



WASHINGTON STATE  
Department of  
Children, Youth, and Families



QIC-WD QUALITY IMPROVEMENT CENTER  
FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

# CHILD WELFARE FIELD OPERATIONS

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## TELEWORK PROGRAM HANDBOOK

For the following positions in selected telework offices:

- SOCIAL SERVICE SPECIALIST 2, 3, 4, & 5
- SOCIAL AND HEALTH PROGRAM CONSULTANT 2, 3, 4, & 5
- AREA ADMINISTRATOR
- DEPUTY REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR
- REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

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## Section I. Telework Fundamentals

This handbook provides guidance about the implementation of telework for select jobs in the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) Child Welfare Field Operations. It addresses questions about telework benefits, requirements, processes, expectations, and best practices, to ensure consistent and effective implementation of the telework component of the DCYF Modern and Mobile Workplace Policy.

### What is telework?

Telework is an authorized working arrangement where employees perform part of their regular work activities at their home or at an alternate DCYF office, rather than at their official duty station. As is further described in this handbook, telework involves a formal agreement and must occur during the employee's approved work schedule. Telework requires the use of technology to ensure availability and access to normal work material, in order to continue to meet regular performance standards. Thus, teleworking cannot be sanctioned informally, is not a means of having an enhanced flexible schedule or a substitute for taking leave, and it is not an opportunity to disengage, limit availability, or reduce productivity. The successful implementation of this trial shall solidify the full implementation in other regions and job classifications within the Child Welfare Field Operations. This handbook shall be fluid as telework is implemented throughout the agency.

### Who is eligible to participate in telework?

Teleworking may not be a suitable arrangement for all positions or employees. Some CWFO job classifications have been determined eligible for telework based on typical job duties. At this time, the following job classifications are eligible for the telework program: Social Service Specialist 2, 3, and 4; Social and Health Program Consultant 2, 3, and 4 (except for those that have meeting facilitation responsibilities); Area Administrator; Deputy Regional Administrator; and Regional Administrator. Telework eligibility for other CWFO positions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Employees must meet certain basic eligibility criteria in order to be considered for telework. Actual participation is determined through an application, approval, and agreement process. The following eligibility criteria apply to employees in eligible jobs:

- Employees must have permanent status in their current job classification and can be either part time or full time; and
- Employees must have been employed in Child Welfare Field Operations for at least 18 months AND in their current position for at least three months.

### Why should an employee telework?

Teleworking provides benefits to DCYF, its employees, the economy, and the environment. A well-structured telework program can help attract and retain talented employees, provide a supportive and productive work environment, and improve employee job satisfaction, stress, work-life balance, and retention. It can also reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions by reducing commute trips.

## Is telework required?

Participation in telework is not required.

## Does an employee have a right to telework?

Telework is one tool that an employer may utilize, where appropriate, to increase employee satisfaction and engagement. Participation as a telework employee is entirely voluntary.

Teleworking is available only to eligible employees, at the agency's sole discretion.

Teleworking is not an employee benefit intended to be available to the entire agency. As such, no employee is entitled to, or guaranteed the opportunity to, telework.

## How often and on what days can an employee telework?

Employees who have been approved for telework can telework a maximum of two days per week. The 30 telework pilot participants from 2018 can continue with their agreed-upon arrangements, which in some cases could be a maximum of three days a week. If a pilot participant leaves their position, the person who fills the position is eligible to apply for telework based on these guidelines.

Both telework days and in-office days must be fixed days each week and cannot vary across time (e.g., Monday, Wednesday, Friday—in office; Tuesday and Thursday—at home or at an alternate DCYF office). An employee can request that the two telework days be consecutive, but there is no guarantee that the request will be approved. If there is any need to come in to the office on a telework day, the employee will not be able to substitute or make up the telework day on an alternate day. Telework schedule requests are made during the application process, and supervisors and administrators who review applications will consider the agency's business needs, including office coverage, as well as the employee's job requirements and state seniority in the case of multiple employees requesting to telework on the same day.

