



**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

SUBJECT: Telecommuting
Date: 11/26/08 NEW

Number: 07-011
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ISSUE:

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is implementing a telecommuting policy to establish criteria and procedures for the use of telecommuting to provide flexibility in a work arrangement that will mutually benefit departmental program activities and individual employees.

AUTHORITY:

Department of Management and Budget (DMB)-Office of State Employer (OSE) Telecommuting Guidelines; DMB-OSE Telecommuting Application and Agreement.

DEFINITION:

"Telecommuting" is a work arrangement in which employees are permitted to perform their job responsibilities at a place authorized by the appointing authority (e.g., telecommuting center, home) away from their official work station, following the approved Telecommuting Agreement, Telecommuting Guidelines, and department policy. Work scheduled while in travel status (e.g., field work, public meeting) is not considered telecommuting.

LIMITATION:

If any part of this policy conflicts with an applicable labor agreement, the agreement prevails.

POLICY:

1. **General Requirements:** Each telecommuting request will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Each bureau/division/office (hereafter "division") will determine whether a telecommuting request can be approved for its work area. The operational needs of the DEQ are the primary consideration in determining whether a telecommuting work arrangement will be approved. Not all employees may be allowed to telecommute. Staff in the Office of Criminal Investigation are not allowed to telecommute.
2. **Specific Requirements:**
 - A. All telecommuting work arrangements must follow the OSE Telecommuting Guidelines.
 - B. Any combination of Alternative Work Schedule, Plan A, and/or telecommuting work arrangement must require that each employee is scheduled to work no less than 64 hours at their official or temporarily assigned work location (e.g., field work) in a pay period. This is not intended to restrict time spent on field activities or in travel status.

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- C. Office furnishings (e.g., chair, desk, file storage, desktop organizers) for telecommuting work arrangement in the home of the employee shall be the responsibility of the employee. The employer accepts no responsibility for the ergonomic suitability of the telecommuting station.
 - D. Each division shall determine what costs other than office furnishings (e.g., secure I.D.) if any, they are able to pay for to accommodate a telecommuting work arrangement.
 - E. Each employee participating in a telecommuting work arrangement shall ensure that their immediate supervisor has an updated phone number, where the employee can be reached at the telecommuting center or their home, which ever is applicable.
 - F. Telecommuting must occur during an employee's approved work schedule. The approved work schedule must be in accordance with Alternative Work Schedule Policy 07-004.01 including starting between 7:00-9:00 a.m. and ending no later than 6:00 p.m.
 - G. A telecommuting employee who is reassigned, promoted, or transferred must reapply for a telecommuting work arrangement with his or her new supervisor in order to continue telecommuting.
3. **Regular and Intermittent Telecommuting:** A telecommuting work arrangement may occur on a regular basis as specified in a DMB-OSE Telecommuting Application and Agreement or an intermittent basis as agreed upon in general in an agreement with each event specifically approved by the employee's immediate supervisor.
4. **Management Discretion:** Management has the discretion within the parameters of this policy and Telecommuting Guidelines to approve or deny a telecommuting work arrangement or to rescind previously approved arrangement. The division chief has the authority to approve or disapprove a telecommuting request.
- Minor and temporary adjustments to a telecommuting work arrangement (e.g., extending lunch for one day in the pay period or modifying lunch period from one hour to one-half hour) are at the discretion of the immediate supervisor.
- Supervisors are encouraged to pilot a specific telecommuting work arrangement with an employee for a specific period of time (e.g., three months) to allow an evaluation of impact on department operational needs.
5. **Approval Criteria:** A request for a telecommuting work arrangement may be approved if it results in an overall benefit to the department based on operational needs and potential for improved efficiency, productivity, and cost savings. The determination is to be made based on considerations that include but may not be limited to:
- Providing sufficient program staffing during all hours of operation and in emergencies. (Note: Each unit shall provide for coverage Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
 - Providing adequate accessibility to other staff and the public

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- Ensuring the availability of individual staff to meet program and workload needs
 - Maintaining or improving program productivity and efficiency levels without increased costs
 - Maintaining the ability to meet specific program requirements
 - Providing effective supervision
 - Maintaining facility and operational functions and accessibility
 - Reviewing past performance
 - Maintaining performance
 - Reviewing past attendance
 - Maintaining attendance
 - Avoiding the accumulation of overtime or compensatory time
6. **Modification of Employee Schedule:** The schedule of an employee required to participate in training or needed to assist with operational needs may be modified by the employee's supervisor to a standard work period consisting of eight hours a day, five days a week, or other schedule during the pay period of the training or operational need.
7. **Annual Review of Telecommuting Work Arrangements:** The immediate supervisor of a telecommuting employee must review, at least annually, the impact, if any, on the telecommuting work arrangements on department operational needs.
8. **Rescission of Telecommuting Approval:** The division chief shall consider rescission of a telecommuting work arrangement that adversely affects department operations. A division chief shall provide to the Office of Human Resources (OHR) written reasons for the action when rescinding a telecommuting work arrangement.
9. **Further Information:** Questions concerning this policy may be directed to the OHR.
- Further information on telecommuting can be found at the OSE Web site including:
Telecommuting Guidelines
Telecommuting Application and Agreement
Telecommuting FAQ's
What Happens if it's NOT Working?

GENERAL PROCEDURES:

1. An employee requesting a telecommuting work arrangement submits a completed Telecommuting Application and Agreement to his or her immediate supervisor along with a detailed list of work that can be done at the alternative work site, performance expectations, and if applicable, a cost analysis. A cost analysis is required whenever there is a cost to set up and/or maintain the telecommuting work arrangement.
2. The immediate supervisor reviews the request and meets with the employee to discuss it. The supervisor then completes the Supervisor's Checklist for Telecommuters listed on the Telecommuting Application and Agreement. If the supervisor is recommending approval, he or she develops and jointly signs with the employee written performance expectations that include

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the specific work to be done away from the official work site and how the work will be monitored and measured. The supervisor forwards all documentation pertaining to the request to the second line supervisor.

3. The second line supervisor reviews the request, makes a recommendation, and forwards the request with the recommendations to the division chief.
4. The division chief approves/disapproves the request by completing the Telecommuting Application and Agreement. The division chief forwards the written request to the OHR after completion of the form. The division chief provides a copy of the approved or denied request to the employee.

Approved: _____



Date: _____

11/26/08