



REMOTE WORK POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Purpose

This policy and procedure was developed to provide guidelines and procedures for remote work option.

The Remote Work is a management tool that may be used to increase productivity and morale of employees, boost efficiency in the use of space, reduce operational costs, lessen the environmental impact of vehicle travel, and accommodate special needs of employees.

As of the adoption date of this policy, it is not the City's intention to utilize this policy to newly establish or transition any job classifications within the City to become full-time remote or permanently-remote positions.

2. Scope

This policy covers all City of Woodburn employees and employment applicants in all employment policies and practices.

Employees approved for remote work as a reasonable accommodation are not necessarily subject to all provisions of this policy.

3. Definitions

Ad Hoc Remote Work: Identified as occasional remote work from various locations, such as to address occasional child/elder care issues, recovering from an illness, inclement weather, on the road during business travel or training, or caring for an ill family member.

Home Office: A work site provided by the employee in the employee's residence.

Official Workstation: An employee's assigned place of work or duty station at a City location.

Regular Office Hours: The agreed upon set of hours during the day when the supervisor and co-workers can always communicate with the remote worker.

Routine Remote Work: Remote Work which is a regular and recurring part of an employee's work schedule.

Remote Work: Mutually agreed upon work arrangement between the City and the employee where the employee performs work at an alternate worksite on specified days and retains flexibility as necessary to meet the needs of the work unit.

Remote Work Schedule: A written schedule outlining the work schedule, duties, and performance standards for the remote working employee.

Remote Work Site: A workplace other than the employee's regular work location that is approved by the employee's supervisor as suitable for remote working. This location must be in Oregon.

Remote Work Site Safety Checklist: The self-assessed checklist required to assess risk hazards of the home office prior to supervisor approval of a Remote Work Arrangement.

4. Policy

It is the policy of the City of Woodburn to encourage the use of the remote work where it will be to the mutual benefit of employees, the City, and the City's stakeholders. The remote work is not an employee benefit intended to be available to all City employees, rather, it is a work option used at the City's discretion, such as flexible work schedules and alternate work schedules.

5. General Guidelines

- A. Not all positions at the City are appropriate for remote work. In general, jobs appropriate for remote work are those in which face-to-face interactions are minimal or that may be scheduled to permit remote work, and in which the employee can perform all aspects of the position remotely, as if the work was being performed in the official workstation.
- B. Remote Work does not otherwise alter the basic terms and conditions of employment including wages, overtime compensation, insurance benefits, paid leave, salary reviews, workers compensation, etc.
- C. All City and departmental policies, rules, and practices such as rest/meal breaks times and rest periods to express breast milk shall apply at the remote work site.
- D. Employees who work with confidential information will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

- E. Remote Work may be temporarily suspended due to the City's operational needs.
- F. Ad Hoc Remote Work can be approved by a supervisor on a case by case basis under this policy.
- G. Routine Remote Work requires a more extensive process to assure employee safety at the location they are working from and requires documented written arrangement that the employee and their supervisor work on together.
- H. While working remotely, the employee must be reachable via telephone, internet communication (such as online meeting platforms or e-mail), or other mutually agreeable technology during agreed-upon work hours, as if the employee was in the office.
- I. The employee's duties, obligations, and responsibilities will not change solely because of remote work. The employee will meet or communicate with the supervisor as often as the supervisor believes is necessary to receive assignments, review work progress, and complete work.
- J. Remote employees must be available for and participate in meetings in accordance with the normal demands of their job. Supervisors will ensure that on-site staff include remote employees in meetings as appropriate using teleconference or other electronic means. If necessitated for business purposes, remote employees are still required to attend meetings at an assigned work location as determined by the supervisor, even if such meetings occur on a day the employee is usually remote working.
- K. The City is not responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, property or liability insurance, or other incidental expenses (utilities, cleaning services, etc.) associated with the use of Employee's residence.
- L. Employees are advised to contact their insurance agent and tax consultant for information regarding taxes/deductions associated with home work sites and coverage for equipment that is damaged, destroyed, or stolen. The City will not provide tax or insurance advice.
- M. Each City department is responsible for determining the positions within the department that are appropriate for remote work and for developing department specific policies on remote work to supplement this policy as necessary.
- N. Supervisors should monitor the work environment for any negative effects a remote work assignment may have on the workload or morale of the co-workers of the remote worker and may need to suspend or terminate the remote work assignment to ensure equal workloads and harmonious relations amongst staff.
- O. When Supervisors find themselves leading from a remote work site, they must maintain an employee engagement plan that includes a predictable and reliable communication cadence with their staff and ensure that onsite employees still receive timely feedback on their work product and have the same opportunities for mentorship and training.

