

Sample Telecommuting Policy/Program

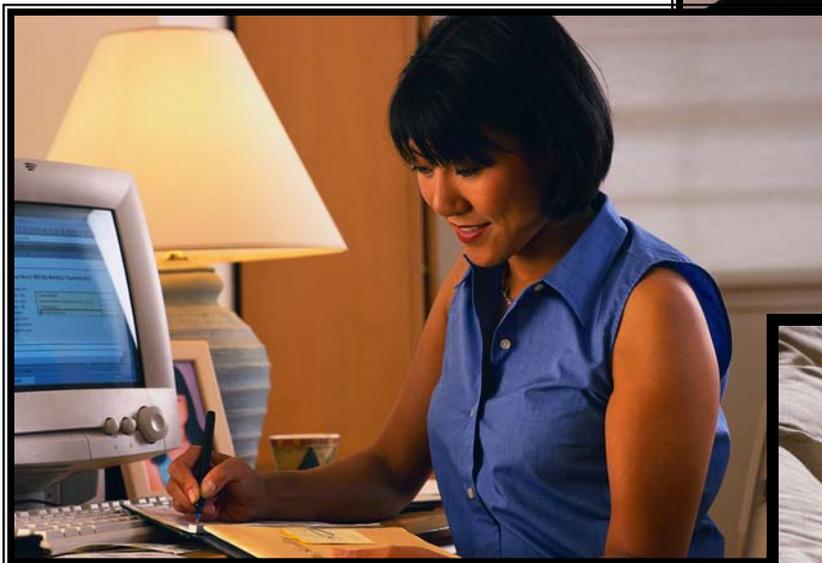


Home Office



Job Responsibilities

Flexibility



It's The New Commute Option!



Definition of Teleworking

Telework is defined as working at home or at other off-site locations that are linked electronically (via computer, fax, etc.) to a central office or principal place of employment. Teleworking is a cooperative arrangement between the organization and an employee, based upon the needs of the job, work groups, and the organization.



Purpose for implementing a Telecommuting program include:

Recruiting

- ◆ Extending geographic boundaries
- ◆ Being able to offer new and flexible work structures

Employee retention

- ◆ Providing alternatives to lengthy and costly commuting
- ◆ Providing employees more flexibility in choosing their city of residence

- ◆ Accommodating dependent care responsibilities
- ◆ Reducing recruiting and training costs
- ◆ Providing a flexible alternative to relocation

Office Space Cost

- ◆ Enabling satellite offices to be in non-premium areas
- ◆ Reduction of office requirements when employees work at home

Productivity

- ◆ Increasing productivity
- ◆ Decreasing distractions and interruptions

Absenteeism

- ◆ Reducing travel and geographic barriers
- ◆ Benefiting employees mentally and emotionally
- ◆ Providing reduction of long-term disability costs
- ◆ Accommodating emergency child care situations

Environmental Impacts

- ◆ Will comply with air quality ordinances
- ◆ Will reduce pollution

Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Recovery

- ◆ Will comply with emergency requirements
- ◆ Will increase emergency effectiveness

It Just Makes Sense!

Summary (Sample)

Three elements are needed for successful telcommuting:

- 1) work that is independent in nature
- 2) employees who are productive, responsible, highly self-motivated, and skilled in their jobs
- 3) supervisors who are willing and able to supervise without being in constant contact with employees

This Telecommuting Program is designed for selected employees who meet specific work standards and expectations. It is a program designed to meet production needs yet still respond to the changing expectations of a modern workforce and to reduce air quality hazards.

Program Eligibility

This program allows the telecommuting employee to work at a site other than [redacted]. This is a privilege, not a right. An employee is eligible to participate in telecommuting by:

- 1) Completing an application requesting consideration for telecommuting
- 2) Submitting application to supervisor. If approved by the supervisor, he or she will route the application to the department head. If the department head approves the application, it will be submitted to [redacted] for consideration. Final approval is at the sole discretion of the [redacted]. If approved by [redacted], a copy will be returned to the Department and copies will be routed to the Human Resources Director.
- 3) Review Process: All denied applications or terminations from the telecommuting program will be reviewed by the Human Resources Director and [redacted], whose decision will be final.

