

<b>MENDOCINO COUNTY POLICY # 57</b>	<b>TELEWORK POLICY <del>AND PROGRAM GUIDELINES</del></b>
<b>ADOPTED: April 5, 2022</b> <b>REVISED: TBD</b>	<b>ADOPTED BY: Minute Order</b>

## 1.0 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

### 1.1 Background:

The County of Mendocino (County) ~~encourages the~~ may utilize ~~use of~~ teleworking as a viable, voluntary option for County employees when it serves operational needs or that can provide a valuable resource for the ~~ensures~~ continuity of services ~~and operations~~. Approval of telework arrangements will be determined based on business needs, job duties, and employee performance.

Telework may be authorized on a part-time or project-specific basis and or in some cases in the event of an emergency. Telework is not a permanent work assignment and is not guaranteed to any employee.

~~The County of Mendocino recognizes that flexible work arrangements and reduced commutes can benefit the employee, the department, and customers by making more efficient use of staff time. Though not all jobs and not all individuals are suitable for teleworking, the County of Mendocino is committed to increasing the use of teleworking for work assignments and individuals well-suited for a part-time or full-time teleworking arrangement. In addition, some jobs that may not be suitable for ongoing teleworking may benefit from a sporadic or project-specific teleworking arrangement.~~

~~The County of Mendocino supports the increased and appropriate use of teleworking arrangements and considers teleworking to be of value to both the County and teleworking employees as it:~~

- ~~Helps the County attract and retain diverse employees to the workforce by providing appealing and flexible work location arrangements;~~
- ~~Decreases the number of days employees commute or engage in unnecessary work-related vehicle trips by employing "greener" workforce mobility solutions to positively impact the environment, and thereby reducing the employer's and employee's carbon footprint;~~
- ~~Ensures the continuity of government by expanding work-site alternatives during emergency situations, increasing the County's ability to provide essential services.~~

### 1.2 Purpose:

The purpose of the Telework Policy is to ~~provide~~ establish a uniform framework ~~for telework in the County, and to establish guidelines~~ for the County Telework Program. A separate document titled *Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines* outlines the details which are intended to support consistent to ~~be implemented~~ implementation of telework arrangements when determined appropriate by a departments. ~~County departments that want to utilize teleworkers to meet their daily operational needs as well as during emergency periods must adopt the use of the County Telework Program.~~

~~Under the County's Telework Policy, telework is an arrangement that allows eligible County employees an opportunity to perform their work in a designated work area at home or alternative worksite on specified work days. It is the policy of the County of Mendocino to implement its Telework Program county-wide, and to make telework available at all departments, to the extent possible, consistent with the procedures, guidelines and requirements of the County Telework Program. Telework is not a permanent work assignment.~~

Telework is a privilege, not a right. Every ~~teleworking County~~ County Telework employee must have a ~~telework~~ Telework arrangement that is established, approved, and maintained under the provisions of the County Telework Program. The duties, obligations, responsibilities, terms and conditions of County employment ~~are not changed by~~ remain unchanged for employees who are approved to telework. As with an employee reporting to the regular worksite, a telework employee must perform work during ~~his or her~~ their scheduled telework hours.

## 2.0 COUNTY TELEWORK PROGRAM

The Chief Executive Officer, in conjunction with the Director of Human Resources, is responsible for establishing and maintaining the County Telework Program. ~~based on these Guidelines, which will include~~ The Program defines the terms and conditions of participation in a telework assignment. ~~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.~~ Any revisions to the County Telework Program must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

### 2.1 Telework Defined:

The County defines telework as work ~~conducted~~ performed by an employee at ~~a work site other than a County office or other County location~~ an alternative location other than a County facility, such as the employee's, either at home or at an alternative worksite as approved by the County. ~~Telework is an available option which can be used to create a flexible work environment.~~

### 2.2 Telework Arrangement:

Telework requires an alternative work arrangement that is voluntary and available to qualifying County employees to work from a remote worksite rather than commuting to the employee's designated County worksite.

- The remote worksite must be within a seventy-five (75) minute commute time from the employee's designated County worksite.
  - Remote worksites outside of the seventy-five (75) minute commute time requirement must be requested in writing by the Department Head/Elected Official to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.
- Department management will establish a telework arrangement with their qualifying employees.
- The telework arrangement is not permanent and may be terminated at any time for any reason.

~~The telework arrangement must ensure that the~~ All terms and conditions of employment ~~for the teleworker and the manager/supervisor~~ remain unchanged. ~~Most notably, p~~ Performance expectations, work schedules ~~for telework hours~~, overtime, compensation, and vacation schedules must conform to existing County, department, and/or telework related and departmental policies, guidelines and procedures, as well as the provisions within the respective Memoranda of Understanding (MOU).

### 2.3 Telework Program Eligibility:

Eligibility is based on many criteria including assessment of the job requirements and responsibilities. Due to the nature of the services offered by the County, employees in some job classifications may not be approved for teleworking.

An employee's position and job duties, along with the employee's demonstrated personal characteristics should be assessed to determine the suitability of the employee to telework. The Department Head/Elected Official or their designee retains the discretion to determine employee eligibility subject to business needs, job requirements, probationary status, and employee performance.

## 2.4 Telework Implementation Responsibilities:

### 2.4.1 Departments are responsible for:

- ~~Adhering to all relevant federal, state and county laws and regulations 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.~~ Ensuring compliance with all applicable federal, state, and county laws, regulations, and security requirements.
- Identifying job tasks and positions suitable for telework.
- 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.
- Ensuring employee compensation, benefits, work status, hours worked per pay period, and work responsibilities ~~are not changed due to participation in the Telework Program~~ remain unchanged.
- Ensuring managers, supervisors and employees are familiar with relevant telework policies, procedures and training.
- 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.

### 2.4.2 ~~Supervisors/~~Managers are responsible for:

- Review, approve, or deny ~~Approving~~ telework ~~arrangements~~ application and agreement.
- Ensuring compliance with all applicable policies, procedures, MOU, guidelines, etc.
- Budgeting the necessary resources, if applicable.
- Maintaining control over County-owned property used by teleworkers.
- Monitoring and overseeing all requests to remove County documents and files that contain customer/patient/client data for purposes of teleworking.
- Monitoring the day-to-day performance, leave and overtime requests of teleworking employees, and ensuring teleworkers complete their assignments, as with other workers under their supervision.
- Ensuring in-office/on-site staff are not negatively impacted by teleworking arrangements.
- Tracking the productivity of teleworkers. ~~Departments should coordinate in coordination with Information Services and/or the department's Information Technology unit (if applicable) when selecting productivity software tools.~~
- Provide training in equipment or software use, if required.
- ~~Ensuring~~ Ensuring compliance with all applicable telework, privacy and security policies, procedures, etc. and reporting security incidents immediately when they occur.

### 2.4.3 ~~Supervisors are responsible for:~~

~~Reviewing and completing the Telework Agreement with the employee and routing for appropriate approvals and distribution.~~

~~Monitoring the day-to-day performance, leave and overtime requests of teleworking employees, and ensuring teleworkers complete their assignments, as with other workers under their supervision.~~

~~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.)~~

~~Providing employee training in the use of equipment and software as required for teleworkers to function effectively and independently.~~

~~Ensuring compliance with all applicable telework, privacy and security policies, procedures, etc. and reporting security incidents immediately when they occur.~~

#### 2.4.43 Information Services is responsible for:

- Providing secure options for facilitating remote access to County ~~data. The final determination would depend on the job function, the applications used, and each County department's computer equipment availability~~systems.
- Approval of remote access technologies such as virtual private network (VPN) for the teleworking staff.
- Providing technical support and address questions that County departments have regarding remote access.
- ~~Providing examples of hardware and software configurations and equipment that could potentially be used by County departments for remote access, productivity tools, etc~~Identifying appropriate hardware, software, or productivity tools for remote access.