- P. Supervisors managing remote employees should regularly review and adjust their department workflows to ensure that the distribution of work assignments and duties between remote and onsite staff is both equitable and comparable. Supervisors must correct any processes that would default additional burdens or workloads to onsite staff over remote workers.
- Q. Remote Work is not an employee right nor do employees have any property interests in remote work. Remote Work arrangements shall be entered into voluntarily by both the employee and the City. Either the City or the employee may discontinue the remote work arrangement at any time and for any reason. Unless circumstances require otherwise, the City will do its best to provide reasonable notice (e.g. 10 business days) to an employee of discontinuation of their remote work arrangement. In no circumstances are employees entitled to due process related to any City decision on Remote Work issues, including approvals, denials, or a City decision to discontinue Remote Work, and all such decisions are not subject to grievance.

6. Eligibility

An employee is eligible for remote work with the approval of his/her supervisor and the Department Director provided his/her job requires minimal direct supervision and face-to-face interaction or where such interaction can be scheduled successfully to permit remote working. Each remote work assignment should be reviewed for costs and benefits, such as the nature of the job, equipment requirements and expected results. The remote work assignment should not create additional costs, risk, or hardship to the City.

A Supervisor shall use the following guidelines in evaluating an employee's request for remote work:

- A. The employee can accomplish the job without being on the premises for an agreed upon portion of the regular work schedule and without detrimental impact on the productivity of the work group.
- B. Clear work objectives can be set, tasks can be clearly defined, and results can be measurable.
- C. The employee can provide the appropriate equipment in the remote work site including, at minimum, a telephone, a computer that has internet access and is compatible with City software, a suitable workspace, and other equipment as appropriate to the employee's job.

- D. The employee shall have demonstrated, to the supervisor's satisfaction, the capability to work productively without direct supervision. Indicators include consistent high performance, reliable attendance, and positive attitude toward assigned work, self-motivation, and no relevant discipline problems in the employee's work history.
- E. Unless remote work is mandated as a part of their position description, the employee shall have indicated a willingness to participate in remote work to the supervisor.
- F. The employee has completed any probation periods for the position or has demonstrated successful competency in the essential functions of the position.

The City will make an exception to these eligibility requirements when an employee with a "disability" under federal or Oregon law requests remote work as a reasonable accommodation, which would be considered under the City's Reasonable Accommodation Policy.

7. Prior Authorization

- A. Employees are not authorized to remote work without written approval of the supervisor. Routine Remote Work also requires prior written approval by the Department Director.
- B. The employee's work schedule shall be outlined and be in compliance with wage and hour laws, City HR Rules, and any applicable collective bargaining agreement. The Remote Work schedule must specify which hours the employee will work on City premises and which hours will be worked off City premises.
- C. The location of the remote work site must be stated. If the location for the remote work site will be a location other than a home office, the remote worker must receive approval from the supervisor to use the location as the remote work site.
- D. The supervisor must consult with HR and the Information Technology if there is any question regarding the appropriateness of the location as a remote work site.
- E. The means by which the employee can be reached during off-premises work.
- F. The criteria that will be used to evaluate the success of the remote work assignment, how often the remote work assignment will be evaluated. At a minimum, the Remote Work arrangement must be evaluated by the supervisor with the employee on a biannual basis, but it is encouraged that the evaluation occur on a quarterly basis. This evaluation is in addition to the regular and consistent monitoring of the employee's remote work assignments.
- G. Any City owned resources the employee will use off-premises and the terms and conditions under which such resources will be used.

- H. Any employee resources that will be used and the costs that will be compensated by the City. Generally, however, the City does not reimburse costs associated with remote working and any reimbursements must meet the requirements outlined below.
- I. Employee must sign an acknowledgement that usage of their personal property is subject to public records law, as well as other state and federal laws, such as Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which may require the employee to grant the City full access to their personal property for inspection and duplication of the information contained in the property.
- J. Affirmation the employee has conducted a self-assessment of the risk hazards of the remote work site and that the supervisor has worked collaboratively with the employee to address any areas of concern.
- K. Remote Work does not otherwise alter the basic terms and conditions of employment including wages, overtime compensation, insurance benefits, paid leave, salary reviews, workers compensation, etc.
- L. City and departmental policies, rules, and practices shall apply at the remote work site.