Program Guidelines

1. All participating departments will comply with these guidelines.
2. Departments will select employees for telecommuting based on job suitability, the likelihood of success as telecommuters, and the supervisor's ability and willingness to manage telecommuting employees. All participants (supervisors and employees) must have the approval of [redacted].
3. All telecommuting employees and supervisors will:
 - 1) comply with screening and selection criteria in order to enter the program
 - 2) agree to follow participation guidelines
 - 3) sign telecommuting agreement
4. Participation in the Telecommuting Program is voluntary. The Department head may, at any time, cancel the telecommuting agreement, permanently or temporarily. Except in cases of an emergency, the department head shall provide an employee with [redacted] days advance notice of a permanent schedule change and/or [redacted] hours notice of a temporary change. The employee must provide the department [redacted] days advance notice of his or her desire to return to a standard schedule at the normal work site. These timeframes can be modified by mutual agreement of the Department head and employee.
5. The [redacted] Department and the Human Resources Department will provide technical assistance, upon request.

Employee Selection

Telecommuting does not suit everyone. Employees with the following characteristics generally make good telecommuters:

- ◆ Volunteer for the program
- ◆ Self-motivated
- ◆ Satisfactory performance evaluations
- ◆ History of dependability
- ◆ Function independent of direct supervision
- ◆ Can deal with isolation
- ◆ Well organized with good time management skills
- ◆ Have an appropriate home worksite that includes privacy and lack of distraction
- ◆ Have an adequate level of job skills and knowledge
- ◆ Prefer the home environment
- ◆ Moderately people oriented
- ◆ Proven good work habits
- ◆ Views telecommuting as an alternative to the traditional work environment

Some positions require the use of equipment, such as a personal computer, that can be moved to an alternate location with reasonable ease. Other positions require the employee to be at a specific work area or require equipment and information not easily taken to an alternate location. Some employees and some jobs are just not suited for this work alternative. Careful selection and candid communication are essential elements to success.

Supervisor Selection

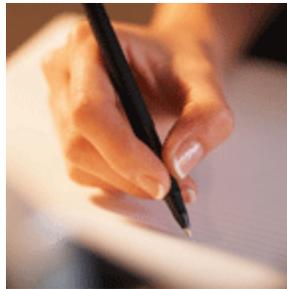
The supervisor must believe that telecommuting can work and be willing to develop realistic performance goals for the employee. Supervisory support and involvement is essential for a successful program. The supervisor must support telecommuting and adapt management styles to continue providing effective guidance. Telecommuting is not a reduction of responsibility. Participation in a telecommuting program requires good communication and management skills.

