County Telework Program

The County allows for the use of telework when it would best meet the needs of the County to efficiently administer department services and serve the Community.

Teleworking is an alternative work arrangement available to qualifying County employees to work from a remote workplace, such as one's home or satellite office, rather than commuting to a designated worksite. Management will establish a work arrangement with their qualifying employees. The arrangement is not permanent and may be terminated for any reason.

This County recognizes the business, societal, and personal benefits available through a carefully planned and managed telework program. Telework, as a work program, enables the County to optimize resources and maintain employee productivity during County, State or Federal emergencies. Telework, as an element of transportation management programs, can also help the County support social responsibility and the State of California's climate goals and ease traffic congestion in our communities. The County allows the use of the telework program where work conditions and business needs permit its use.

County Telework Program Guidelines

The County Telework Guidelines establishes the standard guidelines and requirements of the County's telework program and can be located in the County Facility Reopening Plan. Additional guidance for Departments is included in this document.

Department Telework Program Plan

Each Department should establish a telework program plan. A Department Telework Program Plan is included as Attachment "A".

Department Telework Justification Form

The Department Telework Justification Form should be completed by a manager or supervisor. This form serves as an evaluation of the position's suitability for telework duties. If a telework schedule is recommended, the form should accompany the Telework Agreement. The Telework Justification Form is included as Attachment "B".

Employee Telework Agreement

The Employee Telework Agreement verifies that all essential components of a telework arrangement have been addressed prior to the actual start of teleworking. The required signatures indicate that the teleworker, manager, and supervisor have read and understood all applicable policies, standard practices and guidelines. The Telework Agreement is included as Attachment "C". The components of the Telework Agreement include:

- Telework Authorization
  Identifies the remote worksite, sets the telework schedule, job duties and management approvals.
- Telework Self-Certification Checklist
  Provides parameters for a safe and focus-based work environment.
- Telework Equipment Loan
  Itemizes equipment used by the teleworker at the remote worksite. Managers should verify that any employee provided equipment is suitable to complete the employee's assigned duties.

Training

Employees who elect a telework arrangement must complete required online training courses through the Performance, Education & Resource Centers (PERC) Learning Center at https://perclms.sbcounty.gov/learn.

More information regarding these training courses, as well as additional resources for employees and managers are available on the County's Telework website at https://hr.sbcounty.gov/telework/.

Questions?

Please contact HR-Commuter Services at hrcommuterservices@sbcounty.gov or your Department Human Resources Officer.

Department Telework Program Guidance

I. **Developing a telework program.** Departments should develop a telework program plan.
  - A. Determine what processes your department has that can be performed remotely or that can be transitioned to remote work via technology with the guidance of Information Services Department (ISD) or your department's Information Technology unit.
    1. If you use paper forms, consider transitioning to electronic processes/services:
       - (a) Receive documents via email
       - (b) Approve documents via pdf
       - (c) Create a digital drop box/file with the support of Information Services Department
    2. If you need to continue with certain paper processes, such as wet signatures, mail or payment collection, consider setting a schedule for collection and delivery of materials.
    3. If you have heavy call volume, consider forwarding phones to:
       - (a) County-issued cell phones
       - (b) Employee's personal phones
       - (c) County approved web-based phone forwarding services; coordinate with ISD on interoperability questions
    4. If you hold in-person meetings, consider remote meeting options:
       - (a) Microsoft Skype or Teams supports instant-messaging and video capabilities
       - (b) Utilize conference call lines or WebEx for meetings
  - B. Determine the feasibility and suitability of a telework schedule for job classifications and positions. Consider identifying tasks that can be accomplished in a telework setting and/or redeploying tasks and assignments to allow for telework.
    1. Duties that may be suitable for telework include:
       - (a) Work that requires thinking and writing (e.g. data analysis, reviewing grants, writing regulations or reports)
       - (b) Telephone-intensive tasks (e.g., customer contacts, obtaining information, setting up conferences)
       - (c) Computer-oriented tasks (e.g. programming, data entry, word processing)
    2. Duties that may not be suitable for telework would include:
       - (a) Employee's physical presence on the job
       - (b) Extensive face-to-face contact with others
       - (c) Security issues that prevent duties from being accomplished at an alternative worksite
       - (d) Where multiple positions are needed in office to interact and complete work products

C. Establish Department Criteria. Departments may establish additional criteria to their telework program as long as it is reviewed and approved by Human Resources. Criteria may include standard expectations for teleworkers, supervisors and managers.

