

Amendment to the Village of Jackson Employee Policy Manual

1.14 (A.) Public Health Emergency Tele-Work (Telecommuting) Policy

In the event of a public health emergency, the Village may provide supplies, equipment, and materials necessary for employees to perform their jobs from home. These items are to be used solely for Village-related business. The Village expects that employees and volunteers will not:

1. Obtain, use, or divert Village property, including records, for personal use and/or benefit.
2. Materially alter or destroy Village property or records without proper authorization.
3. Borrow or use Village property, unless for Village work-related use. Any removal of Village property for personal non-work-related use is not permissible.

Employees are expected to exercise care in the use of Village equipment and property and use such property only for authorized purposes. Loss, damages, or theft of Village property should be reported to the supervisor immediately. Negligence in the care and use of Village property may be considered grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

I. PURPOSE

Telecommuting is an arrangement in which an employee may work at a place different than the traditional workplace, typically their home, for the benefit of the employees and the organizational needs of the Village of Jackson.

II. POLICY

Telecommuting arrangements may vary for individuals or positions. The determination as to whether any position, assignment, or employee is a good fit for telecommuting is at the sole discretion of the Village Administrator and Department Head.

- Telecommuting is not an entitlement of any employee.
- It is the employee's responsibility to communicate any issues or concerns regarding the telecommuting arrangement with his/her supervisor as soon as possible.
- Telecommuting employees must comply with all Village policies. Failure to comply with this policy or other Village policies may result in discipline, up to and including discharge.

Management retains the right to modify the telecommuting agreement and to remove the employee from the arrangement for any reason. With proper notice, the employee may stop participating in the telecommuting arrangement at any time.

III. DISCUSSION

Employees who may be asked to engage in a telecommuting arrangement must meet the following criteria:

1. A history of reliable and responsible completion of work duties at a performance level that is Consistent or higher.
2. Employee must demonstrate a history of and maintain regular, punctual and predictable attendance.
3. Employee must provide broad band internet access at their own expense.
4. Employee must utilize a Village-owned computer.

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If an individual meets the above criteria and is asked to engage in a telecommuting arrangement, the position of the person will be evaluated to determine suitability for telecommuting.

IV. PROCEDURES

Managers should consider the following when considering an employee for telecommuting:

- Face-to-face communication is not a daily requirement of the position and communication can be effectively accomplished over the telephone, e-mail, via mail, or other appropriate means.
- The individual already works in a self-directed role and produces clearly defined output and work products or the work activities are measurable.
- The employee must be self-motivated, self-disciplined, self-directed with the ability to establish, manage, communicate, and collaboratively determine priorities.
- The employee must clearly demonstrate skills in planning, organizing, managing time, and meeting clear standards and objectives.
- The employee must maintain regular, punctual and predictable attendance.
- The employee must maintain a performance level that is “Consistent” or above.
- The employee should make every effort to maintain a safe and ergonomically sound home office free from distractions.

The employee agrees to be available during their scheduled work hours for communication through phone, e-mail, in-person, or other appropriate communication tools (text or chat/conference apps). Employee initiated schedule changes must be approved by their supervisor.

On occasion, it may be possible for employees to teleconference into the meetings that are scheduled on telecommuting workdays.

The employee will communicate with the supervisor according to procedures previously agreed upon to receive assignments and to review completed work as necessary. All records, papers, and correspondence done at the telecommuting location are considered the Village’s business and may be subject to open records disclosure. The employee will apply safeguards to protect records from unauthorized disclosure or damage. The employee agrees to maintain all information which is protected by federal or state regulations in a confidential manner. Phone contacts involving such information will be conducted in a private area. Passwords and protected entry codes to the Village’s software will be kept confidential. The employee agrees that family members and others will not have access to protected information at any time.

Home Office Requirements:

Employees asked to telecommute must have safe and adequate workspace to work from home. Following are criteria that must be met for home office safety requirements:

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- The temperature, noise, ventilation, and lighting levels of the dedicated office area must be adequate for maintaining normal levels of job performance.
- File cabinet doors and drawers are arranged so they do not open into walkways.
- Phone lines, electrical cords, and other extension wires are secured.
- Aisles, corners, and doorways in the work area are free of obstructions.