Participation Guidelines

1. Telecommuting is not a substitute for child or elder care. The telecommuter must provide child or dependent care in a manner that allows job responsibilities to be successfully met.
2. The duties, obligations, responsibilities, and conditions of [] employee are not changed by telecommuting. Employee's salary, retirement, benefits, and insurance coverage remain unchanged.
3. The telecommuting employee remains obligated to comply with all [] rules, policies, practices, and instructions. Violation may result in being removed from telecommuting and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
4. Work hours, overtime compensation, and vacation schedule will conform to the [] policies, Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and to any other terms agreed upon by employee and supervisor, except that, those terms may not violate the laws/provisions stated above.
No worker shall work more than [] hours per workweek as a result of telecommuting unless s/he has received prior overtime authorization, and is compensated for that overtime. The telecommuter will spend at least one regular workday per week in the office.
5. Employee will work at a designated location during the hours agreed upon. Employee will not work elsewhere, unless agreed upon with supervisor.
6. Employee agrees not to engage in employment activities other than [] assignments during telecommuting hours. Arrangements for flexible work schedules are subject to [] policy on alternative work schedule.
7. Telecommuters will have a method of receiving and responding to communications (messages, mail, bulletins, training opportunities, etc.) from their supervisors or department heads. This method should be incorporated in the agreement between the supervisor and the telecommuter.
8. Expectations must be pre-established between telecommuters and supervisors regarding work assignment(s), productivity level, and productivity measurements to be used when employee is telecommuting. The telecommuting program is not intended to extract more work from employees nor to encourage employees to work uncompensated hours.
9. [] provided equipment is not an entitlement for telecommuters. Departments may provide equipment, but are not obligated to do so. [] must pre-approve all arrangements for the use or installation of [] computer or phone equipment. Office supplies needed by the telecommuter will be provided by the department. All requests for equipment and supplies must be approved by the responsible supervisor. Use of [] equipment and supplies is limited to authorized persons for purposes relating to [] business. The employee is responsible for ensuring that equipment is used properly. [] will provide for repairs to [] equipment. Employee will cover all utility costs incurred while working at home.
10. When employee uses his/her own equipment for telecommuting, the employee is responsible for maintenance and repair of equipment. [] must pre-approve all arrangements for the use or installation of [] software or access to other [] systems. The employee will cover all utility costs incurred while working at home.
11. In the event of delay in repair or replacement of equipment or another circumstance under which it would be impossible for the employee to telecommute, the employee will be assigned other work and/or will return to [] work place.
12. Employee must designate a workspace at home that is maintained in safe condition, free from hazards. Telecommuter will be responsible for completing a home/work space safety checklist. Any accident must be brought to the immediate attention of the supervisor.
13. Given a minimum of 24 hours advance notice, an appropriate representative of [] may make on-site visits to the employee's home to determine that the work site is safe and free from hazards and to maintain, repair, inspect, or retrieve [] owned equipment.

14. Telephone charges directly related to [redacted] business, will be paid by the department. [redacted] is not responsible for the payment of utilities (heat, electricity, etc.) nor home maintenance costs.
15. [redacted] worker's compensation liability for job-related accidents will continue to exist during the employee's telecommuting work hours.
16. Telecommuter remains liable for injuries to third persons and/or members of employee's family on employee's premises. [redacted] is not liable for damage to the employee's real property. Employees are advised to check with their insurance advisor on the availability of incidental office liability coverage. This coverage can extend the home or rental insurance policy to cover "business pursuits" at the home. [redacted] is not responsible for determining insurance coverage issues.
17. The Department may pay for the cost of software and hardware modifications. The supervisor/manager, after consulting with [redacted], will obtain the necessary equipment.
- Ownership of the software and all files and databases shall remain the property of the Department. All software copyright laws will be strictly adhered to; in no instances will unauthorized copies be made of [redacted] owned software.
- Telecommuter will take all precautions necessary to secure [redacted] information and equipment in his/her home, prevent unauthorized access to any [redacted] system or information, and will sign an equipment security agreement. Telecommuter will comply with all Telecommuting Equipment and Security Guidelines including access procedures.
18. Smoking is prohibited at [redacted] worksites in compliance with State law and in order to protect the health of employees and coworkers, and to protect [redacted] equipment and work products. The same standards should be adhered to when one is telecommuting.
19. Any non-compliance with these regulations can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

A signed copy of these guidelines must be attached to each telecommuter's Employee-Supervisor Agreement.



Information for the Telecommuter

To be a successful telecommuter, it's necessary to work with less your responsibilities. Telecommuting isn't as simple as staying at planning and discipline. Described below are basic tools for your level of productivity.

Get organized. Having good work habits from the moment complete work away from the office.

The location. Identify a safe location in the home as a room for the office at home. Some telecommuters have room, a basement room or an attic for their workstation. Locate on the couch in front of the TV doesn't work!

