



Alternative Work Arrangement - Frequently Asked Questions

What is an Alternative Work Arrangement?

Alternative work arrangements are work arrangements that include flexible work schedules, for example, telework, flextime, compressed work week and staggered work schedules.

What is telework?

Telework is an arrangement in which an employee regularly, or occasionally, performs work at a remote worksite (such as a home, library, or coworking space).

Who is eligible for telework?

Employees whose duties can be performed remotely. Positions that function with minimal supervision. Positions that do not require onsite customer support. Positions whose services can be provided by email, phone, or Zoom, and who have access to systems which support business continuity.

Who is not eligible for telework?

Employees who need to be on campus to perform their duties or provide services.

What paperwork do I have to complete for my telework arrangement?

You must review the Alternative Work Arrangements Policy. [ARP 6.87 – Establishing an Alternative Work Arrangement \(AWA\)](#) You and your supervisor must also complete an AWA Form and submit it to Human Resource Services. [Alternative Work Arrangement Form](#). A new AWA, or changes to your current AWA, require completion of a new AWA Form.

If I am continuing to telework, as result of COVID-19, do I need to complete an AWA Form?

No, you do not need to complete an AWA Form at this time. If you return to your previously established work schedule on campus and are then approved for another AWA, then an AWA Form will need to be completed.

When does the AWA Form go into effect?

The AWA Form is in effect July 1, 2020 for new AWAs.

If I am returning to work on campus and reverting to my previously established work schedule, do I need to complete an AWA Form?

No, you do not need to complete an AWA Form because you will no longer have an AWA.

If I am returning to work on campus under an alternative work schedule (short-term, staggered, flexible or compressed), do I need to complete an AWA Form?

Yes, you must complete an AWA Form because your AWA is changing.

Can a manager mandate that all the employees in their department return to campus?

An assessment must be completed to determine which employees must be on campus to perform their duties, which employees are eligible to telework, whether they can be productive while teleworking, and how safety protocols will be maintained on campus. Managers are encouraged to use the Telework Decision Tree: [Decision Tree](#)

Some of my duties must be performed on campus. Can I telework?

Your manager should consider your return to work only to perform on-campus duties, and telework the rest of the time.

I like teleworking and I am productive. Can I continue to telework?

Yes, you can continue teleworking, if supported by your supervisor.

I like teleworking and I am not as productive as I could be due to connectivity/ equipment issues. What should I do?

Meet with your supervisor to discuss the challenges, and explore resources to increase your productivity. If problems persist, or your supervisor deems it necessary, return to the office with all safety protocols in place.

What resources will NMSU provide for my telework arrangement (laptop, camera, etc.)?

Meet with your supervisor to discuss your needs and explore resources.

I like teleworking, but my productivity could improve. What should I do?

1. Seek out NMSU telework productivity tools and training for employees. [Training Central Telework Employee Training](#). Your manager could consider having you telework part of the week, in the office the rest of the week, and monitor your productivity.
2. If problems persist, your manager should consider having you return to work on campus with all safety protocols in place.

I supervise a teleworker who is unresponsive to daily communication and/or is unproductive. What should I do?

1. Seek out NMSU telework productivity tools and training for managers and supervisors. [Training Central Telework Manager Training](#)
2. If problems persist, you could consider having the employee telework part of the week, in the office the rest of the week and monitor productivity.
3. If problems persist, you should consider having the employee return to campus with all safety protocols in place.

4. Corrective action could be considered at any point. Consult with Employee & Labor Relations.

My work must be performed on campus. Can I telework?

1. You will be required to return or continue to work on campus with all safety protocols in place.
2. Your manager could consider an Alternative Work Arrangement.

What is a flexible schedule?

Flextime is an arrangement that allows an employee to alter the start and/or end time of their workday. Employees will still work the same number of scheduled hours as they would under a traditional schedule.

What is a compressed schedule?

A Compressed Work Week is an arrangement which condenses more than one standard work week into fewer days (such as a 4.5-day work week, with four 9-hour days and one 4-hour day per week, or four 10-hour days with three days off per week). When scheduling employees, supervisors should take FLSA overtime rules into consideration. [DOL Fact Sheet #23](#)

What is a staggered work schedule?

A staggered work schedule is one in which employees arrive and depart work at different times in shifts. Shifts may be staggered anywhere from 15 minutes to two hours. When scheduling employees, supervisors should take FLSA overtime rules into consideration. [DOL Fact Sheet #23](#)

I am at high health risk if exposed to infectious disease, but I would like to return to work. Can I return on an AWA?

We ask employees at high risk to remain home.

I am caring for someone at home who is high risk, so I don't want to return to work. What should I do? Am I eligible for AWA?

- Check with Benefits to see if you qualify for FFRCA benefits. You may be eligible for Emergency Sick Leave.
- Apply for ADA accommodation in OIE.

I must provide childcare due to school closure, so I don't want to return to work. What should I do?

Check with Benefits to see if you qualify for FFRCA benefits. You may be eligible for Emergency Sick Leave.

I am afraid to go back to work on campus. What should I do?

1. If your duties can be performed by teleworking, you can continue to telework, if it is supported by your supervisor.
2. Speak with your supervisor and identify your specific concerns. Your supervisor should explain the safety protocols in place.
3. If your duties must be performed on campus, and you are unwilling at this time, you may be able to use annual leave or leave without pay for some limited amount of time, or you may be eligible for Emergency Sick Leave under FFRCA.

I have been teleworking from home but was offered the option of returning to the worksite on campus. If after some time at the worksite I do not feel safe, can I return to teleworking from home?

1. You should speak with your supervisor about your specific concerns to better understand the safety protocols in place.
2. You may return to teleworking, if it is supported by your supervisor.

How can I reduce the number of employees working in the office to ensure social distancing?

- Alternating days or alternating weeks: To limit the number of individuals and interactions on campus, departments should consider scheduling partial staffing on alternating days or weeks with staff who are required on campus (e.g., two weeks remote, two weeks on campus OR one week on campus, three weeks remote). Such scheduling will enable physical distancing, especially in areas with large common workspaces. To contain “germ circles,” it is best to schedule the same people on the same days to limit any one individual’s exposure to other individuals when possible.
- Staggered reporting and departing: The beginning and end of the workday typically bring many people together at common entry/exit points of buildings. Staggering reporting and departure times by at least 15 minutes will reduce traffic in common areas to meet physical distancing requirements.