



Administrative Policy No. 18.80

Title: Teleworking

Applies To: All Department of Social and Health Services Employees

Information Contact: DSHS Human Resources

Authorizing Sources: RCW 70.94.521-551 (Washington Clean Air Act)
Executive Order 01-03
RCW 41.04.390

Effective Date: July 1, 2005

Revised: July 1, 2007, May 1, 2010

Sunset Review Date: May 1, 2012

Approved By: 
Senior Director of DSHS Human Resources

Purpose:

This policy requires Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) supervisors and managers to consider teleworking as a way of contributing to the DSHS commute trip reduction program without impairing service to the public, or the employee's ability to meet job requirements. Additionally, telework is recognized as a way to reduce employee sick leave, reduce training and hiring costs, increase employee productivity and morale, and reduce office space.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees of DSHS.

Definitions:

Official workstation: The city, town, or other location where the employee's office is located or where the employee is assigned to work when not teleworking.

Telework: At least once every two weeks, the employee works from his or her home, or from an office near the employee's home, rather than the employee's official work station.

Teleworking agreement: A written plan detailing the employee's, supervisor's, and appointing authority's agreed upon understanding of, and commitment to, teleworking.

Telework site: An extension of the employee's office workstation that is located in the employee's home or in an office nearer the employee's home than the official workstation.

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Policy:

This policy provides minimum direction and is intended to be flexible and applicable throughout DSHS. Managers and supervisors within DSHS organizational units may expand beyond these general provisions, as necessary, provided the minimum criteria outlined in this policy are met.

A. Telework Criteria

1. Teleworking is a management option. The following criteria must be met when implementing teleworking for a single employee, or group of employees:
 - a. The employee's job, or tasks of that job, can be readily completed at a telework site.
 - b. The employee is accessible to supervision at the telework site.
 - c. The employee's absence from the official work station will not:
 - i. Be detrimental to the work group's productivity or client/customer needs.
 - ii. Have a disruptive or negative impact on other employees' working conditions.
 - d. The supervisor considers the employee's performance to be satisfactory.
 - e. The appointing authority, supervisor, and employee are willing to sign and abide by a mutually defined teleworking agreement.
 - f. The supervisor and the employee are willing to participate fully in teleworking training and evaluation efforts.
 - g. Funds are available to provide the necessary resources for teleworking.
2. The supervisor's offering of, and the employee's participation in, teleworking must be voluntary. Either party may end the teleworking agreement with seven calendar days written notice. In cases of an emergency or alleged misconduct, no notice is required prior to ending the agreement.
3. DSHS considers the telework site to be an extension of the official workstation.
 - a. The employee's salary, job responsibilities, total work hours, benefits, and worker's compensation do not change as a result of teleworking.
 - b. DSHS may require the employee to travel to the official workstation at any time during the scheduled workday. No travel expenses will be paid for travel between the employee's home or telework site and his or her official workstation.

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- c. Other reimbursable travel expenses are outlined in the DSHS Travel Manual and the Office of Financial Management Financial and Administrative Policies, Regulations and Procedures Manual.
4. The supervisor and the employee must comply with all applicable laws, rules, Collective Bargaining Agreements, and policies including, but not limited to:
 - a. Work hours
 - b. Meals and break periods
 - c. Scheduling, including flex schedules, if applicable
 - d. Overtime
 - e. Leave
 - f. Employee conduct and ethics
 - g. Performance Development Plan
 - h. Disciplinary action
 - i. Labor relations
 - j. DSHS equipment and supply use
 - k. Worker's compensation liability for job-related accidents
 - l. Communication procedures
 - m. Confidentiality of DSHS and/or client information

B. DSHS Responsibilities

DSHS must ensure computer hardware, software, and equipment meet security and confidentiality requirements and:

1. Limit the use of DSHS-purchased equipment, software, supplies, and furniture at the employee's home/telework site to those authorized by DSHS in accordance with applicable DSHS administrative policies.
2. Ensure the employee complies with all DSHS policies relative to equipment and data security, data confidentiality, and hardware/software manufacturers' licensing agreements.
3. Ensure the employee receives prior management approval to:
 - a. Remove secure or confidential materials from the official workstation.
 - b. Access secure or confidential information through computers.

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4. Repair and maintain department-provided equipment, unless damaged through employee negligence.

