



GUIDELINES FOR HYBRID WORK

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS – PRESIDENT’S OFFICE

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I. INTRODUCTION, DEFINITIONS, and BENEFITS

a. Introduction

The University of Massachusetts President’s Office (UMPO) hybrid pilot program began on Monday, September 13, 2021. In May of 2022, the UMPO Senior Executive Team (SET) which includes the President, and his direct reports, extended the hybrid work pilot until September of 2023. The SET decided to implement the hybrid work guidelines on a permanent basis effective July 1, 2023.

The UMPO reserves the right to clarify, amend, or rescind these guidelines based on the operational needs of the organization at any time. The UMPO also reserves the right to implement different temporary guidelines in response to an emergency or operational need.

b. Scope of Guidelines

The guidelines in this document apply to non-unit (also referred to as non-union) employees who are employed by the UMPO.

c. Definitions of Telework and Hybrid Work

Telework – also known as telecommuting or working remotely – is an alternative workplace arrangement which provides employees the opportunity to work at a place other than a UMPO assigned on-site work location.

A hybrid work model is a workplace arrangement that seeks to capture the benefits of both on-site work and telework and consists of employees who have a mix of both as part of their regular schedule. This also includes a limited number of employees who may be either on-site on a full-time basis or teleworking on a full-time basis.

II. DEPARTMENT, BUSINESS UNIT AND INDIVIDUAL HYBRID SCHEDULE

The regular hours of operation for UMPO are Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM (excluding holidays). Departments must be staffed and providing service during those hours. However, staffing and the provision of services may consist of a blend of on-site and remote work.

a. Department Hybrid Schedule

Some departments may adopt a hybrid work schedule for the entire department (as opposed to for an individual employee). This schedule will specify the hours that the department is staffed on-site and the hours that some or all employees in the department will be teleworking. The department’s hybrid schedule must be based on the business needs of the University.

Decisions about the hybrid work schedule for a department must be approved by the Senior Executive Team (SET) member who oversees that department of the President’s Office.

Table 1 provides an example of a department’s hybrid work schedule.

Table 1: Example Department Hybrid Work Schedule

The SET member determines the following for a department:

- The department will have staff on-site on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.
 - All employees in the department will be classified as regular reporting, except for one employee who will be designated fully on-site.
 - All employees within the department must be on-site on two of these three days.
 - All employees within the department must be on-site on Wednesday.
 - The department head can determine the other day (Tuesday or Thursday) upon which individual employees will be on-site.
 - Employees who want to be on-site for all three days are welcome to do so.

As a result, there are four schedules within the department that are consistent with the SET member’s decision:

Employee	Hybrid Classification	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Tyler	Regular Reporting	telework	telework	on-site	on-site	telework
Catalina	Regular Reporting	telework	on-site	on-site	telework	telework
Jade	Regular Reporting	telework	on-site	on-site	on-site	telework
Keith	Fully On-site	on-site	on-site	on-site	on-site	on-site

SET members may delegate the determination of the hybrid work schedule for an individual employee to a department head, provided the individual employee’s schedule is consistent with the hybrid scheduled that was approved for the department. (For example, the department head can determine whether Catalina works

on-site on Tuesday or Thursday.) To the extent the employee’s personal preference can be accommodated within this framework, then department heads are encouraged to do so.

b. Business Unit Hybrid Schedule

Some business units within a department may adopt their own distinct hybrid schedule based on distinct business needs. This is allowed provided the business unit hybrid schedule is consistent with the department hybrid schedule.

Table 2 provides an example of a business unit hybrid work schedule.

Table 2: Example Business Unit Hybrid Work Schedule

The SET member determines the following for a department:

- The department will have staff on-site on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

The Department Head determines the following for a particular business unit:

- The business unit within the department determines all business unit staff must be on-site all three days.
- All employees in the business unit will be classified as regular reporting, except for one employee who will be designated fully on-site.