#### 2.4.54 Human Resources is responsible for:

- Serving as a ~~telework~~teleworking resource for ~~management and non-management~~all employees.
- Retaining and maintaining electronically approved copies ~~of teleworking employees signed of all~~ Telework Agreements.
- Maintaining and updating the County's Telework Program.

### 2.5 Telework Agreement

~~Before teleworking begins, an~~ The Employee Telework Agreement must be completed and signed. ~~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, supervisor and/or manager, and supervisor and department head have read and understood all applicable policies, standard practices and guidelines.

- ~~Once an employee requests a telework arrangement and it has been accepted, the employee and their supervisor/manager are required to complete a Telework Agreement.~~
- The ~~Department~~County reserves the right to cancel a Telework Agreement at any time and for any reason.
- Departments are responsible for ensuring that a All County-owned ~~equipment~~equipment and other employer-issued items provided to an employee in order to for telework ~~must be~~returned immediately upon the end of ~~his/her~~the employee's telework arrangement, or separation from the County.

The ~~components of the~~ Telework Agreement must include:

- Telework Application: Identifies the remote worksite, sets the telework schedule, job duties and management approvals.
- 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.
- Telework Employee Acknowledgments: Provides a summary of telework essential components the employee must understand and agree to prior to implementing the telework arrangement.
- Self-Certification Checklist: Provides parameters for a safe and focus-based work environment.

## 2.6 Other Considerations for Teleworking

### 2.6.1 Information Security

~~Security of~~Protecting confidential information is ~~of great importance to the~~a critical responsibility of all County employees, including those approved to telework. Teleworkers, ~~like all County employees, are expected to adhere to~~must comply with all County-wide and departmental ~~policies and procedures regarding~~information security policies and procedures. ~~For more information, (s~~See the County Information Technology Policy #22 ~~for reference.)~~

Teleworking employees and their supervisors/managers shall identify any confidential, private, or personal information and records to be accessed and ensure appropriate safeguards are ~~used to protect them in place.~~ ~~A d~~Departments may require ~~employees teleworkers~~ to work in private locations when handling confidential or sensitive material ~~and may restrict or prohibit the.~~ ~~Departments may prohibit employees from~~printing of confidential information ~~outside of County facilities. in teleworking locations to avoid breaches of confidentiality.~~

Employees ~~may not~~are strictly prohibited from disclosing ~~disclose~~ confidential or private files, records, materials, or information, and ~~may not allow access to County networks or databases to anyone who is not authorized to have access.~~allowing unauthorized individuals to access County systems, networks, or databases.

### 2.6.2 Supplies, Equipment, and Costs

County provided laptops and other authorized equipment assigned to employees must be used for teleworking. All equipment must comply with County Information Services security policies and practices. In some instances the County may provide additional equipment or software, if feasible, approved by the department, and in compliance with County Information Services policies.

The costs associated with telework are primarily the responsibility of the teleworker/employee. ~~However, the County will provide standard office supplies (pens, paper, pencils, etc.).~~ Please refer to Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines for further guidance.

### 2.6.3 Work Related Injury While Teleworking

~~In the event an employee suffers a work-related injury while teleworking, workers' compensation laws apply just as they would if such an injury occurred in the employee's designated County worksite.~~ Worker's compensation laws apply to work-related work-related ~~Employees are to follow County policy for reporting work~~injuries occurring during approved telework hours. Employees must follow County procedures for reporting injuries.; including by notifying their ~~manager/supervisor~~manager immediately and completing all necessary documents regarding the injury. The County assumes no liability for injuries that occur outside of the performance of the employee's duties and/or outside of the employee's scheduled telework hours. ~~Employees are liable for injuries or~~

### 2.6.4 Telework as a Disability Accommodation

Employee requests to telework as an accommodation for a disability or pregnancy are handled through the County's accommodation process, consistent with the *Americans with Disabilities Act* and California's *Fair Employment and Housing Act*. Employees should contact Human Resources to discuss work-related requests for disability accommodation-related telework requests.

<b>MENDOCINO COUNTY POLICY # 57</b>	<b>TELEWORK POLICY</b>
<b>ADOPTED: April 5, 2022 REVISED: June 2, 2026</b>	<b>ADOPTED BY: Minute Order</b>

## **1.0 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

### **1.1 Background:**

The County of Mendocino (County) may utilize telework as a viable, voluntary option for County employees when it serves operational needs or ensures continuity of services. Approval of telework arrangements will be determined based on business needs, job duties, and employee performance.

Telework may be authorized on a part-time or project-specific basis and or in some cases in the event of an emergency. Telework is not a permanent work assignment and is not guaranteed to any employee.

### **1.2 Purpose:**

The purpose of the Telework Policy is to establish a uniform framework for the County Telework Program. A separate document titled *Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines* outlines the details which are intended to support consistent implementation of telework arrangements when determined appropriate by a department.

Telework is a privilege, not a right. Every County Telework employee must have a Telework arrangement that is established, approved, and maintained under the provisions of the County Telework Program. The duties, obligations, responsibilities, terms and conditions of County employment remain unchanged for employees who are approved to telework. As with an employee reporting to the regular worksite, a telework employee must perform work during their scheduled telework hours.

## **2.0 COUNTY TELEWORK PROGRAM**

The Chief Executive Officer, in conjunction with the Director of Human Resources, is responsible for establishing and maintaining the County Telework Program. The Program defines the terms and conditions of participation in a telework assignment. Any revisions to the County Telework Program must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

### **2.1 Telework Defined:**

The County defines telework as work performed by an employee at an alternative location other than a county facility, such as the employees' home or at an alternative worksite as approved by the County.

### **2.2 Telework Arrangement:**

Telework requires an alternative work arrangement that is voluntary and available to qualifying County employees to work from a remote worksite rather than commuting to the employee's designated County worksite.

- The remote worksite must be within a seventy-five (75) minute commute time from the employee's designated County worksite.

- Remote worksites outside of the seventy five (75) minute commute time requirement must be requested in writing by the Department Head/Elected Official to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.
- Department management will establish a telework arrangement with their qualifying employees.
- The telework arrangement is not permanent and may be terminated at any time for any reason.

All terms and conditions of employment remain unchanged. Performance expectations, work schedules, overtime, compensation, and vacation schedules must conform to existing County and departmental policies, guidelines and procedures, as well as the provisions within the respective Memoranda of Understanding (MOU).

### **2.3 Telework Program Eligibility:**

Eligibility is based on many criteria including assessment of the job requirements and responsibilities. Due to the nature of the services offered by the County, employees in some job classifications may not be approved for teleworking.

An employee's position and job duties, along with the employee's demonstrated personal characteristics should be assessed to determine the suitability of the employee to telework. The Department Head/Elected Official or their designee retains the discretion to determine employee eligibility subject to business needs, job requirements, probationary status, and employee performance.

### **2.4 Telework Implementation Responsibilities:**

#### **2.4.1 Departments are responsible for:**

- Ensuring compliance with all applicable federal, state, and county laws, regulations, and security requirements.
- Identifying job tasks and positions suitable for telework.
- 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.
- Ensuring employee compensation, benefits, work status, hours worked per pay period, and work responsibilities remain unchanged.
- Ensuring managers, supervisors and employees are familiar with relevant telework policies, procedures and training.
- 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.

