



TELECOMMUTING POLICY
APPROVED _____ BY THE COMMON COUNCIL

Note: This policy will be added to the Employee Handbook & Policy Manual as Section 7.9.

PURPOSE

Telecommuting is an arrangement in which an employee may work at a place different than the traditional workplace, typically their home, for the benefit of the employees and the organizational needs of the City of Milton. The City of Milton considers telecommuting to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some employees and jobs, but not for others. Telecommuting is not an entitlement, it is not an organization-wide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the City of Milton. This policy is intended to address voluntary telecommuting, but an employee may be ordered to telecommute in emergency situations (i.e. pandemic, natural disaster, building mechanical issues, etc.). Administration will use this policy as a framework for emergency telecommuting arrangements and has the discretion to deviate from the policy if the causality and duration of the emergency event warrants changes.

POLICY

Telecommuting arrangements may vary for individuals or positions. The determination as to whether any particular position, assignment, or employee is a good fit for telecommuting is at the sole discretion of the Department Head.

- Telecommuting is not an entitlement of any employee.
- It is the employee's responsibility to communicate any issues or concerns regarding the telecommuting arrangement with his/her supervisor as soon as possible.
- Telecommuting employees must comply with all City policies. Failure to comply with this policy or other City policies may result in discipline up to and including discharge.
- Telecommuting is not intended to permit the employee to have time to work at other jobs, provide dependent care or elder care, or run a business.

Management retains the right to modify the telecommuting agreement and to remove the employee from the arrangement for any reason. With proper notice, the employee may stop participating in the telecommuting arrangement at any time.

ELIGIBILITY

Employees who wish to engage in a telecommuting arrangement must meet the following criteria:

1. Must be employed with the City of Milton for a minimum of 12 months of continuous, regular employment or receive approval from the City Administrator and must have a satisfactory performance record.

2. A history of reliable and responsible completion of work duties at a high performance level.
3. Employee must demonstrate a history of and maintain regular, punctual, and predictable attendance.
4. Employee must provide broad band internet and phone access at their own expense.
5. Employee must utilize a City-owned computer.

In the event that an individual meets the above mentioned criteria and wishes to engage in a telecommuting arrangement, the position of the person will be evaluated to determine if suitable to telecommute.

PROCEDURES

Department Heads should take into account the following when considering an employee for telecommuting:

- **Employee Suitability** – The employee and Department Head will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, compared to traits customarily recognized as appropriate for successful telecommuters.
 - The employee must be self-motivated, self-disciplined, self-directed with the ability to establish, manage, communicate, and collaboratively determine priorities.
 - The employee must clearly demonstrate skills in planning, organizing, managing time, and meeting clear standards and objectives.
 - The employee must maintain regular, punctual, and predictable attendance.
 - The employee must maintain a high performance level.
- **Job Responsibilities** – The employee and Department Head will review the job description, discuss the job responsibilities, and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement.
 - Face-to-face communication is not a daily requirement of the position and communication can be effectively accomplished over the telephone, e-mail, or other appropriate means.
 - The individual already works in a self-directed role and produces clearly defined output and work products or the work activities are measurable.
- **Equipment Needs and Workspace Design Considerations** – The employee and Department Head will review the physical workspace needs and the appropriate location for the telework.
 - The employee can maintain a safe and ergonomically sound home office free from distractions.

- Employee agrees to an on-site inspection of the designated work area by the Department Head to ensure that it meets the requirements of a home work environment described below.
- **Tax and Other Legal Implications** – The employee must determine any tax or legal implications under IRS, state and local government laws, and/or restrictions of working out of a home-based office. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.

The employee agrees to be available during their scheduled work hours for communication through phone, e-mail, in-person, or other appropriate communication tools (text or skype). Employee initiated schedule changes must be approved by their supervisor.

Employees must check their City of Milton voicemail account at a minimum of once per day to receive messages and respond accordingly to those messages.

The employee agrees that their Department Head may make on-site visits to the telecommuting site during established work hours and that such visits may be made without notice; however, meetings with those conducting business with the City will not be held at the employee's telecommuting location.

The employee will try to schedule any off-site business meetings on telecommuting days in order to maximize the time they are available at their established work location. On occasion, it may be possible for employees to teleconference into the meetings that are scheduled on telecommuting workdays.