As a result, there are four schedules within the department that are consistent with the SET member’s decision:

Employee	Hybrid Classification	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Jose	Regular Reporting	telework	on-site	on-site	on-site	telework
Maura	Regular Reporting	on-site	on-site	on-site	on-site	telework
Wendy	Regular Reporting	telework	on-site	on-site	on-site	on-site
Omar	Fully On-site	on-site	on-site	on-site	on-site	on-site

To the extent practicable, UMPO Human Resources encourages departments to adopt department or business unit hybrid schedules rather than individual hybrid schedules.

c. Individual Employee Schedule

In addition, some departments may adopt a hybrid work schedule for the department but grant an individual employee a hybrid schedule that differs from the hybrid schedule that was authorized for the rest of department or business unit. (This could also include a situation where any employee seeks to be on-site full time and not have a hybrid schedule.) In these circumstances, the SET member, or their designee, and the employee must document the established schedule. An email exchange sent by the supervisor/manager that contains the relevant information and acknowledged by the employee may serve as sufficient documentation.

d. Variations and Flexibility in Schedules

Whether a department opts to have a department hybrid schedule or a department hybrid schedule with a business unit hybrid schedule, and/or some individual hybrid schedules, there may be differences in employees’ schedules based on the nature of their position and the needs of the business unit. There will be variations in the number of on-site and telework days that any individual employee works within a department and business units, as well as differences with other departments and business units.

e. Variation in the Beginning and End of the Workday

The regular hours of operation for UMPO are Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM (excluding holidays) including a half hour lunchbreak. However, on a case-by-case basis, a SET member, or their designee, may authorize an employee to have a different beginning and end time within a workday, provided that the employee works the same number of hours that day. (This variation in the beginning and end time of an individual employee's schedule should be documented. An email exchange sent by the supervisor or manager that contains the relevant information and acknowledged by the employee may serve as sufficient documentation.

f. Temporary Incidental Variations

An employee and their supervisor can agree to temporary incidental changes to the employee's hybrid work schedule. For example, a supervisor can direct an employee to work on-site on a different day for the next four weeks to attend an on-site training program; or the supervisor and the employee can agree that the employee will telework on a different day other than the one scheduled (i.e., telework on Wednesday of that week rather than the employee's normal schedule of teleworking on Friday of that week). However, if the parties agree to an extended period or permanent change in the employee's hybrid work schedule, then that decision should be documented. An email exchange sent by the supervisor/manager that contains the relevant information and acknowledged by the employee may serve as sufficient documentation.

g. Discontinuation of Hybrid Work

A SET member can modify or discontinue a department, business unit, or individual employee's hybrid work schedule if they determine a modification or discontinuation is in the business interest of the department or business unit. The SET member is encouraged to provide any impacted parties with as much notice as is possible.

III. HYBRID POSITION CLASSIFICATION

a. Classifications

Each position should be classified in one of four categories below:

- **Fully On-Site** – These employees report to their on-site work location for their full work week, and they do not work remotely as a regular part of the schedule. (Some incidental remote work may be approved by the department head, but not as part of the employee's regular schedule.)
- **Regular Reporting** – These employees report to the on-site work location on a regularly scheduled basis. On the workdays employees are not designated to be on-site, they are teleworking. Designated on-site workdays may range from one day per month to a few days per week based on their department's hybrid schedule, the specific job duties of the individual position and the need to physically staff their department's on-site hours.

In addition to their designated on-site workdays, the department heads may direct these employees to report on-site as needed on additional days for meetings, trainings, or other business needs.

- **On-Site As Needed** – These employees have an on-site work location to which they report only when directed to do so by their department head or supervisor. However, these employees primarily work remotely. Department heads are authorized to direct the employee to report on-site for meetings, trainings or other business needs. Department heads are expected to provide these employees with reasonable notice, to the extent possible, of the need to report on-site.
- **Fully Remote** – These employees work remotely, and there is no expectation that they be available to report on-site.

Except for fully remote employees, each employee will have a designated work location. This location will be the location to which the employee reports, whether on a full-time basis, on a regular reporting basis, or when directed to report on-site by their department head or supervisor. The most common on-site work locations are the UMPO offices at One Beacon Street, Boston or at 50 Washington Street, Westboro. However, some employees report to a campus-based work location.

