



ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

SECTION: 300 – Human Resources	POLICY#: 311
TITLE: Telecommuting / Remote Work	R & O #: –XX-XXX
	IMPLEMENTED BY PROCEDURE #: 311-A
SPONSORING DEPT/DIV: Support Services/Human Resources	
ADOPTED: XX/XXXX	REVIEWED:

PURPOSE: This policy supports departments in the ability to provide telecommuting as an effective management tool resulting in sustaining hiring and retention of a highly qualified workforce. Embracing and maximizing the appropriate use of telecommuting will support the County’s sustainability efforts including reduced commuting miles, resource conservation, and supporting a healthy environment.

Telecommuting is not a formal, universal employee benefit, and there is no pay differential for participating or not participating in remote work. Telecommuting is a work alternative that may be offered to some employees when it is mutually beneficial to the employee, the County and the community we serve.

AUTHORITY: The policy is in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), Oregon Administrative Rules (ORS 839-026-0020 and 839-020-0040), and Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS 240.855).

DEFINITIONS:

Appointing Authority: A Department Head (elected or appointed) or designee with the authority of Appointment for any County Position within their Department.

Telecommuting or Remote Work: The practice of working in a home office in lieu of traveling to a central County workplace.

Reasonable efforts: Actions that do not impose an undue hardship on the operation or community members of Washington County.

Telecommuting Agreement: A document signed by the employee, supervisor and Appointing Authority that describes the conditions of each telecommuting arrangement.

Undue hardship: Significant difficulty, expense, or impact on services or operational

needs.

GENERAL POLICY:

This policy provides a general framework for telecommuting and does not address the special considerations and needs of each individual. The County will make a reasonable effort to afford employees the opportunity to telecommute provided it does not impose an undue hardship on business and operational needs or negatively impact services to the community. Telecommuting will be available where the Appointing Authority determines there is mutual benefit to the employee, staff, department, and service requirements.

Telecommuting is evaluated on a case-by-case basis with advanced authorization. It is a privilege and not a right of an employee or position. Eligibility has three components: Position suitability, employee ability, and location conditions. It is intended that telecommuting will not result in additional expenses to the department or IT Services in administering, implementing, and monitoring an employees' work.

Telecommuting does not change the employee's duties, obligations, responsibilities, or terms and conditions of employment. Telecommuting employees must comply with all County and departmental rules, policies, practices, and instructions.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to obstruct or interfere with management's right to modify, suspend, or dissolve a Telecommuting Agreement for an individual staff member, team, division or department at any time and in its sole discretion.

APPLICABILITY: This policy and related implementing procedures apply to all Washington County employees.

POLICY GUIDELINES:

1. Departmental Authority:

- 1.1. The Appointing Authority may determine the extent to which their department, division or workgroup may participate in the County's telecommuting program.
- 1.2. A supervisor, manager, or Appointing Authority may modify, suspend, or end a Telecommuting Agreement for an individual or team at any time.

2. Telecommuting Agreements:

- 2.1. All employees who telecommute must have an approved Telecommuting Agreement on file with their department which defines the terms of the telecommuting arrangement (e.g. equipment, software, alternate workspace, and tasks to be performed) and which is signed by the employee, supervisor, and Appointing Authority.
- 2.2. Employees who may telecommute on an occasional basis should complete a Telecommuting Agreement to be used when needed.
- 2.3. Employees are not authorized to telecommute without prior supervisory approval.

- 2.4. Telecommuting Agreements shall not remove essential functions of a position or compromise quality or quantity of the work to be performed.
- 2.5. Requests for a telecommuting schedule for the purpose of accommodating a medical condition or disability must be evaluated by Human Resources through an ADA compliant interactive process prior to approval.

3. Telecommute Workday Expectations:

- 3.1. Since Washington County must be open and available to the public during certain days and timeframes, management reserves the right to limit the number of individuals who can telecommute at any given time.
- 3.2. Employees on telecommuting workdays shall have the same expectations as on-site workdays including, but not limited to, workload size and management, work quality, professional communications, schedule adherence, overtime pre-authorization, and use of sick, vacation or other leaves.
- 3.3. Employees may be required by their supervisor to adjust or forego their telecommuting day when needed on-site for business, operational, or other needs as determined by their supervisor.
- 3.4. An employee found to be failing to adhere to their Telecommuting Agreement may lose their eligibility to participate in the telecommuting program for a period as determined by the Appointing Authority and may be subject to discipline up to and including termination of their employment.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Appointing Authority or a designee determines if there is mutual benefit to the employee, staff, department, and the community and approves, alters or denies Telecommuting Agreements.

The Human Resources Division is responsible for working collaboratively with directors, managers and supervisors to develop and have the County Administrator approve Administrative Procedures to implement this policy.

DISTRIBUTION: This policy shall be made available to all managers, supervisors and employees of Washington County. Any questions, concerns, or comments related to this policy should be directed to the Chief Human Resources Officer or their designee.

IMPLEMENTATION: Observance of and adherence to this policy is mandatory for all County employees. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

PERIODIC REVIEW: This policy shall be reviewed by the County Administrative Office at least every three years, or more often if needed, and updated as necessary.

DRAFT