Set a Routine. Set a work schedule for telecommuting days and stick to it. Begin and finish work at the same time on telecommuting days. This helps set a routine.

Replace the Ritual of Getting Ready for Work. Telecommuters will no longer have the traditional office rituals of morning conversations or coffee. Even the drive to work that symbolizes the beginning of the workday is missing. Set up new rituals for telecommuting days. Some telecommuters actually leave their house, go around the block, return, and begin the workday. Others play specific music or begin working after a morning exercise session or bike ride. Each work should find a ritual which will work for them.



structure and more freedom in completing home and working. It requires careful working at home and maintain or increasing

telecommuting begins makes it easy to

workspace. There is no need to devote an entire successfully developed a part of an existing the workstation away from distractions. Working

Make a Daily “Things-to-Do” List. Develop a list of goals and assignments for telecommuting days. At the end of the day, go over the list and see how much has been accomplished. It's helpful to start the list a couple of days before telecommuting. This helps to plan for all the resources need to support activities at home. Remember there may not be access to a FAX, copier, or even a computer at home. Plan the work accordingly.

Managing the Work. As a telecommuter, it's necessary to manage work efficiently. It's up to the telecommuter to make sure they keep well informed and continue with a high level of performance.

Maintain Contact with the Office.

establishing a buddy system with a trusted Frequently call the office or voice mail for telecommuting. Decide early in the day hours without any interruptions.



Be sure to stay in touch with the office during telecommuting days. Try co-worker or a secretary in the office who can be called once or more a day. messages and return phone calls. Don't fall out of touch when how accessible to be. There may be the luxury of working for three or four

Voice Mail. Voice mail is an invaluable using an answering machine while working office will tell callers to contact the

telecommuting tool. If there is no access to voice mail in the office, consider at home. It will enable storing messages when unavailable. Decide if the telecommuters directly at home.

Set up a System at Home. Develop a system for organizing the work that will be done at home. Without the time to organize resources and materials there will be trails of paper and stacks of references everywhere!

Stick to Deadlines. While telecommuting, follow the same rules for deadlines as in the office. **Don't miss deadlines.** When mailing reports to the office, send them so they arrive the day they're due or earlier. When sending work electronically (by modem or FAX) it should also arrive on time.

Keep the Supervisor Informed. The telecommuter needs to keep supervisors informed about the status of projects, progress, and any difficulty encountered. **Supervisors are clients that need information on a timely basis.**

Attend Gatherings. Attend office gatherings and group meetings. Don't become invisible because of telecommuting.

Train Family Members, Friends, and Neighbors. As a serious telecommuter, consider the work seriously. Be careful not to create a bad image for telecommuters. Train the people at home so there are not too many interruptions.



Office Supplies. Develop an understanding with family members about how office materials are used. Tell them what office supplies are for business only. The worker may want the work space to be off limits to other members in the household.

Don't Telecommute if There are Problems at Home. Avoid telecommuting on days when there may be friction at home such as family quarrels or problems. If there is an elderly family member, an infant, or a toddler needing care, it will be difficult to telecommute and complete any work. Wait until additional help arrives to take care of those needing help before starting to telecommute.

Telecommuting is NOT a Replacement for Child or Elder Care. Don't assume working at home means the ability to take care of children. There is more flexibility in accommodating childcare needs; however, it is not a replacement for childcare. When taking care of children and being a telecommuter, there are two jobs instead of one! This may preclude handling the job in a professional manner.

The same is often true when older family members can benefit from someone being home with them. The key is how much time and how many distractions occur because of this care. Elder care, when balanced with work needs, can be a powerful benefit of telecommuting.

These are areas that can bring the most benefit to the employee and their family, and in turn benefit the employer, but also requires the most careful thought. The needs of the workplace must be met and expectations and the ability to do the job fully understood. To succeed, there is the need for crafting a realistic and balanced accommodation. Too much compromise on the part of the employee or employer will lead to problems and failure of the Agreement.