## What is the expected work schedule while teleworking?

Telework approval is separate from decisions concerning an employee's work schedule or use of leave. Employees are expected to work their approved work schedule while teleworking, in accordance with the conditions outlined in the collective bargaining agreement and position description. Changes to an employee's work schedule must be made through the use of the *Work Schedule/Shift Change Notice*. Employees may request to combine telework with alternate schedules, but there is no guarantee that a combination will be approved. An employee requesting authorization to work overtime or use sick leave, vacation, or other leave will follow the same procedures used when working at the official duty station.

## From where can an employee telework?

Telework can be done at an employee's home in Washington State or a neighboring state, and/or an employee may request to telework (exclusively or in addition to teleworking from home) from an alternate DCYF office that is more convenient to their home (e.g., based on travel distance or availability of public transportation). Use of an alternate DCYF office is not guaranteed, and decisions are contingent on available office space and approval by the employee's supervisor and the Area Administrator for the alternate office. If an employee's home is in a neighboring state, it will be the employee's responsibility to determine any income tax implications of maintaining a home office or any other aspect of telework. The agency will not provide tax guidance nor will the agency assume any additional tax liabilities. The

employee is encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss income tax implications.

## **What are the basic requirements for an at-home workspace?**

At-home workspaces need to ensure safety, sufficient space, reliable connectivity, information security, and freedom from personal disruptions. The location should meet the same health and safety standards as the employee's official duty station. A dedicated work space is not required, but sufficient work space is needed to accommodate all equipment needed. A dedicated high-speed internet connection to the home is required, and teleworkers assume responsibility for those costs, as well as other operational costs associated with the residence, such as home maintenance, insurance, or utilities. Employees must protect the security and integrity of data, information, paper files, and access to agency computer systems. Personal responsibilities, including dependent care, must be arranged so as not to interfere with working at home. Further details are discussed in *Section III. Being a Teleworker*.

## **What computer equipment is provided for teleworkers?**

The employee and supervisor shall determine the minimum equipment and software necessary for the employee to complete assignments from the remote location in a timely, efficient, and professional manner. In determining which equipment (if any) shall be provided by the agency, the supervisor may consult other departments within the agency as to appropriateness and availability. Any equipment provided by the agency must be properly inventoried and listed in the agreement, and the agreement must be kept updated if equipment is returned or if new equipment is assigned. The employee is required to return any agency property upon request.

## **What about any additional expense required to telework?**

The employee is responsible for ongoing operating costs, such as telephone service fees, internet fees, utility costs, homeowner's or renter's insurance and furniture or equipment rental fees unless the agency agrees in writing to pay for or reimburse such costs. The agency will normally reimburse for shipping expenses of agency-owned equipment. The employee should never purchase or rent equipment, services, or supplies on the assumption that the agency will reimburse the cost. Prior manager approval should be obtained.

## **What computer software and systems will teleworkers have?**

Teleworkers can have access to all the same software and systems as they do at their official duty station. A standard set of programs will be available to all teleworkers, and if additional programs or access are needed, the teleworker should discuss this with their supervisor and local Information Technology support staff.

The employee may not install or download any other software without approval. The employee may be allowed to install software on agency-owned equipment upon approval. Without approval, the employee must schedule installation with the Information Technology department. Only agency-owned software may be installed in agency-owned equipment. All software used for telework must properly be licensed by the software manufacturer. If new software is required for telework, it will be provided by the agency.

## What technical support is provided for teleworkers?

Teleworking employees can contact the Information Technology (IT) Service Desk for the same support they have at their official duty station. IT will not repair or troubleshoot other connectivity problems related to an employee's residential internet connection.

## What type of work can be done while teleworking?

The type of work that can be done while teleworking varies by position and should be decided through consultation between the employee and supervisor. In general, the best tasks for teleworking are those that can be done independently, do not require face-to-face communication with others, and can be accomplished with the equipment and software provided to teleworkers. Further details are discussed in *Section III. Being a Teleworker*.

## Does teleworking change policy expectations for teleworkers?

In accordance with the DCYF Modern and Mobile Workplace Policy, employees participating in telework must adhere to all DCYF policies including, but not limited to, policies regarding confidentiality of information, work schedules, work hours, use of electronic equipment, ethics, performance, leave use, and tracking of mobile work hours. All state and agency policies apply to employees who are teleworking.

