

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY 20-02

TELECOMMUTING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1. **PURPOSE**

Telecommuting allows employees to work at home, on the road or in a satellite location for all or part of their workweek to address social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) considers telecommuting to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement during the time where social distancing is necessary. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some employees and jobs but not for others. Telecommuting is not an entitlement, it is not an organization-wide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the CBJ.

2. **GUIDELINES**

Procedures

Telecommuting can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term project or a formal, set schedule of working away from the office as described below. Although either an employee or a supervisor can suggest telecommuting as a possible work arrangement when social distancing is necessary, telecommuting is not an employee entitlement.

Any telecommuting arrangement made will be on a temporary basis during the period of the COVID-19. Every effort will be made to provide one weeks' notice of such change to accommodate commuting. There may be instances, however, when no notice is possible.

Eligibility

Individuals requesting formal telecommuting arrangements must have a satisfactory performance record. Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and supervisor, with the assistance of the HRRM Department, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

- Employee suitability. The employee and supervisor will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, compared to traits customarily recognized as appropriate for successful telecommuting employees.
- Job responsibilities. The employee and supervisor 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 supervisor 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 supervisor agree, and the Department Director and HRRM Director concur, a Telecommuting Agreement will be prepared and signed.

Evaluation of the telecommuting employee performance will include regular interaction by video conferencing and e-mail between the employee and the supervisor. Weekly check-in meetings by video conferencing shall occur to discuss work progress and problems. The employee and supervisor will each evaluate the telecommuting arrangement week and make recommendations for continuance, assess the arrangement's necessity in light of current social distancing recommendations from public health entities, or modifications. Evaluation of the telecommuting employee's performance 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.

An appropriate level of communication between the telecommuting employee and supervisor will be agreed to as part of the discussion process. The supervisor and telecommuting employee are expected to 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 CBJ will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, phone and data lines and other office equipment) for each telecommuting arrangement. HRRM and Management Information Systems (MIS) will serve as resources in this matter. Equipment supplied by the organization will be maintained by the organization. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the organization, will be maintained by the employee. The CBJ accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. The CBJ 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 telecommuting employee must sign an inventory of all CBJ property received and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment, all CBJ property will be returned to the CBJ, unless other arrangements have been made.

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. The CBJ will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the

employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture, lighting, data lines, or phone lines, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space. The CBJ will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary.

Security

Consistent with the CBJ's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of sensitive or confidential work-related 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.

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 during pre-defined work hours are generally covered under workers' compensation. Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying the supervisor 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 telecommuting employees are encouraged to discuss expectations of telecommuting with family members prior to entering an agreement.

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 CBJ's time-keeping system. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval by the telecommuting employee's supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the immediate termination of the telecommuting agreement and discipline, up to and including dismissal.

3. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- A. **Scope:** This policy applies to all agencies and employees of the City and Borough of Juneau, Alaska.
- B. **Authority to promulgate policy:** The City Manager of the City and Borough of Juneau, Alaska, maintains the authority granted by the CBJ Charter to order policy and the guidelines for implementation.

C. **Effective date:** This policy will take effect as of the signing date.

Dated at Juneau, Alaska, this 18 th day of **March, 2020**.



Duncan Rorie Watt
City and Borough Manager