

**CITY OF NEW ORLEANS
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

POLICY MEMORANDUM NO. 147

April 12, 2022

TO: All Departments, Boards, Agencies, and Commissions

FROM: Gilbert A. Montaña, Chief Administrative Officer



SUBJECT: REMOTE WORK/TELECOMMUTE POLICY

I. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this memorandum is to establish a policy that governs the rules for remote work and telecommuting. It provides the terms, conditions, description of resources, and effective internal controls that will serve as a guide for both management and employees who work in designated areas outside the office.

II. EFFECTIVENESS.

This policy shall become effective on May 1, 2022, and shall supersede all previously issued circular memoranda and alternative worksite agreements.

III. BENEFITS.

- Continuity of operations
- Efficient use of City resources, including office space
- Greater flexibility for employees and departments
- Increased productivity
- Improved employee morale and job satisfaction
- Greater work/life balance
- Decreased energy consumption, air pollution, and traffic and parking congestion
- Ability to function during an emergency when the employee's principal worksite is inaccessible

IV. SCOPE.

This policy applies to employees of all City agencies, departments, boards, and commissions.

V. DEFINITIONS.

A. Remote Work.

Remote work is work performed outside of a traditional office environment pursuant to a Remote Work Agreement, also referred to as working from home or telecommuting. The concept of remote work is that employees can successfully execute projects and daily tasks without needing to commute to an office each day.

B. Non-Remote Eligible.

An employee who is non-remote eligible has been deemed by their Appointing Authority as needing to be physically present at their worksite(s) to complete the core functions of their work.

C. Remote Work Office.

A Remote Work Office is an approved alternative location that is not owned or leased by the City of New Orleans in which an employee is authorized to conduct remote work.

D. Remote Work Agreement.

A Remote Work Agreement is a signed document that outlines the understanding between the City and the employee regarding the employee's remote work arrangement.

VI. ELIGIBILITY.

Remote Work eligibility will depend upon the operational needs of departments and the functions and responsibilities of employees. The initial determination of an employee's eligibility to work remotely is the responsibility of the employee's immediate supervisor; however, the final approval to allow an eligible employee or a group of employees within the Department to work remotely is at the discretion of the employee's Appointing Authority and the Chief Administrative Officer.

In determining whether an employee is eligible to work remotely, the Supervisor, Appointing Authority, and Chief Administrative officer will consider whether the employee's responsibilities:

- Can be accomplished offsite
- Are independent in nature
- Lend themselves to measurable deliverables
- Require frequent in-person interaction at the regular worksite with supervisors, colleagues, clients, or the public
- Require the employee's immediate presence at the regular worksite to address unscheduled events unless alternative arrangements for coverage are possible
- Are essential to the management of on-site workflow

VII. GENERAL STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS.

Each eligible employee who desires to work remotely must request a remote work arrangement with their supervisor, and a Remote Work Agreement must be drafted using the attached template to memorialize the employee's remote work arrangement. The employee must sign the Agreement first, then each management representative in the approval path must sign in order, and the approval process shall cease if any approval signature is not provided. Once entered, the Remote Work Agreement shall be in effect for one year unless otherwise specified. At a minimum, the Agreement must be reviewed annually by the Department and Employee and discussed as part of the annual performance review process.

The ability to remote work/telecommute is discretionary on the part of management and is **NOT** an employee's benefit or right. This policy does **NOT** change the terms of employment with the City of New Orleans. There are many instances in which remote work will not be compatible with the operational needs of the Department and the functions and responsibilities of certain positions, and some Departments may not be able to offer remote work. At any time, the Chief Administrative Office may reevaluate this remote work policy and it may be amended or discontinued. The City reserves its right to approve or deny an employee's request to work remotely based on operational needs and the eligibility factors and approval criteria outlined in this policy memorandum.

Employees are expected to be available by telephone and/or email during scheduled remote work assignments unless otherwise specified or agreed upon by the supervisor. Employees working remotely must also adhere to breaks and attendance schedules agreed upon with their manager and in compliance with state and federal law. Additionally, telecommuting employees must project the same professionalism as if they were in their office/worksites, especially during virtual meetings. Management retains the right to require an employee who remote works/telecommutes to commute to a City office on a regularly scheduled remote workday if necessary.

Employees must comply with all the terms of the Remote Work Agreement, City policies and procedures, agency-specific policies and procedures, and applicable laws and regulations. **Please refer to Policy Memorandum Nos. 82 (R) – Standards of Appearance for City Employees, Policy Memorandum 83 (R) – Standards of Behavior for City Employees, and any other related City policies.**

VIII. REMOTE WORK OFFICE.

To ensure that an employee's performance will not suffer in remote work arrangements, the City advises remote employees to choose a Remote Work Office that is:

- A quiet and distraction-free workspace
- Has an internet connection that's adequate for personal and work devices

- Allows the employee to dedicate full attention to their job duties during working hours

Each employee's Remote Work Office shall be designated in the Remote Work Agreement, and any deviations from the approved Remote Work Office must be approved by the employee's supervisor. **Please refer to Policy Memorandum No. 19 (R) – Domicile Requirements for City Employees for additional information regarding employee domicile requirements.**

IX. SCHEDULING.

All employees must perform their remote work in accordance with the approved schedule in their Remote Work Agreement. Any deviations from the approved schedule must be approved by the employee's supervisor. The City will continue using ADP or its other applicable timekeeping procedures for those City employees approved to work remotely.

Employees may use annual, sick, or other leave in accordance with Civil Service Rules and City policy, with the approval of their supervisor and/or Appointing Authority.

For additional information please see the Timekeeping and Payroll section located on the employee's Neutral Ground website.

X. EQUIPMENT.

The City of New Orleans may provide employees with equipment that is essential to perform their job duties, such as laptops, headsets, and cell phones (when applicable). Alternatively, remote employees who are pre-approved to do so may receive expense reimbursement to cover reasonable and necessary work-related expenses. **Please refer to the CAO Policy Memorandum No. 109 (R) - Regulations Pertaining to Assignment, Usage and Care, and Return of City Property and CAO Policy Memorandum No. 145 – Employee Expense Reimbursement for additional information.**

XI. COMMUNICATION CONFIDENTIALITY DATA AND SECURITY.

The remote worker and supervisor must agree on data security and transfer procedures necessary to meet the needs of the City, to protect the security of data, and to comply with applicable federal and state laws, policies, and procedures. Communications and data, in whatever form (paper or electronic) created or maintained during a Remote Work Agreement, are and remain the property of the City of New Orleans and are subject to the City's public records laws and agency records retention policies. **Please refer to Policy Memorandum No. 61(R) – Acceptable Use Policy for additional information.**

XII. EMERGENCY AND OFFICE CLOSURE.

Should a natural disaster or emergency occur while an employee is remote working, the employee will be provided directives by their supervisor(s) in accordance with Policy Memorandum No. 112 – Emergency and Office Closure Leave and Pay Policies. **Please refer to the CAO Policy Memorandum No: 112 (R) – Emergency and Office Closure Leave and Pay Policies for additional information.**

XIII. COMPLIANCE.

Employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional at their own expense to discuss income tax implications related to maintaining a home workspace, if applicable. The City will not provide legal advice or tax guidance, nor will the City assume any tax liabilities related to this policy.

XIV. ENFORCEMENT.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

XV. INQUIRIES.

Any questions concerning this policy may be addressed with the Chief Administrative Office at (504) 658-8600.

GAM/PMRC/zaf

Attachment