

Approved:

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Department of Transportation

## TELEWORK PROGRAM

### PURPOSE:

The purpose of this guidance is to establish processes for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Florida Department of Transportation's (Department) participation in the State of Florida Telework Program.

### AUTHORITY:

Sections 20.23(3)(a) and 334.048(3), Florida Statutes (F.S.)

### REFERENCES:

Section 110.171, F.S.

### SCOPE:

All offices and work units of the Florida Department of Transportation

## 1. DEFINITIONS:

**Telework:** An arrangement that allows an employee to conduct all or some of his or her work away from the official worksite during all or a portion of the employee's established work hours on a regular basis. The term does not include, and a telework agreement is not required, for:

- Performance of required work duties away from the official worksite and outside of established work hours on an occasional basis and sporadically working away from the official worksite during all or some portion of the established work hours. These arrangements may be used by the supervisor or manager to accommodate extenuating circumstances by allowing an employee to maintain productivity away from the official worksite; or

- Duties and responsibilities that, by their nature are performed routinely in the field away from the official worksite.

## **2. JOB CLASSES APPROVED FOR TELEWORK**

**2.1** All employees appointed to Career Service positions may request to participate in the Telework Program. The Assistant Secretary, District Secretary, Executive Director, or designee shall approve or disapprove each request based on the guidelines outlined in **Attachment A**.

All Department Career Service job classes may be considered for telework. The appropriate Assistant Secretary, District Secretary, Executive Director or designee shall review and approve or disapprove each request based on its individual merits. (See **Attachment A** for consideration guidelines.)

**2.2** Selected Exempt Service (SES) employees may request to participate in the Telework Program. However, the duties required by certain SES positions may not be appropriate for telework. The Secretary, Assistant Secretary, District Secretary, Executive Director, or designee shall approve or disapprove each request based on the guidelines outlined in **Attachment A**.

**2.3** Senior Management Service (SMS) and Other Personal Services are not authorized to participate in the Telework Program.

## **3. PROGRAM PARTICIPATION**

**3.1** Employee participation in the Telework Program is voluntary and may be terminated in writing at any time by the employee.

**3.2** Employee participation in the Telework Program is discretionary on the part of the Department and the employee's immediate supervisor and is in no way to be considered an entitlement. Participation may be terminated by the Department or the supervisor at any time.

**3.3** Participation will not adversely affect the employee's eligibility for advancement or any other employment rights or benefits.

**3.4** Employees on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) are not eligible for the Telework Program.

**3.5** An employee shall not telework if on sick leave, leave associated with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), or leave associated with the Family Supportive Work Program (FSWP).

**3.6** Employees desiring to participate in the Telework Program must complete **Form No. 250-000-07, Telework Agreement, and** agree to be bound by the terms and conditions set forth within. **Telework Agreements** are valid until terminated in writing by either party.

**3.7** Teleworkers are subject to the same rules regarding conduct, attendance, leave, performance standards, and discipline as other employees. Teleworkers must obtain supervisory approval before taking leave. Accurate time sheets must be submitted by the employee.

**3.8** Teleworkers agree to allow their immediate supervisor or other Department designated staff to inspect the telework site during the teleworker's established telework hours and upon 24 hours written or verbal notice. Teleworkers may waive the required notification time if they choose. In the event of a job-related accident while teleworking, the teleworker agrees to allow immediate and follow-up inspection(s) at the telework site as needed.

**3.9** The teleworker's Cost Center Manager and the District IT Services Manager must approve the use of teleworking equipment. The use of a teleworker's personal equipment for teleworking requires a written request from the teleworker and approval from the appropriate District Secretary, Executive Director, or Assistant Secretary. Equipment provided by the teleworker shall be at no cost to the Department and will be maintained by the teleworker. Use of State-owned equipment is subject to Cost Center Manager approval and the availability of equipment and funding. The teleworker's Cost Center Manager must enter into an agreement with the District Technology Services and Support Manager to pay for, install, and maintain approved equipment, software, and communication lines at the telework location. Department owned equipment must be protected against damage and unauthorized use. Teleworkers may not use Department owned equipment, software, or communication lines for personal activities. Approved Department owned equipment must be listed on the **Teleworking Agreement** and returned to the Department within two working days if the **Agreement** is terminated, the employee changes positions, or separates from the Department.

**3.10** Teleworkers are covered by Workers' Compensation under **Chapter 440, F.S.**, when performing official duties at the telework site.

**3.11** The Department is not responsible for operating costs or any other costs associated with setting up or maintaining the telework location such as furnishings, maintenance, repairs, utilities, etc. The teleworker may be reimbursed for authorized expenses incurred while conducting official business for the Department.

**3.12** Upon execution of the **Telework Agreement**, the State and the Department shall not be held liable for damages to the teleworker's property and the teleworker holds the State and the Department harmless against any and all claims excluding Workers' Compensation claims resulting from participation in the Telework Program.

The teleworker must verify that the telework location provides work space that is free of safety and fire hazards.

