

## A Sample Telework Pilot Program's Guidelines

Use the sample below as an outline for your company's telework program and tailor it for your business' specific needs.



[COMPANY NAME] has established a pilot program to examine how teleworking can contribute to organizational objectives and employee well-being. This policy provides guidance for teleworkers, employees not teleworking, and management.

### **Purpose**

Teleworking, is defined by [COMPANY NAME] as the practice of working at home for a limited number of days instead of working at the [COMPANY NAME] office. Telework is a work alternative that [COMPANY NAME] offers to some employees when it would benefit both [COMPANY NAME], and the employee. Teleworking is not a formal employee benefit, but a work-scheduling practice that helps employees balance the demands of their work and personal lives. Teleworking is an earned privilege, not a universal benefit or employee right.

An employee's compensation, benefits, work status, and work responsibilities will not change due to participation in the telework program. Telework employees must comply with all organizational rules, policies and procedures.

### **Eligibility**

Candidates for telework must be employees of [COMPANY NAME] with a history of satisfactory or better performance ratings. The opportunity to telework must be approved by an employee's supervisor, who is ultimately responsible for the decision to continue or discontinue teleworking by the employee, following appropriate notification to the teleworker.

Selection of employees to participate in the Teleworking Pilot Program shall be based on specific, written, work related

criteria including:

- Employee responsibilities
- Need for, and nature of, interaction with other staff and external clients
- Need for use of specialized equipment
- Availability of other qualified employees on site
- Employee job performance

Employees that are considered for teleworking must be able to work independently, be a self-starter, and demonstrate attention to work time and productivity. An employee must have a satisfactory or better performance level with no record of performance or conduct issues. The resources that an employee needs to do his/her job must be easily transportable or available electronically.

The decision to allow an employee to telework will be made by the employee's supervisor in consultation with Human Resources. Eligibility and suitability of employees to participate in teleworking will vary around departments and business units, depending on the function and responsibilities of the employee. Each department must maintain some minimum complement of employees who work on site at the [COMPANY NAME] office in order to function effectively.

Teleworking is not an alternative to child or elder care and, when applicable, the teleworker must make appropriate arrangements for dependent care, unless there are extreme exceptions approved by management.

## **Schedule and Hours**

Telework hours and overtime hours may differ from regular office work hours, and must be specified in writing, and agreed upon by the supervisor and teleworker. A regular teleworking schedule, including specific days and hours, must be established. Generally, a teleworker will spend 1 to 2 days working from home with the remainder of the scheduled hours working in his/her office, on [COMPANY NAME] premises. The amount of time the teleworker is expected to work per day or per pay period will not change due to participation in the teleworking program.

Deviations from the agreed upon schedule should be approved in advance by the supervisor. [COMPANY NAME]'s policy will be followed for all absences.

Supervisors retain the right to require a teleworker to return to the [COMPANY NAME] office on a regularly scheduled teleworking day should work situations warrant such an action. This situation is expected to be only an occasional occurrence. If a teleworker is required to return to [COMPANY NAME]'s office during regularly scheduled teleworking days frequently, the supervisor may re-evaluate the compatibility of the teleworker's position and job responsibilities with respect to teleworking or the specific teleworking schedule.

Teleworkers are required to account for all time worked in accordance with [COMPANY NAME]'s timekeeping policies. It is the teleworker's responsibility to submit an accurate accounting of hours worked in a timely manner. If a teleworker is sick while working at home or uses other time off, the teleworker must report hours actually worked on his/her timesheet and use composite leave for the remainder of the hours.

## **Workspace**

Teleworkers must have an appropriate work area in their home that considers ergonomics, equipment, adequate workspace, noise and potential disruptions. The teleworker's off-site workspace should provide an adequate work area, lighting, 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.

[COMPANY NAME]'s liability for job-related accidents will continue to exist during the approved work schedule and in the teleworker's designated work location since the teleworker's homework space is an extension of [COMPANY NAME] workspace. The teleworker must agree to follow common safety practices and provide a work area for the employee and others who enter it. The designated work location must meet OSHA safety rules for the workplace including: smoke detector; working fire extinguisher; clear, unobstructed exits; removal of hazards that could cause falls; adequate electrical security, and appropriate furniture. If an at-home injury occurs, the teleworker must notify his/her supervisor immediately and follow [COMPANY NAME] policy for on-the-job injury.

Homeowner's insurance and any changes in rates or coverage are the responsibility of the employee. Any increase in

the teleworker's home utility costs (excluding increased telephone costs) are the responsibility of the employee.

Federal and state statutory abstracts will be posted at the teleworker's [COMPANY NAME] office location in lieu of posting them in the employee's home office. Teleworkers should review these notices while on [COMPANY NAME] premises.

Teleworkers should consult their attorney, tax advisor or accountant regarding any legal or tax implications attendant to working at their home or alternative site.