## How do employees determine if they are a good candidate to telework?

The first step of the application process is to complete the *Employee Self-Assessment*, which will help interested employees decide whether telework is right for them. The self-assessment asks employees to consider the following factors in making an honest determination about their telework capabilities: self-motivation and ability to work independently, without close supervision; organizational and time management skills; social needs and possible feelings of isolation; effectiveness of communication with management, coworkers, and others; flexibility to come into the office on a telework day if needed; and current job performance. Telework is not a fit for everyone. Employees and supervisors should carefully consider the adjustments that may be needed to be successful.

## Section II. Becoming a Teleworker

### Telework Application and Agreement Process

#### When can eligible employees apply to telework?

Employees may apply to telework up to three months prior to eligibility, and there are no application deadlines.

#### Where can the telework forms be accessed?

All telework forms will be accessible online at the [FORMVERSE site](#). Employees who are eligible to apply, will soon be eligible to apply, or who have a role as a reviewer will receive notification of a FORMVERSE account by email. Information about navigating FORMVERSE is

located in the FORMVERSE User Guides, which are available in the Q&A tab of FORMVERSE and at the [telework website](#).

## How do eligible employees apply to telework?

The first step of the online application process will be for interested employees to complete the *Employee Self-Assessment*, which will help them decide whether telework is right for them. Once employees decide they want to apply to telework it is recommended that they discuss with their supervisor their preferred telework days and telework tasks, prior to starting the application. The next step will be to complete a telework application and agreement form, which requires information about the requested number of telework days, the preferred telework days each week, the requested telework location (home, an alternate DCYF office, or both), and commuting times and mileage. The application and agreement form also requires the employee to complete the *Telework Safety and Work Space Assessment*, attest to having read this handbook, select which tasks they will perform while teleworking, and agree to the terms and conditions of the teleworking program. The completed application and agreement form will then be automatically routed to the employee's supervisor and Area Administrator via email. If there is a request to telework from an alternate DCYF office, the Area Administrator for the alternate office will also receive the application and agreement form to review and approve. Information about how to complete a telework application and agreement form in FORMVERSE is located in the FORMVERSE User Guides, which are available in the Q&A tab of FORMVERSE and at the [telework website](#).

## What is the process for reviewing and making decisions about telework requests?

The supervisor will review the completed *Employee Self-Assessment* and *Telework Safety and Work Space Assessment*, confirm the employee's eligibility for telework, and consider the employee's work habits and skills, requested telework days, and any performance or attendance issues that could affect telework. Taking into consideration those factors and considering the agency's business needs, the supervisor will decide to approve or deny the request to telework. The telework application and agreement form will be approved if all the employee's requests (i.e., number of telework days, preferred telework days, location, and start date) can be honored. A telework request will be denied if there are business reasons that preclude approval (including the requested telework days) or there are performance issues that need to be addressed. If the denial is based on performance issues, the supervisor will discuss the issue with Human Resources before making a decision. All denials should be discussed with the employee before the employee receives written notification. All telework decisions will be automatically routed to the Area Administrator, who will review the form and decide whether to approve. After a final decision has been made, the applicant will automatically be notified of the decision by email. Information about how to review a telework application and agreement form in FORMVERSE is located in the FORMVERSE User Guides, which are available in the Q&A tab of FORMVERSE and at the [telework website](#).

## What criteria are used to determine who gets priority for their preferred telework days?

If two or more employees request the same telework days at the same time and business needs preclude approval of one or more requests, decisions about who receives priority will be based on employees' seniority date for state service.

## How long does it take to for a telework application and agreement form to be approved or denied?

Once an application has been submitted, it will be approved or denied within 10 business days.

## Telework Approval Process

### What happens after a telework application and agreement form is approved?

After an employee's telework application and agreement form has been signed by the supervisor and Area Administrator, the IT Field Technician assigned to the employee's office will be notified. The IT Field Technician will reach out to the employee to confirm they have all of the equipment they need to begin teleworking. After the necessary equipment and technology is in place, the employee can begin teleworking on their next scheduled telework day.

### How long does an approved telework application and agreement last?

An approved telework application and agreement will last a maximum of one year and may be renewed or terminated. Employees can request to be approved to telework for less than a year.

### What is the process for renewing a telework application and agreement form?

The supervisor and employee must review and evaluate the telework application and agreement form annually. It may be reviewed more often if appropriate. The review should include assessment of the work being accomplished at the alternate work site, the impact of telework on clients or customers served by the employee, and whether the cost of the agreement exceeds the predicted benefits. Information about how to renew a telework agreement in FORMVERSE is located in the FORMVERSE User Guides, which are available in the Q&A tab of FORMVERSE and at the [telework website](#).

### What is the process for modifying a telework application and agreement?

If there are elements of a telework application and agreement that need to be modified, the supervisor and employee must discuss and agree on the changes. If the changes are in response to concerns about the employee's performance, the supervisor should consult with Human Resources before meeting with the employee. Information about how to modify a telework application and agreement in FORMVERSE is located in the FORMVERSE User Guides, which are available in the Q&A tab of FORMVERSE and at the [telework website](#).

### What is the process for terminating an approved telework application and agreement?

The telework arrangement will not be allowed to continue if it is detrimental to work quality,

client service, the work unit, or the agency. Either party may terminate the employee's involvement in the program, with or without cause, by providing written notice to the other party via email, seven days prior to the effective date of termination. An employee can terminate a telework application and agreement for any reason, but it is recommended that the employee meet with the supervisor to discuss concerns and possible remedies. If the agency believes the arrangement is not effective, the supervisor will make a good faith effort to work with the employee to resolve the situation. If a supervisor's recommendation to terminate is in response to concerns about the employee's performance, the supervisor should consult with Human Resources about the decision. If the problem cannot be resolved, the supervisor has a responsibility to recommend termination of the telework arrangement to the appointing authority. If Area Administrators of alternate DCYF offices would like to terminate a telework arrangement, they should consult with the teleworker's supervisor first before notifying the employee of the termination. The employer will not be held responsible for costs, damages, or losses resulting from cessation of participation in the teleworking program. An approved telework application and agreement is not a contract or condition of employment and may not be construed as such. Information about how to terminate an approved telework application and agreement in FORMVERSE is located in the FORMVERSE User Guides, which are available in the Q&A tab of FORMVERSE and at the [telework website](#).

### **If an approved telework application and agreement is terminated by DCYF, can the employee request reconsideration of the decision?**

If an approved telework application and agreement is terminated by DCYF, the employee has the option to request reconsideration to the appointing authority within 15 calendar days. Alternatively, the employee may choose not to telework at all or to reapply for telework after the reasons for denial have changed or been resolved.

### **If an approved telework application and agreement is terminated, can the employee apply for telework in the future?**

If an approved telework application and agreement is terminated by the employee, the employee may reapply for telework at any time. If an approved telework application and agreement is terminated by DCYF, the employee may reapply after the reasons for termination have changed or been resolved.

### **If a teleworker changes jobs, can teleworking continue?**

If a teleworker changes jobs, they must be in the new position for three months before being eligible to telework again.

## **Telework Denial**

### **What happens if a telework application and agreement is denied?**

If a telework request is denied, the supervisor will meet with the employee to discuss the reasons for denial and the conditions under which the employee may apply to telework in the future. After the meeting, the employee will receive written notice of the denial by email via FORMVERSE. The employee has the option to submit for reconsideration to the appointing authority within 15 calendar days. Alternatively, the employee may choose not to telework at all

or to reapply for telework after the reasons for denial have changed or been resolved. If the denial is due to scheduling issues that can be easily resolved (e.g., fewer or different days), the applicant can modify and resubmit the initial application and agreement in FORMVERSE.

## Telework Reconsideration

### **How does an employee request reconsideration of a telework denial decision?**

To request reconsideration of the denial decision to the appointing authority, the employee will attest to having discussed the reasons for denial with the supervisor and will provide an explanation of why the agency should reconsider the decision. Information about how to request reconsideration in FORMVERSE is located in the FORMVERSE User Guides, which are available in the Q&A tab of FORMVERSE and at the [telework website](#).

