

KENT COUNTY

REMOTE WORK/TELEWORK PROGRAM GUIDELINES

These guidelines set parameters for implementation of a Remote Work/Telework Program for authorized employees on a situational basis to ensure continuity of operations during qualifying situations by enabling some employees to work from remote locations.

1. Eligible Employees include those whose job tasks, in-person collaboration needs, and remote work site are suitable for a teleworking arrangement as determined by the employee, his/her supervisor, the Department Head, Personnel Director, and County Administrator.

2. Employee participation in teleworking may be voluntary or mandatory. Authorization of a teleworking arrangement may be rescinded by the Department Head, Personnel Director, or County Administrator at any time.

2.1 An employee seeking authorization to telework shall submit a completed Telework Request Form to his/her Department Head. After review and consideration of a request, the Department Head with Personnel Director concurrence may approve, on a case-by-case basis, employees to telework on an emergency or situational basis. An employee who is teleworking must account for all hours worked and leave used.

2.2 To initiate the process to telework, an employee should review the request with their supervisor and submit a completed Telework Request Form and a Remote Workplace Self-Certification Checklist to the Department Head. If the Department Head approves the request, the forms shall be forwarded to the Personnel Director for concurrence. Final approval (with or without modifications) or denial is granted by the County Administrator.

2.3 Prior to each telework period, the teleworker and his/her supervisor or Department Head shall discuss and identify the assignments to be completed by the employee while teleworking. Employees must have all necessary tools and equipment available to them for teleworking and must present a description of completed assignments or other work product the next work day in which the employee is present at his/her usual work location.

2.4 While teleworking, the employee shall be accessible via telephone during agreed upon work hours. Teleworkers must notify the office via email when they start and end their telework day, and if they leave their telework location, just as they would inform other staff in their traditional office during a regular work day. Teleworkers will also notify the office via email if they end their telework day early.

2.5 Typically, the hours of a telework day will be consistent with a department's normal business hours or the employee's regular work hours.

2.6 An employee who is teleworking may not conduct personal business while in an official duty status at the remote work site. Personal business includes, but is not limited to: running personal errands; caring for dependents; making home repairs; completing housework, personal internet usage, etc.

2.7 If the County or any specific Department is closed, on a delayed opening, or closes early on an employee's regularly scheduled telework day, the teleworking employee's work schedule shall adjust accordingly to match the Department work hours.

3. The teleworker's duties, obligations, responsibilities, and conditions of employment with the County will be unaffected by teleworking. Except as provided in 2.7 above, an employee who is teleworking is required to work his/her normal scheduled hours or account for hours not worked by utilizing approved leave.

3.1 The teleworker's salary, benefits, and insurance coverages will remain unchanged by the teleworking arrangement.

3.2 The teleworker must have the pre-approval of the teleworker's supervisor or Department Head before working overtime/compensatory time at a remote workplace.

3.3 Teleworkers are permitted to join work-related meetings by phone or web conferencing, if available, but shall not conduct in or person or customer meetings in their remote workplace.

3.4 The current County policies continue to apply regarding breaks. Teleworkers may not save break time in order to stop work prior to their scheduled end time.

4. The teleworker must have a telephone or personal mobile phone and a designated work space with appropriate equipment and supplies to do the assigned work at the remote workplace. Telework proposals that include using County equipment will be evaluated on whether that equipment is already assigned to the employee; is portable in nature; or is otherwise readily available. The County will not pay or be responsible for any increase in the employee's home utility, internet, or mobile phone costs incurred as a result of teleworking.

4.1 If the teleworking employee will need internet access to complete work from the remote location, it is the responsibility of the employee to acquire broadband service and to cover all associated costs.

4.2 The Information Technology Office (IT) will do its best to resolve help desk calls from teleworkers. If the issue cannot be resolved remotely, IT will not travel to the remote employee's location to resolve a technology issue. If available from existing supplies, the County with approval of the County Administrator may provide, with IT approval, teleworkers with a laptop or tablet computer for the exclusive use of completing County work assignments.

4.3 Any equipment provided to a teleworking employee shall remain the property of the County and shall be returned upon conclusion of the employee's participation in the telework program.

4.4 The use of County equipment, software, data, and supplies is limited to use by the authorized telework employee only and for purposes related to County business only.

4.5 The teleworker will be responsible for the security of all items furnished by the County. The teleworker will immediately report any lost or damaged equipment to his/her supervisor or Department Head.

4.6 The teleworker may obtain from their Department all incidental office supplies needed for work at the remote workplace and return unused supplies when the telework assignment ends.

5. The employee's remote work space will be considered an extension of the County's work space. The teleworker shall identify a proposed remote workplace for approval in the Telework Request Form and the Remote Workplace Self-Certification Checklist. The remote workplace should be maintained in a safe condition, free of hazards that might endanger the employee or County equipment. The employee agrees to maintain a work space that is conducive to an effective and efficient work area.

6. The supervisor or Department Head, with concurrence from the Personnel Director, may make on-site visits, with reasonable advance notice and concurrence of the teleworker, to the remote workplace for the purposes of determining that the work area is safe and free from hazards, and to maintain, inspect, or retrieve County-owned equipment, software, data, and/or supplies and to drop off and/or pick up work assignments.

6.1 The teleworker is covered under the County's Workers' Compensation policy for injuries occurring in the course of the actual performance of official duties at the remote workplace. The teleworker or someone acting on the teleworker's behalf shall immediately notify the teleworker's supervisor of any accident or injury that occurs at the remote workplace.

