



Telework Policy
Administrative Policy #42

April 2020

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the city of Portsmouth to promote general work efficiencies by permitting departments to designate employees to work at alternative work locations for all or part of the workweek. It is the intent to promote telework as a means of achieving administrative efficiencies, supporting the Continuity of Operation Plans and sustaining the hiring and retention of a highly qualified workforce by enhancing work/life balance.

II. STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY

This administrative policy is not legally required and alternative work arrangements to include telework are a privilege, not a benefit or employee entitlement. The City maintains the authority to determine if an alternate work arrangement is suitable for a position and/or specific employee and retains the right to discontinue any arrangements outlined within this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Alternative Work Location** means approved work sites other than the employee's central workplace where official municipal business is performed. Such locations may include but are not necessarily limited to, employees' homes, and satellite offices.
- B. **Central Workplace** means an employer's place of work where employees normally are located.
- C. **Telework** is an employee working from a home office or alternative location on an occasional or routine basis.
- D. **Work Schedule** is the employee's hours of work in the central workplace or alternate work locations.
- E. **Dependent Care** – The care provided to infants, toddlers, preschoolers, school-aged children, or adults and elderly adults.

IV. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. Telework

1. Telework assignments do not change the conditions of employment or required compliance with city policies and procedures.
2. A teleworker is responsible for all costs associated with an alternate workplace (i.e. home office) to include but, not limited to utilities, insurance, phone, and internet communication lines.
3. A teleworker must be accessible via telephone, within reason, during the agreed-upon work hours and must notify their supervisor if leaving the telework location, as would be the expectation when leaving the traditional office during the workday.
4. A teleworker must stay current on department and workgroup events and facilitate communication with customers and co-workers, who may be affected by employee's telework arrangement.
5. A teleworker may be required to alter his/her schedule and location occasion to meet operational needs to include but limited to attend meetings or training sessions, provide coverage during staffing shortages.
6. If the primary telephonic communication is through a cell phone or hands-free device the employee should only answer when it is safe to do so. The voicemail on an employee's cell phone and/or landline must meet the same requirements as City office voicemail. In addition, the employee is responsible for ensuring their voicemail can accept voicemails.
7. Employees must regularly take a lunch break of at least one (1) hour consistent with other city policies.
8. Teleworking is not a substitute for dependent care. Employees who telework are required to make adequate dependent care arrangements to assure that the employee's work time remains uninterrupted.
9. Employees' compensation and benefits will not change as a result of telework arrangements.
10. The total number of hours that employees are expected to work will not change, regardless of work location. In addition, employees eligible for overtime must ask for approval before working any overtime.

B. Procedures for Requesting Telework Arrangement

1. The Department Head in collaboration with the Chief Information Officer and the Director of Human Resource Management with final approval by the City Manager

will evaluate each request in accordance with established guidelines and operational needs to determine requests to telework.

2. Generally, employees must be employed with City for at least six (6) months before they will be eligible to telework. Exceptions may be approved at the discretion of management.
3. Employees requesting a teleworking assignment must have received at least a “meets” expectations on their most recent performance evaluation.

C. Management Responsibilities

1. Department Heads are responsible for ensuring procedures are in place to document the work hours of employees who telework ensuring compliance with Fair Labor Standards Act.

D. Equipment & Materials

1. The City will provide the laptop needed by employees to effectively perform their duties.
2. City issued equipment may only be used for authorized city business by authorized employees.
3. Employees are responsible for protecting City-owned or issued equipment for theft, damage, and unauthorized use.
4. City-owned or issued equipment used in the normal course of employment will be maintained, serviced and repaired by the Department of Information Technology.
5. When employees are authorized to use their own equipment, the City will not assume responsibilities for the cost of equipment, repair, liability, or service.
6. The City is not obligated to assume responsibility for operating costs, home maintenance, or other costs incurred by employees in the use of their homes or other alternate work locations for telework.

E. Use of Leave

1. Telework is not intended to be used in place of accrued paid leave.
2. The Director of Human Resource Management may determine whether it is appropriate to offer telework arrangements as an opportunity for a temporary, partial or full return to work from illness or injury or disability accommodations based on the applicable Federal, State and city policy.

F. Workers' Compensation Liability

The City may be liable for job-related injuries or illnesses that occur during an employee's established work hours in their alternative work locations.

V. Security of City Information

1. Employees must safeguard city information used or accessed while teleworking. In addition, employees must agree to follow all applicable security procedures to ensure the confidentiality and security of city information.
2. Work performed in alternate work locations is considered official City business; therefore, Department Head may establish specific conditions that apply to employees working in alternate locations.

VI. Remote Access:

When accessing the City network from a personal computer, Authorized Users are responsible for preventing access to any City computer resources or data by non-Authorized Users. Performance of illegal activities through the City network by any user (Authorized or otherwise) is prohibited. The Authorized User bears responsibility for and consequences of misuse of the Authorized User's access. For further information and definitions, see the Acceptable Use Policy. Authorized Users will not use City networks to access the Internet for outside business interests.

A. Requirements

1. Secure remote access must be strictly controlled with encryption (i.e., Virtual Private Networks (VPNs)) and strong pass-phrases. Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy
2. Authorized Users shall protect their login and password, even from family members.
3. While using a City-owned computer to remotely connect to City's corporate network, Authorized Users shall ensure the remote host is not connected to any other network at the same time, with the exception of personal networks that are under their complete control or under the complete control of an Authorized User or Third Party.
4. Use of external resources to conduct City business must be approved in advance by Chief Information Officer.
5. All hosts that are connected to City internal networks via remote access technologies with a personal device will be limited to remote desktop protocol only.

VI. Telework Agreements

1. The City may terminate a telework agreement at its sole discretion. Department Heads should give employees advance notice (one week is recommended) if a decision is made to terminate the agreement; however, advance notice is not required.

2. Departments and employees must agree to the terms of the telework arrangements before an employee may work at an alternate location.
3. The employee shall participate in any City-sponsored teleworking and/or technology training before the approval of a teleworking assignment.
4. Employees shall not conduct any unauthorized external (non-City) work during their telework schedule.
5. The City retains the right to make on-site visits to the teleworking site to ensure that safe work conditions exist and to maintain, repair, inspect or retrieve City-owned equipment, software, data, and/or supplies. When practicable, the employee will be given a 24-hour notice of an on-site visit by the City.

VII. Compliance

1. Employees are expected to adhere to all City rules while teleworking as they would if working at their regular office location on City premises.
2. Violation of this Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

If you have any questions regarding Telework, please contact Human Resource Management at (757) 393-8626.

Approved:



City Manager