### **What is the process for reviewing and making decisions about requests for telework reconsiderations?**

The appointing authority will consult with the supervisor and other principal influencers and make a decision to approve or deny the request. Information about how to respond to requests for reconsideration in FORMVERSE is located in the FORMVERSE User Guides, which are available in the Q&A tab of FORMVERSE and at the [telework website](#).

### **How long does it take to for telework reconsideration to be upheld or denied?**

Reconsiderations will be made within 14 calendar days.

### **If a reconsideration is upheld, can the employee apply for telework in the future?**

If reconsideration is upheld, an employee can reapply for telework after the reasons for denial have changed or been resolved.

## Section III. Being a Teleworker

### Setting Up an At-Home Workstation

#### **What is the process for setting up equipment at an at-home workstation?**

Employees that requested equipment will receive it at their official duty station. Information Technology (IT) support staff will install all required software but will not provide equipment installation outside a DCYF work site. If needed, they will provide a brief in-office training session and/or written instructions regarding installation and remote access. Employees will be responsible for transporting the equipment to their at-home work station and plugging in cables to get the equipment set up. Employees are also responsible for ensuring that a dedicated

high-speed internet connection to the home is set up prior to teleworking. Employees may use personal monitors, keyboards, or mice for teleworking purposes, but may not use personal printers. The following safeguards are recommended when setting up equipment:

- Position equipment away from direct sunlight or heat.
- Place equipment on well-ventilated surfaces.
- Do not eat or drink near valuable equipment.
- Cover interconnecting cables or place them out of the way to avoid tripping.
- Provide sufficient air space around electronic components.
- Make sure electrical outlets are grounded. There should be enough electrical outlets in the room. You may need a separate circuit to avoid overloading the existing electrical system. If necessary, consult your local power utility.

IT will not provide support related to home internet connectivity. For technical assistance with DCYF-owned equipment, software, or network services, employees may contact the DCYF Service Desk at [dcyf.servicedesk@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.servicedesk@dcyf.wa.gov) or (360) 725-Help (4357).

## **What ergonomic factors should be considered when setting up an at-home work station?**

A good set-up for an employee's work area can make a big difference in comfort and productivity. Employees can access [online support and resources](#) from the DCYF Ergonomics Team and an interactive guide, [Office Ergonomics: Computer Workstation & Mobile Computing](#), by the Department of Labor and Industries.

## **Telework Tasks**

### **What types of tasks are recommended to complete on telework days?**

In general, the best tasks for teleworking are those that can be done independently, do not require face-to-face communication with others, and can be accomplished with the equipment and software provided to teleworkers. This topic should have been discussed between the supervisor and employee during the development of the telework agreement.

### **How do teleworkers plan for and handle emergencies?**

Teleworkers should arrange for a coworker to serve as a back-up in the event of an emergency that requires someone to be physically present and the teleworker cannot be present. Teleworkers are still expected to respond to emergencies, which may include coming in to the office, and to work with their supervisor and back-up to coordinate and implement a plan to address the emergency.

### **What should teleworkers do if they need to print something while teleworking?**

Printing will not be an option for telework, as the technology requirements identify that the employee shall not download any state information or documentation to their personal device. If a document requires a signature, the employee will work with Information Technology support staff to create an acceptable form of electronic signature and use it in lieu of a wet

signature. Printing can be initiated from an alternate work station but will be printed at the teleworker's official duty station.

### **Can teleworkers request assistance from coworkers in the office?**

Unless there are emergent or exigent needs, teleworkers should not rely on others to perform tasks that are required to be performed at the official duty station.

### **Can teleworkers take clients (either adults or children) to their alternate work station?**

Teleworkers may not conduct in-person meetings or host clients or customers in an official capacity from their home. Teleworkers may meet with the clients or customers in an official capacity if the approved alternate location is another DCYF office.

### **Can teleworkers be responsible for dependent care while teleworking?**

Employees will not use telework as a substitute for regular dependent care (e.g., child care outside of the Infants at Work Program, elder care, or care of any other dependent adults).