In addition to meeting safety requirements in the home office, a telecommuting workstation must be ergonomically suited for the employee. Employees will be responsible for ensuring they maintain the following ergonomic guidelines while working from home:

- Chair should be adjusted so feet are flat on floor or footrest and legs are vertical to ground.
- Computer monitor should be directly centered in front of the user. User should not have to look up, down, left or right for better viewing. Additionally, the monitor should be at a comfortable viewing distance.
- Use good posture when keyboarding. Elbows should be at a 90-degree angle. Wrists should be level with the keyboard.

Equipment:

The Village reserves the right to make the determination as to the appropriate equipment which is subject to change at any time. Equipment needs may be periodically assessed by the Information Technology Department to ensure that the individual is equipped for telecommuting based on the needs of the position. The Village may provide necessary computer and telephone equipment for a fully functional real and virtual office for employees who telecommute on a routine basis.

The employee will be responsible for providing Internet connectivity that is at least a standard speed (which doesn't impede the employee from completing online work in an efficient manner). Connectivity should be checked before the employee begins working remotely.

The Village's Information Technology Department may supply the following equipment for approved telecommuters:

- Village laptop pre-loaded with required standard programs
- VoIP capable phone that connects to internal phone system
- Printer, if required for the job
- Instructions and training on how to get connected to the internal network

The costs related to the equipment, installation and maintenance may be the responsibility of the requesting department.

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In no event shall the use of the Village's equipment change the ownership of or impede the Village's access to the equipment. All equipment and materials provided by the Village shall remain the Village's property. The employee agrees to return all Village owned furniture, equipment, and supplies in proper working condition and agrees to take financial responsibility for missing and/or broken items upon the termination of the telecommuting arrangement or termination from employment. If the employee's own home equipment such as personal cell phone or home phone is used, it will be at the employee's expense. Special supplies not normally provided by the Village (ink cartridges, toner, etc.) may be the employee's responsibility. Expenses for supplies normally available in the office may or may not be reimbursed depending on the circumstances.

Equipment provided by the Village must not be used for purposes other than Village business and must be kept in a secure, confidential location, and protected against damage and unauthorized use.

Village-owned equipment will be serviced and maintained by the Village. Equipment provided by the employee will be at no cost to the Village and will be maintained by the employee.

If equipment requires repair or replacement where it is impossible for the employee to work at the remote location, the employee may suffer loss of pay for hours not worked. Any lost hours may be made up within the confines of the Fair Labor Standards Act and/or the departmental policies.

The Village will not be responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, or any other incidental costs (e.g. utilities) associated with the use of the employee's residence. The Village is not responsible for insuring any personal equipment in the employee's remote office. The employee understands that he or she is responsible for any tax and insurance from this arrangement and for conforming to any local zoning regulations.

Liability:

The Village will not be liable for damages to the employee's property resulting from participation in the telecommuting program. By participating in the telecommuting arrangement, the employee agrees to hold the Village harmless against any and all claims including injuries to others at the telecommuting location.

If an employee is injured while working at home, the employee should follow the Village's established procedures for reporting on-the-job injuries.

Employment Laws:

Telecommuting employees will be held to the same employment law standards as employees in the traditional office. They will adhere to normal work schedules and will have to obtain prior management approval for any change to their normal work schedule (including overtime).

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Time Off:

Telecommuting employees agree to follow established procedures for requesting and obtaining approval of leave, including Paid Time Off. If a telecommuting employee is ill, he or she must follow the Village's Attendance Policy.

PTO:

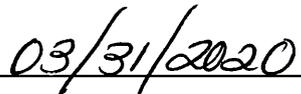
Telecommuting may be used as a temporary arrangement in lieu of paid time off at the discretion of the Village Administrator and Department Head.

Miscellaneous:

A Tele-Work (Telecommuting) Request form must be completed and signed by the Employee, Department Head, and the Village Administrator. This will be considered a binding agreement.



John M. Walther – Administrator



Date:

