

SUBJECT:	Telework Program
PURPOSE:	Establish a County Policy for agencies to implement Teleworking as an option for eligible employees.
SCOPE:	This procedure outlines the policies and procedures that govern the County's Telework Program.
AUTHORITY:	Personnel Law Sections 16-106, 16-107, 16-108, 16-113 and 16-114
RESPONSIBILITY:	The Office of Human Resources Management Appointing Authorities Participating Classified and Exempt Service Employees

I. GENERAL STATEMENT

Prince George's County, Maryland ("the County") recognizes that in this fast paced and rapidly evolving society, there continues to be a need to consider innovative and alternative means of conducting business. The County believes that the use of non-traditional work programs, such as the Telework Program, can be a valuable motivation and productivity tool as long as citizen and operational needs are achieved.

The Telework Program provides employees with greater flexibility for maintaining work/life balance. It is an excellent tool to use for staff recruitment and staff retention. Also, the Program supports the County's goal to "Go Green" by reducing the number of vehicles on the road for daily commuting. This reduction will help to improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion. Finally, the Telework Program is a means to help ensure that government services may continue to be rendered during emergency conditions.

The Telework Program will provide employees of the Executive Branch, pursuant to any limitations imposed by the Appointing Authority, the option to work at home or at an alternative work site one (1) or two (2) days during each bi-weekly pay period.

Participation in the Telework Program is not a formal employee benefit, but an alternative approach to fulfilling the County's work program requirements.

Managers, supervisors and participating employees are expected to comply fully with the Telework Program requirements. The Personnel Law will prevail in the event of conflict between the Program and Personnel Law. Finally, managers and supervisors must consult any applicable labor agreements to ensure conformity with the terms of said agreement. This can be done with the assistance of the Office of Human Resources Management, Employee Services and Labor Relations Division.

II. DEFINITIONS

Eligible Employee --a permanent, full-time classified or permanent, full-time exempt service County employee. Employee ratings on two (2) consecutive, most recent performance appraisal evaluations must be at least satisfactory. The term “employee” or “employees” will be used interchangeably with the term “eligible employee” or “eligible employees” throughout this Procedure.

Remote Work Site -- a site other than the employee’s usual and customary work site. The remote work site shall mean the employee’s residence or any remote office location approved by the employee’s Appointing Authority.

Telework or Teleworking -- the practice of working at home or another work site instead of physically traveling to the employee’s usual and customary work site.

Work Plan -- a specific set of defined work duties to be met each time the employee works at a remote work site.

Routine Telework Schedule – pre-approved as an ongoing, regular schedule for an employee during the bi-weekly pay period. An approved routine telework schedule allows an employee to telework one (1) or two (2) days per bi-weekly pay period.

Situational Telework Schedule – Telework approved for a certain occasion or period, where hours worked were NOT part of a previously approved, ongoing and regular telework schedule. An approved situational telework schedule allows an employee to telework for one (1) or two (2) days per bi-weekly pay period, unless approved for additional days by the Appointing Authority. Examples include, but are not necessarily limited to, inclement weather, other hazard or emergency conditions, special work assignment, doctor appointment, etc.

III. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. Routine Telework Schedule

An employee wishing to participate in a Routine Telework Schedule will submit the Telework Request and Agreement (ATTACHMENT A), via their proper chain of command, to their Appointing Authority at least four (4) weeks prior to the effective date.

Employees granted approval to participate in the Telework Program pursuant to a Routine Telework Schedule, are required to complete a Work Plan (ATTACHMENT B). The Work Plan must be completed prior to and immediately after each telework day. Review and approval of Work Plan is required by the employee's Division Manager or designee.

B. Situational Telework Schedule

Employees may request to participate in Situational Telework. With the exception for requests related to inclement weather or other hazardous or emergency conditions that may impact County operations, a Telework Request should be submitted at least three (3) working days prior to the day teleworking is requested. A Work Plan must also be submitted.

C. Situational Telework Due to Inclement Weather or other Hazardous or Emergency Conditions

Employees requesting participation in Situational Telework pursuant to Section III. C. of this Procedure, should submit a Telework Request as soon as possible. A Work Plan must also be completed and should include normal, ongoing duties the employee could provide from a remote worksite.

Only those employees who have been granted approval for Situational Telework pursuant to Section III. C. of this Procedure, or those employees who have been granted approval for Routine Telework, will be allowed to telework due to inclement weather or other hazardous or emergency conditions. Employees who have been approved for Situational Telework pursuant to Section III. C. of this Procedure will be allowed to telework if the County declares an operating status of "Open with Option for Liberal Leave or Unscheduled Telework" or its substantial equivalent.

Employees must have all necessary tools and equipment available to them for teleworking and must present a description of the Specific Deliverables

(associated with the Work Plan) the next work day in which the employee is present at their usual and customary work location.

Appointing Authorities should review this policy to determine if it can/should be incorporated into the agency/department's Continuity of Operations plan.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

A. Eligibility

Eligible employees may request participation in the Program. Generally, sworn public safety employees will not be eligible for the Telework Program. The decision to allow an eligible employee to participate will be made by the employee's Appointing Authority or designee.

Unless a specific waiver is granted by the Appointing Authority or designee, in order to participate in the Telework Program, employees must have approval to use a County issued laptop at the remote work site.

B. Request for Participation In or Withdrawal from the Telework Program

1. An employee desiring to participate in the Telework Program pursuant to a Routine Telework Schedule will submit the Telework Request and Agreement (ATTACHMENT A), via their proper chain of command, to their Appointing Authority at least four (4) weeks prior to the effective date. "Effective date" means the first day that participation will begin.
2. The procedure in the prior paragraph will apply to a request to change circumstances under which a prior approval for a Routine Telework Schedule was granted (i.e., change date, location, etc.). For requests relating to a change, "Effective date" means the first day the change will become effective.
3. A request to participate in Situational Telework pursuant to Section III. B. of this Procedure must be submitted at least three (3) working days prior to the day teleworking is requested.
4. A request to participate in Situational Telework pursuant to Section III. C. of this Procedure must be submitted as soon as possible.
5. Prior to participating in any form of teleworking, an employee must receive written approval from his/her Appointing Authority or designee.

6. A request to withdraw from the Telework Program may be submitted at any time.

C. Consideration of Employee's Telework Request

1. The following should be considered when reviewing Telework requests:
 - a. Employee's area(s) of responsibility;
 - b. Whether the office will be able to continue to meet its workload requirements. The amount and quality of work produced should not be reduced by granting the Telework request;
 - c. Whether the employee has access to a County issued laptop at the remote worksite;
 - d. Whether the employee will be able to access all necessary and required information and technology systems from a remote work site (consultation with Office of Information Technology ("OIT") may be required);
 - e. Ability to maintain proper supervision;
 - f. Whether granting the request will maintain appropriate combination of experienced employees with less experienced employees that are present in the office;
 - g. The need to ensure adequate office coverage during normal business hours;
 - h. Services to other County agencies and the general public. Government services will not be impaired by approving Telework requests; and,
 - i. Requesting employee work history including performance deficiencies or discipline issues.
2. Telework Decision Options:
 - a. Approve Telework Request without modification;
 - b. Approve Telework Request with modification; or,
 - c. Deny Telework Request.

If the Request is modified or denied, the reason for the denial/modification should be documented and discussed with the employee. Moreover, an Appointing Authority may modify a prior decision regarding a Telework Request should circumstances warrant.

3. Timeliness in Responding to Requests
Appointing Authorities or their designees should make good faith efforts to respond to requests based upon the following recommended time periods:

- a. Routine Telework Schedule: at least five (5) working days prior to the Effective Date;
- b. Situational Telework submitted pursuant to Section III. B.: within 24 or 48 hours of receiving the request; and,
- c. Situational Telework submitted pursuant to Section III. C.: within 10 working days of receiving the request.

V. WORKSPACE

The employee's remote workspace will be considered an extension of the County's workspace. Before participating in the Telework Program, employees must provide a written description of the intended workspace on the Teleworking Request/Agreement. The employee's remote workspace should provide adequate work area (e.g., table or desk), light, telephone service, power and temperature control. Additional requirements may vary, depending on the nature of the work and the equipment needed to perform the work.

The employee agrees to maintain safe conditions, free of hazards, in the remote workspace and to practice the same safety habits in the designated remote workspace as in his/her office on the County's premises. Also, employees agree to maintain a workspace that is conducive to an effective and efficient workspace.

Homeowner's insurance and any changes in rates or coverage are the sole responsibility of the employee. The County is not responsible for any changes in rates or coverage.

VI. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Employees may use County-owned equipment at their remote worksite, with the prior approval of their Appointing Authority. The equipment will be used for County work only and its use at his/her remote worksite will not impede the work of employees working at County facilities.

Employees are to report all damage(s), lost or stolen County IT equipment to their immediate supervisor as soon as possible. Supervisors are to report all lost and stolen equipment to OIT and to Risk Management utilizing: Notice of Loss or Damage Report Form (PGC) #556. A Police Report should be filed on all stolen County IT

equipment reported and a copy of the Police Report will be provided to Risk Management.

The County will not pay or be responsible for any increase in the employee's home utility costs.

Office equipment needed to participate in Teleworking may vary by employee and task. The County will not purchase or reimburse a Teleworking employee for equipment necessary to function in a Teleworking environment. If permission is granted by the Appointing Authority or designee pursuant to Section IV. A. of this procedure, employees may use their own equipment (e.g., modem, answering machine, fax machine, photocopier, etc.) provided the County incurs no cost. Repair and maintenance of employee-owned equipment is the responsibility of the employee.