## **Staying Connected**

### **What are the expectations for teleworkers regarding communication with their supervisors?**

As a result of the telework agreement, employees will have a plan for receiving assignments, returning assignments, and reporting to the supervisor on telework days. Teleworkers are expected to be available and respond to their supervisor in a timely manner during their scheduled hours on telework days and to contact their supervisor for any necessary assistance or approvals.

### **What are the expectations for teleworkers regarding communication with their coworkers, other professionals, and families?**

Teleworkers should be available and respond to coworkers, other professionals, and families in a timely manner during their scheduled hours on telework days.

### **How do teleworkers stay connected to their supervisor, coworkers, other professionals, and families?**

Teleworkers can use a variety of means to stay connected with others. All teleworkers will be able to communicate by phone, email, Zoom, Skype, etc. Zoom and Skype allow supervisors and workers to share screens during a meeting, and Skype for Business allows for communication via instant messaging. Teleworkers with agency-issued iPhones also have texting and FaceTime. Other possibilities include tracking telework days, breaks, and lunch on Outlook; noting "teleworking" on office in-out board; and posting a sign at the employee's official work station providing contact information to coworkers and customers.

## **How do teleworkers access email?**

Outlook can only be accessed through Virtual Private Network (VPN) from a state issued computer.

## **How do teleworkers access the DCYF network?**

Teleworkers should use Virtual Private Network (VPN) and a high-speed internet connection to access the network. Citrix should not be used, and use of a work cell phone as a mobile hotspot is not recommended. If it is necessary to use a cell phone as a hotspot, the phone cannot be simultaneously used to connect to the internet. Any data entered (e.g., in FamLink) should be saved before using the phone as a hotspot.

## **Are teleworkers expected to attend meetings at the office on a telework day?**

Teleworkers are expected to participate in office meetings, but the method of doing so (i.e., in person or remotely) should be decided in consultation with their supervisor.

## **Teleworking at an Alternate DCYF Office**

### **What access will teleworkers have to the alternate DCYF office?**

Visiting teleworkers will have access to secured building entrances and will adhere to all building security rules. Teleworkers should only use the alternate office during their scheduled telework days and times.

### **What space, equipment, and supplies are available to teleworkers at an alternate DCYF office?**

The amount of available space will vary by office. Due to the limited frequency of telework, visiting teleworkers will not get an individually assigned space, and the space may be used by other employees on other days. The host office will provide a docking station, monitor(s), keyboard, and mouse at the work station, and visiting teleworkers will also be able to fax, scan, print, and copy documents. To set up printing at the host office, the teleworker will need to submit a ticket to the DCYF Service Desk at [dcyf.servicedesk@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.servicedesk@dcyf.wa.gov) or (360) 725-Help (4357). Teleworkers should not use other office supplies at the alternate office.

### **Can visiting teleworkers use a state vehicle at the alternate DCYF office?**

In general, visiting teleworkers should not use state vehicles at the alternate office. If there is a unique and urgent situation, teleworkers should consult with their supervisors at their official duty stations.

## **Can visiting teleworkers be expected to provide support or assistance to others at an alternate DCYF office?**

In general, visiting teleworkers will not be expected to provide support or assistance to others at an alternate agency office. Any emergency exceptions should be arranged between the teleworker's supervisor and a supervisor or administrator at the alternate office.

## **What support or assistance can visiting teleworkers request from others while working at an alternate DCYF office?**

Visiting teleworkers should not request support or assistance from others at an alternate agency office. The teleworker's supervisor remains the supervisor of record, and teleworkers should seek any needed assistance from their supervisor, administrator, or coworkers at their official work station, as appropriate.

## **Work Schedule**

### **What is the expected work schedule while teleworking?**

Employees are expected to work their normal scheduled hours while teleworking, in accordance with the conditions outlined in the collective bargaining agreement, position description, and/or *Work Schedule/Shift Change Notice*.

### **What do teleworkers do if they need to change their schedule?**

To make any changes to their schedule, employees should follow the same procedure used when working at the official duty station. In the event that overtime is anticipated, this must be discussed and approved in advance with the employer, just as any overtime scheduling would normally have to be approved. If the employee is able to work but not from their alternate work station, the employee should report to their official duty station.