#### **2.4.2 Supervisors/Managers are responsible for:**

- Review, approve, or deny telework application and agreement.
- Ensuring compliance with all applicable policies, procedures, MOU, guidelines, etc.
- Budgeting the necessary resources, if applicable.
- Maintaining control over County-owned property used by teleworkers.
- Monitoring and overseeing all requests to remove County documents and files that contain customer/patient/client data for purposes of teleworking.

- Monitoring the day-to-day performance, leave and overtime requests of teleworking employees, and ensuring teleworkers complete their assignments, as with other workers under their supervision.
- Ensuring in-office/on-site staff are not negatively impacted by teleworking arrangements.
- Tracking the productivity of teleworkers in coordination with Information Services and/or the department's Information Technology unit (if applicable).
- Provide training in equipment or software use, if required.  
Ensuring compliance with all applicable telework, privacy and security policies, procedures, etc. and reporting security incidents immediately when they occur.

#### **2.4.3 Information Services is responsible for:**

- Providing secure options for facilitating remote access to County systems.
- Approval of remote access technologies such as virtual private network (VPN) for the teleworking staff.
- Providing technical support and address questions that County departments have regarding remote access.
- Identifying appropriate hardware, software, or productivity tools for remote access.

#### **2.4.4 Human Resources is responsible for:**

- Serving as a telework resource for all employees.
- Retaining and maintaining electronically approved copies of all Telework Agreements.
- Maintaining and updating the County's Telework Program.

### **2.5 Telework Agreement**

Before teleworking begins, an Employee Telework Agreement must be completed and signed. The required signatures indicate that the teleworker, supervisor and/or manager and department head have read and understood all applicable policies, standard practices and guidelines.

- The County reserves the right to cancel a Telework Agreement at any time and for any reason.
- Departments are responsible for ensuring that all County-owned equipment and other employer-issued items provided for teleworking are returned immediately upon the end of the employee's telework arrangement, or separation from the County.

The Telework Agreement must include:

- Telework Application: Identifies the remote worksite, sets the telework schedule, job duties and management approvals.
- 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.
- Telework Employee Acknowledgments: Provides a summary of telework essential components the employee must understand and agree to prior to implementing the telework arrangement.
- Self-Certification Checklist: Provides parameters for a safe and focus-based work environment.

## **2.6 Other Considerations for Teleworking**

### **2.6.1 Information Security**

Protecting confidential information is a critical responsibility of all County employees, including those approved to telework. Teleworkers must comply with all County-wide and departmental information security policies and procedures. (See County Information Technology Policy #22 for reference.)

Teleworking employees and their supervisors/managers shall identify any confidential, private, or personal information and records to be accessed and ensure appropriate safeguards are in place. Departments may require teleworkers to work in private locations when handling confidential or sensitive material and may restrict or prohibit the printing of confidential information outside of County facilities.

Employees are strictly prohibited from disclosing confidential or private files, records, materials, or information, and allowing unauthorized individuals to access County systems, networks, or databases.

### **2.6.2 Supplies, Equipment, and Costs**

County provided laptops and other authorized equipment assigned to employees must be used for teleworking. All equipment must comply with County Information Services security policies and practices. In some instances, the County may provide additional equipment or software, if feasible, approved by the department, and in compliance with County Information Services policies.

The costs associated with teleworking are primarily the responsibility of the teleworker/employee. Please refer to *Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines* for further guidance.

### **2.6.3 Work Related Injury While Teleworking**

Worker's compensation laws apply to work-related injuries occurring during approved telework hours. Employees must follow County procedures for reporting injuries, including notifying their supervisor/manager immediately and completing all necessary documents regarding the injury. The County assumes no liability for injuries that occur outside of the performance of the employee's duties and/or outside of the employee's scheduled telework hours, or to third parties that enter the designated telework space.

### **2.6.4 Telework as a Disability Accommodation**

Employee requests to telework as an accommodation for a disability or pregnancy are handled through the County's accommodation process, consistent with the *Americans with Disabilities Act* and California's *Fair Employment and Housing Act*. Employees should contact Human Resources to discuss work-related requests for disability accommodation-related telework requests.



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

## Implementation

This County Telework Program is implemented as of \_\_\_\_\_.

This program may not be modified without prior review by the Human Resources Director and express approval from the Chief Executive Officer.

If the telework policy does not address a department's specific need, the Department may contact the Human Resources Department to evaluate a possible addendum to the Policy.

The County will provide written notice of any Program changes to all telework employees, employee organizations, supervisors and County departments.

## Definitions

### Definitions for terms used in this document include:

- County worksite: The County work location(s) normally occupied when not teleworking.
- Designated teleworking space: The approved remote ~~worksite area that the employee will use during teleworking.~~ workspace used by the employee while teleworking.
- Remote worksite: The teleworker's approved ~~worksite at-home or alternative alternate work location~~ within ~~a seventy five~~ seventy-five (75) minutes ~~commute time from the employee's designated County worksite of the designated County worksite.~~
- Teleworking: ~~Working from a remote location, away from the employee's designated~~ Performing assigned duties from an approved remote location, away from the designated County ~~work location~~ worksite.
- Teleworking agreement: The written agreement between the employee and the supervisor/manager that includes the approval to telework. Written approval is needed from the Department Head/Elected Official or designee.
- Teleworking assignment: The agreed-upon parameters specific to an employee's telework arrangement (e.g., work assignments, work hours).
- Teleworking engagement: ~~When the employee is teleworking~~ A period of time when the employee is performing work duties remotely.

## Statement of Policy

~~The County of Mendocino recognizes that flexible work arrangements and reduced commutes can benefit the employee, the department and customers by making more efficient use of staff time.~~

~~Though not all jobs and not all individuals are suitable for teleworking, the County of Mendocino is committed to increasing the use of teleworking for work assignments and individuals well-suited for a part-time or full-time teleworking arrangement. In addition, some jobs that may not be suitable for ongoing teleworking may benefit from a sporadic or project-specific teleworking arrangement.~~

~~The County of Mendocino supports the increased and appropriate use of teleworking arrangements and considers teleworking to be of value to both the County and teleworking employees as it:~~

~~Helps the County attract and retain diverse employees to the workforce by providing appealing and flexible work location arrangements;~~



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

~~Decreases the number of days employees commute or engage in unnecessary work-related vehicle trips by employing "greener" workforce mobility solutions to positively impact the environment, and thereby reducing the employer's and employee's carbon footprint;~~

~~Ensures the continuity of government by expanding work-site alternatives during emergency situations.~~

This Program pertains to all eligible permanent County employees. Agreements with contractors for teleworking will be addressed in the applicable service agreement or contract.

Teleworking guidelines and requirements that pertain to emergency situations take precedence over the guidelines outlined in this document and will be communicated separately if enacted.

"On-call" and "call-back" guidelines and agreements are not included in this Program as they are addressed in Memoranda of Understanding for applicable bargaining units, and specific departmental guidelines.

Teleworking is a privilege, not a right. Every ~~teleworking County~~County Telework employee must have a ~~telework~~Telework arrangement that is established, approved, and maintained under the provisions of the County Telework Program. The duties, obligations, responsibilities, terms and conditions of County employment ~~are not changed~~by remain unchanged for employees who are approved to telework. As with an employee reporting to the regular worksite, a telework employee must perform work during ~~his or her~~their scheduled telework hours. Telework is not a permanent assignment.

## Eligibility Requirements and Prerequisites

Eligibility is based on many criteria, and certain job classifications and associated job responsibilities may not be conducive to teleworking. The following requirements are presented to help the employee and supervisor/manager determine if teleworking is feasible.

