Policy

It is the policy of the County to encourage, in appropriate circumstances, the creation of telecommuting opportunities for county employees. Telecommuting has been found to benefit society by reducing energy consumption, decreasing environmental pollution and reducing traffic congestion. Additionally, telecommuting has been found to benefit employers and employees by reducing office costs, saving commuting costs and allowing flexibility in work schedules.

Definition of Telecommuting

Telecommuting is a form of telework, which is the use of telecommunications technology to work from any remote location. In most instances, it is the act of working from home, thus eliminating travel to and from an office. There are very few jobs where it would be practical to telecommute five (5) days per week. Some jobs, however, have tasks that could be accomplished while telecommuting one to two (1-2) days per week or on an ad hoc, project-specific basis. Generally, jobs suitable for telecommuting will have defined tasks with clearly measurable results. Ultimately, whether or not management decides to utilize telecommuting as an option will depend on the operational needs of the County.

Telecommuting Program Criteria

The decision to approve an Employee’s telecommute request or schedule shall be determined by the County Administrator, after discussions with the Human Resources Director and Department Manager, on a case by case basis. Supervision, clear expectations and measurable tasks are essential components in considering whether or not telecommuting would be an option. The supervisor must be able to supervise telecommuting employees by developing a system of distributing work appropriate for telecommuting and designating tasks with measurable outputs that can ensure appropriate levels of employee accountability.

Department Managers are responsible for developing a formal telecommuting program including the following criteria in their program development:

- Develop a “telecommuting agreement” that must be reviewed by the Human Resources Director and approved by the County Administrator.
- The “telecommuting agreement” with employees must outline the specific parameters of their telecommuting arrangement, including the method of recording and approving work time and a provision requiring prior authorization for the use of overtime.
- Create a Telecommuting Work Plan, to be included as part of the Telecommuting Agreement, which addresses the following:
  a. Specific description of duties to be performed
  b. Established workdays and normal work hours
  c. Explanation as to how supervision will be provided
  d. Explanation as to how work products and outputs will be monitored and reviewed
  e. Explanation as to how attendance and leave records will be maintained and processed
- Submit a copy of each telecommuting agreement to the Human Resources Director.
• Notify the Human Resources Director in writing of any changes to, or cancellation of, telecommuting arrangements.

The Department Manager may discontinue a telecommuting arrangement at any time if continuation would not be productive, efficient or otherwise not in the best interest of the County.

**Capital Costs and Management Supervision**

The County is not required to provide equipment for telecommuting; however, Department Managers may choose to provide all or part of the necessary office equipment for accomplishing work assignments.

**Implementation Considerations**

It is the County’s intention that telecommuting agreements allow employee participation in telecommuting arrangements to be voluntary in nature. However, nothing in this policy, or in any County policy developed in accordance with this master policy, shall be deemed to abrogate or mitigate any employee or employer contractual rights as they relate to the staffing or assignment of personnel.

Department Managers that wish to consider developing telecommuting policies must contact the Human Resources Director.