Telecommuting Agreement



This is an agreement between (employer) and (employee) and shall cover the period from through .

This agreement establishes the terms and conditions of telecommuting.

The employee volunteers to participate in the telecommuting program and to follow the applicable guidelines and policies. The employer agrees with the employee's participation.

Duration: This agreement will be valid until canceled by either party.

Work Hours: Work hours and location are specified as part of this agreement.

Pay and Attendance: All pay, leave and travel entitlement will be based on the employee's official duty station. The employee's time and attendance will be recorded as if performing official duties at the office.

Leave: Employees must obtain supervisory approval before taking leave in accordance with established office procedures. The employee agrees to follow established procedures for requesting and obtaining approval of leave.

Overtime: The employee will continue to work in pay status while working at the home office. An employee working overtime ordered and approved in advance, will be compensated in accordance with applicable guidelines. The employee agrees that failing to obtain proper approval for overtime work may result in removal from the telecommuting program or other appropriate action.

Equipment: The supervisor and the employee must agree upon the equipment to be used in telecommuting. is not required to provide equipment for the home office; however, with the approval of the supervisor, the telecommuter may be provided with owned equipment necessary to perform work assignments.

| Equipment Description | Location | Serial # | Date Installed | Initials |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------------|----------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Maintenance of Equipment: Equipment provided by the employer must be protected against damage and unauthorized use. Employer-owned equipment will be serviced and maintained by the employer. Equipment provided by the employee will be at no cost to the employer, and will be maintained by the employee.

Cost: The employer will not be responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, or any other incidental costs (e.g. utilities), associated with the use of the employee's residence. The employee does not give up any reimbursement for authorized expenses incurred while conducting official business for the employer.

Liability: The employer will not be liable for damages to the employee's property resulting from participation in the telecommuting program. In signing this document, the employee agrees to hold harmless against any and all claims, excluding workers' compensation claims.

Workers' Compensation: The employee is covered by workers' compensation if injured in the course of performing official duties at the telecommuting location.

Verification of Home Safety: In signing this agreement, the employee verifies that the home office provides workspace that is free of safety and fire hazards.

Work Assignments: The employee will meet with the supervisor to receive assignments and to review completed work. The employee will complete all assigned work according to procedures mutually agreed upon with the supervisor.

Evaluation: The evaluation of the employee's job performance will be based on established standards. Performance must remain satisfactory to remain a telecommuter. Employees will not be allowed to telecommute during their "probationary" period or have received a less than satisfactory evaluation within the past 24 months.

Records: The employee will apply safeguards which are approved by to protect records from unauthorized disclosure or damage. All records, papers and correspondence must be safeguarded for their return to the office.

Participation in Evaluation: The employee and supervisor agree to promptly complete and submit telecommuting evaluation materials and to attend periodic group meetings.

Nullification of the Agreement: The employee may stop participating in this program at any time. Management has the right to remove the employee from the program if participation fails to benefit organizational needs.

The employee agrees to work at the office or telecommuting location, and not from another unapproved site. Failure to comply with this provision may result in termination of this agreement, and/or other appropriate disciplinary action.

Work Hours and Location: The following are the working hours and locations which are agreed to as a part of the Telecommuting Agreement:

Official Work Location:

Telecommuting Location:

General Work Hours:

| | Day | Hours | *Location O=Official Office T=Telecommuting |
|-----------|-----|-------|---|
| Monday | | | |
| Tuesday | | | |
| Wednesday | | | |
| Thursday | | | |
| Friday | | | |
| Saturday | | | |
| Sunday | | | |
| Lunch | | | |

Telecommuting Work Plan: (Include a description of duties; how work output will be reviewed and monitored; and how supervision will be provided.)

We agree to abide by the terms and conditions of this agreement.

Employee: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Approving Authority: _____ Date: _____