



City and County of San Francisco
Interim COVID-19 Telecommuting Program Policy

I. Purpose

Telecommuting is an arrangement that allows employees of the City and County of San Francisco (City) to conduct their work from a designated area outside the office. Telecommuting is a cooperative arrangement between employees, supervisors, and employing departments.

The City's standard Telecommuting Policy outlines position and employee eligibility, procedures, and expectations regarding employees working remotely. However, during the current outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), it is in the best interest of the City and public health to expand the number of City employees who telecommute in order to comply with DPH recommendations and occupational health standards.

Employees who can perform their work remotely should telecommute, to enable those who cannot do so to safely perform their job duties in the workplace. The City has ordered departments to significantly expand the use of telecommuting, to consider offering flexible start and end times for shifts during this interim period, and to establish a process for employees to retrieve equipment necessary to perform their job duties remotely.

II. Policy

The Interim COVID-19 Telecommuting Policy is an addendum to the City's standard Telecommuting Policy and applies citywide. Department heads are directed to make telecommuting available to all employees in their departments to the greatest extent possible, in order to promote the health and safety of City workers and the public. As a rule, the percentage of employees physically present in a general office environment or worksite should not exceed 20% of the workforce assigned to the site, provided this staffing level does not negatively impact safety standards at the worksite. Departments may rotate on-site duties among a group of employees to achieve this goal, or may designate individual employees to remain on-site to perform required duties. Decisions as to who is allowed to telecommute and who is assigned to remain on site should be based on documented business and operational reasons.

All City employees who telecommute must have an approved telecommuting agreement in place. A City department may have additional telecommuting requirements, guidelines, or procedures, provided they are consistent with the City's telecommuting policy (<https://sfdhr.org/telecommute>). Employees are responsible for completing and submitting their telecommute agreements to their managers or supervisors for approval. Modifications of telecommute agreements will be handled in the same manner.

Telecommuting does not change the duties, obligations, responsibilities, or terms and conditions of City employment. Telecommuting employees must comply with all City rules, policies, practices, and instructions, including restrictions on the use of City resources for non-City purposes.

A telecommuting employee must perform work and be available during the scheduled telecommuting hours agreed upon in the employee's telecommuting agreement. The employee's telecommuting schedule may be adjusted to accommodate an employee's special needs during the workday, such as child, elder or other dependent care. Employees must inform their managers or supervisors if they need temporary adjustments in their telecommute schedules. Telecommuting employees may take care of personal business during breaks or unpaid lunch periods, as they would at the regular worksite.

The City will notify telecommuting employees when the Interim COVID-19 Telecommuting Policy is no longer in effect. Supervisors or managers will notify employees when their telecommute agreements must change and when they can return to the office.

III. Agreement Options

Telecommuting agreements may be on a full-time, regular and recurring, or an occasional basis. The type of work that an employee performs determines the appropriateness for working from an alternate location. One of three telecommute agreements should be assigned based on fitness with job duties and business needs of the department or division.

Full-Time Telecommuting

Full-time telecommuting means an employee works away from the regular worksite full-time. Full-time telecommute employees have no obligation to visit the office on a regular basis but are required to be available to return to the worksite with reasonable notice.

Regular and Recurring Telecommuting

Regular and recurring telecommuting means an employee works away from the regular worksite on an established day or days, and on a recurring schedule. Employees who telecommute on a regular and recurring basis must also be available to work at the regular worksite with reasonable notice.

Occasional Telecommuting

Occasional telecommuting means an employee works away from the regular worksite on an infrequent, one-time, or irregular basis. This option provides an ideal arrangement for employees who generally need to be at the worksite, but who sometimes have projects, assignments, or other circumstances that allow them to work from a remote location.

IV. Limit Unscheduled Office Visits

Telecommuting employees should not come to the worksite when they are not scheduled to do so. There are limited reasons for when employees may need to come to the worksite. These reasons may include picking up important mail, retrieving work equipment, equipment repair, or performing large or sensitive printing jobs. An employee's preference to work on-site instead of remotely is not on its own

an acceptable reason for on-site work. Employees who telecommute should plan to be on-site only to conduct business that must be done in person.

Telecommuting employees must obtain approval from their managers or supervisors before making an unscheduled visit to the worksite to make sure it is safe to do so. Departments should implement a process to track employees who report to the worksite in order to manage employee capacity requirements and to provide the ability to perform contract tracing, if needed.

V. Training

All employees with telecommute agreements must complete the appropriate telecommute eLearning module at least once. Supervisors may require employees to retake telecommute eLearning at any time.

VI. Work Hours

All rules applicable at the regular worksite are applicable while telecommuting. That is:

- Telecommuting employees must work during scheduled work hours
- Employees must account for and report time spent telecommuting the same way they would at the regular worksite, or according to the terms of the telecommuting agreement
- Work time must be recorded accurately
- Employees may work overtime only when directed to do so and when approved in advance by their supervisors
- Employees must obtain approval to use vacation, sick, or other leave in the same manner as departmental employees who do not telecommute
- Telecommuting employees who become ill must report the hours actually worked, and use sick leave for hours not worked

VII. Equipment and Supplies

Employees who are telecommuting for a majority of their work schedule may, with departmental approval, take home City equipment for telecommuting purposes. Equipment which may be removed from the worksite includes laptop computers, monitors, keyboards, chairs, computer mice, and other desktop equipment. Departments providing equipment, software, or other supplies to telecommuting employees must reasonably allocate those resources based on operational and workload needs, and must utilize an inventory tracking system for this equipment. City issued equipment is subject to the department's asset protection policy.

All City rules regarding the use of computers and the internet apply while an employee is telecommuting, regardless of whether the employee is using City-provided or personal equipment.

VIII. Denial of Application

The City's Interim COVID-19 Telecommuting Policy and Program is not subject to the grievance procedures in any Memorandum of Understanding, or to any other review or appeal procedures.