor/College Considerations

1. Recognizing that telecommuting arrangements cannot be approached in a one-size fits all manner, immediate supervisors/managers must ensure equity and fairness in accordance with College policy when reviewing applications for telecommuting arrangements and in assigning work and assessing performance.
2. The employee requesting a telecommuting arrangement can perform their job duties as effectively from a telecommuting location as a campus location.
3. The telecommuting arrangement does not necessitate the transfer of work which increases the workload to co-workers on campus.
4. The tasks completed in the telecommuting location are consistent with the employee's title and scope of responsibilities, or job description based upon Civil Service title.
5. Key performance metrics such as quality of work product, quantity of work produced, response time/turnaround time, level of service, etc., are measurable and should be routinely measured and assessed consistent with the employee's title and scope of responsibilities, or job description based upon Civil Service title.
6. The immediate supervisor/manager is accountable for communicating performance expectations, monitoring and measuring performance, providing ongoing performance feedback and formally addressing performance issues via established policies and collective bargaining agreements.
7. Telecommuting arrangements must be reviewed and approved or denied by the immediate supervisor/manager, Department/Division Leader, and Cabinet.
8. Telecommuting arrangements are reviewed for effectiveness on an ongoing basis and in conjunction with the ongoing assessment of the employee's performance in accordance with existing collective bargaining provisions.
9. Telecommuting arrangements may be modified, suspended, or cancelled at any time by the College with 30 calendar days' advance written notice to the employee where feasible and consistent with operational and program needs. The reason for modification, suspension, or cancellation of the telecommuting arrangement may be based on operational needs, performance concerns, or any other non-discriminatory reason.

## Employee Responsibilities

Telecommuting arrangements simply allow work to be performed in settings other than the traditional on campus worksite. *All policies, work rules, performance expectations, professional obligations and codes of conduct apply as they normally would in a traditional campus setting.*

Specific telecommuting employee responsibilities include:

1. Employees are actively working towards and are fully focused on departmental and College goals and professional obligations during normally scheduled hours of work.
2. Employees are easily accessible throughout the workday, answer phones, and respond to emails and other inquiries in a prompt and timely manner.
3. Employees meet or exceed all performance goals and expectations as outlined in job description and/or in alignment with special projects and other duties as assigned.
4. Employees ensure effective and productive communication with their immediate supervisor/manager, team members and all other constituents and/or campus partners.
5. Employees' behavior is professional, courteous, service-oriented and aligned with MCC values: integrity, excellence, empowerment, inclusiveness, collaboration and stewardship, as well as [MCC Policy 4.2 Employee and Visitor Conduct](#).
6. Employees return to campus for onsite meetings, teambuilding activities, trainings etc., as required. Departments should provide 48 hours' notice where operationally feasible.
7. Employees submit requests for scheduled time off (vacations, holidays, etc.) in accordance with established policies and/or contracts and charge appropriate accrued leave banks.
8. Employees notify immediate supervisor/manager of unanticipated full day or partial day absences or lateness in accordance with established policies and/or contracts and charge appropriate accrued leave banks.
9. Employees understand that telecommuting should not be considered as a substitute for child or elder care, nor should the College mandate or monitor such arrangements. Employees, whether telecommuting or working in person, are expected to make such arrangements for child or elder care so as not to adversely impact workflow and productivity.
10. Employees, whether telecommuting or working in person, who have childcare obligations, family care obligations and/or any other obligations that would prevent them from focusing their full time and attention on work, must follow all leave and/or time off policies as needed.
11. While NYS Workers Compensation through the State Insurance Fund covers the employee working from a flexible location, it is the employee's responsibility to also ensure that this type of arrangement is permissible under their homeowners or renters insurance policy. Employees must practice safe work habits and make every reasonable effort to minimize the risk of work-related injuries.

Employees understand and acknowledge that telecommuting arrangements are not an entitlement and can be modified or discontinued by management at any time following 30 days' advance written notice to the employee where feasible and consistent with operational and program needs. The reason for modification, suspension, or cancellation of the telecommuting arrangement may be based on operational needs, performance concerns, or any other non-discriminatory reason. Likewise, telecommuting arrangements may be terminated at any time by an employee following 30 days' advance written notice to the department

12. Employees understand and acknowledge that telecommuting arrangements do not change the employee's terms and conditions of employment including an employee's classification, base compensation, or benefits under applicable collective bargaining agreements.

13. Employees understand and acknowledge that the College not responsible for equipping their telecommuting location(s) and the specific policies of related to loaning, borrowing, transporting and/or supporting supplies and equipment will apply.

## Equipment and Supplies

The employer will not provide telecommuters durable equipment such as desks, chairs, file cabinets, or other office related furniture. The employer may, at its discretion, provide a laptop or other similar device to telecommuters to facilitate work at the telecommuting worksite; alternatively, employees may be allowed to bring work-assigned equipment to the telecommuting worksite where authorized in advance.