### **How do teleworkers track their telework hours?**

The policies and procedures for time tracking remain the same for teleworking as for working at the official duty station.

### **Can teleworkers be asked to report to their official work station on an approved telework day?**

There may be occasions where teleworkers shall be required to come into the office on an approved telework day. In those circumstances, the employee will not be able to substitute or make up the telework day on an alternate day.

## **Travel**

### **Can teleworkers claim mileage if they need to travel to somewhere other than the official work station on a scheduled telework day?**

It depends based on any given situation, please consult with payroll/travel personnel.

Teleworkers are encouraged not to schedule travel on telework days, but if it is necessary, that travel may be reimbursable.

## **Can teleworkers claim mileage if they need to travel to their official duty station on a scheduled telework day?**

If the need to travel to the official duty station is determined in advance of the telework day, travel to the official duty station is considered commute time and is not reimbursable. If the need to travel to the official duty station arises during the telework day, travel to the official duty station is considered work time; however, the commute may not be reimbursable. Employees should consult with payroll/travel personnel to ensure their scenario is considered work time or reimbursable. See the Statewide Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM) sections 10.50.20 and 10.50.25 for details on mileage that can be reimbursed.

## Information Security

### **What are the expectations for teleworkers around information security?**

Teleworkers must protect the security and integrity of data, information, paper files, and access to agency computer systems. DCYF confidentiality and security standards apply to telework just as they would at the official duty station. Each employee must follow the rules and procedures for information technology security as outlined in agency policy.

## Proper User, Care, and Maintenance of Equipment

Agency-issued equipment is provided for use on work assignments only. Other household members or anyone else must not use the equipment. DCYF will be responsible for insurance and maintenance of DCYF equipment. All agency-issued equipment remains the property of DCYF and must be returned to DCYF upon request.

## Need for Technical Assistance

### **What do teleworkers do if they need technical assistance?**

Teleworkers are expected to troubleshoot minor technology issues and can refer to the IT guides, located at the [telework website](#), for instructions. If teleworkers cannot resolve the issues and needs support for their DCYF-issued equipment, software, or network services, they will submit a ticket to the DCYF Service Desk at [dcyf.servicedesk@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.servicedesk@dcyf.wa.gov) or (360) 725-Help (4357). The ticket will be assigned to an Information Technology (IT) technician who will be able to help the employee. In some situations, it may be necessary for the employee to bring the equipment back to the office. IT support staff will not come to a teleworker's home to provide technical assistance and will not troubleshoot connectivity problems related to an employee's residential internet connection.

## Liability

### Are employees who telework covered under worker's compensation?

Yes. The employee's at-home work station is considered an official agency worksite for purposes of worker's compensation. As allowable, the agency will be responsible for any work-related injuries under the state's Workers Compensation laws, but this liability is limited to injuries resulting directly from work and only if the injury occurs in the designated work areas. The employee must report any injury to their manager/supervisor immediately. Worker's compensation does not cover accidents to family members or other third parties at the telework site. Any claims will be handled according to the normal procedure for Worker's Compensation claims.

The employee understands they are liable for injuries to third persons and/or members of employee's family on employee's premises. The employee agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the agency, its affiliates, employees, contractors and agents, from and against any and all claims, demands or liability (including any related losses, costs, expenses, and attorney fees) resulting from, or arising in connection with, any injury to persons (including death) or damage to property caused, directly or indirectly, by the services provided herein by employee or by employee's willful misconduct, negligent acts or omissions in the performance of the employee's duties and obligations under this agreement, except where such claims, demands, or liability arise solely from the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the agency.

## Supporting Program Improvement and Evaluation

It is recommended that teleworkers:

- respond to surveys or requests for feedback on teleworking
- report telework problems and potential solutions at [dcyf.telework@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.telework@dcyf.wa.gov)
- respond to other requests to support evaluation

## Section IV. Supervising Teleworkers

For telework to be a successful practice, supervisors must be committed to allowing teleworking for others. Managerial support, knowledge, and skills can make telework an asset to the agency. The principles and practices below will guide supervisors in their implementation of telework.