The employee will meet with the Department Head according to procedures previously agreed upon to receive assignments and to review completed work as necessary. The evaluation of the employee's job performance will be based on established standards and the employee's performance must continue to be at a high level to continue to telecommute.

All records, papers, and correspondence done at the telecommuting location are considered the City's business and may be subject to open records disclosure.

Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of records from and safeguard against unauthorized disclosure or damage. Steps to protect these records and information include, but are not limited to:

- Family members and others will not have access to protected information at any time or use City of Milton issued equipment.
- The use of locked file cabinets and desks.
- Passwords and protected entry codes to the City's software will be kept confidential.
- Regular password maintenance.
- Maintain all information which is protected by federal or state regulations in a confidential manner.
- Phone contacts involving confidential or sensitive information will be conducted in a private area.

- Any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

The employee, with the help of their supervisor, will determine strategies to ensure any confidential information remains secure and confidential while the employee is telecommuting. The employee will not take any printed documents containing confidential or personally identifiable information to an alternative work location unless specifically authorized by their supervisor.

HOME OFFICE REQUIREMENTS

Employees wishing to telecommute must have safe and adequate work space to work from home. Following are criteria that must be met for home office safety requirements:

- The temperature, noise, ventilation, and lighting levels of the dedicated office area must be adequate for maintaining normal levels of job performance.
- File cabinet doors and drawers are arranged so they do not open into walkways.
- Phone lines, electrical cords, and other extension wires are secured.
- Aisles, corners, and doorways in the work area are free of obstructions.

In addition to meeting safety requirements in the home office, a telecommuting workstation must be ergonomically suited for the employee. Employees will be responsible for ensuring they maintain the following ergonomic guidelines while working from home:

- Chair should be adjusted so feet are flat on floor or footrest and legs are vertical to ground.
- Computer monitor should be directly centered in front of the user. User should not have to look up, down, left or right for better viewing. Additionally, the monitor should be at a comfortable viewing distance.
- Use good posture when keyboarding. Elbows should be at a 90 degree angle. Wrists should be level with the keyboard.

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. The City of Milton will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture, or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.

EQUIPMENT

The City reserves the right to make the determination as to the appropriate equipment which is subject to change at any time. Equipment needs may be periodically assessed by the Department Head or the City's contracted IT provider to ensure that the individual is equipped for telecommuting based on the needs of the position. The City may provide necessary computer equipment for a fully functional real and virtual office for employees who telecommute on a routine basis. The telecommuter must sign an inventory of all City of Milton property received.

The employee will be responsible for providing internet connectivity that is at least a standard speed (which doesn't impede the employee from completing online work in an efficient manner). Connectivity should be checked before the employee begins working remotely. The employee will also

be responsible for providing a phone to make and receive calls in a reliable manner. The City will consider reimbursement for phone, internet, and other work related expenses based on the necessity and duration of remote work.

The City of Milton can supply the following equipment for approved telecommuters:

- City laptop pre-loaded with required standard programs.
- Set up of the telecommuting account (VPN) (must meet with the City's contracted IT provider at least 48 hours in advance to set up and test the VPN account prior to telecommuting).
- Instructions and training on how to get connected to the internal network.

The costs related to the equipment, installation, and maintenance may be the responsibility of the requesting department.

Employees must make arrangements regarding the use of the City's equipment in their remote office. The Department Head has the authority to determine for employees who work at multiple locations whether it will provide a single laptop which is transported between locations rather than maintaining a workstation at each location.

In no event shall the use of the City's equipment change the ownership of or impede the City's access to the equipment. All equipment and materials provided by the City shall remain the City's property. The employee must agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. The employee agrees to return all City owned furniture, equipment, and supplies in proper working condition. Special supplies not normally provided by the City (ink cartridges, toner, etc) or supplies not approved by the Department Head will be the employee's responsibility. Expenses for supplies normally available in the office may or may not be reimbursed depending on the circumstances.

Equipment provided by the City must not be used for purposes other than City business and must be kept in a secure, confidential location, and protected against damage and unauthorized use.