Additionally, a change in job duties and assignments, such as being assigned to work out of class, being assigned to a new project, or covering for coworkers who are out on vacation or leave, may affect eligibility. For this reason, it is the supervisor's/manager's responsibility to periodically assess the teleworking arrangement with the employee to address any change in eligibility. An agreement can be terminated by the County at any time.

Meeting ~~any~~ eligibility ~~requirement~~requirements does not guarantee approval to telework. ~~Approval is given on a~~Telework is approved on a ~~case-by-case~~case-by-case basis; however, for approval to be given, an employee must meet all requirements.

### Suitable candidates for telework:

~~An employee is a suitable candidate for telework if the employee has demonstrated personal characteristics that are well suited to telework, as determined by the supervisor, including the following~~Employees may be considered suitable for teleworking if they :~~demonstrate:~~

- ~~Demonstrated dependability~~Dependability and responsibility;
- Effective communication with supervisors/managers, coworkers and clients;
- ~~Demonstrated m~~Motivation and the ability to work independently;
- ~~A consistently high rate of~~Consistent productivity ~~and a high level of skill and knowledge of the job~~and job knowledge;
- The ability to prioritize work effectively;
- ~~Good~~Strong organizational and time management skills.



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

## Criteria for an employee to telework include:

- Full or part time status.
- Permanent status (no original probationary status); others on exception basis only, subject to approval by Department Head/Elected Official, [and Chief Executive Officer](#).
- Classified or unclassified position.
- Employee is in compliance with County rules, regulations or policies, and/or department rules and policies.
- Current overall job performance evaluation meets or exceeds expectations.
- ~~Employee's~~[Employees](#) telework consists of the ~~employee's~~[employees'](#) regular work responsibilities, including call-back and on-call duties.
- ~~Employee's~~[Employees'](#) job duties allow [him/her/them](#) to be away from the County work site for a period of time during the work week.
- Teleworking does not impede other workers from performing their job duties.
- No ~~reduction of service~~[adverse impact on](#) ~~to~~ internal and external customers and clients ~~as~~ determined by supervisor/[manager](#).
- Employee and supervisor/[manager](#) agree in writing on a teleworking arrangement, which is approved in writing by the Department Head/Elected Official or designee.
- Employee has access to required supplies and equipment to telework as specified in the Telework Application and Agreement ~~Form, and~~[Form and](#) has an acceptable workspace and environment to effectively work at home or alternative worksite. This includes adequate and reliable internet access (not cell phone ~~hot-spot~~[hotspot](#))

## ~~In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements, the following items are required before allowing an employee to telework~~[Pre-Telework Requirements:](#)

- ~~Telework Application and Agreement Form is completed and approved~~[Completion and approval of the Telework and Agreement Form](#).
- ~~If needed, remote~~[Remote](#) access ~~to County network systems and email is~~ established, ~~if applicable and signing of~~ ~~Employee reviews and signs~~ the [Mendocino County Virtual Private Network \(VPN\) Access Agreement](#).
- Employee/supervisor [or manager](#) work assignment expectations are reviewed and agreed upon.
- Employee reviews and signs [Mendocino County Information technology](#)[Technology](#) Acceptable Use Policy #58 and is placed on file (confirmation of a ~~previously~~[current version](#) signed copy in personnel file satisfies this requirement).

## Responsibility for Teleworking Costs

Teleworking is a voluntary program. The County is not obligated to pay for the costs of ~~telework~~[teleworking](#). ~~Nevertheless~~[Nevertheless](#), the county has determined that the following costs will be covered:

### ~~Cost responsibility of the County~~[Responsibilities:](#)

- [Standard](#) ~~Office~~ supplies ~~that normally are available at the County work site for the employee's use~~ (such as pencils, binders, and paper) [as typically provided at the County worksite and limited to reasonable quantities required to perform County business](#). Just as at the County work site, teleworkers will not be reimbursed for additional office supplies unless approval to purchase supplies is given in advance of the purchase. County-issued supplies will be used for County work purposes only.



## Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

- Repairs and replacement of County-issued ~~laptops or other required computer~~ equipment ~~based on need and availability~~ as needed and available. County will not repair or replace personally owned computers and/or equipment.
- Mileage will be reimbursed dependent on IRS rules and County mileage reimbursement guidelines. Existing departmental procedures to request mileage reimbursement are to be followed.
- The teleworker will not receive mileage reimbursement for any travel that would not occur if the teleworker were at the County's office worksite. The teleworker will not receive mileage reimbursement for the distance of any travel between home and the normal work site for any reason on teleworking days.
- As an option, the department may choose to supply teleworkers with cell phones for use when teleworking and conducting County business.
- No other costs will be covered by the County unless prior written approval from the Department Head ~~is given~~.



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

## Cost responsibility of the employee Employee Responsibilities:

In general, any cost not itemized as covered by the County will be the employee's responsibility to pay, such as:

- Home workspace furniture, ergonomic equipment and related modifications.
- ~~Network access set up and continuing charges (e.g., DSL, broadband, etc.).~~ Internet or network access costs.
- Purchase, repair or replacement of employee-owned equipment including computer equipment and/or supplies.
- Liability for any claims by 3rd parties, including family members.
- Homeowner's and renter's insurance, including any changes in rates or coverage required for teleworking and maintaining a home office.
- Tax advice/preparation and tax liability for setting up and maintaining a home office; employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss income tax implications.
- Legal expenses and associated financial liabilities.
- Any cost to relocate personal or County-issued equipment and/or to re-install equipment if the employee moves to a new home workspace or new residence, or re-establishes equipment within the existing home.
- Cost of utilities (gas, electric, etc.) including maintenance costs incurred while working at home.
- Any costs not specifically covered by the County.

## Department's Rights Reserved

Administering the teleworking program is under the authority of the Department Head/Elected Official or designee with general oversight by Human Resources Department. The Department may establish specific time periods for submitting requests, duration of the telework period, and review of teleworking participation. Any changes to this program and document, associated agreement form and checklist, will be managed through the Human Resources Department and approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

The ~~Department Head/Elected Official or designee~~ County reserves the right to accept ~~or~~ reject, or revoke any request for teleworking based on ~~available equipment, quality of work, assessed ability to be self-motivated and to maintain high work standards. Also considered are the employees' demonstrated ability to communicate effectively, work independently, prioritize appropriately, skill and knowledge level of job, and organizational and time management skills.~~ operational needs, employee performance, and resource availability.

Should an applicant's telework request be rejected, the decision is final and not subject to the grievance procedure or any other appeal. The employee may request to meet with the Department Head/Elected Official or designee to discuss the reason for denial. That meeting shall occur within 14 calendar days of the denial of the request. If the meeting does not occur, the employee can contact the Human Resources Department.

