

Town of Clarkdale



Teleworking Policy

Purpose

The Town of Clarkdale understands that under certain circumstances, it may become prudent for an employee to work from home. This policy establishes guidance and procedures for teleworking and defines the responsibilities necessary to ensure appropriate, safe and responsible use of the Town's IT and computing resources when teleworking. Further, this policy will assist staff and supervisors in understanding the requirements and conditions for telecommuting. Certain requirements for all telecommuting arrangements are set forth in this policy and are intended to ensure that such arrangements comply with all applicable laws, as well as to prevent losses and claims.

Teleworking is an alternative work arrangement the Town may offer to certain employees when it would benefit the Town's operations, the citizens we serve and the employee. Teleworking does not change the basic terms and conditions of employment with the Town. Teleworking is a privilege rather than an entitlement and will only be made available for those employees who are given express approval and are able to comply with the policy set forth. The Town, with or without cause, may revoke or modify the employee's participation in a teleworking agreement at any time.

Definitions

Teleworking – an arrangement in which an employee regularly performs work at an alternative worksite for a specified period of time. Also referred to as work from home, remote work and/or telecommuting. Traveling on Town business does not constitute teleworking.

Eligibility

All employees can complete a request for a teleworking arrangement; however, it is important to note this arrangement is only viable for certain positions. Employees should notify their supervisor as soon as possible if the need arises for a teleworking arrangement. The employee's supervisor, in coordination with the Department Head, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

- Employee suitability – Assess the needs and work habits of the employee, equipment needs and availability, workspace considerations and scheduling issues
- Job Responsibilities – Review the job responsibilities and determine if the duties are appropriate for teleworking and what, if any, accommodations may be necessary such as access to a Virtual Private Network (VPN)

If the supervisor and Department Head agree that teleworking is a viable option based on this review, the Teleworking Agreement and Safety Checklists should be completed and turned in to the Human Resources Manager. Final approval of the agreement can only be made by the Town Manager.

Responsibilities

Teleworking will not affect an employee's compensation, benefits, work status or work responsibilities.

Supervisors will establish the terms of the teleworking agreement that will include hours of work, required availability, job responsibilities, length of the arrangement, and available equipment and/or technology.

Supervisors are responsible for monitoring work time of non-exempt employees. Non-exempt employees shall not work overtime without prior approval from their supervisor. Supervisors are further responsible for ensuring that their non-exempt employees are recording all time worked on an accurate and timely basis.

Supervisors shall refrain from sending emails, leaving voicemails, or engaging in other work activities with non-exempt employees during non-work hours unless absolutely necessary.

Employees are required to follow all personnel rules, administrative regulations, department policies and procedures as if they were on-site.

Work Schedules/Timekeeping

Teleworkers will have regularly scheduled work hours agreed upon with their supervisors and remain obligated to comply with all City rules, policies, and procedures. Changes to this schedule will be reviewed and approved in advance by the employee's supervisor. All information about work hours and schedules shall be included in the Teleworking Agreement.

Teleworkers must be accessible, by telephone and/or email during all designated work time periods, regardless of work location.

The frequency and methods for communication will be established by the teleworker and his/her supervisor and revised as necessary.

Teleworkers who work at home are expected to manage dependent care and personal responsibilities the same as if the employee were working at their normal work site. Exceptions may be made by the Department Head or Town Manager in limited circumstances.

All Town policies regarding attendance and reporting time worked apply to teleworking employees. Employees shall maintain the agreed upon work schedule while teleworking.

FLSA non-exempt employees must be compensated for all time worked regardless of the work arrangement. Non-exempt employees who telecommute are prohibited from working overtime without prior supervisor approval. This includes but is not limited to reading/responding to email, checking voicemail, and returning telephone calls. Notwithstanding supervisor approval, non-exempt employees are required to timely and accurately record and/or report to their direct supervisor all pre-approved overtime worked, including but not limited to time spent emailing, listening to voicemail, and returning phone calls, on their timesheet. An employee's failure to timely and accurately record and/or report to the employee's direct supervisor all overtime worked, may result in employee discipline and/or the termination of the telework agreement.

Teleworkers generally spend the entire teleworking day at the same remote work location. Only travel specifically authorized by the teleworker's supervisor will be considered business travel eligible for expense reimbursement or workers' compensation coverage. Establishing a remote work location in the

telecommuter's home does not make the telecommuter's regular commute to his/her primary employment location a business trip.

Requests for in-person attendance can override telework arrangements.

Work Location and Liability

The employee's at-home workspace will be considered an extension of the Town's workspace. Therefore, the Town's worker's compensation insurance coverage will extend to the employee will be covered by worker's compensation for all job-related injuries that occur in the designated workspace at the telecommuter's home during the telecommuter's defined work period. Since the workplace and home will be one and the same, worker's compensation will not apply to non-job-related injuries that might occur in the home.

Employees will be required to complete and sign the Remote Workspace Safety Checklist, certifying their alternate workspace meets minimum safety standards. The Town will not be liable for any injuries resulting from an employee's failure to comply with and maintain these safety standards.

If the employee knows in advance of any situation that would preclude working at the telecommuting worksite, the employee must notify his or her supervisor immediately.

In the case of an injury sustained while teleworking, the employee will immediately report the injury to his/her supervisor and TriageNow pursuant to applicable Town policies. The Town is not liable for injuries to third parties and/or members of the employee's family on the employee's premises.

Security:

Employees must use a secured internet connection method for accessing the Town's network infrastructure. Once a Telework Agreement has been approved, arrangements will be made to provide access to the Town's Virtual Private Network (VPN) based on the needs of the employee, their job duties and the equipment available.

Information is a valuable Town asset and must be protected from unauthorized, incorrect, or accidental access, use, modification, destruction, or disclosure. Employees will be held accountable for securing information by taking reasonable and prudent measures to safeguard information on a routine basis.

Information will be protected by the employee in a manner consistent with its value, in all forms (e.g., written, oral, video, and computer) throughout its life cycle.

The employee may not disclose any confidential, private or personal files, records, materials or information, and may not allow access to Town networks or databases, to anyone who is not authorized to have access.

The work employees do while teleworking remains subject to the Arizona Public Records Law.

Equipment and Costs:

The Town will not be liable for the employee's costs to maintain their at-home workspace. Specifically, the Town will not reimburse a teleworking employee for utility costs, costs for local telephone service, costs associated with rent, mortgage, home maintenance, insurance, property taxes, utilities, etc. The Town will not be liable for any investment in furniture or equipment for the designated workspace.

Employees may be provided, at the Department Head's discretion, with limited office equipment (e.g., laptop, cell phone). Such equipment will remain the property of the Town and may not be used for non-business purposes. Repair and maintenance of Town equipment will be the responsibility of the Town. It is the employee's responsibility to assure that Town-owned equipment is not abused beyond the normal wear and tear of such equipment. All equipment issued to accommodate teleworking should be listed on the Teleworking Agreement. Upon termination of employment, all Town property will be returned to the Town, unless other arrangements have been made.

Office supplies will be provided by the Town and should be obtained during the teleworker's in-office work period. Out-of-pocket expenses for supplies normally available in the office will not be reimbursed. Unless otherwise agreed to in writing prior to any loss, damage or wear, the Town does not assume liability for loss, damage or wear of employee-owned equipment.

Any teleworking expenses not specifically covered in this policy will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis between employee and supervisor with final approval by the Town Manager.