



## **REMOTE WORK POLICY**

Non-Represented Staff

<Last Update: October 2023>

### **Policy Statement**

Remote work refers to an arrangement where an employee works from home or from another non-City location away from their usual workplace through telecommunications technology. Where appropriate to the nature of the position duties, business need, and individual situation, employees may work remotely from their home or other remote locations away from City facilities. All ongoing remote work assignments and schedules must be approved in writing by the Department Director before remote work is performed. All employees approved for remote work assignments may still be required to report, in person, to community and City work site locations as determined necessary to meet the ongoing business needs of the City. All employees authorized to work remotely continue to be subject to all City policies, conduct, and performance standards. The City reserves the right to change or discontinue a remote work assignment at any time for any reason it determines appropriate.

### **Scope and Application**

This policy only applies to non-represented employees of the City of Hillsboro. Employees covered by a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) should refer to their CBA for information on the working conditions and benefits applicable to their employment.

#### *Exceptions:*

- This policy does not apply during natural disasters, public health or other emergencies when declared by applicable government authorities and/or the City Manager or designee. During inclement weather or other similar conditions that may present health or safety risks to employees and/or the public, at the discretion of the City Manager or designee, this policy may not apply.
- If an employee requests a remote work arrangement as an ADA accommodation due to an injury or illness, or a pregnancy, the supervisor must immediately contact the City's Human Resources Department for guidance.

### **Eligibility**

Not all jobs can be performed remotely. A position's suitability for remote work is based on operational needs and the duties and responsibilities of the position. All remote work requests will be evaluated by supervisor and/or manager on their job duties and classification basis, employee readiness for remote work, and/or manager and team readiness for remote work. In general, a position(s) suitable for remote work is one that has responsibilities that can be conducted through telework, using basic telecommunications technology at home without adversely affecting service quality or organizational operations.

Characteristics of positions that may lend themselves to remote work:

- Job duties can be effectively and efficiently conducted remotely away from employees' City work site.

- Remote work does not adversely affect service quality or organizational operations.
- Remote work does not add additional cost to the City of Hillsboro.
- Remote work does not negatively impact team performance or place additional work on non-remote team members.

Characteristics of positions that may NOT lend themselves to remote work:

- Job duties require access to specific personnel, onsite files, or specialized space/equipment/technology in order to effectively perform job duties.
- Job duties include regular in-person client/customer/community interaction.
- Job duties require participation in onsite field work that can't be performed remotely.
- Remote work relationship adds additional cost to the City.

Remote Work Readiness factors include but are not limited to:

- Work equipment/resources at remote location
- Ergonomic safety
- Available internet bandwidth
- Maintain or enhance public services
- Individual employee performance
- Impact to ongoing and/or future projects and workflows
- Impact to work teams
- Individual employee needs or preferences

### **Citywide Requirements**

Employees whose job characteristics lend them themselves to being eligible to have a remote work schedule should first discuss remote work with their supervisor. With their approval to move forward to seek an ongoing remote work assignment (whether full-time, part-time, or extending over any period in excess of two (2) weeks), fill out and submit the Remote Work Agreement (RWA) to their Department Director for final review and authorization. In addition to supervisor directives and requirements outlined in the applicable RWA, employees authorized to work remotely must also adhere to all departmental and City policies including, but not limited to policies regarding personnel, respectful workplace, information services, confidentiality of information, work schedules, work hours, use of equipment, ethics, performance, safety, leave use, and tracking of work hours.

- *Remote Work Environment:* Remote workers should have a quiet, distraction-free working space where they can minimize background noise to maintain a professional working environment. Remote workers are expected to arrange for childcare just as they would if they were working in the office. Employees are expected to have appropriate separate childcare, eldercare, pet care, and other forms of dependent care coverage in place as needed during their remote working hours, just as they would if they were working in the office. Employees who are approved for remote work assignments will continue to be evaluated as if they were performing work in their primary work location (City offices/facilities, etc.)

