

Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Policy 4.21 Telecommuting	Effective: 9/1/2021
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TELECOMMUTING

POLICY

Telecommuting can provide employees with a number of benefits to include greater productivity and increased job satisfaction. The employer can also benefit from increased job satisfaction, leading to increased employee retention and lower recruitment costs.

The ability to meet in person enhances collaboration and helps to build relationships with co-workers. This practice can also result in greater job satisfaction and improved teamwork. Therefore, the Board's approach towards telecommuting is a hybrid model.

The Board defines the principle of telecommuting as permitting an eligible employee to work from home for business reasons. The job duties and responsibilities of the majority of employees who are eligible to telecommute are community based. These jobs include SSAs, Payment Authorization Specialists, Investigative Agents, Provider Compliance & Support, Early Intervention Service Providers. Therefore, flexibility is provided whether an employee is telecommuting or working from the office. Additionally, the ability to schedule home visits, monitoring(s), and other meetings in the community throughout the work week is required regardless of whether an employee is working from home or their work office.

Employees who prefer to work out of their site specific office, are free to do so. Employees may also telecommute with the expectation that they would work from their site specific office at least twenty (20%) of the work week. Managers are encouraged to coordinate department or unit meetings during these times. Site specific time may include supervision discussions, project meetings, interviews, annual planning meetings, or in-person trainings. If needed, an employee must be available during the work day to promptly report to their site specific office location if requested to do so by their Supervisor.

Telecommuting employees must have demonstrated a thorough and productive understanding of their job. New employees will be permitted to telecommute once they complete their probationary period. An early authorization to telecommute may occur if the department Director grants approval.

Telecommuting is not a suitable option for all jobs or all employees. This policy establishes selection criteria for eligible non-represented and represented employees to include employees who:

- Have demonstrated a thorough and productive understanding of their job.
- Have demonstrated a consistent and acceptable level of productivity and quality. Examples may include the following:
 - Receiving "meets" or "exceeds" on all of their most recent performance evaluation standards.

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- Meets TCM expectations and/or meets ISP timeliness expectations, or meets other applicable job expectations.
- Is not in active discipline status.
- Completes required documentation by established deadlines per written guidelines.
- Demonstrates the ability to work independently with minimal levels of supervision.
- Performs job duties that are not location-specific.
- Maintains a satisfactory attendance record in accordance with Board Policy 4.15 Attendance, Tardiness, and Sick Leave.

Historical Resolution Information	Reviewer(s):								
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PROCEDURE

1. Telecommuting is a voluntary work alternative that may be appropriate for some employees and some jobs. It is not an entitlement; it is not a company-wide benefit; and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment.
2. Employees may apply for telecommuting privileges by completing a Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities Alternative Work Location Procedure Authorization Form. The decision of Human Resources will be made in writing on the Teleworking Authorization Form; however, if this is not immediately possible, the decision can be made orally but must be confirmed in writing, which may include email.
3. Employees must maintain an updated work calendar and remain available via phone and/or connection to the SCBDD email system while working from home. Employees must have access to job specific systems such as iData and Brittco. If the employee has a SCBDD issued cell phone, it must remain "on" and the employee is expected to answer calls and return voicemail messages in a timely manner. If the employee does not have a SCBDD issued cell phone, it is expected that she/he will check work voicemail messages regularly.
4. The employee must be performing essential work while telecommuting. Just checking messages is not an acceptable practice. Supervisors may ask for specific information about the work performed while telecommuting and/or ask that the employee provide a detailed log regarding work performed during their shift(s) on an accounting log.
5. All requests for extra-time or over-time must be approved in advance by the employee's Supervisor. In an emergency situation, the employee will contact his/her Supervisor as soon as possible after the emergency has been resolved.
6. Employees that are working from home are not permitted to schedule in-person meetings in their home. Appointments should always be scheduled at a community location or at a Board facility.
7. Employees are not permitted to perform domestic duties that interrupt work time while working from home. Examples of domestic duties include, but are not limited to: preparing meals, providing personal care, or similar/related activities. Employees may not record time spent on domestic duties as work time. Work time that is frequently interrupted by domestic duties makes distinguishing "work time" from "non-work time" impractical, and working at home may be deemed inappropriate for the employee.

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8. Employees telecommuting are required to follow the regular daily clock-in procedure established for their department. If an employee is unable to work a shift in which they are scheduled to telecommute due to an illness, injury or otherwise, they must follow the Board's Attendance Policy for reporting off.
9. The employee's immediate Supervisor is responsible for monitoring the employee's performance while working from home.
10. While working from home, employees remain subject to all confidentiality policies and procedures. Any confidential documents must be kept in a secure, confidential location.
11. Employees working from home are required to comply with all Board policies and procedures that cover the use of IT equipment and applications.
12. Employees that are telecommuting are required to be available to report to their actual/physical work location, if necessary.
13. Employees may be required to adjust their local city tax withholding based upon their telecommuting work location.
14. The employee's Supervisor will have final approval on authorizing telecommuting pertaining to the day of the week the employee works from home.
15. In rare situations, a job may exist that is conducive to telecommuting on a full-time basis. In these cases, the respective Director will consult with Human Resources to make a determination as to whether or not this option is applicable.