

Human Resources Policy Bulletin

City of Lincoln

Number: 2022 -5

Date: December 2022

Reference:	Title:
	Remote Work Policy and Procedure

OVERVIEW

The City of Lincoln is committed to assisting employees in maintaining a healthy work/life balance by offering flexible work schedule options. This type of scheduling arrangement provides employees and the City a more efficient way of performing certain job duties. Remote work arrangements also improve the recruitment and retention of employees who are unable to commute to the worksite due to conflicting work/personal circumstances or as a result of a physical disability. In addition, this arrangement provides an employee with the flexibility to take care of personal needs and reduce commuting time and expense. Working remotely benefits the community by reducing traffic and parking congestion, air pollution and energy consumption, and wear and tear on the transportation infrastructure.

DEFINITION

Remote work is a term that describes a flexible work arrangement that allows an employee to work at home or other off-site locations. Remote work may include either all or part of the employee's work schedule.

POLICY

- A. The City of Lincoln may approve an employee's request of remote work for one or more days a week regularly. This work arrangement may be reevaluated, modified, suspended, or terminated for any reason at any time, and the decision is not grievable. Employees may be expected to attend on-site meetings, training, or other work-related events, as needed, on remote working days.
- B. An employee may be eligible for remote work, pending approval from their supervisor and the Department Director. Generally, the employee should have at least six (6) months of continuous documented satisfactory service in their current position before the employee is eligible to request a remote arrangement. Achieving operational objectives and meeting customer needs is a primary factor that will be considered in determining whether or not an employee and the duties the employee performs are

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eligible. Characteristics of successful remote workers include satisfactory performance, recognition as a self-starter, substantial on-the-job experience, demonstrated ability to work independently, and good communication and organizational skills. The employee's supervisor, in consultation with the Department Director, will determine if operational goals can be met through a remote work schedule.

- C. Job responsibilities and expectations are the same as if the employee is operating on-site. An employee is expected to accomplish the work that ordinarily would be accomplished on-site at the remote work site. Specific goals and plans of accomplishment, which can be monitored on a regular basis, must be agreed upon by the employee and supervisor. Remote work may not be suitable for all positions within the City, due to the nature of the work to be done.
- D. Remote Work schedules may be arranged on a flexible basis whereby an employee may work partially remote and partially on-site. The employee's schedule should specify the number of work hours, start and stop times, and location where the work will be performed (on-site or remote.) The employee needs to request and receive approval prior to working any overtime.
- E. Time spent commuting to the office for work purposes will be considered a part of the employee's normal commute and not work time. Mileage for normal commuting travel is not eligible for reimbursement. If an employee working remotely is required to attend meetings or to train away from their on-site or remote work location, reasonable attempts shall be made to leave from the on-site work location and utilize fleet vehicles.
- F. Employees working remotely are expected to minimize outside distractions to complete required work during agreed upon work hours, which could include caregiver responsibilities.

EQUIPMENT

- A. Generally, employees are provided with one computer system (computer, monitors, etc.) for professional use. If an employee is able to safely transport the computer to their remote work location for work purposes, they may do so with supervisor approval. If additional equipment is needed, Department Director approval is required. The Information Services Department may provide guidance for system setup to ensure the workstation is connected to the necessary Department systems.

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- B. The employee is responsible for the security of the system and the security of access to the City's resources. Reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that City property is used in compliance with City policies and procedures. This includes complying with all software licensing agreements. The security and confidentiality of data and records must also be maintained. Sensitive data shall not be placed on a personal computer or device but instead should be accessed via secure remote access technology.
- C. City-owned workstations are subject to scheduled system updates. When working remotely, the employee will ensure the workstation is connected to the City network, so updates occur in a timely manner.
- D. Information Services will generally not provide on-site support of City owned equipment at the employee's remote work site. If an equipment failure occurs, it is the responsibility of the employee to return the equipment for service as soon as possible. Information Services provides 24/7 tech support through the helpline. After-hours support is limited to password resets, infrastructure issues, and network access.
- E. The employee is responsible for providing a high-speed internet connection, utility, and additional related expenses at their own cost. The employee and supervisor are responsible for determining an appropriate method to be accessible to receive and address work calls coming into work/desk phones in a timely manner.
- F. City equipment and resources located at a remote work site are not automatically insured. The Director, supervisor, and employee should review information about equipment insurance. If departments do not insure the equipment that will support the telework arrangement, the Remote Work Agreement should specify whether the Department or the employee bears the risk of loss. The Remote Work Agreement shall require that the employee immediately report any damage to City equipment.

PROCESS

- A. To request a remote working arrangement, the employee needs to submit the Remote Work Agreement to their supervisor for consideration.

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- B. The supervisor is encouraged to meet with the employee to discuss and determine the appropriateness of the employee's request per the remote work policy and, if applicable, the acceptable terms for the employee to work from a remote work site.
- C. As needed, the Remote Work Agreement may be updated to reflect the agreed-upon arrangement.
- D. When the request to work remotely is denied, the supervisor and the employee should discuss reasons for the decision, and, when possible, discuss action to be taken to allow the employee to work remotely. Remote work may not be suitable for all positions within the City due to the nature of the work to be done.
- E. The Human Resources Department is responsible for maintaining approved Remote Work Agreements in the employee's electronic employee file.
- F. Remote Work Agreements will be reviewed annually as part of the Performance Evaluation Process.

MISCELLANEOUS

- A. All applicable laws, contracts, rules and regulations, policies, and procedures are in effect just as if the employee is in the workplace.
- B. Utilization of a personal computer to access technology through a Virtual Private Network VPN or City resources such as a City provided computer or laptop is allowed, but all records and work are subject to the federal and state public records laws and possible disclosure.
- C. An employee who experiences a workplace injury or disease during designated work hours while working remotely will need to follow Administrative Regulation No. 19: Worker's Compensation Policy and, if requested, make the site of the incident available for a full and complete investigation into the worker's compensation claim.
- D. An employee who works from a remote work site remains solely liable for injuries to members of their family or any other third parties or any damages to real or personal property that occur in the remote work site.

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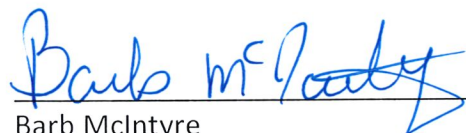
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- E. Worksite items, such as small office supplies of pens, paper, and sticky-notes, may be reasonably provided by the Department for use at the employee's remote worksite. The Department will provide the employee with one on-site workspace, and office supplies such as desks, chairs, lights, telephones, filing cabinets and the like will not be provided for the remote work site. When remote work is terminated, all equipment must be returned to the Department.
- F. Requests by an employee to work remotely on an ad hoc basis for a short duration, for circumstances such as medical appointments, family illness, light duty, or weather conditions, may be approved by the supervisor and not become part of the employee's regular work schedule.
- G. Requests for remote work as the result of a health condition should be referred to Human Resources for review and appropriate action. The EEOC guidance bulletin contains additional information on the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).



Barb McIntyre
Human Resources Director

12/15/2022
Date


Leirion Gaylor Baird
Mayor

12-16-2022
Date