

# MACOMB COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY

## REMOTE WORK

### Policy Statement

Macomb County Department Heads/Elected Officials may permit certain positions to work remotely. The opportunity for employees to work remotely is an employer option, not an employee right. Departments across the County may implement remote work as an option for eligible positions based on operational needs and be uniformly applied.

### Reason for Policy

This policy has been designed to help supervisors and employees understand the remote work environment and their associated rights and responsibilities. This policy provides a general framework for employees working remotely. Remote work can benefit both employees and departments by providing a better work-life balance. Other benefits include:

- Increased ability to function during an emergency
- Increased productivity
- Efficient use of County resources, including office space
- Recruitment and retention of highly qualified employees
- Greater flexibility for employees and departments
- Improved employee morale and job satisfaction
- Reduced employee absenteeism
- Reduced employee commute time and costs

### Worksite Definitions

"Traditional worksite" refers to any County owned or controlled facility.

"Remote worksite" refers to the employee's home or Department-approved location.

"Field worksite" refers to any worksite where the employee is assigned to perform the essential functions of their job other than the traditional or remote worksite.

### Management Guidelines

Each supervisor, with the approval of the Department Head/Elected Official, or their designee, will be responsible for designating positions which will be authorized for remote work. Remote work is an arrangement between an individual employee and their supervisor. Remote work must not be used as a reward or revoked as a punishment. The sole determinant should be the position's ability to accomplish its tasks remotely.

Departments who authorize remote work for positions are responsible for the following:

1. Establishing expectations for and monitoring of employee performance

2. Identifying eligible positions suitable for remote work
3. Identifying eligible employees (see "Employee Participation in Remote Work")
4. Determining if equipment will be provided to the employee (see "Equipment and Supplies")
5. Establishing how the employee will maintain regular contact with office coworkers and management
6. Determining how the department will handle restricted access materials, security issues, and taking electronic or paper records from the traditional worksite (see "Security and Access to Information")
7. Ensuring practices are consistent and compliant with all County policies
8. Communicating remote work expectations to employees
9. Ensuring individual work schedules and reporting for non-exempt employees are in compliance with the Fair Labor Standard Act (FLSA)
10. Each employee request to work remotely will be considered in relation to the department's operating needs

### **Employee Participation in Remote Work**

Offering the opportunity to work remotely is an employer option and not an employee right. Management may eliminate the option of a position to work remotely without cause.

The employee must adhere to all policies, rules, and regulations of the County while working remotely. Further, an employee must have the willingness of their supervisor to perform the necessary supervisory responsibilities required for remote workers. The employee agrees not to conduct personal business or any unauthorized external (non-County) business during working hours (See Worksite and Hours of Operation). Additionally, the employee must ensure personal obligations during work hours will not hinder work performance.

Employees must use discretion when scheduling the location of business meetings with internal or external clients, customers or colleagues while working remotely.

### **Conditions of Employment**

The employee's conditions of employment remain the same as for non-remote employees. Employee salary, benefits, and employer-sponsored insurance coverage will not change as a result of working remotely.

### **Worksite and Hours of Operation**

The Department Head/Elected Official, or their designee, must define the type of worksite and hours of operation for the participants, thus (1) reducing Macomb County's exposure to risk, (2) facilitating proper supervision of remote workers, and (3) ensuring work is conducted in a productive and safe environment.

Any arrangement regarding working hours must adhere to the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Immediate supervisors can direct employees to report to their traditional worksite instead of their remote or field worksite. Whenever possible, employees who are directed to report to their traditional worksite, should be notified by the end of the work day prior to the day they are to report. In such cases, travel time to the traditional worksite is treated as regular commuting time and is not counted as hours worked.

If an employee is working in their remote or field worksite during the workday and they are directed to report to their traditional worksite, the time traveling from the employee's remote or field worksite to the traditional worksite must be treated as "job site" to "job site" travel, and the employee's travel time must be counted as hours worked and compensated accordingly.

### **Work Space**

An employee approved to work remotely is responsible for setting up an appropriate work environment. The County will not be responsible for any cost associated with the setup of a remote office. Upon request, the County will consult with an employee on any modifications or requirements to operate County-owned equipment. Employees who require a disability accommodation must follow the established process outlined in the Human Resources Disability Accommodation policy.

As a condition to work remotely, the employee must ensure that the work space is safe and suitable for the purposes of the employee's work. Employees must report any known safety hazards to County-owned equipment or devices, such as water or electrical issues, to their supervisor immediately. An employee may be denied the opportunity to work remotely if the remote worksite is not conducive to a safe and productive work environment.

### **Equipment and Supplies**

General office supplies (e.g. pens and paper) shall be provided by the County and obtained from the traditional worksite. Out-of-pocket expenses for supplies normally available at the traditional worksite will not be reimbursed.

The employee is expected to use their own furniture, telecom/internet services, and other equipment. Any use of private facilities of the employee will be at the employee's discretion and not at the request or expense of Macomb County.

Any equipment assigned for remote work is property of the County. Each department retains the responsibility for the inventory and maintenance of County-owned property. In no situation should County-owned equipment be permanently installed in an employee's home or utilized for non-business purposes.

Any hardware provided by the Information Technology Department to any employee may only be removed from County facilities with the approval of the individual employee's Department Head/Elected Official, or their designee and the approval of the Chief Information Officer, or their designee.


### **Liability**

The employee's remote worksite, when used for working remotely, is an extension of the traditional worksite. Nonetheless, Macomb County is not responsible for injuries to family members, visitors, and others due to an employee working remotely. The employee will not attempt to hold the County responsible or liable for any loss or liability in any way connected to the employee's remote work.

**Security and Access to Information**

The employee is responsible for maintaining confidentiality and security at the remote worksite, at the same standard as at the traditional worksite. The employee must protect the security and integrity of data, information, paper files, and access to computer systems. All County Information Technology Policies apply while working remotely as they would at the traditional worksite.

Approved:



Office of County Executive



Date

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