**3.13** The teleworker will be in pay status during scheduled work hours at the approved telework location. Overtime hours must be approved in advance and the teleworker will be compensated in accordance with applicable law and rules. The teleworker agrees that failing to obtain proper approval for overtime work may result in removal from the Telework Program and/or other disciplinary action.

**3.14** The teleworker and the supervisor shall discuss and impose mandatory safeguards that shall be taken by the teleworker to ensure protection of Department documents and records from unauthorized disclosure or damage. All records, papers and correspondence must be safeguarded and immediately returned to the work unit by the teleworker upon request, upon termination of the **Telework Agreement**, if the employee changes positions, or separates from the Department.

**3.15** The teleworker agrees to work at the assigned office or approved telework location and not from any other unapproved site. Failure to comply with this provision may result in termination of the **Telework Agreement** and/or other appropriate disciplinary action.

**3.16** The teleworker is prohibited from conducting face-to-face business at his or her established telework location. Failure to comply with this provision may result in termination of the **Telework Agreement** and/or other appropriate disciplinary action.

#### **4. PROGRAM APPROVAL PROCESS**

**4.1** Employees requesting to telework shall complete and sign **Form No. 250-000-07, Telework Agreement**. The employee's request must be approved and the completed form signed by the employee's immediate supervisor, Cost Center Manager, the District IT Services Manager, and the Secretary, Assistant Secretary, District Secretary, Executive Director, Director, or designee. Assistant Secretaries, District Secretaries, or Executive Directors may delegate this authority in writing to another Senior Management Service (SMS) employee. Managers may also require additional reviews within their areas before submitting the completed form for approval. Additional comments or reasons for disapproval shall be noted in the space provided below the form's signature block. The fully executed form shall be submitted to the Human Resources Office (HRO) for final processing and approval.

**4.2** Upon receipt of the fully executed form, the HRO Director or designee will sign the **Telework Agreement** form. The original form shall be retained in the employee's official personnel file. Copies will be sent to the employee and the employee's immediate supervisor.

**4.3** If a request is disapproved for any reason, HRO shall return the original request to the employee's immediate supervisor, and provide a copy to the employee. HRO shall also maintain a copy for monitoring and reporting reasons.

## **5. SCHEDULES AND WORK ASSIGNMENTS**

**5.1** A teleworker may telecommute for a maximum of 32 hours in any workweek with a minimum of eight (8) hours at the official office location unless an exception is granted, in writing, by the HRO Director. Non-standard workweek schedules also require written approval by the HRO Director.

**5.2** The ***Work Hours and Location*** section of the ***Telework Agreement*** must be completed indicating the official work location, telework location, and the agreed upon work hours in both locations.

**5.3** Significant or long-term changes to the agreed upon telework schedule must be documented with an updated ***Telework Agreement*** which must be signed, approved, and processed in the same manner as an original request.

**5.4** A teleworker may be called into the official work location by the employee's immediate supervisor at any time in order to meet work unit or agency needs. Travel for reporting to the official work location is not considered work time nor is the teleworker in travel status.

**5.5** The ***Work Plan*** section of the ***Telework Agreement*** must be completed to document the employee's general work duties and to develop monitoring and supervision plans. Immediate supervisors are to meet regularly with teleworkers to discuss specific work assignments, due dates, productivity expectations, and to review completed work. Such meetings should be held during the teleworker's scheduled time in the official work location. Immediate supervisors may assign new work tasks or review progress status by email or telephone as needed. Immediate supervisors are expected to monitor work performance and productivity just as they would in a traditional work environment. Teleworkers are expected to meet or exceed performance and productivity standards while participating in the Telework Program. Failure to do so shall result in revocation of the teleworker's participation in the Telework Program.

## **6. PROGRAM COORDINATION, DOCUMENTATION, AND REPORTING**

The Human Resources Office (HRO) is responsible for the overall coordination of the Department's statewide Telework Program. ***Telework Agreements*** and related correspondence or documents shall be maintained in the teleworker's official personnel file. HRO shall maintain a list of current and former teleworkers, copies of all approved or disapproved requests, and report program results as required by ***Section 110.171, F.S.***

## **7. TRAINING**

There is no training required for this procedure.

## **8. FORMS**

Form No. 250-000-07, Telework Agreement

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **Guidelines for Selection of Teleworkers**

Telework does not suit everyone or every job. The following guidelines are offered for use by supervisors and managers when considering the telework option for an employee. This list is not all inclusive of factors that may impact the telework decision.

#### **Operational Considerations**

- A. Benefits to the work unit or Department's productivity
- B. Office workload
- C. Office space reduction or multi-use
- D. Equipment reduction or multi-use
- E. Financial impact reduction through increased returns or yields
- F. Impact on other employees' (ability to interact with teleworker and morale)
- G. Impact on customers

#### **Employee Considerations**

- H. Performance and disciplinary history
- I. Employee workload
- J. Degree of self-motivation and need for supervision
- K. Organization and time management skills
- L. Home work station (privacy, lack of distractions)
- M. Level of job skills