

SOUTHWESTERN

LAW SCHOOL

Los Angeles, CA

Guidelines for Intermittent Remote Work

Administrative policy approved July 9, 2021. Effective immediately.

Revision history: Technical edits made in November 2024 and April 2025.

Related policies: Telecommuting and Remote Work Policy

Scheduled Review Date: May 2027 (President and Dean's Office)

A. Policy Statement

Department heads have the authority and discretion to authorize intermittent remote work for an employee they supervise, consistent with this policy. Employees in fully remote positions are not covered by this policy.

B. Eligibility

Most commonly, permission to work remotely will be granted for a specific day or a limited set of days due to an employee's emergent need to work from home for a short period. Examples of appropriate reasons an employee might request to work remotely on a specific day include, but are not limited to, a doctor's appointment closer to the employee's home than campus; a sick spouse, partner, or child; an unexpected issue with child care; a health issue that would allow the employee to work from home but not from school (e.g., exposure to COVID); and an unexpected issue with a vehicle needed to commute to work. Oversleeping typically would not be an appropriate reason, nor would scheduling a vendor, repair, or personal meeting that could be completed outside regular work hours. In addition, an employee who is ill typically should take a sick day.

C. Advance Notice

Except in true emergency situations, such as when the event for which the remote work is requested occurs on the day of the request (e.g., a child wakes up sick; plumbing or car fails that morning), an employee should make every effort to request remote work in advance.

D. Scheduled Events

For planned events, such as a scheduled dentist appointment, the employee should make the request at least five business days in advance so the supervisor can ensure proper departmental staffing and coverage, but the supervisor may grant requests on shorter notice.

E. Time and Ability to Work Remotely

Remote work should be requested for a period when the employee will be able to work for at least one-half of the business day (or, for exempt employees, at least 4 hours during the day) and has the ability and equipment to work remotely (e.g., has a computer, internet connection, appropriate place to work, etc.).

F. Approval Process

To seek approval for intermittent remote work, an employee should submit a written request to the supervisor via email, and the supervisor should acknowledge that request via email. Should the initial request or approval be via phone, text, Zoom, or another mode, the request and approval should be documented via email as quickly as feasible. The supervisor should keep all requests and approvals for at least three years. If a supervisor leaves Southwestern Law School's employment, those files should be transferred to Human Resources.

G. Lack of Notice/Dishonesty

If an employee does not seek and receive approval for intermittent remote work and does not report to campus, the department head may take corrective action. Similarly, if the department head or Southwestern learns that the employee's reason for requesting intermittent remote work was misleading, corrective action may be taken.

H. Length

Normally, intermittent remote work should span no more than one business week. Remote work that will span more than one business week must also be approved by Human Resources. Remote work that will span more than three business weeks must also be approved by the Dean.

I. No Patterns

Remote work should not result in a pattern (e.g., remote work every Wednesday). Supervisors should track remote work and speak with Human Resources if a pattern emerges or if an employee requests to work remotely on a regular basis.

J. Privilege, Not a Right or Benefit

Intermittent remote work is not an employee right or benefit and may be denied. If the supervisor denies a request, the employee must take a sick or vacation day, as

appropriate. The supervisor's decision is final unless the employee believes the supervisor's conduct violates another law school policy or a local, state, or federal law or regulation.

K. Departmental Communication

So that departmental work may continue smoothly, the department head should consider informing others within the department that a particular employee will be working remotely. But department heads typically should not share the reason that intermittent remote work was approved for a particular employee.

L. Questions or Concerns

Questions or concerns about these guidelines should be directed to Human Resources.

M. Policy Revisions

Southwestern reserves the right to change or modify any aspect of this policy and the related protocols at any time, with or without prior notice.