Employees utilizing a Telework schedule at a remote work site will still be responsible for adhering to Administrative Procedure 119-Electronic Information Policy and any other IT related policy.

Employees participating in the Teleworking Program may wish to consult their attorney, tax advisor or accountant regarding any legal or tax implications as a result of working at a remote worksite.

VII. AVAILABILITY

Employees shall remain available during their work hours. This includes phone calls, emails or texts should be responded to in a timely manner within the same business day (as they would respond working from a County facility).

VIII. LIABILITY FOR INJURY WHILE TELEWORKING

An employee participating in the Telework Program may be eligible for disability leave benefits governed by County Personnel Law Section 16-224 and Administrative Procedure 284 for injuries sustained directly in the performance of the employee's official duties at the remote work place and/or alternative worksite. The injury must have occurred while the employee was performing tasks assigned in the employee's position description or tasks that are appropriate to that position.

An employee who is injured while engaging in horseplay or injured during a lunch or rest break is not eligible for disability leave.

In addition, an employee participating in the Telework Program may be covered under the Maryland's Workers' Compensation Statute for sustained injuries arising out of and during the course of the performance of official duties at the remote work place and/or alternative worksite.

As a reminder, in addition to the other requirements set forth in Personnel Law and Procedures, employees are required to report all injuries to their immediate supervisor within 24 hours of the incident.

IX. HOURS WORKED IN EXCESS OF REGULAR WORKDAY

Employees in the Telework Program recognize that overtime must continue to be specifically ordered and approved by management. Appointing Authorities must ensure that the approval of Telework requests does not result in increased overtime/compensatory leave expenditures. This Policy shall not in any way alter the overtime provisions as provided in the General Schedule resolution or as provided by any collective bargaining agreement.

The current rules shall continue to apply regarding breaks. Employees cannot save break time in order to stop work prior to their scheduled end time.

X. LEAVE CONSIDERATIONS

A. General

An employee's work schedule, which should be reflected on his/her job description, will be adhered to by the employee. Employees are required to work their normal scheduled hours or otherwise account for hours not worked by utilizing approved leave. Unless granted prior approval from his/her manager or supervisor, employees must work all scheduled hours associated with Telework day.

Implementation of this Telework Program will in no way change current leave rules except as otherwise stated in this Procedure. As a general rule, the amount of leave to be charged will be equal to the difference between the number of hours the employee was scheduled to work on that day and the actual number of productive hours worked (if any).

B. Administrative Leave Due to Partial Closure

Unless otherwise directed, the following will apply:

If a delayed opening for non-essential employees occurs on an employee's Telework day, the employee will begin his/her work day in accordance with the County opening. An employee Teleworking during an Early Closing will be required to stop working in accordance with the County closing, unless otherwise directed.

C. County Family Medical Leave ("FML")

Employees on intermittent FML Leave will follow current leave rules and procedures. Employees on FML Leave for continuous periods cannot be required to work while on FML and therefore will not be eligible for participation in the Telework Program during these periods.

D. Tardiness

Tardiness of more than 15 minutes is to be charged in even increments of one-quarter hour of annual leave, unless charged as absence without leave by the Appointing Authority or designee. Repetitive tardiness may result in revocation of the employee's Telework Program participation, in addition to any disciplinary action that may be implemented.

XI. TIME REPORTING

Employees who are required to record their time in ETS, must add an "Off-Site Work Hours" transaction with comments to reflect their Telework hours.

XII. MODIFICATION, SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF THE TELEWORK PROGRAM

The Telework Program can be modified, suspended, or terminated by the Chief Administrative Officer. In addition, each Appointing Authority is authorized to modify, suspend, or terminate the approval of a Telework request as needed.

XIII. REVOCATION OF TELEWORK PRIVILEGES

In addition to any disciplinary action that may be imposed, participation in the

September 2, 2016

Telework Program may be revoked if an employee violates or abuses the Telework Program. Violations and abuses include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to continue to provide satisfactory work performance;
- Engaging in breaks that exceed the authorized time period without prior Supervisor approval;
- Failure to adhere to accurate time reporting;
- Frequent instances of unexcused tardiness or absences from work; and
- Participation in non-work related activity (excluding defined break periods) during scheduled work hours.

This Procedure shall become effective upon its issuance.

09/02/16
Date

Nicholas A. Majett
Nicholas A. Majett
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A- Telework Request and Agreement

ATTACHMENT B- Telework Work Plan

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ATTACHMENT A: Telework Request and Agreement

TELEWORK REQUEST AND AGREEMENT

Employee Name: _____ **Position:** _____

Remote Worksite
Address: _____

Remote Worksite
Description: _____

Voluntary Participation - The employee voluntarily agrees to work at the approved remote workplace indicated above and to follow all applicable policies and procedures. The Employee recognizes that the Telework arrangement is a privilege, not a right.