IV. OPERATIONAL NEED, HYBRID WORK ASSESSMENT and NEW HIRES

a. Operational Need

Each department must have the necessary staff on-site to operate during its designated on-site business hours. Hybrid work must not result in a decrease in productivity, a decrease in communication or coordination, or a decrease in the level of service to internal or external customers.

b. Reassignment of Work

A hybrid work schedule must not result in an employee performing different work while teleworking than they would perform if they were working on-site. Additionally, hybrid work should not result in any of the duties of the employee being reassigned to other employees.

c. Types of Work Suited for Telework

Different types of work have characteristics that are well suited to telework assignments while other types of work are less so. When evaluating whether to allow an employee to telework, a department head should consider these work characteristics. In general, work with easily measured outputs is better suited to telework assignments.

Characteristics of work that are not well suited to telework include:

- Work that regularly requires in-person communication with a supervisor, peers, or customers (e.g., an employee who regularly greets internal or external customers, an employee who provides in person IT support.
- Work that regularly requires access to hardcopy (non-electronic) files, financial documents, confidential documents and mail, and other hardcopy documents that should not be regularly removed from the work site. (Any employee who removes documents from the office that are allowed to be taken off-site temporarily for the purpose of accessing those documents while teleworking must return the documents to their on-site work location as soon as practicable and comply with any record retention requirements.)
- Work that requires regular access to supplies and/or equipment that should not or could not be reasonably brought to or provided at a remote worksite.

d. Onboarding New Employees

Generally, except for fully remote employees, an employee's first day on the payroll should be on-site. On an exception basis, an employee may be onboarded remotely.

A representative of the hiring department must be on-site on the first day that a new employee is on-site. The department representative should greet the new employee and provide the new employee with information specific to the department. The department representative should also coordinate the on-boarding process with Human Resources and UITs.

Generally, except for fully remote employees, a new employee must come on-site to secure the necessary IT equipment and office supplies. The UMPO is not responsible for shipping IT equipment or office supplies to these employees.

V. AVAILABILITY WHILE TELEWORKING

a. Availability

When teleworking, an employee must be readily available by email, telephone, web conferencing and/or the other relevant communications tools deemed necessary by their department (e.g., Slack) during their regularly scheduled work hours.

b. Non-Work Related Responsibilities While Teleworking

All workplace policies remain in effect while teleworking including time and attendance, and expectations for performance and conduct. Employees who telework must be able to commit their attention to work during their agreed upon hours and are not to perform non-work related activities during work hours.

However, in circumstances when an employee is teleworking due to a declared state of emergency, a time when the on-site work location is closed due to an emergency situation, or when ordinary dependent care services are unavailable as a result of these factors, an employee who teleworks may also perform non-work related activities if no alternative is available, provided that they are still able to work their regular number of hours that day. If the employee is unable to work their regular number of hours that day, then they must use paid leave; if paid leave is unavailable, the employee must take unpaid leave.

c. Temporary Closing of On-Site Work and Temporary Inability to Telework

In the event UMPO must close an office location because of weather, construction/renovations, or other circumstances, employees who are classified as regular reporting, on-site as needed, and fully remote are expected to telework during this period. Should such employee not have the capabilities to telework (because of a power outage or similar circumstance), the employee may be excused from work with pay but must contact their supervisor and/or Human Resources for approval.

Employees who are classified as fully on-site are not expected to report to their office location (unless they are required to be on-site for emergency purposes) and if not equipped to telework, are not expected to do so.

VI. STATUS, LEAVE and ACCOMODATIONS

a. Paid Leave

Employees should continue to use paid leave, including vacation, sick, family and medical leave in accordance with existing practice while working a hybrid work schedule. Requests for paid time off must be approved in advance in accordance with standard operating procedures within the employee's department.

Department heads and supervisors should inform all employees, whether they work on-site or work remotely, that they are expected to utilize their accrued vacation leave and other types of leave as is appropriate.

b. Workers' Compensation and Safety

Employees will be covered under applicable workers' compensation laws if injured while performing official duties while teleworking. While teleworking, employees are required to maintain a safe working environment. The UMPO is not liable for any damages to the employee's property that results from participation in the hybrid work pilot.

c. Tax Status for Employees who live and/or regularly work outside Massachusetts

If an employee lives outside the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and/or if they regularly work outside the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, then the employee needs to consult with Human Resources and Treasury to ensure they understand any obligation or risk related to their state taxes.

d. Requests from Employees to Remain Fully Remote For Documented Medical Reasons

This request will be handled consistent with the process for addressing reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If an employee is unable to safely work on-site, they will need to provide the Senior Benefits Generalist (Katie Temple) with medical documentation that supports that position. If supported by documentation, then Human Resources and the employee's department head will assess whether the employee can perform all the essential functions of the position while working remotely. If yes, then UMPO may make the accommodation.