~~If the teleworker participating in the teleworking program fails to conform to the program criteria, the teleworking privileges may be revoked.~~ Failure to comply with program requirements may result in revocation of telework privileges. ~~In summary, the Department has total discretion to approve or reject all or part of any teleworking request.~~

## General Terms and Conditions

**The following general terms and conditions apply to teleworking:**



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

- Duties, obligations, responsibilities and conditions of employment with the County of Mendocino remain unchanged except those obligations and responsibilities specifically addressed in this program and associated policy and documents.
- Salary, benefits, and work status remain unchanged ~~as a result of~~because of teleworking.
- The supervisor and the teleworker will create a work plan (as described in the Telework Application and Agreement Form) for work to be done during teleworking. The supervisor will review the work results with the teleworker on a regular basis to ensure that work expectations are being met.
- The teleworker must comply with all County and department rules, policies, agreements and procedures.
- The teleworker must comply with all Federal, State and local laws, including Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and applicable labor contracts/MOU.
- ~~The teleworker must be available to communicate with those with whom he/she normally conducts business (e.g., supervisor, management team, coworkers, clients, vendor contacts) by phone and/or email (per agreement with supervisor) during the telework engagement, including by web and audio/video conferencing, if required~~remain available and responsive during work hours and use approved/official communication channels.
- ~~During the telework engagement, the teleworker must respond to any email or phone communication within a reasonable timeframe as designated by their supervisor, except for pre-determined and agreed upon lunch and break periods.~~
- If the teleworker encounters constraints that prohibit the teleworker from continuing the telework engagement (e.g., required equipment fails), the teleworker must either come to the County work-site to continue working, or notify their supervisor/manager to determine if alternate work can be done to continue the telework engagement. Alternatively, with supervisor approval, the employee may take remaining time off utilizing vacation, CTO or personal leave time banks.
- ~~If the teleworker becomes sick or must take time away from teleworking to assist with a dependent family member's illness or injury, the teleworker must report to their supervisor the need to use the appropriate bank of hours (e.g., sick leave) and state which hours of the telework engagement the teleworker will not be able to work~~The teleworker must report absences and leave usage consistent with County policy.
- The immediate supervisor will monitor and periodically review the teleworking arrangement, at least every 3 months.
- The teleworker must notify the Department immediately if any equipment used to perform County work is stolen, lost, or otherwise compromised.
- The teleworker must provide a contact phone number to the supervisor; this contact information will be shared with "need to know" managers, coworkers and other business contacts (e.g., vendor contacts) so that communications with the teleworker can continue during telework engagements.
- Taking a County vehicle home while teleworking is not authorized unless the circumstances are determined to be in the best interests of the County as defined in Mendocino Code Sec. 3.12.060. - Authorization for Work-to-Home/Home-to-Work Use of a County Vehicle and the request is approved accordingly.

## Remote Worksite

Telework requires an alternative work arrangement that is voluntary and available to ~~qualifying~~qualifying County employees to work from a remote worksite rather than commuting to the employee's designated County worksite.

- The remote worksite must be within a ~~seventy-five~~seventy-five (75) minute commute time from the employee's designated County worksite.
- Remote worksites outside of the ~~seventy-five~~seventy-five (75) minute commute time requirement must be requested in writing by the Department Head/Elected Official and approved by ~~to~~ the Chief Executive Officer



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

for approval.

- ~~Given~~ With a minimum ~~one-hour~~ one-hour advance notice, an appropriate representative from the ~~Department~~ County may make an on-site visit to the teleworker's remote worksite.
- If the teleworking employee moves to a new home address or requests a new alternative worksite, the employee must submit a new telework application for approval in advance of the change.

## Schedule and Hours

**Unless approved on an exception basis, the schedule and hours allowed for teleworking must be within the following guidelines, but subject to approval by the supervisor:**

- ~~The number of teleworking hours of an employee's normal work week must be approved by the supervisor.~~
- ~~The total number of work hours will not change due to teleworking.~~
- ~~Hours of teleworking are expected to be within the employee's existing pre-approved work and break schedule unless otherwise approved~~ Telework hours must be pre-approved and consistent with the employee's normal schedule.
- The business needs of the County ~~worksite office may take precedence; over telework days.~~ Teleworkers may be required to ~~be at their designated County~~ report to the worksite during a regularly scheduled telework day. The supervisor is to give at least a 24 hour notice if possible, but can give less than a 24 hour notice should an immediate need arise.
- Teleworker is ~~still~~ subject to the Department's time reporting process and ~~schedules~~ schedule, including obtaining prior approval for requesting overtime and time off for any reason.
- Teleworker must ensure that in-person meetings are not delayed due to telework schedules. No in-person meetings ~~are to take place~~ may occur at ~~a teleworking worksite~~ the telework site.
- ~~Departmental procedures, including obtaining prior approval, for requesting overtime and time off for any reason are to be followed as when working at the County worksite.~~

## Equipment

**Use of equipment is pursuant to the following requirements:**

- ~~County provided~~ issued ~~laptops and other authorized~~ equipment ~~assigned to employees~~ must be used for teleworking. ~~All equipment must comply with County Information Services security policies and practices.~~
  - To request County issued equipment, the employee does this at the time of completing the Telework Application and Agreement form.
- ~~If the teleworker needs to connect to the County's network, they must follow existing procedures to request and obtain remote access through their department~~ Remote access must comply with Information Services security protocols.
- ~~If network access is required, the workspace must have high~~ High ~~speed internet service~~ (no dial-up or use of a ~~cell phone~~ hot-spot) is required for network access.
- ~~If an employee wants to telework and requires a laptop but does not have a County-issued laptop, they may request one. Due to budget constraints, satisfying requests for additional laptops may not be feasible, and lack of a laptop and County network connection capability may impact whether an employee will be allowed to telework. As an alternative, a laptop, if available, may be reserved and checked out from the Department; the duration of the use of the equipment being checked out would need to be agreed upon.~~
- County-issued equipment may be used for County work purposes only and only by the employee to which the equipment is assigned.
- The teleworker is to immediately report evidence/suspicion of computer virus on equipment used for



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

teleworking by sending an email to [spamreport@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:spamreport@mendocinocounty.org)  
[spamreport@mendocinocounty.gov](mailto:spamreport@mendocinocounty.gov).

- The department must be notified of any theft, damage, or ~~failure,~~[failure](#) of equipment immediately.

## Authorized Equipment

All equipment is to be considered Department issued unless otherwise specified:

- Laptop and/or Mobile device
- Ergo or Standard Keyboard and Mouse
- [Secondary Monitor](#)

Example equipment **not** authorized for Telework:

- Printer/Scanner/Copier
- [Desktop Computer](#)
- [Shredder](#)

## Confidentiality/Security

The same security practices required at the designated County worksite regarding County data applies to the teleworker's designated ~~work space~~[alternative worksite](#). Employees often work with confidential and/or critical information, and teleworkers must exercise due diligence to ensure that County data and systems are ~~protected,~~  
~~and~~[protected and](#) not left available for intentional or unintentional access by others. Teleworkers are to follow all laws and County and departmental policies and procedures including Information Services security, privacy, and confidentiality policies and guidelines as when working in the office.

**The teleworker must follow secure practices to protect equipment, County data and systems.**

**This includes, but is not limited to:**

- ~~Employee will not take confidential information home (either on a laptop, flash drive, CD, paper copy, or other medium) without the prior approval from the supervisor. Such an agreement will be for a specific task and time duration.~~ [Confidential information must not be removed, stored, or transmitted outside secure systems without prior authorization.](#)
- Employee will not use their personal email for County business.
- Provide secure workspace for protection of County equipment, County data and County systems, particularly confidential data including what is covered under HIPAA regulations.
- Properly use County applications, systems, and network, including use of strong passwords, and logging out of applications when not in use, and locking the workstation when physically away from the worksite.
- Return documents containing sensitive information to the [Department/County](#) for proper storage, shredding or disposal and do not discard in a household receptacle.
- The teleworker must comply with the Mendocino County Information ~~technology~~[Technology](#) Acceptable Use Policy #58 and Mendocino County Policy #22, Information Technology Policy which provides the detailed policy on use of County networks, data, and systems. Remote access to County systems is subject to County and department policies, procedures and approval.
- ~~The Teleworker may request remote access and/or email access, and will not use a personal email account to conduct County business.~~

