



DODGE COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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| Policy # | Approval Date: 5/19/2020 |
| Policy Title TELECOMMUTING | Effective Date: 6/4/2020 |
| | Revision Date(s): 02/28/2023 |

I. Purpose:

This policy provides guidelines for telecommuting employees and outlines the expectations, responsibilities, and safety requirements for remote work. The goal of this policy is to provide telecommuting employees with the resources and support they need to work safely and effectively, while also ensuring the security and confidentiality of company information and assets.

II. Policy:

Telecommuting allows employees to work at home, on the road or in a satellite location for all or part of their workweek. Dodge County considers telecommuting to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some employees and jobs but not for others. Telecommuting is a privilege, not an employee right, and it in no way changes conditions of employment with Dodge County.

Telecommuting can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term project or on the road during business travel, or a formal, set schedule of working away from the office as described below. Either an employee or a supervisor can suggest telecommuting as a possible work arrangement.

Department Heads may, subject to this policy, develop and implement a telecommuting work schedule provided that the Department is open to the public under the established office hours of Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

A. Eligibility/Criteria

Individuals requesting telecommuting arrangements must have completed the required Orientation Period and must have a satisfactory performance record. Before entering into any telecommuting arrangement, the employee and manager, with the assistance of the Human Resources Department, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

1. Employee suitability. The employee and manager will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, as appropriate for successful telecommuters.
2. Job responsibilities. The employee and manager will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement.
3. Equipment needs, workspace design considerations and scheduling issues. The employee and manager will review the physical workspace needs and the appropriate location for the telework.
4. Employees are reminded during working hours they must comply with all existing policies as defined in the Dodge County Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual including, but not limited to: Computer Use, Electronic Communications, Use of Telephones and Other Communication Equipment, hours of work, meal/break periods, and confidentiality laws and regulations.
5. Tax and other legal implications. The employee must determine any tax or legal implications under IRS, state and local government laws, and/or restrictions of working out of a home-based office. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.
6. Any telecommuting arrangement may be discontinued at will and at any time at the request of either the telecommuter or the Department Head. Every effort will be made to provide 30 days' notice of such change to accommodate commuting, child care and other issues that may arise from the termination of a telecommuting arrangement. There may be instances, however, when no notice is possible.

The telecommuter may, at the discretion of their immediate supervisor, be called to work at their centrally located worksite at the County on any telecommuting day during their regular work hours to meet workload requirements.

III. Standards:

A. Equipment

On a case-by-case basis, Dodge County will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, modems, phone and data lines and other office equipment) for each telecommuting arrangement. The Human Resources and Information Technology Departments will serve as resources in this matter. Equipment supplied by the County will be maintained by the County. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the County, will be maintained by the employee. County laptop with working speakers, web camera and earphone jack; County cellular phone, wireless mouse, mobile monitor; and earphones are approved for telecommuting. County desktop monitors and computers, printers, scanners, headsets, voip desk phones, and County office peripherals are not approved for telecommuting and must stay within a County building. Personal devices including: printers, scanners, internet, monitors, wireless are approved to be used with a County laptop, however, County IT support staff cannot support or troubleshoot personal devices.

Home office setup requires the following:

- Dedicated workspace meeting requirements of the Dodge County Telecommute Safety Checklist including: General Safety, Fire Safety, Ergonomics, and Security
- Reliable High Speed Internet with 25mbps download or higher
- Wired internet access or secured wireless with encryption password (Cellular hotspots are not allowed with the exception of a county-issued hotspot)

The County accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. The County reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the County is to be used for County business purposes only. The telecommuter must sign an inventory of all County property received and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment or arrangement, all County property will be returned to the Department within seven (7) days, unless other arrangements have been made.

When using County equipment or software, the telecommuter must follow all software-licensing provisions agreed to by the County.

Dodge County will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary. The County will also reimburse the employee for business-related expenses, such as phone calls and shipping costs that are reasonably incurred in carrying out the employee's job responsibilities with prior approval for the expenses from the Supervisor and/or Department Head.

The County reserves the right to pursue recovery from the employee for any County property deliberately or negligently damaged or destroyed while in employee's care, custody, and control.

B. Work Environment

Telecommuting employees are responsible for setting up a safe and ergonomic work environment in their home workspace. This includes following ergonomic best practices, such as using an ergonomic chair and keyboard, and maintaining proper posture and lighting. The County will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.

Employees are required to review and follow the Policies; including but limited to:

HR Policy 304 – Computer Use

HR Policy 305 - Ethics

HR Policy 309 – Social Media

HR Policy 310 – Use of Telephones and Other Communication Equipment

HR Policy 314 – Texting Policy

C. Security

Consistent with the County's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of confidential County and client/customer information accessible from their home office at all times and follow all security compliances. Steps include: taking only minimally necessary confidential information out of the office, use of locked file cabinets and desks, performing regular password maintenance, using the County VPN at all times, using multi-factor-authentication (MFA) to access County systems remotely, logging off and shutting down a County laptop when not in use, preventing inadvertent disclosure, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

D. Safety

Employees are responsible for maintaining their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards, similar to what is provided in the County's physical work environment. Injuries sustained by the employee in a home office location and in conjunction with his or her regular work duties may be covered by the County's workers' compensation policy. The

County reserves the right to perform safety audits to assess the home work environment to identify and mitigate any potential safety risks or in the event of a work-related injury in the home environment. Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying the employer of such injuries as soon as practicable. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to his or her home worksite.