The use of an employee's personal computer to access work-related sites, applications, systems and other information, will be dependent on the use of appropriate security protocols, which will be deployed at the discretion of, and as directed by, the College in accordance with College Policy:

1. [7.1 MCC Acceptable Use of College Technology Policy](#)
2. [7.2 Password Policy](#)
3. [7.3 Information Technology Security Policy](#)

Examples of security protocols include but are not limited to *Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI)*, *Virtual Private Network (VPN) access*, and/or *multi-factor authentication*. Management will determine which connection mechanism is appropriate based on operational need.

*Telecommuters using personal devices will receive instruction on how to implement any necessary software, hardware and/or other security processes, all of which must be tested before telecommuting can begin.*  
*Employees should not be required to use personal computers, as a condition of approval for telecommuting.*

Minimal office supplies may be provided by the College and should be requested during the telecommuter's in-office work period. Supplies will not be shipped to the alternate work site. Any out-of-pocket expenses incurred for supplies, equipment, food, commuting, etc. will not be reimbursed.

Generally, the telecommuter must have an internet connection with bandwidth that is acceptable for conducting the telecommuter's full professional obligation/job description and College official business without disruption, as specified by MCC Computing and Information Technology Services (see MCC Communications & Network Services instructions for [Accessing MCC Systems from Off Campus](#)). The telecommuter is responsible to secure and pay for an internet connection. The College will not reimburse internet costs. In limited instances, telecommuting assignments that do not require an internet connection may be available. Where such assignments meet operating needs, they may be made/approved.

The telecommuter is responsible for having a phone for all work-related calls or having other technical support to ensure phone calls related to work are attended to in a timely fashion.

If assigned work equipment or other work item is lost or stolen, the telecommuter must immediately notify their immediate supervisor/manager.

When the Telecommuting Program ends or if the employee is voluntarily or involuntarily separated from the College, the employee must return all MCC-issued devices and equipment, provided to facilitate work at the alternate worksite, if applicable, and any supplies issued on their next workday unless otherwise specified by the immediate supervisor/manager. Employees who elect to use their own personal devices and equipment (and receive approval to do so) for telecommuting acknowledge and release the College from any and all liability.

## MCC Policies/Security of Information

Any SUNY/MCC information possessed by the telecommuter cannot be shared with or made available to any other individuals except as appropriate, consistent with their campus work obligation.

Telecommuters must ensure that official records and information are secure and not maintained in a way that would make them available to any other individuals except as appropriate, consistent with their campus work obligation.

Telecommuters and campuses are responsible for adhering to the [SUNY Information Security Policy \(Document 6900\)](#) and all State, and MCC policies, procedures and standards concerning use of computer equipment and the security of data/information while utilizing this telecommuting program. Links to such policies, procedures and standards can be found below:

1. [7.1 MCC Acceptable Use of College Technology Policy](#)
2. [7.2 Password Policy](#)
3. [7.3 Information Technology Security Policy](#)

Unauthorized access to or disclosure of official information or systems must be immediately reported to the telecommuter's immediate supervisor/manager. Such unauthorized access or disclosure, including the release of confidential information or the personally identifiable information of MCC staff or students, which happened due to the telecommuter's neglect, will be addressed through administrative actions under applicable collective bargaining agreements and College policy.

Telecommuters must protect and safeguard files, documents, equipment, and other materials transported back and forth between the official work site and the alternate work site. Telecommuters must protect official records and documents from unauthorized disclosure or damage and shall comply with all established policies and procedures regarding such matters.

Telecommuters must also take the following specific precautions:

1. Only take confidential information offsite when authorized in advance by their immediate supervisor/manager.
2. Avoid transmitting confidential information from work e-mail to personal e-mail addresses or text messaging services (e.g., icloud.com, aol.com, yahoo.com or g-mail.com).
3. Securely store all hard copy documents or office media so that others cannot access it.
4. Do not communicate confidential information where others can listen.
5. Place documents requiring destruction in Confidential/Sensitive destruction bins located at the official work site.

Telecommuters will be required to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Loss or theft of equipment must immediately be reported to the telecommuter's immediate supervisor/manager.

Any suspected data breach containing sensitive data must immediately be reported to the telecommuter's supervisor and the and the Chief Information Security Officer, consistent with the [SUNY Cyber Incident Reporting requirements](#). The telecommuter must complete any required documentation of the suspected breach.

Every effort should be made to avoid transferring or storing official data or information on any personal devices. Under no circumstance may the telecommuter allow College-issued equipment to be used by any other person except as appropriate consistent with their campus work obligation.

Telecommuters should log off and secure any computer being utilized to conduct official business when not in use, consistent with College computer use policy.

The College will not require the production of personal equipment unless legally required and will not access or otherwise use any personal information on an employee's personal device.