**Tennessee State University**

**FALL 2020 AND SPRING 2021 UPDATED REMOTE OPERATIONS POLICY GOVERNING THE COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC PERIOD**

1. Purpose.  The purpose of this policy (to be known as the Fall 2020/Spring 2021 Updated Remote Operations Policy or “UROP”) is to act as an update to the March 31, 2020, Remote Operations Policy Governing the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic Period (March 2020 Remote Operations Policy or “MROP”).

1. Supplemental Nature of UROP.  The MROP set forth the terms, conditions and requirements for employees to work on a remote basis during the COVID-19 period until further notice.  The MROP shall remain effective and applicable, including, but not limited to, paragraph F of the MROP, addressing the conditions governing remote work operations.  The UROP offers supplemental information governing University operations for the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 academic sessions.   To the extent there is any conflict between the MROP and the UROP, the provisions of the UROP control.

1. Effective Date of Policy.  This policy is effective commencing on August 5, 2020, and shall remain in effect, including the Spring 2021 academic session, until further notice.

1. Application.  This policy shall be applicable to all TSU employees, except those employees designated as essential by their unit head under the terms set forth below.

1. Development and Submission of Fall 2020 Remote Operations Plans (“ROP”)

* + Creation of the ROP.  By no later than August 17, 2020, the heads of each administrative and academic unit shall submit an ROP to the Vice President/Cabinet Member overseeing their respective unit for review and approval.  Following the review and any adjustments, the VP/CM shall forward the ROP to the Chief of Staff (Dr. Curtis Johnson) and Associate Vice President for Human Resources (Ms. Linda Spears) for final review.

* + Contents of the ROP.  The ROP shall address operational matters during the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 academic sessions, including the identification of employees that will continue to work remotely, employees that will work on campus regularly or periodically, measures that will be taken to ensure social distancing and adherence to other safety guidelines within each unit and office space, and the possible use of personnel to work in shifts, if necessary, for health and safety reasons.

* + ROP – Factors to Consider - In developing the ROP, each unit head shall consider the following:

                                                              i.      Ability to continue to work remotely – When possible and practicable, unit heads shall support continued remote operations by non-essential employees.

                                                            ii.      The necessity for physical presence to meet the needs of students, institutional personnel and authorized visitors.

                                                          iii.      Nature of services provided, especially services directly involving or affecting students.

                                                          iv.      Physical space limitations, including the ability of unit employees to maintain social distancing among the staff and with possible visitors.

                                                            v.      Input from unit employees, including issues related to living conditions, interactions with vulnerable populations, and other relevant factors, recognizing the University’s compassionate approach to this unprecedented pandemic period.

                                                          vi.      The health and safety of unit employees and student related customer service shall be key priorities in developing the ROP.

* Additional Guidance in Developing ROPs.  In communicating with Unit employees regarding the ROP, do not attempt to inquire as to or identify and target high-risk category employees or employees living with someone considered high risk under CDC guidelines. Some employees may choose to voluntarily disclose such information in connection with discussions on the expectations associated with the ROPs.  Please confer with the Associate Vice President for Human Resources if the employee disclosing such information is expected to be physically present to work on campus.  Unit heads shall maintain the confidentiality of disclosed information in accordance with Tennessee State University personnel policies, and state and federal privacy laws.

* + Sharing and Reviewing ROPs with unit employees.  Unit heads shall share and review ROPs, or share the information contained in the ROP, with unit employees prior to submitting the ROP to the applicable VP/Cabinet member.

* + Unit Head Responsibilities in Sharing and Reviewing ROPs.  Unit heads shall work in good faith with unit employees to address any issues or concerns regarding the employee’s remote operations status.  As noted above, when possible and practicable, unit heads shall support continued remote operations by non-essential employees.

* + Communicating ROP Issues – Unit heads and unit employees may contact the Associate Vice President for Human Resources or her designees to discuss any issues or concerns associated with the ROP.

* + Disability or Leave Related Issues.  Employees shall follow the normal procedures and processes for submitting ADA disability accommodation related requests and leave requests, including Emergency Care Sick Leave Act requests, by working with the Office of Human Resources on disability related matters and working with the applicable supervisor or Human Resources, when appropriate, on leave related requests.

* + Unit Heads shall review their Fall 2020 Remote Operations Plans to determine whether any adjustments are warranted for the Spring 2021 academic sessions and thereafter, if necessary.

1. Adherence to Health and Safety Guidelines Governing COVID-19.  All employees and students shall at all times adhere to TSU, State and federal health and safety guidelines, including wearing masks at all times while in public areas and spaces, exercising social distancing (at least six feet apart, if possible), and washing your hands and/or using hand sanitizer.   Please reference the TSU COVID-19 Operations Guide for more details on health and safety guidelines.   Unit heads shall ensure that each employee who will be physically present on campus affirm, electronically, their adherence to COVID-19 health and safety guidelines.

1. Commitment to Customer Service.  All employees shall remain resolute in demonstrating and adhering to the University’s commitment to customer service, including, but not limited to, responding in a timely manner to email, phone calls, letters, meeting request and attendance at virtual meetings, mail, inquiries and other matters affecting the University.

Effective Date:       August 5, 2020