6.2 The County is not liable for damages to the teleworker's personal or real property while the teleworker is working at the remote workplace.

7. The teleworker must maintain compliance with all County policies including the Computer Use & Security Policy and remain subject to disciplinary action for any failure to abide by all County policies and these guidelines.

7.1 In addition to any disciplinary action that may be imposed, participation in the Telework Program may be revoked if an employee violates or abuses the Telework Program. Violations and abuses include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to provide satisfactory work performance or products;

- Engaging in breaks that exceed the authorized time period without prior supervisory approval;
- Failure to adhere to accurate time reporting;
- Frequent instances of unexcused tardiness or absences from work; and
- Participation in non-work related activity (excluding defined break periods) during scheduled work hours.

8. Provisions of these guidelines may be waived or enhanced at the discretion of the County Administrator. Any and all exceptions to these guidelines must be approved in advance.

Established per Policy 8.3: 03/12/2020

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Emergency/Situational Telework Request Form

Eligible employees should submit completed Emergency/Situational Telework Request Form and Remote Workplace Self-Certification Checklist to their Department Head for consideration and approval with concurrence by submission to the Personnel Director and County Administrator. At any stage, the County Administrator may assign and/or approve a request without modifications; with modifications; or deny it.

PLEASE PRINT. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Employee Name: _____ Employee Title: _____

Department: _____ Division: _____

Employee's Remote Work Number: _____ Email: _____

Supervisor's Name: _____ Supervisor's Title: _____

Current Daily Work Schedule: Arrival time: _____ Departure Time: _____

Proposed Telework Schedule: _____

Requested Effective Date(s): _____ Expected Duration: _____

Is Telework Request for a personal FMLA qualifying condition? Yes if No, please explain

Description of remote workplace (Please include the address and a list of any computer and office equipment, such as fax, scanner, or printer, that you have available for use.):

Please list any County equipment or County system access that will be required and whether that equipment/access is already available to the teleworker. Please note any equipment that is assigned to a department, rather than specifically to the employee.

Projects or typical assignments you would complete at the remote workplace: _____

Impact on co-workers if the employee teleworks:

Impact on Supervisor(s):

I have read and agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the Telework Program Guidelines. I understand authorization to telework may be revoked at any time by my Department Head, Personnel Director or County Administrator. I understand that I am under financial liability for loss or damage to any assigned County equipment if the loss or damage results from my negligence, intentional act, or failure to exercise reasonable care, safeguarding, maintenance, or service of this equipment. I agree to maintain regular contact with my supervisor while teleworking.

Employee signature: _____

Date: _____

Department Head review and approval or denial:

Approved without modifications: _____

Approved with modifications: _____

Denied: _____ Date: _____

Department Head signature: _____

Comments: _____

Personnel Director/County Administrator review and approval or denial:

Approved without modifications: _____

Approved with modifications: _____

Denied: _____ Date: _____

Personnel Director signature: _____

County Administrator signature: _____

Comments: _____

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Remote Workplace Self-Certification Checklist

Name: _____ Department/Division: _____

Remote Work Address: _____

Remote Work Phone: _____

Supervisor: _____

This checklist will help assess the overall adequacy and safety of your remote workplace and ensure that you have been properly prepared for teleworking.

Describe the work area in your remote workplace: _____

1. Is the work space free of potential hazards that could cause physical harm (loose or exposed wires, frayed or torn carpeting seams, uneven floor surfaces)? Yes No
2. Are electrical outlets grounded (3 pronged)? Yes No
3. Do chairs have any loose casters (wheels) Yes No; and are the rungs and legs of the chairs sturdy? Yes No
4. Are the phone lines, electrical cords, and extension wires secured? Yes No
5. Is the office space neat, clean, and free of obstructions or combustibles? Yes No
6. Is there enough light for reading? Yes No
7. Is there a working smoke detector within hearing distance of the workspace? Yes No
8. Is the area free from distractions (i.e. children, noise)? Yes No
9. Have you completed and signed the Telework Request Form? Yes No
10. Have you discussed your work schedule with your supervisor? Yes No
11. If you have been issued County equipment, have you been briefed on the care of the equipment? Yes No
12. If you have been issued County equipment, did you indicate such on the Telework Request Form? Yes No

- 13. Have you discussed your performance expectations with your supervisor? ___ Yes ___ No
- 14. Do you have access to the reports and information (electronic or hard copy) you need to complete your work? ___ Yes ___ No
- 15. Do you have sufficient technical proficiency to use your own computer or a County-owned computer to telework? IT will do its best to resolve Help Desk calls from teleworkers. If the issue cannot be resolved remotely, IT will not travel to a teleworker's location to resolve a technology issue. ___ Yes ___ No
- 16. Is the remote workplace connected to the Internet via a broadband connection? ___ Yes ___ No

I certify that all information contained in this checklist is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand my supervisor and/or Department Head may make on-site visits to the remote workplace for the purposes of determining that the site is safe and free from hazards, and to maintain, inspect, or retrieve County-owned equipment. The supervisor and/or Department Head must provide reasonable advance notice of an inspection and make inspections only during normal working hours. I understand that any erroneous, misleading or fraudulent information is sufficient grounds for my preclusion from teleworking and/or disciplinary action.

Teleworker	Date
Supervisor	Date
Department Head	Date

Promptly submit completed form with a Telework Request Form to the Personnel Office