Salary and Benefits - The Employee understands that a Telework arrangement is not a basis for changing the employee's salary or benefits.

Official Duties - The Employee agrees not to conduct personal business while in an official duty status at the remote work site (e.g., caring for dependents or making home repairs, etc.).

Leave - The Employee agrees to follow established County/Agency/Department procedures for requesting and obtaining approval for leave.

Overtime - The employee agrees to work overtime only when approved in writing and in advance by the supervisor, and understands that claimed overtime work without such approval may result in termination of the telework privilege.

Remote Work Site Costs - The Employee understands that the County will not be responsible for any operating costs that are associated with the use of a remote worksite, for example, home maintenance, insurance or utilities. The Employee also understands that any entitlement to reimbursement for authorized expenses incurred while conducting business for the County, as provided for by statute or regulation, is not relinquished by this agreement.

Equipment/Supplies - The employee agrees to protect any County-owned equipment and to use the equipment only for official purposes.

<p>➤ Current Daily Work Schedule:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">○ Arrival Time: _____ Departure Time: _____</p> <p>➤ Requested Effective Date(s): _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Routine Schedule _____• Situational Schedule _____																							
<p>Telework Day & Weekly Schedule:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"><thead><tr><th style="width: 15%;"></th><th style="width: 15%;">Monday</th><th style="width: 15%;">Tuesday</th><th style="width: 15%;">Wednesday</th><th style="width: 15%;">Thursday</th><th style="width: 15%;">Friday</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Week 1</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Week 2</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> <p>I have read and understand the Prince Georges County Telework Program Procedure. I request to participate in the Telework Program.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 20px;"><div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">_____ Employee Signature and Date</div><div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">_____ Division Manager Signature and Date</div></div>							Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Week 1						Week 2					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday																		
Week 1																							
Week 2																							
<p>**FOR MANAGEMENT USE ONLY**</p> <p>____ Approved Without Modification</p> <p>____ Approved With Modification listed below</p> <p>____ Denied</p> <p>Comments: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>																							
<div style="margin-top: 20px;">_____ Appointing Authority (or designee)</div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;">cc: Employee Division Manager HR Liaison</div>																							

ATTACHMENT B: Telework Work Plan

Employee Name: _____ **Position:** _____

This Work Plan is intended to clearly define work expectations each time the Employee works at a remote work site. The Assignments and Specific Deliverables sections must be completed and signed by both the Employee and the Division Manager (or designee) *before* each Telework day.

After the Telework day, the Employee must provide the Work Plan and associated deliverables to the Division Manager (or designee) to complete the Acknowledgement of Completion section. The Employee and Division Manager (or designee) will initial the Acknowledgment of Completion section acknowledging satisfactory completion of the assignments performed while teleworking.

Employees who fail to complete this process and/or fail to complete the assignments to the satisfaction of the Division Manager (or designee) will not be permitted to continue to Telework. In addition, failure to complete work assignments may negatively impact the Employee's performance rating, and/or result in disciplinary action.

ASSIGNMENTS	SPECIFIC DELIVERABLES	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COMPLETION

Signatures required before each Telework Day:

Employee Signature

Date

Division Manager Signature

Date

ATTACHMENT C: Examples of Possible Telework Tasks

EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE TELEWORK TASKS

- ❖ Analysis
- ❖ Auditing
- ❖ Calculating
- ❖ Computer-related work
- ❖ Drafting
- ❖ Evaluations
- ❖ Planning
- ❖ Preparing Budgets
- ❖ Preparing Contracts
- ❖ Project Management
- ❖ Research
- ❖ Spreadsheet Analysis
- ❖ Writing (reports, policy development, letters or memos, etc.)

ATTACHMENT D: Guideline Questions for Determining Position Appropriateness for Telework

**GUIDELINE QUESTIONS FOR DETERMINING
POSITION APPROPRIATENESS FOR TELEWORK**

Please answer “Yes” or “No” for the following questions:

Responsibility	Yes	No
1. Does the position require the employee to have daily face-to-face interaction with co-workers or customers?		
2. Does the employee occupying the position require immediate feedback or the presence of a supervisor?		
3. Is there a significant degree of independent thinking for the employee occupying the position?		
4. Will the absence of the employee from the office adversely affect the organization, departmental assignments/projects, customer relations, or other work units?		
5. Does the employee occupying the position have clear work objectives?		
6. Does the employee occupying the position have a high degree of ability to control and schedule their work?		
7. Is there a significant degree of work which must be coordinated with other co-workers/team members?		
8. Is there a significant degree of in-office reference materials required?		