



# WASHOE COUNTY

## TELECOMMUTING POLICY

**Approved by the Board of County Commissioners on November 26, 2007**  
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- I. POLICY
- II. TELECOMMUTING PROCESS
  - 1. Eligibility
  - 2. Telecommuting Location
  - 3. Intellectual Property
  - 4. Safety
- III. Procedures
  - 1. Telecommuting Work Agreement Form
  - 2. Approval/Disapproval
  - 3. Human Resources
- IV. TERMINATION OF TELECOMMUTING ARRANGEMENTS

## I. POLICY

Washoe County is dedicated to excellence in public service. This policy establishes guidelines for telecommuting work schedules, an arrangement where an employee can work from home.\* The telecommuting policy is being implemented by the County to further improve provision of services to the public. Not all positions are amenable to a telecommuting assignment; therefore, assignments will be made based on business necessity, at the sole discretion of management, and employees may be re-assigned based on the County's business needs. Telecommuting is not an employee entitlement. Employees retain all rights to which they are entitled under any applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement, federal, state or local law, and nothing in this policy should be construed otherwise.

\* Telecommuting must occur at one's residence only and that residence must be within the northern Nevada region or neighboring California communities such as Truckee, South Lake Tahoe or Susanville. Any exceptions will require written approval by the County Manager.

## II. TELECOMMUTING PROCESS

1. *Eligibility.* Not all positions are appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement; therefore, the department head shall determine which positions and employees are suitable for telecommuting. Employees seeking a telecommuting arrangement may apply to their department head using the Telecommuting Work Agreement form. The primary factor for consideration shall be whether an assignment to a telecommuting arrangement meets the business needs of the department and Washoe County. Other factors include, but are not limited to:
  - a. **Location.** The manager will confirm with the employee that the employee's residence resides within the northern Nevada region or neighboring California communities such as Truckee, South Lake Tahoe or Susanville. If the employee's residence is outside of these areas the employee's request to telecommute will be denied unless the department opts to work directly with the County Manager and receives written approval for the exception.
  - b. **Job Responsibilities.** The manager and employee will discuss current job responsibilities and determine what tasks are appropriate for telecommuting arrangements. Such factors in determining whether an employee can telecommute include, but are not limited to, the nature of the work which will

be performed, including the need for, and amount of interaction with the public, co-workers, and subordinates required by the position.

- c. **Equipment Needs.** The manager, technology services, and employee will review the physical workspace needs, equipment requirements, and the appropriate location for the telework. The employee will confirm that he or she has access to space conducive to performing telework.
  - d. **Work Performance.** To be eligible for telecommuting, an employee must be and remain in good standing with Washoe County. The manager will take into consideration the employee's work performance, both prior to and during the assignment to a telecommuting position.
  - e. **Work Hours.** The manager and employee must agree to a work schedule prior to telecommuting. During the agreed upon work schedule, the employee shall only perform County work and is required to seek prior approval for any change in schedule, overtime, or leave of any kind.
  - f. **Time Recording.** The employee is required to maintain accurate records of their hours worked and descriptions of the work they perform and to forward those records to their supervisor each week.
  - g. **Regular Communication.** The manager or designee and employee must remain in frequent communication during the telecommuting period. An appropriate level of communication between manager and employee will be agreed upon in advance.
2. *Telecommuting Location.* The employee shall only perform work in their residence. The dedicated workspace should be quiet, clean, and safe with adequate lighting and ventilation. The employee will not hold business visits or meetings with professional colleagues, customers, or the public at their residence.

**While telecommuting, the employee is responsible for:**

- i. The protection of all County owned property and equipment against theft and damage.
- ii. The safeguarding of records, files, correspondence, and other County owned and business-related materials. Consistent with Washoe County's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting

- employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary County and information accessible from their home office. Steps include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, virus protection software, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment. Employees must adhere to the document security matrix and take all precautions necessary to ensure that confidential and sealed information is not accessible.
- iii. Maintaining a working voice line to make and receive work related telephone calls. A landline or cell phone, paid for by the employee unless otherwise stated in the Telecommuting Work Agreement form, is acceptable as long as service is available at all times during the employee's work hours.
  - iv. Reading and understanding all applicable County policies and agrees to continue to follow them during their telecommuting assignment to include, but not limited to, the *Washoe County's Worker's Compensation Policy*, *Washoe County's Internet and Intranet Acceptable Use Policy*, and *Washoe County Information Security Policy*, and acknowledges that all information, whether personal or professional maintained on County owned computer equipment and/or the County Computer system is the property of Washoe County.

Washoe County is not responsible for the care, maintenance, upkeep, repair or otherwise of computer or other employee-owned property which is used by the employee.

3. *Intellectual Property*. Products, documents, and records produced or created in connection with county business are the property of Washoe County.
4. *Safety*. Employees are expected to maintain their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Injuries sustained by the employee in a home office location and in conjunction with his or her regular work duties may be eligible for worker's compensation. Employees are responsible for notifying their manager and Risk Management of such injuries as soon as practicable. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to his or her home worksite.

Telecommuting is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate childcare. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate childcare needs, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting business demands. Prospective telecommuters are encouraged to discuss expectations of telecommuting with family members beforehand.

The employee will periodically make the residence available for reasonable inspection by their department head and/or designee, a Washoe County Safety Officer, a Technology Services staff person, or other employees deemed necessary by the County to assure compliance with County policies and/or to repair, inspect, or install County property or equipment. Failure to allow such access may result in denial of the request to telecommute, termination of the telecommuting work agreement, and/or discipline up to and including termination of employment.

### **III. PROCEDURES**

1. An employee is required to complete and sign the Telecommuting Work Agreement form.
2. Approval or disapproval is determined by the department head and/or designee and Technology Services. Any disapprovals are not subject to an appeal.
3. All approved Telecommuting Work Agreement forms shall be forwarded to the Human Resources Department for placement in the personnel file.

### **IV. TERMINATION OF TELECOMMUTING ARRANGEMENTS**

All telecommuting arrangements are at the will of County management and are not employee entitlements. A department head may therefore terminate a telecommuting arrangement upon reasonable notice to the employee (not less than 2 days). Department heads who approve telecommuting arrangements will periodically review all such arrangements to assure the County's business needs are being met, that telecommuting employees are in compliance with the Telecommuting Policy and Work Agreement form, and all other applicable County policies, and to determine the appropriateness of continuing the telecommuting arrangement.