REMOTE WORK

**A Survey of Higher Education Institutions in Texas**

TASSCUBO Winter Conference

Fairmont Hotel Austin

January 22-24, 2023

Committee Charge

During the winter 2022 TASSCUBO meeting, a workgroup was tasked with gathering information from member institutions on remote work. The workgroup consisted of 36 participants representing 33 TASSCUBO member institutions.

- Analyze current practices at member institutions
- Conduct an environmental scan to gather best practices
- Put forward recommendations for remote work including model policies, processes, and practices
- Identify need(s) for policy, practice, or legislative changes

Scope of Work

1 Create a survey to gather information on current practices from member institutions

2 Identify the target audience for the survey

3 Analyze survey results and conduct group discussions

4 Assemble recommendations into report format

5 Deliver presentation and findings

6 Draft model policy
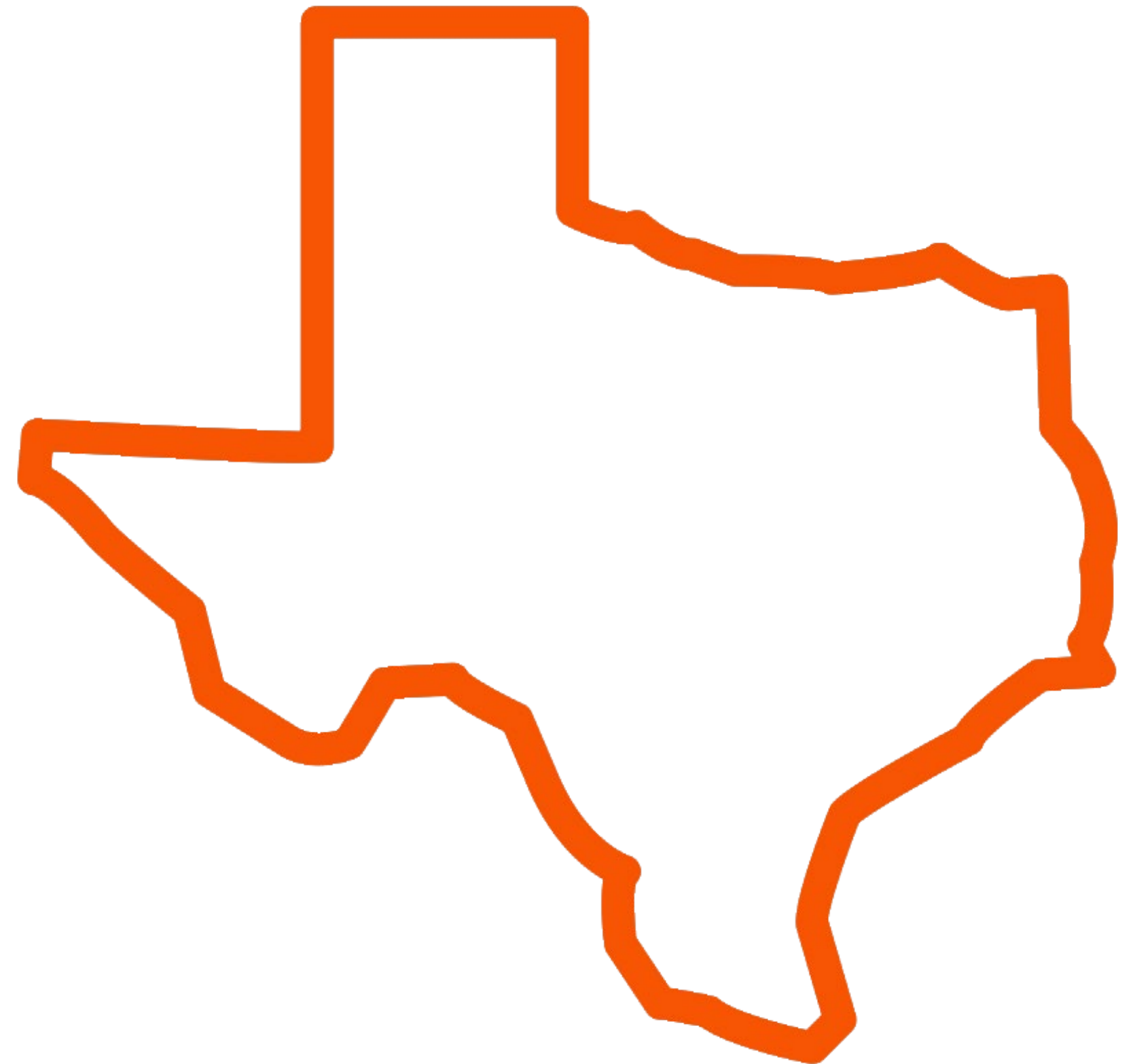
Advantages

- Reduced commute time and associated costs

- Better work-life wellness

- Comfortable work environment

- Increased flexibility

- Increased employee safety

- Increased productivity

- Decreased absenteeism

- Expanded available talent pool for recruiting

- Decreased facility overhead costs

- Increased employee retention

"Why limit your talent pool to a commuting radius?"