- For short-term, temporary remote work assignments due to childcare/school closure, refer to Temporary Remote Work Assignments section later in this document.
- *Hours of Work and Availability:* During remote work assignments, employees are required to work regularly scheduled hours (including taking designated meal and break periods, in accordance with City policy and applicable law) and are expected to be available during their remote work hours and devote their paid working time to the performance of their assigned job duties and responsibilities. Employees working from their remote work location must be as available as when they are working at their City worksite.
  - If time off is required during their regularly scheduled work hours, employees are required to follow the City and Department’s normal attendance reporting and time off policies and may utilize leave as outlined in the appropriate City leave policies.
- *Work Location & Travel Expectations:* All employees approved for ongoing remote work assignments must understand that they may still be required to report, in person, to City work site locations on an ongoing basis as determined necessary by the City to participate in meetings, training, and to conduct other in-person work required for the job.
  - Unnecessary travel back and forth between remote and City work sites during the workday reduces efficiency for the City and community and should be avoided. Non-exempt employees who are approved for a schedule that includes remote work (including hybrid schedules) must work at their assigned work location throughout the entire workday unless you have been expressly approved or directed to do so to meet City business needs. Such employees are not permitted to travel back-and-forth between their remote work location and City work location(s) during the workday unless you have been expressly approved or directed to do so to meet City business needs.
  - Home-to-worksite travel at the beginning and work-to-home travel and end of one workday are considered normal commute time and is not compensable (even if the employee reports to the regular location on a remote workday) except when otherwise required by applicable law.
- *Equipment and Data Security:* All City work product, business records, and other job-related information may only be accessed and stored on City-owned devices and through the City’s or other approved secure network. Use of any personal device to record or store City information is prohibited. Employees who work remotely must comply with all Information Services policies.
  - City laptops(s), tablet(s), cell phone(s) and other electronic devices and information (including records) are not to be left unattended or unsecured in the employee’s home, vehicle or in possession of third parties. It is employees’ responsibility to protect and manage the records and other sensitive information stored on telework devices and transmitted across external networks. Remote workers must keep City property and information safe, secure, and separated from their personal property and information.
  - Allowing family members or any other third party to access City information or use the City’s computers and other equipment for any purpose is strictly prohibited.

### **Department-Specific Options**

In addition to the Citywide requirements that apply to all City employees, departments are authorized to provide or impose additional department-specific requirements in the following areas:

- Number of office days required per week at a City facility
- Required in-person onboarding period (a minimum of 90 days in-person onboarding period is recommended)
- Designated communication channels/platforms
- Allowing or not allowing remote work while on a compressed workweek schedule depending on business need.
- Short-term, temporary remote work for employees with no ongoing remote work assignments (see Temporary Remote Work Assignment section later in this document)
- Short-term, temporary remote work assignments from outside of Oregon (see Temporary Remote Work Assignment section later in this document)

Departments will have a written policy, reviewed by Human Resources and approved by the City Manager, that outlines department-specific requirements. Departments will consult with Human Resources every two years to assess impacts of department-specific requirements to minimize disparities in outcomes resulting from implementation.

### **Work Schedules and Timekeeping**

Employees and managers are required to comply with all timekeeping and overtime regulations defined by state, federal, or local laws, collective bargaining agreements, or other City policies. Overtime eligible employees must receive approval from their manager prior to working overtime. Regardless of prior approval, both employees and managers are expected to ensure accurate recording of all hours worked. For definition of hours of work and travel time, please refer to Policy 5.4 Hours of Work and Policy 5.7 Travel Time.

### **Temporary Remote Work Assignments**

In the event of an unplanned or temporary circumstance, including but not limited to attending a conference, infectious disease outbreak, temporary school/childcare closure, and approved vacation time-off, remote work may be an appropriate short-term workplace flexibility option for employees. Short-term, temporary remote work assignments expected to last less than fourteen (14) consecutive days or 28 days total annually may be approved on a case-by-case basis without following the procedures outlined above when it supports City operations and services.

- In all approved cases, employees authorized to work remotely temporarily are responsible to become familiar with and comply with the remote work policy and any additional requirements needed to support City operations and services, at the discretion of department directors.
- An approved short-term, temporary remote work arrangement does not reduce expectations regarding an employee's performance and does not serve as a precedent for future



arrangements within a department. Employee-requested flexible arrangements are a privilege, are revocable, and should not be an expectation of employment.