8. Work Hours and Accessibility

Remote Work arrangements must comply with any applicable collective bargaining agreement and any applicable state and federal laws including wage and hour laws which regulate the payment of overtime for non-exempt employees. This includes the scheduling of rest and meal breaks even while the employee is working at a remote work site if the employee doing the same work at an Official Workstation would be entitled to rest and meal periods.

Employees must receive advance approval from their supervisor for any overtime work or flexing of their remote work schedule. Employees must also report to their supervisor any absences from duty during remote work hours in the same manner as if they were scheduled to be at their assigned duty station.

Employees shall not be paid for travel between the remote work site and the employee's official workstation. Any travel from the remote work site and meetings at locations other than the employee's official workstation shall be compensated in accordance with applicable laws.

Remote Workers will maintain accessibility via telephone, email, and/or text during agreed upon work hours or specific core hours of accessibility as required by the City. The remote worker and the remote worker's supervisor will determine who will be given access to the remote worker's home phone number.

The employee shall promptly notify the supervisor when unable to perform work assignments due to equipment failure or other unforeseen circumstances. Supervisors may reassign employees to another project and/or work location in the event of equipment failure.

8.1 Adequate Time in Office

- A. The amount of time spent remote working during a work week may vary according to each job, equipment needs and the individual Remote Work arrangement. Minimally, the remote work schedule must allow adequate regular office time for meetings, access to facilities and supplies, and communication with other employees and with customers.
- B. Business meetings shall not be held at a remote work site.
- C. Remote Work shall not adversely affect customer service or delivery, employee productivity, or the progress of an individual or team assignment.
- D. Remote Workers may be requested to attend “short notice” meetings. When possible and effective, telephone conference or video conferencing may be offered as an alternative to in-person attendance.

8.2 Family Care and Duties

The employee agrees to make arrangements necessary to ensure the employee is able to apply full attention to duties and assignment during the agreed-upon work hours. Remote Work is not to be viewed as a substitute for dependent care. The City recognizes that one advantage of working at home is the opportunity to have more time with dependents, but it is the employee’s responsibility to ensure that they are fully accessible during work hours and able to complete work assignments on time. However, there may be unplanned or temporary circumstances (e.g., an unscheduled remote work day in which schools are closed) when remote work may be appropriate. These short-term temporary circumstances should represent the exception and not the rule.

In these short-term temporary remote work situations, there can be a dual benefit for both the City and the employee. Provided the employee has a remote work arrangement in place and is remote work-ready, the City/supervisor can exercise discretion in determining whether an employee can accomplish at least some part of their duties from the remote work site. The focus should remain on the work, while striking a balance with the employee’s caregiving responsibilities. In effect, the employee could be allowed to remote work during the time they are not responsible for dependent care responsibilities and be required to take appropriate leave while

performing dependent care responsibilities. There can be clear benefits to the City when managers support employee efforts to accomplish at least a portion of scheduled work instead of taking leave for the entire work day.

Child care or elder care arrangements that require increased levels of care may require more communication about possible flexible work options (e.g., a change in work schedule or the use of leave during periods in which the employee is actively engaged in dependent care responsibilities), subject to Department Director and HR Director approval.

9. Equipment

If City equipment is used for remote work, the employee must exercise the same reasonable care for the equipment as would be expected in any City work site.

The security of City property in the home is as important as it is in the office. Remote Work employees are expected to take reasonable precautions to protect City equipment from theft, damage, or misuse.

City equipment and/or software may not be used by other household members or any other non-City persons. City owned software may not be duplicated except as authorized in writing by IT Manager.

A list of the City issued equipment should also be attached to the Remote Work schedule and updated as needed.

If City issued equipment is not otherwise available, remote workers may use their personal computer equipment and/or software for remote working purposes, provided that it is compatible with the City's configuration and approved by IT.

The employee will be responsible for the maintenance of their equipment and software, and for ensuring that the software is free of viruses in accordance with the guidelines set forth by IT. Employees must follow approved policies and practices with regard to protecting data. Remote Workers are encouraged to contact IT for consultation on appropriate hardware and software to minimize the chances of data theft or corruption.

The City will not be responsible for damages or losses that occur to the employee's equipment and real property resulting from the remote work process.