Challenges

TRUST

PERFORMANCE

COMMUNICATION

COMPLIANCE

Survey Recommendations

1 Explore the opportunity to adopt a formal remote work policy, or review current policy and practices

2 Reach out to organizations that have mature programs and explore lessons learned, forms, processes, templates, and training

3 Utilize remote work where feasible to aid in recruitment and retention, increase engagement, productivity, and job satisfaction

Best Practices

- Identify and denote position eligibility (job descriptions/postings)

- Identify and engage SMEs/stakeholders in review processes (pre-hire/post-hire changes)

- Streamline approval procedures (digital workflows)

- Provide employee and supervisor guidance

- Set performance standards/measures and continuously evaluate

- Include "right to terminate" clause and rationale

Job Descriptions & Postings

- Include remote work eligibility on job descriptions and job postings; Clearly define "remote" and "flexible"
  - Example 1: This position is designated as partially remote and requires employees to report to the principal location at least 2 days per week
  - Example 2: This position is eligible for flexible schedule (include sample schedule)
- Specify eligible/ineligible alternative work locations and explain
  - Example 1: Individuals residing in the state of California may not be considered for a remote work arrangement due to the university's requirement to comply with laws and regulations of the state of Texas.
  - Example 2: This position requires employees to work from a private alternative work location because it requires the handling of confidential information. Work may not be performed in a public location (e.g., a coffee shop or library).

Job Descriptions & Postings

- Denote equipment provided and/or needed
  - Example 1: Employees will be issued a university laptop to perform the position duties and responsibilities.
  - Example 2: Remote workers must have adequate Internet service to support uninterrupted access to web meetings and other work activities during their scheduled shift.
- Define the principal location/designated work site
- Use commonly searched keywords on job ads such as:
  - Work at/from home/anywhere
  - Work remotely
  - Telecommute
  - Distributed
  - Virtual
  - Home office/home-based

Sample Compliance Matrix

Compliance Issues To Consider ↓/ Stakeholders →	HR	Payroll & Tax Compliance	SAP Team	IT Security	GAO-Financial Reporting	GAO-Accounts Payable	Procurement/Purchasing	SBS	Financial Aid	Budget	Envrnmntal Hlth, Sfty, Risk & Emrg Mgmt
Nexus – state taxes (UBIT, sales tax, franchise tax, etc.....)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Unemployment Compensation (DOL Letter 20-04)	X	X	X		X					X	
Workers' Compensation	X	X	X		X					X	X
OSHA (Ergonomics)	X		X		X					X	X
Disability Insurance	X	X	X								
Reasonable Accomodation (ADA)	X										X
Garnishment limits		X	X								
New Hire Notices/Reporting	X		X								
Background and Credit Check Requirements	X										
I-9 (review of documents)	X										
Drug Testing Policies	X										
Worker Classification: Employee v Indpendent Contractor (DOL, FLSA and IR	X	X	X				X				
Exempt v Nonexempt (DOL and FLSA)	X	X	X								
Minimum wage, Regular Rate and Overtime	X	X	X								
Meal and Rest Breaks	X	X	X								
Leave Entitlement: FMLA, Sick, COVID, and/or other leave with pay	X		X								
PTO accruals and carryovers	X		X		X					X	
Time Reporting	X		X								
Pay Equity laws and reporting	X		X								
Pre-tax benefits (tax treatment)	X	X	X								
Health coverage mandates	X	X	X								
Licensing (employee requires a new license in a new state?)	X		X								
Retirement plan mandates	X		X								
Privacy laws	X		X	X							
Final Pay & Deductions from final pay (Separation from employment)	X	X	X								
Expense Reimbursements			X		X	X	X				
Cybersecurity				X							
NSNR working remotely - are they employed by another state agency or institution?	X										
Personal Property vs University Property											
Parking and Transportation (occasional use of garage/hourly parking)											

Employee & Supervisor Guidance

- Establish a central repository to house remote work resources
  - Website
  - TEAMS
  - Sharepoint
- Offer self-paced or live training workshops on relevant topics such as:
  - Overcoming cognitive bias (proximity bias)
  - Using collaboration software (Teams, Zoom, Slack, Monday, etc.)
  - Virtual meeting best practices
  - Team building
  - Managing hybrid or remote employees
  - Stress management/avoiding burnout
- Publish program documents
  - Toolkits (UT Arlington)
  - Guidance documents (University of Arizona)
  - Individual/Team Agreement templates (Example: TXST academic advising)

Performance Feedback

- Ensure performance measures are relevant to remote workers
  - Shift weighting as needed to emphasize higher priority skills & aptitudes (communication, collaboration)
- Consider frequency of measurement period
  - Conduct regular check-ins
  - Monthly or quarterly informal reviews
- Use video conferencing
- Gather info on challenges
- Recognize achievements timely

Termination/Revocation

- Clauses should be clearly outlined in policy and individual/team agreements

- Sets expectations with employees that remote work arrangements are a privilege, not a right

- Gives reasons for termination that should be cited in such instances

- Explain "what happens next"

Resources

- TASSCUBO workgroup final report
- TASSCUBO workgroup draft model policy
- TXST workgroup recommendations
- TXST ISO telecommuting arrangement
- TXST Academic Advising Team telecommuting agreement
- ADP Presentation: Compliance Considerations for a Remote Hybrid Workforce Nov. 2022
- Bloomberg Tax white paper: Multistate Tax Considerations for Remote Work Arrangements
- NACUBO webinar: Work from Anywhere Nov. 2022
- CUPA HR webinar: Multi-State Workforce Challenges Nov. 2022
- University of Arizona
- University of Iowa