E. Childcare

Telecommuting is not a replacement for appropriate childcare and alternative childcare must be arranged. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate child care needs, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting County demands. Prospective telecommuters are encouraged to discuss expectations of telecommuting with family members prior to beginning telecommuting.

F. Time Worked

Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all hours worked using the Kronos time-keeping system. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval of the telecommuter's supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the immediate termination of the telecommuting arrangement.

G. Ad Hoc Arrangements

Temporary telecommuting arrangements may be approved for circumstances such as inclement weather, special projects or business travel. These arrangements are approved on an as-needed basis only, with no expectation of ongoing continuance.

Consideration will be given for other informal, short-term arrangements requested by the employee for extenuating circumstances this may include family or medical leave with consent of the employee's health care provider and approval by the Department Head and Human Resources Department.

All ad hoc telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the County.

Employees who are sick or have restrictions are not eligible to telecommute. In these circumstances, employees are expected to stay at home and take the necessary time off to recover. Telecommuting may be a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Requests for telecommuting as an accommodation are on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the essential functions of the employee's job and the impact of telecommuting on the business operations. An employee seeking a reasonable accommodation under the ADA must make a request to their supervisor to begin the interactive process.

IV. Procedure

- A. A Telecommuting Request Form and signed Dodge County Telecommute Safety Checklist must be completed by the employee and submitted to the Department Head/County Administrator for approval prior to beginning telecommuting. The telecommuting schedule consists of preset days of the week and hours as defined and approved in the

Telecommuting Request Form. Any changes to the schedule requires submission of a new Telecommuting Request.

- B. Approval or denials by the Department Head (or County Administrator) of such requests must be in writing and provided to the employee.
- C. All completed and approved requests and denials must be sent to the Human Resources Department to be placed in the employee's personnel file.
- D. Any request for telecommuting outside the parameters defined in this policy must be reviewed and approved by the County Administrator and Human Resources Department Director.

V. Guidelines

Dodge County Telecommute Safety Checklist



Dodge County Telecommute Safety Checklist

Ensuring the Home Office is Safe

| General | Yes | No |
|--|------------|-----------|
| 1 Workspace is away from noise, distractions, and is devoted to your work needs? | | |
| 2 Workspace accommodates workstation, equipment, and related material? | | |
| 3 Floors are clear and free from hazards? | | |
| 4 File drawers are not top-heavy and do not open into walkways? | | |
| 5 Phone lines and electrical cords are secured under a desk or along wall, and away from heat sources? | | |
| 6 Temperature, ventilation, and lighting are adequate? | | |
| 7 All stairs with four or more steps are equipped with handrails? | | |
| 8 Carpets are well secured to the floor and free of frayed or worn seams? | | |
| Fire Safety | Yes | No |
| 9 There is a working smoke detector in the workspace area? | | |
| 10 A home multi-use fire extinguisher, which you know how to use, is readily available? | | |
| 11 Walkways aisles, and doorways are unobstructed? | | |
| 12 Workspace is kept free of trash, clutter, and flammable liquids? | | |
| 13 All radiators, portable heaters, and candles are located away from flammable items? | | |
| 14 You have an evacuation plan so you know what to do in the event of a fire? | | |
| Electrical Safety | Yes | No |
| 15 Sufficient electrical outlets are accessible? | | |
| 16 Computer equipment is connected to a surge protector? | | |
| 17 Electrical system is adequate for office equipment? | | |
| 18 All electrical plugs, cords, outlets, and panels are in good condition? No exposed/damaged wiring? | | |
| 19 Equipment is placed close to electrical outlets? | | |
| 20 Extension cords and power strips are not daisy chained and no permanent extension cord is in use? | | |
| 21 Equipment is turned off when not in use? | | |

| Computer Workstation | | Yes | No |
|---------------------------------------|---|------------|-----------|
| 22 | Chair casters (wheels) are secure and the rungs and legs of the chair are sturdy? | | |
| 23 | Chair is adjustable? | | |
| 24 | Your back is adequately supported by a backrest? | | |
| 25 | Your feet are on the floor or adequately supported by a footrest? | | |
| 26 | You have enough leg room at your desk? | | |
| 27 | There is sufficient light for reading? Identify if task lighting is needed to provide additional light to avoid eye strain. | | |
| 28 | The computer screen is free from noticeable glare? | | |
| 29 | The top of the screen is at eye level? | | |
| 30 | There is space to rest the arms while not keying? | | |
| Other Safety/Security Measures | | Yes | No |
| 31 | Files and data are secure? | | |
| 32 | Materials and equipment are in a secure place that can be protected from damage and misuse? | | |
| 33 | You have an inventory of all equipment in the office including serial numbers? | | |
| 34 | If applicable, do you use up-to-date anti-virus software, keep virus definitions up-to-date, and run regular scans? | | |
| | | | |
| | Employee Signature | | |
| | Date | | |
| | Supervisor Signature | | |
| | Date | | |
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