

SUBJECT: Telecommuting

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the telecommuting program of the employer and the guidelines under which it will operate. Telecommuting is defined as working at an alternate worksite that is away from the main or primary worksite typically used by the employer. Telecommuting is a mutually agreed upon alternative work location between the telecommuting employee and employer. Telecommunicating is not an employee benefit, but rather a work alternative or possible accommodation based upon the job content, satisfactory work performance, and work requirements of the department and employer.

II. Scope

The policy applies to all employees, supervisors, and managers who are approved to telecommute as a work alternative. All supervisors, managers, and department heads must be familiar with the contents of this policy.

A. Requesting Permission to Telecommute

An employee who wishes to request a telecommuting arrangement shall submit a written request for approval to his/her supervisor. The form shall be approved by the appropriate department head with concurrence of the Administrative Officer/Personnel Director before employee may telecommute. Employees requesting telecommuting as an ADA accommodation shall make such requests to their supervisor and the ADA coordinator (see Policy 205).

B. Employee Rights and Responsibilities

1. Except as specified in this policy or agreed to in the individual telecommuting agreement signed by the employee, employee rights and responsibilities are not affected by participating in telecommuting. An employee's compensation, benefits, and expected total number of hours worked will not change regardless of work location.
2. No benefits provided by employer are enhanced or abridged by the implementation of a telecommuting agreement. All forms of telecommuting imply an employee-employer relationship. The employee is expected to adhere to all of the same policies, regulations, and performance expectations established for all employees of employer.
3. Telecommuting employees must keep their supervisor informed of progress on assignments worked on at the alternative worksite, including any problems they may experience while telecommuting. The employee must generate a written synopsis of activities and accomplishments for the workday in a prescribed format. Methods of planning and monitoring the work shall be at the discretion of the supervisor, department head, and/or employer.

4. Office needs will take precedence over telecommute days. An employee must forgo telecommuting if needed in the office on the regularly scheduled telecommute day.
5. The employee is responsible for providing an appropriate workspace, including all necessary equipment to perform their normal job functions unless otherwise stated in the written agreement. Equipment supplied by employer is to be used for business purposes only. Any additional financial burden resulting from the telecommuting arrangement is solely the responsibility of the employee unless the arrangement is identified as the ADA reasonable accommodation in which case, the situation will be addressed individually.
6. Telecommuting is not intended to serve as a substitute for child or adult care. If children or adults, in need of primary care, are in the alternate work location during employees' work hours, some other individual must be present to provide care.

C. Employer Rights and Responsibilities

1. Participation in a telecommuting agreement is at the sole discretion of the employer. Except as specified in this policy or agreed to in the individual telecommuting agreement, employer rights are not affected by an employee's participation in telecommuting.
2. The employer will determine the methods of planning, monitoring, receiving, and reporting the employee's activity and accomplishment. Employer must manage the work of employees in their area of responsibility and assure that employees receive the assistance they need to accomplish their responsibilities.
3. The employees will be given as much advance notice as possible if they will be needed in the office on the regularly scheduled telecommute day.
4. Each telecommuting agreement will be discussed and renewed at least annually, or whenever there is a major job change or other need to discuss and renew the agreement. Because telecommuting is selected as a feasible work option based on a combination of job characteristics, employee performance, and employer needs, a change in any one of these elements may require a review of the telecommuting agreement.
5. Employer may, upon request, inspect the employee's alternate workspace for safety and workers' compensation concerns.

D. Termination of Telecommuting Agreement

1. Employer and/or employee may terminate the telecommuting agreement for any reason, at any time. Whenever feasible, written notice will be provided, but this is not a requirement.
2. The opportunity to participate in a telecommuting agreement is offered only with the understanding that it is the responsibility of the employee to ensure a proper work environment is maintained, dependent care arrangements must not interfere with work, and personal disruptions such as non-business telephone calls and visitors must be kept to a minimum. Employees must notify their supervisor of any changes to their standard workweek (i.e. sickness, health care provider visits, or annual leave). Failure to maintain a proper work environment, as determined

by employer, provides cause for discipline and the termination of the employee's telecommuting agreement.

3. Approval for any telecommuting request is based upon employer and department requirements as determined by the employer. Employees previously participating in a telecommuting agreement are not assured a telecommuting agreement in the future. Note: If telecommuting is considered as a reasonable accommodation, the employer and employee will follow the employer's ADA policy and process, to include proper use of appropriate forms and procedures.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW: The County Personnel Director and/or Administrative Officer will review this policy every 5 years or sooner as necessary.