## Telework Decisions

It is recommended that supervisors:

- know the telework application and agreement criteria, processes, and expectations described in this handbook and in the telework forms and instructions
- support employees who are interested in teleworking by answering questions to the best of their ability, and seek answers when there is uncertainty
- not deter employees from applying for telework, unless the employee does not meet the eligibility criteria

- review telework requests in a timely manner
- approach telework decisions with the mindset that employees will be approved for telework unless there are clear and objective reasons they cannot
- be flexible and willing to negotiate requested telework arrangements with applicants if necessary to find an arrangement that can be approved
- base decisions on business needs, as it relates to telework, with an openness to changing supervision style and office practices to meet business needs in a way that is compatible with teleworking
- know the processes and expectations for establishing, modifying, renewing, and terminating approved telework application and agreements, as described in this handbook and in the telework forms and instructions
- discuss the conditions of the telework application and agreement with the employee to ensure shared understanding of expectations
- consult with Human Resources before making any changes in response to concerns about an employee's performance
- discuss any potential changes to an agreement, including termination, with the teleworker in advance of making changes; discuss denial decisions with employees and; if relevant, support them in resolving the reasons for the denial, so that they may apply again in the future

## Setting up an At-Home Workstation

It is recommended that supervisors:

- know the processes for setting up an at-home workstation, as described in this handbook
- if new teleworkers need support, refer them to the proper people or resources that can provide assistance

## Supervising Teleworkers

Supervisors shall ensure employees have a plan for receiving assignments, returning assignments, and reporting to the supervisor on telework days. The supervisor shall also ensure that teleworkers will maintain contact with their work unit and colleagues, including attending meetings, on telework days when requested to do so.

It is recommended that supervisors:

- convey support and commitment to telework
- show trust and respect for employees' ability to telework
- know the telework schedule, location, and duties that were established in each teleworker's agreement
- provide additional support, as needed, to help teleworkers identify tasks that are and are not suitable for telework
- be available and respond to teleworkers in a timely manner

- establish results-based performance standards, by setting goals and objectives with timelines, assessing progress, and giving regular feedback
- apply performance standards equitably to teleworkers and non-teleworkers
- avoid holding teleworkers to higher standards of accountability (e.g., excessive check-ins, status updates, or micromanaging)
- establish expectations and plans for how teleworkers will handle emergencies
- establish expectations for how and when teleworkers will seek support from others in the office
- delegate work fairly; avoid distributing work based on physical presence
- mitigate problems by working with the employee to provide feedback and discuss concerns
- keep teleworkers in mind when setting program goals
- consider the need to change supervision style and work habits to better support telework

## Keeping Everyone Connected

It is recommended that supervisors:

- know the processes and expectations for teleworkers to stay connected, as described in this handbook
- reinforce expectations for teleworkers to be available and responsive to others while teleworking
- clarify expectations around communication messages, timing, and methods (e.g., phone, email, instant messaging via Skype, Outlook, office in-out board, voicemail)
- establish expectations for participation in office meetings (i.e., in person or remotely); set up meetings in a way that facilitates attendance
- be open to learning new methods of communication and adjusting practices to better support telework
- ensure teleworkers receive all office communications in a timely manner
- ensure teleworkers remain aware of and involved in official events, decision-making, discussions and planning

## Supervising Teleworkers at an Alternative DCYF Office

It is recommended that supervisors:

- know the processes and expectations for teleworking at an alternate DCYF office, as described in this handbook
- support teleworkers in making arrangements to begin teleworking at an alternate DCYF office
- reinforce expectations for teleworking at an alternate DCYF office (e.g., use of equipment, supplies, vehicles)
- respond to questions, concerns, or feedback about the teleworker or the telework

arrangement from managers at the alternate DCYF office

## Supporting Program Improvement and Evaluation

It is recommended that supervisors:

- respond to surveys or requests for feedback on teleworking, and encourage employees to do the same
- report telework problems and potential solutions at [dcyf.telework@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.telework@dcyf.wa.gov)
- respond to other requests to support evaluation