## Public Records

~~The teleworker must be aware of and comply with Mendocino County Policy #36, Public Access to County Records~~



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

~~and the requirements of the California Public Records Act, Government Code Section 6250 et seq., regarding public information and public records.~~

~~A public record may include any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public's business prepared, owned, used or retained by the County regardless of physical form or characteristic. Public information means the contents of a public record.~~

~~Upon receipt of an appropriate request, and subject to authorized exemptions, a teleworker must permit inspection and examination of any public record or public information in his or her custody, or any segregable portion of a public record, within required time limits. This requirement exists for any public record located at his or her personal residence. The teleworker must coordinate with his or her supervisor to make appropriate arrangements to ensure compliance with the California Public Records Act.~~

## Safety and Work-Related Injuries

The employee's designated teleworking ~~workspace~~ work location is the employee's responsibility, and must comply with recommended safety rules for the workplace, including:

- ~~Working S~~ Smoke detector and ;
- ~~Working~~ fire extinguisher. ~~Employee must have completed fire extinguisher with~~ training completed via in Target Solutions or other County approved training sites.
- Clear, unobstructed exits and removal of tripping hazards.
- ~~Removal of hazards that could cause falls.~~
- Adequate electrical circuitry.
- Appropriate furniture.
- Be subject to inspection by the County with at least a ~~48 hour~~ 48-hour notice.
- Provide a quiet, well-lit, and ergonomically appropriate work environment.
- Be covered by employee's homeowner's or renters' insurance.
- Be secured, so that County data is not compromised, shared, or lost.
- Be secured to minimize chance of damage or theft of equipment.
- Retain copy of Worker's Comp Packet at teleworking work site for reference (digital or hard copy).

If a teleworker is injured in their designated teleworking ~~workspace~~ during teleworking hours while conducting County business, the teleworker must ~~notify his/her supervisor immediately and follow County procedure for reporting on the job work injuries as found in the Mendocino County Injury and Illness Prevention Program.~~

~~If the immediate supervisor is not available, the teleworker is to contact their manager or an alternate supervisor or manager for reporting the injury. The supervisor is to follow all applicable rules and procedures governing employee injuries (e.g., fill out appropriate forms, such as the Accident, Incident, Injury Report and the DWC-1 Workers' Compensation form as needed, and escalate information as required).~~

~~Such injuries may be covered by Worker's Compensation provided that all eligibility requirements are met. Existing procedure for Worker's Compensation apply, such as treatment by the County contracted health provider if the employee does not already have a designated physician name for worker's compensation covered health services on file with the County, or the need for appropriate paperwork to be completed by the County before visiting the~~



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

~~healthcare provider~~ immediately report the incident as per the County's Injury and Illness Prevention Program and Worker's Compensation procedures.

The County assumes no liability for injuries to the ~~employee teleworker that occur~~ outside of the designated work-space ~~and outside of employee's scheduled telework or work~~ hours. ~~Employee~~ The teleworker is liable for injuries to ~~any and all other~~ 3<sup>rd</sup> parties who enter the ~~teleworkers~~ designated ~~worksite work space~~.

## Requirements for Successful Teleworking

Not every environment is conducive to teleworking. Therefore, to ensure successful teleworking, the teleworker must understand ~~and convey to all family, friends, and neighbors, and comply with the following:~~

- ~~The teleworker is working while at home. Working at home carries the same responsibilities and tasks which need to be completed as required in the office~~ Teleworking carries the same expectations as in-office or any designated County worksite work.
- ~~The teleworker must keep i~~nterruptions ~~must be kept~~ to a minimum by developing ground rules for family and others to follow regarding interruptions while teleworking ~~and that work hours need to be respected~~.
- **Teleworking is not a replacement for dependent child or elder care.** ~~Successful participation in the teleworking program requires minimizing interference from others in the home work environment.~~
  - ~~If dependent child or elder care is needed, the employee~~ Teleworker must arrange for care to be secured ~~appropriate care for others so that the employee is not interrupted from performing work duties during~~ their teleworking hours.
- The teleworker must establish guidelines for the proper use of office supplies and develop an understanding with family members that County equipment/office materials are not for personal use.
- County-owned equipment ~~that is issued for telework is to be used for official County use only and~~ may only be used by the employee to whom the equipment is issued; ~~any access by 3rd parties is strictly prohibited (e.g., children may not use the computer); all other users are strictly prohibited. (If equipment needs repaired, it must be brought to County premises.)~~
- The County will not publicly release a telework employee's home address or ~~telephone personal contact~~ number for purposes of the Telework Program, unless the employee has designated their ~~personal home~~ telephone number as ~~his or her~~ their contact number while teleworking.

## Evaluation

The Department Head/Elected Official or designee will conduct evaluations of the Teleworking Program usage in their department to ~~determine if program changes or program termination is required~~ ~~assess effectiveness, recommend improvements, or revoke any further teleworking agreements withing the department~~. Employees and their supervisors/~~managers~~ will be expected to take part in the evaluation process to help provide feedback and suggestions. Evaluation measurements will include, but are not limited to: productivity, quality of work, responsiveness, sick leave use, and availability/flexibility to Department needs.

## Term of Agreement

The Agreement shall remain in effect until it is terminated ~~voluntarily or involuntarily, or~~ amended in writing by either of the parties to the agreement, or the approved teleworking period ends. Any changes in the telework schedule must be approved and in writing ~~and typically would constitute a cancelation of the current agreement and a new one put in place~~.



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

- The initial term of an approved telework Agreement shall not exceed six (6) months in length.
- The initial term may be extended an additional six (6) months for a total of twelve (12) months upon approval of the supervisor and/or manager.
- Thereafter, existing agreements may be renewed annually with the approval of the Department Head/Elected Official, or their designee.

## Termination of Agreement

The employee or the ~~Department~~ County may terminate an agreement for teleworking should the arrangement become no longer beneficial to either party. The terminating party is to give advanced written notification to the other party immediately once the decision is made to terminate the teleworking agreement.

Non-compliance with any County policies and/or procedures may result in termination from the Telework Program and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment.

If the employee terminates the teleworking agreement, the employee must immediately return all County- owned equipment relating to the telework.

If the supervisor/department terminates the teleworking agreement, the supervisor is to determine if any County- owned equipment should be returned by the employee or if support staff should be sent to retrieve that equipment. That equipment-return should be immediate or within one calendar day from the termination date in most circumstances.

[The department in which approved the telework agreement is responsible for making sure all County issued/owned equipment and supplies are returned/collected.](#)



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

## Implementation

This County Telework Program is implemented as of \_\_\_\_\_.

This program may not be modified without prior review by the Human Resources Director and express approval from the Chief Executive Officer.

If the telework policy does not address a department's specific need, the Department may contact the Human Resources Department to evaluate a possible addendum to the Policy.

The County will provide written notice of any Program changes to all telework employees, employee organizations, supervisors and County departments.

## Definitions

### Definitions for terms used in this document include:

- County worksite: The County work location(s) normally occupied when not teleworking.
- Designated teleworking space: The approved remote workspace used by the employee while teleworking.
- Remote worksite: The teleworker's approved home or alternate work within seventy-five (75) minutes of the designated County worksite.
- Teleworking: Performing assigned duties from an approved remote location, away from the designated County worksite.
- Teleworking agreement: The written agreement between the employee and the supervisor/manager that includes the approval to telework. Written approval is needed from the Department Head/Elected Official or designee.
- Teleworking assignment: The agreed-upon parameters specific to an employee's telework arrangement (e.g., work assignments, work hours).
- Teleworking engagement: A period of time when the employee is performing work duties remotely.