## **Equipment and Supplies**

Office supplies will be provided by [COMPANY NAME] and should be obtained during the teleworker's in-office work period. Out-of-pocket expenses for supplies normally available in the office will not be reimbursed. Teleworkers are responsible for all supplies, equipment, and/or materials provided by [COMPANY NAME]. All items remain property of [COMPANY NAME] and may not be used for personal or other [COMPANY NAME] use.

[COMPANY NAME] will reimburse teleworkers for other business-related expenses that are reasonably incurred in accordance with job responsibilities and approved by the supervisor in accordance with [COMPANY NAME] regular policies. Appropriate documentation is required if such expenses are submitted for reimbursement. [COMPANY NAME] required equipment is listed under JOB REQUIREMENTS.

[COMPANY NAME] does not assume liability for loss, damage or wear of employee-owned equipment unless otherwise agreed to in writing prior to the occurrence. Maintenance, repair and replacement of [COMPANY NAME]-owned equipment issued to teleworkers are the responsibility of [COMPANY NAME]. In the event of equipment damage or malfunction, the teleworker must notify his or her supervisor immediately. [COMPANY NAME] reserves the right to enter the home work area for inspection of the equipment, if necessary. Repairs to employee owned equipment is the responsibility of the teleworker. In either situation, the teleworker may be asked to report to the office until the equipment is usable.

Teleworkers must take appropriate action to protect company-provided equipment from damage or theft.

[COMPANY NAME] equipment must be returned to [COMPANY NAME] when an employee terminates or discontinues the teleworking arrangement.

Teleworkers may use their own equipment (e.g., fax machine, printer, photocopier) provided that no cost is incurred by [COMPANY NAME]. Repair and maintenance of employee-owned equipment is the responsibility of the teleworker.

## **Employee Access and Availability**

Teleworkers must be available by telephone and e-mail during scheduled hours, with the exception of their scheduled lunch period.

If it has been determined that you cannot be connected to the [COMPANY NAME] telephone system and/or computer system, call your supervisor. You may need to return to [COMPANY NAME]'s office. If you do not follow this procedure, you will not be compensated for time lost for these disruptions.

## **Security**

It is the responsibility of the teleworker to take all precautions necessary to secure proprietary information and to prevent unauthorized access. The teleworker is required to observe all office security practices when working outside [COMPANY NAME]'s office to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of proprietary information. Steps to ensure the protection of proprietary information include, but are not limited to, use of locked file cabinets, disk boxes and desks; regular password maintenance; firewall; and any other steps appropriate for the job and the environment.

Teleworkers agree to allow an authorized [COMPANY NAME] representative access to the home work area during pre-arranged times for business purposes as deemed necessary by the supervisor, including safety inspections, equipment installations and repairs, security assurance, retrieval of [COMPANY NAME] property and performance evaluations. To ensure hardware and software security, all software used for teleworking must be approved by the IT supervisor prior to installation and only approved bulletin board systems may be contacted. All software used for teleworking must be virus inspected and each PC must have virus protection software installed.

[COMPANY NAME] owned software may not be duplicated unless authorized through the license agreement. Restricted access materials shall not be taken out of the office or accessed through the computer unless approved in advance by the IT supervisor.

## **Liability**

It is the responsibility of the teleworker to maintain a safe, professional work site at home that is free from potential safety problems. Teleworkers must certify that their home is free from workplace hazards by completing a safety checklist.

In the case of an injury while working at home, teleworkers must immediately (or as soon as circumstances permit) report the injury to his/her supervisor or the Human Resources Department and request instructions for obtaining medical treatment.

## **Application Process**

Employees wishing to telework will complete a Telework Selection Survey and provide information concerning job responsibilities, proposed teleworking schedule, types of work tasks and activities to be performed at the off-site work space, description of the off-site work space and the equipment required. A decision will be made by [COMPANY NAME] management to select employees for teleworking.

Teleworkers will be required to sign a Teleworking Agreement and complete associated documentation.

Teleworking arrangements will be on a trial basis for their first three months and may be discontinued at any time, at the request of either the teleworker or [COMPANY NAME]. If a teleworking arrangement is discontinued by [COMPANY NAME], every effort will be made to provide two weeks advance notice to the employee. However, there may be instances where no notice is possible. Likewise, if an employee elects to discontinue a telework arrangement, the employee should provide notice to his/her supervisor.

Employees that are teleworking at the time this policy is adopted will be permitted to continue teleworking. Existing

teleworkers will need to sign the Teleworking Agreement and complete the associated documentation that is required of all teleworkers.

## **Income Tax**

It will be the teleworker's responsibility to determine any income tax implications of maintaining a home office area. The company will not provide tax guidance nor will the company assume any additional tax liabilities. Employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss income tax implications.

## **Evaluation**

Teleworkers will participate in all studies, inquiries, reports and analyses relating to this program.

Source: JDB Associates