



## LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY POLICY

<b>Subject: Telework Policy</b>	<b>Policy No: 1.2.16</b>
<b>Approved:</b>	<b>Effective Date: May 1, 2022</b>

### I. **Policy Statement**

Lewis and Clark County is committed to providing excellent customer service and providing quality programs and services to County residents. The County's approach to accomplishing this mission is through in-person interactions with residents and other County personnel. While Lewis and Clark County is committed to providing in-person interactions as the standard staffing model, we recognize there may be extenuating circumstances that could create reason for exceptions.

The purpose of this policy is to establish in-person staffing as the preferred model for providing excellent customer service and quality programs and services and to establish uniform guidelines for conducting work from a location other than a Lewis and Clark County worksite on a temporary basis and under certain situations. Some of these situations include, but are not limited to, emergency response, workspace challenges, an employee needing a reasonable, temporary or long-term work ADA accommodation, and a temporary, personal situation that interferes with an employee's ability to report to their worksite. The County considers telework to be a flexible work option and must be deemed appropriate and viable work arrangement for both the employee and the department. Staff who are approved for telework are also expected to provide excellent customer service and quality programs and services to County residents from their telework location. Telework is not a viable option for all employees or positions across the County. Personal convenience is not an acceptable justification and teleworking is not an employee benefit.

### II. **Applicability**

All Lewis and Clark County Employees.

### III. **Definitions**

**Telework:** A flexible work arrangement offered by Lewis and Clark County where an employee performs the duties and responsibilities of their position, and other authorized

activities, from an approved worksite other than the location the employee would normally work on the employer's premises.

#### **IV. Directives**

##### **A. General Provisions**

1. Department Directors and Elected Officials will make decisions regarding altered work schedules, work locations, work arrangements (hours worked in and out of the office), length of teleworking arrangement, positions suitable for telework, and employees that are able to telework while maintaining their department's operations as necessary.
  - a. Requests for telework arrangements must be made by the employee in writing; an email meets this requirement. The request must at least include the reason, work schedule needs and anticipated length of arrangement.
  - b. Employees required to work from an alternate location due to an emergency declared by the Lewis and Clark Board of County Commissioners are not subject to the requirement for a Telework Plan.
2. Decisions regarding positions and employees authorized for telework by Department Directors and Elected Officials must be approved by the Chief Administrative Officer.
3. Evaluation of the suitability for a telework arrangement will consider the following factors:
  - a. Job responsibilities. The employee and manager will evaluate the responsibilities of the job, operational needs of the office or department, and how accessible the employee must be to County employees and the public.
  - b. Employee Suitability. The manager will consider the needs and work habits of the employee.
  - c. Equipment and workspace needs. The employee and manager will review needs in order to determine the proper equipment is available and/or affordable and that workspace is appropriate. Information Technology & Services (IT & S) should be consulted where confidentiality and security are considerations.
  - d. Tax or other legal considerations.
4. In order for an employee to be approved for teleworking, there must be a signed Telework Plan on file with the approving Department Head/Elected Official, the Information Technology and Services Director (or designee), and the Human Resources Director (or designee).
5. Telework arrangements can be approved on a trial basis and the terms must be included in the Telework Plan.
6. Working from home on an occasional basis is not teleworking; this is remote work and is not covered within the scope of this Telework Policy.
7. Department Officials should maintain a list of positions that could be performed remotely and send a copy to the Human Resources Department.

8. It is the Department's responsibility to contact IT & S to make arrangements regarding equipment and access needed.
9. A Telework Plan may be discontinued at any time at the sole discretion of the Department Head/Elected Official and approved by the Chief Administrative Officer. Considerations for discontinuing include, but are not limited to:
  - a. the arrangement no longer meets the operational needs of the County;
  - b. performance standards are not being met by the employee;
  - c. equipment or security needs can no longer be met;
  - d. the employee's need to telework no longer exists;
  - e. a change to the job duties or the position that affects the feasibility of the arrangement;
  - f. an increase in workload for other employees in the department/work unit.

## **B. Expectations and Key Considerations**

1. Telework Plans must be reviewed prior to the expiration of the Telework Plan to validate that the arrangement is still effective and in the best interest of the County.
2. A regular work schedule must be established in the Telework Plan. This work schedule is to be followed unless otherwise agreed upon by the supervisor. A teleworking employee must follow their department's established procedures for requesting leave, changing their work schedule, and calling off of work.
3. Effective performance management is critical to the success of the telework arrangement. When a supervisor cannot observe an employee's interactions and behaviors in the workplace, they must develop a plan to monitor and evaluate them in other ways. How work performance will be evaluated must be identified by the supervisor prior to the start of the telework and clearly communicated to the employee.
  - a. Consistency in the evaluation of teleworking employees and onsite employees should be as close as possible.
  - b. Performance standards should be job specific as outlined in the position description, formally defined, and reviewed regularly.
4. Employees are expected to follow all County personnel policies, as well as any applicable office policies, procedures and protocols established by the Supervisor or Department Head/Elected Official.
5. Employees approved for a telework arrangement must have a signed acknowledgement on file with the HR office regarding responsibilities of public employees and maintenance of public records.

## **C. Summary of Process for Completed Telework Plan**

The Employee must submit their detailed request in writing to their supervisor; the supervisor and/or Department Head/Elected Official reviews and either approves or denies the request in writing; the Employee and supervisor or Department Head/Elected Official work together to complete the Telework Plan; the Telework Plan is forwarded to

the Human Resources Director for review; sent to the Chief Administrative Officer for approval or denial; and sent to the IT & S Director for review, approval, and sign-off on equipment issued.

V. **Closing**

Provisions of this policy will be followed unless they conflict with negotiated labor contracts which will take precedence to the extent applicable.

Questions concerning this policy should be directed to the Human Resource Department.

VI. **References**

VII. **Attachments**

Telework Plan