D. Evaluate your equipment and supply needs:
1. Carefully weigh the costs and benefits of a telework arrangement, particularly ones that will require additional departmental expense for services or equipment (e.g. the purchase of new computer equipment or cable trenching to allow for a business telephone line).
2. Work with the Information Services Department to assess telework technology hardware and software needs and to provide the necessary services, equipment and supplies to teleworkers.
3. Ensure that the telework infrastructure, including computing equipment at the agency that hosts telework connection and the computing equipment used by the teleworker to connect, is installed, maintained and updated in accordance with state information security policies, standards, and procedures.
4. Subject to specific department policies and procedures that contain greater restrictions, employees shall utilize equipment and/or software compatible with that used in the employee's department. The County Information Services Department cannot support software and/or equipment not purchased through the County in compliance with County Policy and Standard Practice guidelines. The County will not provide unique or auxiliary products to accommodate a teleworker's desire to use products while teleworking that are incompatible with those used in the office.
5. The acquisition and furnishing of services, equipment and supplies shall be in accordance with all County policies, standards and procedures. Reimbursable or shared costs allowed per ordinance, employee contract, or Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), incurred by the employee may be reimbursed through submittal of an expense form.

II. **Telework implementation responsibilities:**
A. Departments are responsible for:
1. Adhering to all relevant federal, state and county laws and regulations (e.g. HIPAA, CMIA, CCPA, etc.) when providing access to County data and resources. Departments are responsible for understanding and following those laws and regulations to ensure County information assets are secure and confidential, and personal and sensitive information is protected.
2. Identifying job tasks and positions suitable for telework.
3. Reviewing employee request to telework, and determining if telework arrangements would allow the County and employee to effectively conduct business at or exceeding the same service capacity if the employee was not working remotely.
4. Ensuring employee compensation, benefits, work status, hours worked per pay period, and work responsibilities are not changed due to participation in the Telework Program.
5. Ensuring managers, supervisors and employees are familiar with relevant telework policies, procedures and training.
6. Ensuring any telework arrangement approved ensures that County business effectively and efficiently continues and a business justification is clearly documented for each position approved for telework.
B. Management staff is responsible for:
1. Approving telework arrangements.
2. Ensuring compliance with all applicable policies, procedures, MOU, guidelines, etc.
3. Budgeting the necessary resources, if applicable.
4. Maintaining control over County-owned property used by teleworkers.
5. Monitoring and overseeing all requests to remove County documents and files that contain customer/patient/client data for purposes of teleworking.

6. Tracking the productivity of teleworkers. Departments should coordinate with ISD and your department's Information Technology unit (if applicable) when selecting productivity software tools.

C. Supervisors are responsible for:

1. Reviewing and completing the Telework Agreement with the employee and routing for appropriate approvals and distribution.
2. Monitoring the day-to-day performance, leave and overtime requests of teleworking employees, and ensuring teleworkers complete their standard tour of duty, as with other workers under their supervision.
3. Ensuring employees who remain in the main office are not negatively impacted by handling the teleworker's regular assignments (answering telephone calls, dispensing information, etc.)
4. Providing employee training in the use of equipment and software as required for teleworkers to function effectively and independently.
5. Ensuring compliance with all applicable telework, privacy and security policies, procedures, etc. and reporting security incidents immediately when they occur.

D. Information Services is responsible for:

1. Providing secure options for facilitating remote access to County data. The final determination would depend on the job function, applications used and each County department's computer equipment availability.
2. Providing technical support and address questions that County departments have regarding remote access.
3. Providing examples of hardware and software configurations and equipment that could potentially be used by County departments for remote access, productivity tools, etc.

E. HR-Commuter Services is responsible for:

1. Serving as a telework resource for management and non-management employees.
2. Retaining copies of teleworking employees signed Telework Agreements.