



TELEWORK REQUEST AND AGREEMENT

Effective May 7, 2021

Whatcom County government is an office-centric, public facing organization. At the discretion of the Department Head, limited and well defined telework arrangements will be considered when mutually beneficial. The employee and supervisor should evaluate the costs and benefits of telework, identify work expectations, and clearly communicate how expectations will be met. The general expectation for a telework agreement is that all regular job duties and productivity standards will be accomplished, regardless of work location.

EMPLOYEE COMPLETES

Employee Name:	Job Title:
Department:	Supervisor:
Employment: Regular Temporary Extra Help Group: Unrepresented Union Represented Overtime: Exempt Eligible (non-exempt)	Type Requested: Regular Hybrid Occasional Other; varies Total Hours/Week: _____
Proposed Duties Suitable for Telework:	

Employee Signature:

Date:

MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Management Name:	Job Title:
Refer to FAQs FOR Leaders Evaluating Post-COVID Telework This position is suitable for Regular Hybrid telework Occasional telework Other; varies AND our department budget can fulfill the needed technology and equipment for this telework request. <input type="checkbox"/> This position is NOT suitable for telework and/or our department budget cannot fulfill the needed supplies.	
County Equipment/Technology Approved for Offsite Work: <input type="checkbox"/> VPN - County Owned Laptop Equipment Only Asset Tag # _____ *Route a copy of this agreement with an IT Service request for VPN to the IT Service Desk Laptop Asset Tag # _____ Monitor Asset Tag # _____ Scanner Asset Tag # _____ Printer Asset Tag # _____ Mouse Keyboard Webcam Phone Headset Other: _____	
Business Reasons and Job Duties Suitable for Telework:	

Effective Dates:

Start Date: _____ End date, if applicable: _____ Indefinite with periodic review

Regular Hybrid Telework Days & Hours:

Days	Onsite	Remote	Start	Lunch	End	Total
Monday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Tuesday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Wednesday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Thursday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Friday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Occasional/Ad Hoc Schedule Anticipated:

I understand and agree to:

- All terms and conditions of employment will apply regardless of where the work is performed, including pay, benefits, attendance requirements, position duties and performance standards, and adherence to Whatcom County and department policies, procedures, and work rules.
- Adhere to attendance standards including requests for time off or other leave and observation of scheduled rest and meal breaks in full compliance with County policies or applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- Request and receive advance approval for overtime and/or any schedule changes.
- Approval to telework may be revoked at any time.
- Be available and responsive during scheduled work hours including the same obligations as onsite workers in regards to responding to phone calls, voicemail, e-mail, and other messages.
- Establish and maintain a safe, healthful and ergonomic work environment free from hazards, dangers, and distractions.
- Not attach non-County printers/devices to the County's computer. Protect confidentiality and integrity of County data, equipment, and records from damage or improper disclosure. Shut down daily for security updates.
- Maintain personal equipment including reliable connectivity to the Internet and phone access.

Employee Signature:

Date:

I agree to ensure the employee is provided with the resources, training, equipment and supplies necessary for effective telework within budget authority. I have thoughtfully considered how to successfully onboard and integrate the teleworking employee into our workgroup and culture. I agree to consistently monitor the effectiveness of this agreement and review and update it periodically as necessary and at least annually.

Supervisor Signature:

Date:

Department Head Signature:

Date:

Reviewed Date	Comments	Supervisor Initials	Employee Initials

Original: Department File

Copy: IT Service Desk (at the start AND at the end of a telework agreement for proper asset tracking)

AT CONCLUSION OF A TELEWORK AGREEMENT COUNTY EQUIPMENT RETURNED

Laptop Asset Tag # _____ Monitor Asset Tag # _____ Scanner Asset Tag # _____
 Printer Asset Tag # _____ Mouse Keyboard Webcam Phone Headset
Other: _____

Working from Remote Locations

AD148301Z

Effective Date: 10/27/09; updated 12/12/2017; 09/16/2019; 02/04/2021; 05/12/2021

This policy applies to employees authorized to perform duties from a remote location on a more than incidental basis, except for Deputy Sheriffs and fire inspectors.

For the purposes of this policy, “remote locations” are defined as places where work is performed away from the employee’s regular work site, such as home, or while traveling.