City owned equipment will be serviced and maintained by the City. Equipment provided by the employee will be at no cost to the City and will be maintained by the employee. The employee will notify their supervisor and/or the City's contracted IT provider in the event there is an equipment malfunction or theft.

If equipment requires repair or replacement where it is impossible for the employee to work at the remote location, the employee may be temporarily assigned to another location or may be required to use available leave time. Any lost hours may be made up within the confines of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and/or the departmental policies.

The City will not be responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, or any other incidental costs (e.g. utilities) associated with the use of the employee's residence. The City is not responsible for insuring any personal equipment in the employee's remote office. The employee understands that he or she is responsible for any tax and insurance from this arrangement and for conforming to any local zoning regulations.

The City of Milton reserves the right to monitor any and all equipment on the City of Milton network, and the right to remove or disable the network connections should the equipment show the behavior of infection, indicators of compromise, or use in violation of City policies.

The employee will be required to return all City of Milton owned equipment, software, products, supplies, and data if they leave employment with the City of Milton or is requested to do so by their supervisor.

LIABILITY

The City will not be liable for damages to the employee's property resulting from participation in the telecommuting program. By participating in the telecommuting arrangement, the employee agrees to hold the City harmless against any and all claims including injuries to others at the telecommuting location.

If an employee is injured while working at home, the employee should follow the City's established procedures for reporting on-the-job injuries.

EMPLOYMENT LAWS

Telecommuting employees will be held to the same employment law standards as employees in the traditional office. They will adhere to normal work schedules and will have to obtain prior management approval for any change to their normal work schedule (including overtime).

Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) will be required to accurately record all hours worked using the City of Milton's established procedures. Employees will accurately record their start and end time, as well as the beginning and ending time of each meal period. They will record the beginning and ending time of any split shift or departure from work for personal reasons. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and /or per workweek require the advance approval of the telecommuter's supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in discipline and / or the immediate termination of the telecommuting agreement.

TIME OFF

Telecommuting employees agree to follow established procedures for requesting and obtaining approval of leave, including Paid Time Off. In the event that a telecommuting employee is ill, he or she must follow the City's Attendance Policy.

CHILD/ELDER CARE

Telecommuting is not an alternative for child care or elder care and the telecommuter agrees to make regular dependent care arrangements during telecommuting periods. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate child care needs, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting business demands. Prospective telecommuters are encouraged to discuss expectations of telecommuting with family members prior to entering a trial period. Employees must not use work hours for any other purposes than City business related duties.

MISCELLANEOUS

Occasionally a telecommuting employee's presence may be required in the traditional office for meetings or other purposes and it is the responsibility of the employee to be present when requested. In

most cases the employee will be notified in advance of the requirement; however, advanced notification may not be feasible in some cases.

The telecommuting employee understands that they may be required to forfeit the use of a personal office or work station in favor of a shared arrangement to maximize the City's office space needs.

Form 22: Telecommuting Request Form

EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

Name _____ Employee Number _____

Department _____ Position _____

Address _____
Street City State Zip

Phone _____ Email: _____

TELECOMMUTING REQUEST

Proposed Start Date _____ Proposed End Date _____

Address where employee will be working remotely (if different from address above):

_____ Street City State Zip

Phone number where the employee can be reached while working remotely: _____

The employee's telecommuting schedule will be:

	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sat	Sun
Telecommuting Days							
Telecommuting Time <i>(Start and Finish Times)</i>							
Breaks (if applicable)							
Total Telecommuting Hours Per Day							
Anticipated hours not telecommuting							

Will the employee perform the duties of their current position? Yes No

If no, which duties will the employee perform?

This agreement is subject to the terms and conditions stated in the City of Milton Telecommuting Policy, a copy of which has already been made available to me. I have read and understand both the City of Milton Telecommuting Policy and this agreement. I agree to abide by and operate in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in both documents. I agree that the sole purpose of this agreement is to regulate telecommuting and it neither constitutes an employment contract nor an amendment to any existing contract. I understand that this agreement may be terminated at any time.

If the reason for the telecommuting request is due to a medical condition, documentation must be attached to this form supporting this request. Furthermore, the employee agrees to operate within any work restrictions they might have as a result of their own medical condition.

SIGNATURES

Employee Signature

Date

Department Head Signature

Date

City Administrator Signature

Date