*Short-Term, Temporary Remote Work as Alternative Sick Leave Option:*

Employees may request short-term, temporary remote work assignments when their health condition doesn't allow them to perform their normal tasks (i.e. in-person customer services, janitorial services, field operations, driving, inspection, etc.) but allows them to perform alternate assignments.

Departments, at the discretion of Director or designee, may approve a temporary remote work assignment if:

- The department can provide employees with alternative work options that substitute their regular duties in a meaningful way that supports City operations and services; **AND**
- Alternative tasks are aligned with the employee's job classification; **AND**
- Accommodating short-term, temporary remote work assignments will not cause adverse impacts to the department's operations, fiscal health, and/or work team dynamics; **AND**
- Employee's own or a family member's illness or injury does NOT interfere with the employee's ability to perform their alternative assignment responsibilities remotely; **AND**
- The duration of remote work arrangement must not exceed five (5) workdays\* – this applies to both employees with no remote work agreement and employees with remote work agreement (hybrid work schedule). Departments must track this in writing if temporary remote work as alternative sick leave is offered to employees as an option.
  - \*Workday: refers to a day when an employee actually works.

When employees continue to be incapable of reporting to work at their designated in-person City work site after the five (5) business days of their short-term, temporary remote work assignment, they must start using their available leave accruals for their absence according to applicable City policies.

Employees and their department/supervisor may seek other means of accommodation with HR Department if the employee is not able to report to work after the initial five-day short-term, temporary remote work assignment.

*Short-Term, Temporary Remote Work Assignment from Outside of Oregon:*

While ongoing employment at City of Hillsboro occurs primarily at City facilities in Hillsboro, Portland metropolitan area, and the State of Oregon, job duties may be performed remotely from outside of Oregon (no work outside of the United States allowed) for a short-term, temporary duration with advanced approval from Department Director or a designee if:

- Candidates who are hired to work for the City need a temporary accommodation to work from a state other than Oregon until they are able to physically relocate to the State of Oregon and their work location within the state of Oregon is set up; **OR**



- Working within the premise of the state of Oregon is not feasible due to the event of an unplanned or temporary circumstance; **OR**
- Employees are in a state other than Oregon for short-term, temporary duration, to conduct the City's official business such as conferences, training, and business trips; **OR**
- Employees may perform their job duties to continue critical services and/or functions of the City while they are away from Oregon for a short-term, temporary duration, including but not limited to approved vacation.

Note: Out of state remote work assignments will generally not be approved if the assignment (or duration of the assignment) would result in tax and other compliance obligations in the applicable state. All out of state remote work assignments other than conferences, training, and business trips must be reported to the Human Resources Department before they begin.

Washington Employees: Employees whose residence is located in the south or southwest region of Washington state are not subject to the additional requirements and restrictions in this subsection of the policy. Such employees who commute to a City worksite in the state of Oregon on a regularly scheduled basis (not occasional or incidental) and also work remotely from the south or southwest region of Washington state (e.g., on a hybrid or intermittent basis) do not require any additional request for remote work assignments in an ongoing basis (they must receive approval for regular ongoing remote work assignments in accordance with the other provisions of this policy).

- Definition of South or Southwest region of Washington state: For the purposes of this policy, "South" or "Southwest" region is the areas in Washington state that are geographically within the 50-mile radius from Civic Center (150 E Main St. Hillsboro, OR 97123).

#### **Monitoring, Changing, Reconsidering, or Ending a Remote Work Assignment**

Employee productivity and performance are continually evaluated during all remote work assignments. In addition to the City's evaluation of performance, changes in City job classifications/duties, staffing levels, workload, resource allocation (i.e., the need to reassign or reallocate equipment and/or other technology resources) and other changes to City operational or service needs may also impact the City's evaluation and viability of a remote work assignment. As such, the City reserves the right to change or discontinue a remote work assignment at any time for any reason it determines appropriate. Approval and continuation of remote work are not guaranteed for any employee. To the extent practicable, the City will strive to provide employees sufficient notice prior to modifying or eliminating a remote work assignment.