



## Telecommuting Policy and Procedure

March 26, 2020

**Objective.** The City is providing this policy and procedure to facilitate employees working from home during this emergency. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some employees and jobs but not for others. Telecommuting is not an entitlement, it is not a companywide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the City of Fond du Lac.

**Procedures.** Any telecommuting arrangement made will be on a trial basis and may be discontinued at will and at any time at the request of either the telecommuter or the City. Every effort will be made to provide 5 days' notice of such change to accommodate 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.

**Eligibility.** Individuals requesting formal telecommuting arrangements must be employed with the City of Fond du Lac for a minimum of 6 months of continuous, regular employment and must have a satisfactory performance record.

Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and manager, with the assistance of the Human Resources Department, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

- Employee suitability – the employee and manager will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, compared to traits customarily recognized as appropriate for successful telecommuters.
- Job responsibilities – the employee and manager will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement.
- 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.
- 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.

If the employee and manager agree, and the Human Resources Department concurs, a draft telecommuting agreement will be prepared and signed by all parties, and a one week trial period will commence.

Evaluation of telecommuter performance during the trial period will include regular interaction by phone and e-mail between the employee and the manager, and weekly face-to-face meetings to discuss work progress and problems. At the end of the trial period, the employee and manager will each complete an evaluation of the arrangement and make recommendations for continuance or modifications. Evaluation of telecommuter performance beyond the trial period will be consistent with that received by employees working at the office in both content and frequency but will focus on work output and completion of objectives rather than on time-based performance.

An appropriate level of communication between the telecommuter and supervisor will be agreed to as part of the discussion process and will be more formal during the trial period. After conclusion of the trial period, the manager and telecommuter will communicate at a level consistent with employees working at the office or in a manner and frequency that is appropriate for the job and the individuals involved.

**Equipment.** On a case-by-case basis, the City ITS Department will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, modems, and other office equipment) for each telecommuting arrangement. The Human Resources and Information Technology System departments will serve as resources in this matter. Equipment supplied by the City will be maintained by the City. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the organization, will be maintained by the employee. The City accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. The City ITS Department reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the organization is to be used for business purposes only. The telecommuter must sign an inventory of all City property received and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment, all company property will be returned to the company, unless other arrangements have been made.

The City will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary.

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. The City 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.

**Security.** Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary company and customer information accessible from their home office. Steps include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

Employees need to comply with the Technology Use Policy in the Employee Handbook and make provision to save all public records that they create.

**Safety.** Employees are expected to maintain their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Injuries sustained by the employee in a home office location and in conjunction with his or her regular work duties are normally covered by the City's workers' compensation policy. 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.

Telecommuting is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate child care. 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 business demands. Prospective telecommuters are encouraged to discuss expectations of telecommuting with family members prior to entering a trial period.

Employees shall notify their homeowner's or renter's insurance company that they are working from home.

**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 City's Executime 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 agreement.

**Communication.** Communication is critical to Telework. Teleworkers are expected to receive and respond to communications (telephone, email, SMS, chat, video, etc.) in a timely manner during each workday from their coworkers, supervisors, and/or customers unless they have made arrangements ahead of time with their supervisor to have protected time dedicated to a project or task.

**Other Conditions.** Employees may, at the discretion of their immediate supervisor, be called to work at their centrally located worksite on their regular telecommute day during their regular work hours to meet workload requirements. This agreement may be terminated at any time.

**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.

Other informal, short-term arrangements may be made for employees on family or medical leave to the extent practical for the employee and the organization and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if appropriate.

All informal telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the City.

**Monitoring.** Teleworkers should expect that all web and application activity will be recorded. Teleworkers may use multiple telecommunication service(s) to communicate with other City workforce members while performing Telework duties.

**Support.** Remote access to the City of Fond du Lac network is provided during normal business hours – 6:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. After hours service is available for emergencies only. Emergencies are defined as a wide-scale outage affecting critical City-related business.