## Statement of Policy

This Program pertains to all eligible permanent County employees. Agreements with contractors for teleworking will be addressed in the applicable service agreement or contract.

Teleworking guidelines and requirements that pertain to emergency situations take precedence over the guidelines outlined in this document and will be communicated separately if enacted.

"On-call" and "call-back" guidelines and agreements are not included in this Program as they are addressed in Memoranda of Understanding for applicable bargaining units, and specific departmental guidelines.

Teleworking is a privilege, not a right. Every County Telework employee must have a Telework arrangement that is established, approved, and maintained under the provisions of the County Telework Program. The duties, obligations, responsibilities, terms and conditions of County employment remain unchanged for employees who are approved to telework. As with an employee reporting to the regular worksite, a telework employee must perform work during their scheduled telework hours. Telework is not a permanent assignment.



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

## Eligibility Requirements and Prerequisites

Eligibility is based on many criteria, and certain job classifications and associated job responsibilities may not be conducive to teleworking. The following requirements are presented to help the employee and supervisor/manager determine if teleworking is feasible.

Additionally, a change in job duties and assignments, such as being assigned to work out of class, being assigned to a new project, or covering for coworkers who are out on vacation or leave, may affect eligibility. For this reason, it is the supervisor's/manager's responsibility to periodically assess the teleworking arrangement with the employee to address any change in eligibility. An agreement can be terminated by the County at any time.

Meeting eligibility requirements does not guarantee approval to telework. Telework is approved on a case-by-case basis; however, for approval to be given, an employee must meet all requirements.

### **Suitable candidates for telework:**

Employees may be considered suitable for teleworking if they demonstrate:

- Dependability and responsibility;
- Effective communication with supervisors/managers, coworkers and clients;
- Motivation and the ability to work independently;
- Consistent productivity and job knowledge;
- The ability to prioritize work effectively;
- Strong organizational and time management skills.

### **Criteria for an employee to telework include:**

- Full or part time status.
- Permanent status (no original probationary status); others on exception basis only, subject to approval by Department Head/Elected Official, and Chief Executive Officer
- Classified or unclassified position.
- Employee is in compliance with County rules, regulations or policies, and/or department rules and policies.
- Current overall job performance evaluation meets or exceeds expectations.
- Employees telework consists of the employees' regular work responsibilities, including call-back and on-call duties.
- Employees' job duties allow them to be away from the County work site for a period of time during the work week.
- Teleworking does not impede other workers from performing their job duties.
- No adverse impact on internal and external customers and clients as determined by supervisor/manager.
- Employee and supervisor/manager agree in writing on a teleworking arrangement, which is approved in writing by the Department Head/Elected Official or designee.
- Employee has access to required supplies and equipment to telework as specified in the Telework Application and Agreement Form and has an acceptable workspace and environment to effectively work at home or alternative worksite. This includes adequate and reliable internet access (not cell phone hotspot)

### **Pre-Telework Requirements:**

- Completion and approval of the Telework and Agreement Form.
- Remote access established, if applicable and signing of the Mendocino County Virtual Private Network (VPN)



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

## Access Agreement.

- Employee/supervisor or manager work assignment expectations are reviewed and agreed upon.
- Employee reviews and signs Mendocino County Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy #58 and is placed on file (confirmation of a current version signed copy in personnel file satisfies this requirement).

## Responsibility for Teleworking Costs

Teleworking is a voluntary program. The County is not obligated to pay for the costs of teleworking. Nevertheless, the county has determined that the following costs will be covered:

### **County Responsibilities:**

- Standard office supplies (such as pencils, binders, and paper) as typically provided at the County worksite and limited to reasonable quantities required to perform County business. Just as at the County work site, teleworkers will not be reimbursed for additional office supplies unless approval to purchase supplies is given in advance of the purchase. County-issued supplies will be used for County work purposes only.
- Repairs and replacement of County-issued equipment as needed and available. County will not repair or replace personally owned computers and/or equipment.
- Mileage will be reimbursed dependent on IRS rules and County mileage reimbursement guidelines. Existing departmental procedures to request mileage reimbursement are to be followed.
- The teleworker will not receive mileage reimbursement for any travel that would not occur if the teleworker were at the County's office worksite. The teleworker will not receive mileage reimbursement for the distance of any travel between home and the normal work site for any reason on teleworking days.
- As an option, the department may choose to supply teleworkers with cell phones for use when teleworking and conducting County business.
- No other costs will be covered by the County unless prior written approval from the Department Head.

### **Employee Responsibilities:**

In general, any cost not itemized as covered by the County will be the employee's responsibility to pay, such as:

- Home workspace furniture, ergonomic equipment and related modifications.
- Internet or network access costs.
- Purchase, repair or replacement of employee-owned equipment including computer equipment and/or supplies.
- Liability for any claims by 3rd parties, including family members.
- Homeowner's and renter's insurance, including any changes in rates or coverage required for teleworking and maintaining a home office.
- Tax advice/preparation and tax liability for setting up and maintaining a home office; employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss income tax implications.
- Legal expenses and associated financial liabilities.
- Any cost to relocate personal or County-issued equipment and/or to re-install equipment if the employee moves to a new home workspace or new residence or re-establishes equipment within the existing home.
- Cost of utilities (gas, electric, etc.) including maintenance costs incurred while working at home.
- Any costs not specifically covered by the County.



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

## Department's Rights Reserved

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The County reserves the right to accept, reject, or revoke any request for teleworking based on operational needs, employee performance, and resource availability.

Should an applicant's telework request be rejected, the decision is final and not subject to the grievance procedure or any other appeal. The employee may request to meet with the Department Head/Elected Official or designee to discuss the reason for denial. That meeting shall occur within 14 calendar days of the denial of the request. If the meeting does not occur, the employee can contact the Human Resources Department.

Failure to comply with program requirements may result in revocation of telework privileges.

## General Terms and Conditions

### **The following general terms and conditions apply to teleworking:**

- Duties, obligations, responsibilities and conditions of employment with the County of Mendocino remain unchanged except those obligations and responsibilities specifically addressed in this program and associated policy and documents.
- Salary, benefits, and work status remain unchanged because of teleworking.
- The supervisor and the teleworker will create a work plan (as described in the Telework Application and Agreement Form) for work to be done during teleworking. The supervisor will review the work results with the teleworker on a regular basis to ensure that work expectations are being met.
- The teleworker must comply with all County and department rules, policies, agreements and procedures.
- The teleworker must comply with all Federal, State and local laws, including Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and applicable labor contracts/MOU.
- The teleworker must remain available and responsive during work hours and use approved/official communication channels.
- If the teleworker encounters constraints that prohibit the teleworker from continuing the telework engagement (e.g., required equipment fails), the teleworker must either come to the County worksite to continue working, or notify their supervisor/manager to determine if alternate work can be done to continue the telework engagement. Alternatively, with supervisor approval, the employee may take remaining time off utilizing vacation, CTO or personal leave time banks.
- The teleworker must report absences and leave usage consistent with County policy.
- The immediate supervisor will monitor and periodically review the teleworking arrangement, at least every 3 months.
- The teleworker must notify the Department immediately if any equipment used to perform County work is stolen, lost, or otherwise compromised.



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

- The teleworker must provide a contact phone number to the supervisor; this contact information will be shared with “need to know” managers, coworkers and other business contacts (e.g., vendor contacts) so that communications with the teleworker can continue during telework engagements.
- Taking a County vehicle home while teleworking is not authorized unless the circumstances are determined to be in the best interests of the County as defined in Mendocino Code Sec. 3.12.060. - Authorization for Work-to-Home/Home-to-Work Use of a County Vehicle and the request is approved accordingly.