1. Department Heads Manage Remote Assignments

The Department Head will only assign remote work to employees who meet ALL the following criteria:

- Duties performed remotely do not require presence at work site and can be scheduled remotely without significant impact on quality or level of internal or external customer service.
- Past and present job performance rated as “meets job requirements.”

2. Department Heads Manage Remote Access to Computer Networks

The Department Head will [request remote access](#) to County computer networks for employees, who must use only County-owned computers with County standard remote access software. This may include county-owned and IT-sanctioned remote access software used on non-county devices.

The Department Head will track and retrieve assets taken off site.

3. Employees Meet Telework Requirements

Prior to working or accessing County computer networks remotely, the Department Head and employee will execute a written [Telework Agreement](#).



Evaluating Post-COVID Telework FAQs for Leaders

As the County prepares to reopen its offices to the public, leaders and employees are asking questions about the future of telework.

The answer is basically in the hands of Department Heads and Elected Officials. The County has sole discretion to offer telework arrangements. Because services in each department are unique, as Department Heads think about re-opening and new methods for providing essential public services, we will be shifting from COVID-response approaches to telework.

Some positions may not be well-suited to telework, some positions are more productive than others via telework, and some positions may offer opportunities for a "hybrid" approach.

This information can help department leaders think about how telework fits with your business needs. In your Re-Opening Plan, you can set expectations and decisions about telework options within your operations.

What are the County's Telework policies?

Before COVID, County policy limited telework to certain positions like supervisors, emergency response and after-hours support roles. Telework was mainly allowed for positions exempt from overtime. Telework requests required approval from the Human Resources and Information Technology Managers. In response to COVID, the County has significantly expanded telework, and has recently simplified the [Telework Policy](#).

Which positions are conducive to ongoing teleworking?

Many information-based jobs (reading, writing, research, working with data, limited communications) are well-suited for telework. Some tasks done remotely during the COVID crisis may be more effectively done in person: work requiring collaboration (innovation, problem-solving, and creativity), coaching, counseling, providing advice and feedback, building customer and colleague relationships, bringing new employees on-board, negotiating, making critical decisions, teaching, and training.

How do I think about the right mix of telework work for my workgroup and/or department?

- What availability for in-person customer service do your customers need?
- What is the nature of the position's work? Is it fully independent or reliant on others?
- What parts of the job are more effectively done in person?
- How will your teleworking employees build relationships and gain and share knowledge?
- What are employee preferences? Individual choices can be considered if balanced with fair application across your work group.
- Are you prepared to consistently monitor accountability for teleworkers and clearly communicate expectations (written objectives, daily tasks, and regular meetings) and review progress and results?
- Do teleworking employees clearly understand the requirement to take breaks, not work over time without permission, and observe full work hours (covered in the [Agreement](#))?
- Does the department have resources to support the space, equipment, administration to provide remote and on-site work spaces? For how many positions?
- Might teleworking create resentment among staff not allowed to telework work or those not interested in telework? How might that impact the workgroup?
- Is your culture of trust high enough to support telework?

Can I prohibit an employee with performance issues from teleworking?

Engaging employees and managing performance can be very challenging when employees are not onsite. It is reasonable to discontinue or not allow telework for employees not meeting performance standards. If you change a telework agreement, provide reasons and advance notice to the employee. Call your HR Rep if you need help navigating this.

Can I change telework arrangements for my workgroup if I have allowed it for the past several months?

Yes, teleworking is a privilege approved by the employer and not an obligation, even if approved during COVID. If you make a change, communicate new expectations with appropriate notice, so employees can plan accordingly.

Can I provide telework as an accommodation for a medical condition or disability?

Telework may be appropriate as a reasonable accommodation in some instances. Work with your Human Resources Representative to evaluate any situations that might be covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

What is the difference between occasional telework and regular hybrid telework?

Occasional telework is approved on a case-by-case, infrequent basis to allow uninterrupted time for project work and is time-limited. Regular hybrid telework would involve scheduling both ongoing telework and work onsite. It can last for a defined period or can continue indefinitely with regular review.

How do I make sure employees eligible for overtime follow attendance standards (work hours and breaks) and don't work overtime unless authorized?

Execute a written [Telework Agreement](#) with every employee. Regularly talk about your expectations. Working "off-the-clock" is actually one of the greatest risks for the County with telework.