10. Remote Work Product and Records

Information produced by remote workers in the pursuit of City business is subject to public record requirements regardless of the ownership of equipment used. Employees may be required to provide the City with full access to their personal computer and

property for the City to respond to record or information requests, subpoenas, court or administrative orders, and investigations.

- A. Work done on behalf of the City at the remote work site is considered official City business. Products, documents and records used by/or developed while remote working shall remain the property of the department and the City and are subject to Department and City rules regarding confidentiality, disclosure, and records retention requirements.
- B. Any employee owned equipment used for City business could be subject to a public records request and require the employee to provide access to such equipment.
- C. Any records, products, or documents that are covered by HIPAA shall not be used at home without written permission from the employee's manager and appropriate measures to insure its confidentiality. Additionally, if any identifiable protected health information or personally identifiable information is electronically transmitted, it must be encrypted. If there are known or suspected breaches of confidentiality of protected health information or personally identifiable information, the employee must immediately report this to their supervisor and IT per City's Cybersecurity Policy.
- D. The remote worker will apply approved safeguards to protect City records and property. All records, correspondence, and equipment must be kept in a secure location to prevent damage, theft, or unauthorized disclosure.
- E. Release or destruction of any public records must only be done at the official workstation and only according to City policy, statutes, and regulations. The remote worker must adhere to confidentiality requirements of all data and records.
- F. Remote Workers must seek advance approval from their supervisor before removing supplies or equipment from City premises to take to a remote work location.
- G. Supplies required to complete assigned work at the remote work site shall be obtained from the City during the remote worker's in-office work periods.
- H. Only copies of documents and files should be taken to a remote work location. Originals should remain in the office, and copies should be properly disposed of when no longer needed. Any such items should be promptly and securely returned to City premises as soon as the remote worker has completed the assignment that required the usage of the item at the remote work site. Supervisors and remote workers are responsible for maintaining an inventory of items that remote workers remove from City premises and take to a remote work site.

11. Workplace Health and Safety

The City's responsibility and accountability for employees' health and safety while working at a Remote Work Site is essentially the same as that when employees work in their assigned City work location. For this reason, employees are required to maintain a designated work area at home or other approved Remote Work Site.

Remote Workers will be expected to set up and maintain a designated workspace in a safe, unobstructed and clean fashion and maintain a designated work area so that it complies with all laws regulating work areas. This includes, but is not limited to, the following basic safety precautions:

- i. Eliminate trip and fall hazards.
- ii. Ensure proper lighting, ventilation and appropriate furniture.
- iii. Avoid using a single power outlet for computer and other electrical extension cords.
- iv. The Remote Work Safety Checklist must be completed prior to any remote work activity governed by this policy. Any questions about the safety of a remote work site should be referred to Risk Management.
- v. Ad Hoc remote workers are also encouraged to participate in ergonomics training as a personal effort to identify and address potential risk factors associated with their work site(s).

12. Worker's Compensation

Standard worker's compensation practices apply to remote work and employees are covered by applicable laws for illness or injury occurring during the course and scope of work. If injured while working remotely, the remote worker must report the injury to the supervisor immediately, following standard City reporting procedures.

The City does not assume responsibility for injury to any persons other than the employee at the employee's residence or alternate workspace within it, or any other Remote Work Site.

Compensability of all workers' compensation claims are thoroughly investigated by the designated Third-Party Administrator. Depending on the nature and the severity of the injury, an on-site investigation may be initiated immediately upon notification. The on-site investigation will be performed by Risk Management staff or an investigative service provider acting under the control of the Third-Party Administrator. The investigation may include a site inspection with less than twenty-four (24) hours' notice to the employee.

13. Forms

Remote Work Safety Checklist
Remote Work Schedule template

14. References

Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990

[American with Disabilities Act as Amended, 2008](#)

Oregon Administrative Rules [Chapter 166, Division 200 City general records retention schedule](#)

Oregon Revised Code [Chapter 192 Records, public reports and meetings](#)

[Oregon Identity Theft Protection Act, ORS 646A.600 – 628. ORS 646A.622 \(d\)](#)

City of Woodburn HR Rules

[City of Woodburn Records Management Policy](#)

City of Woodburn Use of City Information Technology Policy & Procedures

City of Woodburn Social Media Policy and Procedures

15. Review of Policy and Procedures

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as state and federal regulations are revised and necessitate a change in the policy or procedures.

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