## Remote Worksite

Telework requires an alternative work arrangement that is voluntary and available to qualifying County employees to work from a remote worksite rather than commuting to the employee’s designated County worksite.

- The remote worksite must be within a seventy-five (75) minute commute time from the employee’s designated County worksite.
- Remote worksites outside of the seventy-five (75) minute commute time requirement must be requested in writing by the Department Head/Elected Official and approved by the Chief Executive Officer.
- With a minimum one-hour advance notice, an appropriate representative from the County may make an on-site visit to the teleworker’s remote worksite.
- If the teleworking employee moves to a new home address or requests a new alternative worksite, the employee must submit a new telework application for approval in advance of the change.

## Schedule and Hours

**Unless approved on an exception basis, the schedule and hours allowed for teleworking must be within the following guidelines, but subject to approval by the supervisor:**

- Telework hours must be pre-approved and consistent with the employee’s normal schedule.
- The business needs of the County take precedence; Teleworkers may be required to report to the worksite during a regularly scheduled telework day. The supervisor is to give at least a 24 hour notice if possible, but can give less than a 24 hour notice should an immediate need arise.
- Teleworker is subject to the Department’s time reporting process and schedule, including obtaining prior approval for requesting overtime and time off for any reason.
- Teleworker must ensure that in-person meetings are not delayed due to telework schedules. No in-person meetings may occur at the telework site.

## Equipment

**Use of equipment is pursuant to the following requirements:**

- County issued equipment must be used for teleworking.
  - To request County issued equipment, the employee does this at the time of completing the Telework Application and Agreement form.
- Remote access must comply with Information Services security protocols.
- High-speed internet (no dial-up or use of a hotspot) is required for network access.
- County-issued equipment may be used for County work purposes only and only by the employee to which the equipment is assigned.
- The teleworker is to immediately report evidence/suspicion of computer virus on equipment used for teleworking by sending an email to [spamreport@mendocinocounty.gov](mailto:spamreport@mendocinocounty.gov).



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

- The department must be notified of any theft, damage, or failure of equipment immediately.

## Authorized Equipment

All equipment is to be considered Department issued unless otherwise specified:

- Laptop and/or Mobile device
- Ergo or Standard Keyboard and Mouse
- Secondary Monitor

Example equipment **not** authorized for Telework:

- Printer/Scanner/Copier
- Desktop Computer
- Shredder

## Confidentiality/Security

The same security practices required at the designated County worksite regarding County data applies to the teleworker's designated alternative worksite. Employees often work with confidential and/or critical information, and teleworkers must exercise due diligence to ensure that County data and systems are protected and not left available for intentional or unintentional access by others. Teleworkers are to follow all laws and County and departmental policies and procedures including Information Services security, privacy, and confidentiality policies and guidelines as when working in the office.

**The teleworker must follow secure practices to protect equipment, County data and systems.**

**This includes, but is not limited to:**

- Confidential information must not be removed, stored, or transmitted outside secure systems without prior authorization.
- Employee will not use their personal email for County business.
- Provide secure workspace for protection of County equipment, County data and County systems, particularly confidential data including what is covered under HIPAA regulations.
- Properly use County applications, systems, and network, including use of strong passwords, and logging out of applications when not in use, and locking the workstation when physically away from the worksite.
- Return documents containing sensitive information to the County for proper storage, shredding or disposal and do not discard in a household receptacle.
- The teleworker must comply with the Mendocino County Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy #58 and Mendocino County Policy #22, Information Technology Policy which provides the detailed policy on use of County networks, data, and systems. Remote access to County systems is subject to County and department policies, procedures and approval.

## Safety and Work-Related Injuries

The employee's designated teleworking work location is the employee's responsibility, and must comply with recommended safety rules for the workplace, including:

- Working smoke detector and fire extinguisher with training completed via Target Solutions or other County approved training sites.
- Clear, unobstructed exits and removal of tripping hazards.



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

- Adequate electrical circuitry.
- Appropriate furniture.
- Be subject to inspection by the County with at least a 48-hour notice.
- Provide a quiet, well-lit, and ergonomically appropriate work environment.
- Be covered by employee's homeowner's or renters' insurance.
- Be secured, so that County data is not compromised, shared, or lost.
- Be secured to minimize chance of damage or theft of equipment.
- Retain copy of Worker's Comp Packet at teleworking work site for reference (digital or hard copy).

If a teleworker is injured in their designated teleworking space during teleworking hours while conducting County business, the teleworker must immediately report the incident as per the County's Injury and Illness Prevention Program and Worker's Compensation procedures.

The County assumes no liability for injuries to the teleworker outside the designated workspace or work hours. The teleworker is liable for injuries to any and all other parties who enter the teleworkers designated worksite.

## Requirements for Successful Teleworking

Not every environment is conducive to teleworking. Therefore, to ensure successful teleworking, the teleworker must understand:

- Teleworking carries the same expectations as in-office or any designated County worksite work.
- Interruptions must be kept to a minimum by developing ground rules for family and others to follow regarding interruptions while teleworking and that work hours need to be respected.
- **Teleworking is not a replacement for dependent child or elder care.**
  - Teleworker must secure appropriate care for others during their teleworking hours.
- The teleworker must establish guidelines for the proper use of office supplies and develop an understanding with family members that County equipment/office materials are not for personal use.
- County-owned equipment that is issued for telework is to be used for official County use only and may only be used by the employee to whom the equipment is issued; all other users are strictly prohibited. (If equipment needs repaired, it must be brought to County premises.)
- The County will not publicly release a telework employee's home address or personal contact number for purposes of the Telework Program, unless the employee has designated their personal telephone number as their contact number while teleworking.

## Evaluation

The Department Head/Elected Official or designee will conduct evaluations of the Teleworking Program usage in their department to assess effectiveness, recommend improvements, or revoke any further teleworking agreements withing the department. Employees and their supervisors/managers will be expected to take part in the evaluation process to help provide feedback and suggestions. Evaluation measurements will include, but are not limited to: productivity, quality of work, responsiveness, sick leave use, and availability/flexibility to Department needs.

## Term of Agreement

The Agreement shall remain in effect until it is terminated voluntarily or involuntarily, amended in writing by either of the parties to the agreement, or the approved teleworking period ends. Any changes in the telework schedule



# Mendocino County Telework Program Guidelines

must be approved and in writing and typically would constitute a cancelation of the current agreement and a new one put in place.

- The initial term of an approved telework Agreement shall not exceed six (6) months in length.
- The initial term may be extended an additional six (6) months for a total of twelve (12) months upon approval of the supervisor and/or manager.
- Thereafter, existing agreements may be renewed annually with the approval of the Department Head/Elected Official, or their designee.

## Termination of Agreement

The employee or the County may terminate an agreement for teleworking should the arrangement become no longer beneficial to either party. The terminating party is to give advanced written notification to the other party immediately once the decision is made to terminate the teleworking agreement.

Non-compliance with any County policies and/or procedures may result in termination from the Telework Program and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment.

If the employee terminates the teleworking agreement, the employee must immediately return all County- owned equipment relating to the telework.

If the supervisor/department terminates the teleworking agreement, the supervisor is to determine if any County-owned equipment should be returned by the employee or if support staff should be sent to retrieve that equipment. That equipment-return should be immediate or within one calendar day from the termination date in most circumstances.

The department in which approved the telework agreement is responsible for making sure all County issued/owned equipment and supplies are returned/collected.