C. Employee Responsibilities

1. The employee must make necessary arrangements for dependents during agreed upon telework hours to ensure the successful completion of the employee's assigned work duties.
2. The employee assumes responsibility for all costs associated with teleworking other than costs referenced in this policy and the teleworking agreement.
3. The employee must maintain an in-home telework site in a safe condition, free from hazards, and free from other dangers to the teleworking employee, others, and agency equipment.
4. The employee must not use his or her home to meet the public, including clients, in an official DSHS capacity.
5. The employee must remain liable for injuries to third parties and/or members of his or her family, or any damage at the employee's home telework site. The laws and policies of the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries will determine coverage of personal injuries to the employee at the telework site.
6. The employee must not use his or her own computer equipment unless it is agreed to in the teleworking agreement. Information Systems Services Division's "Remote Access Request and Agreement", form number 3-443, must be completed before allowing home based teleworkers to use personally owned computer equipment.
7. The employee is responsible for repair and maintenance of his or her personal equipment unless it is negotiated differently in the teleworking agreement.
8. A DSHS-provided surge protector must be used with any DSHS-owned computer.
9. Return any DSHS-purchased equipment, supplies, software, and hardware, etc. at the conclusion of the teleworking agreement.
10. The employee must use the SCAN and SCAN PLUS systems to place long-distance work-related phone calls when a landline phone is available. DSHS must ensure telephone services are available that the employee needs to perform duties from his/her home. This could be employer or employee provided, in accordance with the teleworking agreement.

D. Manager Responsibilities:

DSHS managers establishing teleworking agreements must:

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1. Provide basic information about teleworking, to include this policy, to participating supervisors and employees.
2. Maintain and report complete and accurate commute trip reduction data as required by the employee's administration.

E. Telework Agreement Reviews:

The supervisor and the employee must review and evaluate the telework agreement at least annually. The agreements may be reviewed more often if appropriate. The review should include:

1. Work accomplished at the telework site.
2. The impact of teleworking on clients or customers served by the employee.
3. Whether the cost of the teleworking agreement exceeds the predicted benefits.

To document completion of the annual review, the employee and supervisor must date and re-sign the original telework agreement.

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**Department of Social and Health Services
Guidelines for Teleworking**

DSHS understands the benefits of telework and agrees with the benefits listed in Executive Order 01-03. Each administration is encouraged to appoint a telework coordinator. The coordinator would serve as a resource and may perform some or all of the following functions:

1. Maintain copies of all telework agreements.
2. Produce reports, such as number of miles reduced, minutes saved, etc.
3. Train supervisors and employees on teleworking.
4. Coordinate with Telework Coordinators when assisting staff to identify alternate worksites.
5. Assist local offices developing telework procedures.
6. Develop templates for telework applications, agreements, telework terminations, etc. to be used throughout the administration.
7. Assist in adding telework to the local, regional, or administration Continuity of Operations Plan during a natural or manmade catastrophic event.
8. Develop a telework strategic plan including outcomes, targets, and metrics.

Administrations are encouraged to develop templates for use by all supervisors and employees interested in the option of telework.

A. Implementing A Telework Agreement:

1. Prior to approving employee teleworking, the appointing authority, supervisor and employee complete a formal teleworking agreement. The supervisor recommends approval or denial of the agreement to the appointing authority. If approved, the supervisor ensures the agreement includes:
 - a. A signed statement of agreement to abide by all applicable policies and procedures, including those unique to a particular office or work group and the requirement to abide by client confidentiality policies.
 - b. A work schedule including times to be available at each work site. This may include flex schedules and/or core hours.
 - c. The telework site location.

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- d. A description of the work activities involved.
 - e. Communication and work flow procedures, i.e., how phone messages are relayed, work assignments delegated, how the employee can be reached, if a cell phone can be used, etc.
 - f. A complete and accurate description of all equipment and supplies with appropriate inventory tag numbers to be used, including: phones, computer hardware/software configurations; and, who will provide and/or maintain the equipment and supplies.
 - g. An agreement to abide by all applicable data security procedures, as described in DSHS Administrative Policies and the Information Technology Security Manual.
 - h. Current single occupancy commute trips and miles per week, and projected weekly trips and miles when teleworking.
 - i. Effective dates the teleworking agreement will begin and end.
2. The supervisor maintains a copy of the teleworking agreement on file, along with any updates and documented annual reviews. The supervisor provides a copy, with any updates, to the employee. The original documents are maintained in the employee's personnel file.
 3. If the employee has a flexible work schedule, the agreement may cover both flexible work hours and teleworking.

B. Work instructions and Leave Requests:

1. An employee unable to perform assigned duties while teleworking will contact the supervisor for instructions.
2. An employee requesting authorization to work overtime, use sick leave, vacation, or other leave will follow the same procedure used when working at the official workstation.

C. Data Gathering:

DSHS may ask the employee to participate in studies, inquiries, reports and/or analyses relative to teleworking within DSHS. While the employee's individual responses remain anonymous, DSHS may compile data and make data available to management, the legislature, and/or the public. The employee's identity will remain confidential.

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