As is the case with all ADA accommodations, the employer retains the right to periodically ask for updated medical documentation to support the underlying claim and to periodically review whether all the essential functions are being performed while the accommodation is in place.

VII. OFFICE SPACE AND SUPPLIES

a. On-Site Office Space Assignment

The UMPO's location is designed to meet the needs of today's UMPO workforce, in which most employees work on site two days per week or are on-site as needed. Since a priority during on-site workdays is collaboration, the location will have additional conference rooms, huddle spaces, and other resources to promote face-to-face communication and teamwork. The location will incorporate the use of a "work point reservation" model as some departments move away from individually assigned offices and cubicles. This model will offer more generally available space that can easily be reserved on an as-needed basis.

The UMPO will continue to review its office space needs and adjust as needed.

b. Office Supplies and Furniture

Except for fully remote employees, employees are responsible for securing the office supplies that they need to telework when they are on-site. The UMPO is not responsible for shipping office supplies to employees. Employees who are classified as on-site as needed are responsible for coming on-site if they need office supplies.

To the greatest extent possible, UMPO printing should take place on-site. On an exception basis, a department may reimburse an employee for the toner cartridge for their personal home printer if the employee is regularly required to use their home printer for UMPO purposes, and the printing cannot be reasonably delayed until the employees is on-site.

Each department should purchase the needed office supplies through the regular office supply procurement process.

The department may make arrangements with the appropriate vendor to have office supplies delivered to an employee who is classified as fully remote.

c. Other Costs

An employee with a hybrid work schedule is responsible for operating costs, office furniture (including standing desks), home maintenance, or any incidental cost (e.g., utilities including Internet costs) associated with the employee's use of their residence or any other location for telework. Employee may not remove UMPO office chairs or other office furniture from the on-site UMPO office for a remote work location.

d. Travel Expenses

When employees do report to their designated on-site work location, they are not eligible to be paid for the time it takes to commute to the office and reimbursed for travel expenses related to their commute.

Employees who are directed to report to a location other than their designated on-site work location on an incidental basis may be paid for travel expenses in accordance with the University Travel Policy, which reads:

“Mileage is measured from the employee’s home to the destination and return, or from the University or Department Address to the destination and return, whichever is less. Mileage between an employee’s residence and place of work is not reimbursed.”

VIII. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

When working remotely, employees must use their university-issued laptop, and not a personal laptop.

Except for the identified portable equipment (see Section (b) below), employees are not authorized to remove other IT equipment from their on-site location.

University-issued equipment is for employee use only.

Employees are required to report any problems with their university-issued equipment to the UITS Help Desk.

a. On-Site IT Equipment

The UMPO will equip each on-site work point with the following:

- 1 or 2 monitors
- External camera (if not built into the monitor)
- Wired keyboard and mouse
- Docking station

This equipment may not be removed from the on-site office.

b. Portable IT Equipment

Employees will be provided with a UMPO owned laptop and may all receive the additional UMPO owned portable equipment:

- Wireless keyboard/mouse
- Headset
- Laptop bag

Employees are expected to bring their individual portable IT equipment with them when they work on-site and they are authorized to remove this equipment from the on-site office for the purpose of working remotely. Employees are responsible for safely transporting portable equipment between their telework location and their on-site location.

Exceptions for additional equipment where accommodations are needed must be approved by the Chief Human Resources Officer, or designee. In addition, all exceptions should be approved, funded and tracked at the department level.

c. IT Security Requirements

Employees who telework must comply with all UITS security guidelines and requirements (see <https://www.umassp.edu/uits/security-center>) and protect all University electronic and hard copy records and data against unauthorized disclosure, access, destruction, etc. Files and other information that are subject to confidentiality regulations must be secured from unauthorized access while at the telework worksite in accordance with any guidance that the UMPO issues regarding this matter.

Employees are also required to follow instructions periodically issued by the UITS Help Desk to update both security and programs on University-issued laptops.