Return to Campus Plan

The University of South Carolina will require employees to return to campus beginning July 1, 2025. This ensures we provide the highest level of support and engagement for our students, faculty, staff and the greater community, while also providing exceptional educational experiences. Being physically present enhances collaboration, communication and the overall sense of community.

Scope

Applies to all University of South Carolina – Columbia full-time and part-time faculty, staff and administrators in FTE, Research Grant, Time Limited and temporary positions.

Telecommuting Conditions
The expectation is that USC faculty and staff return to campus. However, we recognize that there may be certain situations where remote work (hybrid or fully remote) may still need to occur. Remote work should not be the standard practice and a justification will be submitted for consideration to telecommute. However, if leadership deems it necessary, it must adhere to one or more of the following conditions (unless otherwise noted):

1. The position requires the faculty or staff member to work remotely (i.e. regional admissions recruiters or when grants designate specific geographic restrictions) No additional justification required;

2. The employee has a unique or specific skillset that cannot be replaced through recruiting in the South Carolina workforce if vacated;

3. Adjunct faculty who teaches a uniquely specialized subject matter that is considered difficult to replace and/or recruit if vacated;

4. Position that does not directly interact with students, faculty, staff, or constituents. The position is considered a critical role for the area and the employee has demonstrated they can maintain productivity while working remotely and/or has attributes to work independently and productively; or

5. Faculty and staff who are engaged only in online degree programs (e.g., Palmetto College on-line programs or Master's degree programs offered exclusively online). No additional justification is required.

If a faculty or staff member does not meet the specified conditions for remote work, exceptions will be considered by using the same justification form and process.

In addition, to the above conditions:

Staff should be employed with the University for a year and have enough skills and experience to perform their role in an alternate location away from sources of assistance. Leadership will have the discretion on enforcement of this on a case-by-case basis.

Revised April 2, 2025

Faculty Justification Process

If the faculty member does not meet conditions number 1 or 5 above, but leadership would still like to consider their faculty member to telecommute, there is a formal process to consider the requests:

1. A justification form must be completed. The form must be reviewed and signed by the Dean.

2. The justification form is submitted to the Provost by emailing to PROVWORK@mailbox.sc.edu.

3. Based on a review with the Provost, a decision will be made to grant or deny the telecommuting request.

4. Telecommuting decisions are final and there is no appeal process.

Staff Justification Process

If the staff employee does not meet conditions number 1 or 5 above, but leadership would like to consider their employee to telecommute, there is a formal process to consider the requests:

1. A justification form must be completed. The form must be reviewed and signed by the Vice President or Division Leader.

2. The justification form is submitted to Human Resources by emailing to Telecommute@sc.edu.

3. Based on a review with the Vice President of HR and/or designated HR staff, a decision will be made to grant or deny the telecommuting request.

4. Telecommuting decisions are final and there is no appeal process.

Please Note:

1. Just because one or more of these conditions are met does not mean the faculty or staff member will be granted approval to telecommute. This will be the college/division leadership's decision.

2. These conditions do not apply to ADA accommodations or emergency remote work due to extreme bad weather, natural disaster, pandemic health crisis or other unanticipated needs.

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Core Guidelines:

- All offices must be open during their core business hours. For administrative offices, the core hours are Monday-Friday from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm.

- Departments must be fully functional during core business hours. Ensuring all functions and services are readily available to any customer who visits the office in person.

- All employees in student, faculty, staff, or constituent-facing positions require an on-campus presence.

- Position postings:
  - If out-of-state posting then it must go through Talent Acquisition for approval **prior** to being posted to USC jobs.

  - Refrain from advertising remote work opportunity as a benefit on postings.

- Colleges/Divisions must decide if they will be 100% in person (no remote work options available) and communicate that decision to their colleges/divisions.
  OR
  Develop a College/Division telecommuting plan that meets both State HR telecommuting requirements and the University's guidelines and policy.