



# ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>TELEWORK POLICY</b>		
<b>NUMBER</b>	20-03	<b>SIGNED DATE</b>	August 1, 2021
<b>ISSUED BY</b>	Mark Washington, City Manager	<i>Mark Q. Washington</i>	
<b>PREPARED BY</b>	Doug Matthews, Assistant City Manager and Chief Administrative Services Officer		
<b>REVISED</b>	August 1, 2021		
<b>ASSOCIATED POLICIES</b>	<a href="#">Administrative Policy 84-02</a> <a href="#">20-03 Telework Agreement Form</a>		
<b>CITY VALUES</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accountability <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainability	

## SUMMARY

This policy provides a framework and expectations for the requesting and approval of telework arrangements. While reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate telework where possible, certain factors may influence approval decisions.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide tools and guidance to employees of the City of Grand Rapids regarding telework. Employees are authorized to telework at the discretion of their department head based on needs of service and the ability to perform necessary work remotely. To work remotely employees must receive supervisor permission and complete a teleworking agreement with their supervisor and comply with the expectations listed in this policy.

Telework arrangements are considered an employment benefit and not a vested employee right. While reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate such arrangements where possible, factors such as work performance history, immediate business need and workload balance may factor into approval decisions. All terms and conditions of employment with the City remain unchanged, except those specifically addressed in this policy.

Management retains the right to suspend or modify this policy on a temporary or permanent basis for any reason at any time.

## **POLICY**

### **1. Eligibility**

Any office personnel whose work may be reasonably and effectively conducted from a remote location may be eligible to telework for up to 40% (16 hours per week) of their work hours.

- a. Personnel may not be eligible to participate in telework if working with sensitive or confidential data for the vast majority of their workday, or if the nature of the employee's work necessarily requires a physical presence on-site
- b. Exceptions to the 40% cap on telework hours may be made on a case-by-case basis.
  - i. Generally, exceptions should be short-term in nature.
  - ii. Exception requests should be forwarded to the Human Resources Director for review. Final determinations will be made by the Assistant City Manager in consultation with the department head and Human Resources Director.

### **2. Teleworking Agreement**

- a. Employees are expected to complete a telework agreement. [See Telework Agreement Form here](#). The requirement to complete a telework agreement may be suspended during unforeseen emergencies at the discretion of management.
- b. Completed telework agreements must have an end date. Telework agreements on file must be renewed each year in July.
- c. Supervisors are expected to work with the employee to provide guidance in completing the telework agreement. Both parties must agree to the terms and understand the expectations and receive department head approval.
- d. All teleworking employees must receive a copy of this policy and be in agreement.

### **3. Employee Expectations**

- a. Employees must be accessible (via phone, videoconferencing, and/or other electronic means) and be productive during scheduled work hours.
- b. Nonexempt employees must record all hours worked in accordance with regular timekeeping practices.
- c. Employees must obtain supervisor approval prior to adjusting their standard work schedule including, but not limited to, flex scheduling or working unscheduled overtime hours.
- d. Employees must report to the employee's work location as necessary upon directive from their supervisor.
- e. Employees will communicate regularly with their supervisor and co-workers, which may include a written, phone, and/or videoconferencing report of work progress.

- f. Employees will comply with all City of Grand Rapids rules, policies, practices, and instructions that would apply if the employee were working at the employer's work location. [See City Rules and Regulations here.](#)
- g. Employees will maintain satisfactory performance standards.
- h. Employees will plan for regular dependent care and understand that telecommuting is not a substitute for dependent care. In unforeseen emergency circumstances, exceptions can be made for employees with caregiving responsibilities at the discretion of management.
- i. Employees will maintain a safe and secure work environment at all times.
- j. Employees will allow the appropriate City representative to have access to the telecommuting location for purposes of assessing safety and security, upon reasonable notice by management.
- k. Employees will report work-related injuries to their supervisor as soon as practicable. A reported work-related injury will prompt an inspection of the telecommuting worksite by Risk Management.
- l. Employees must understand that working at home is for employee convenience and does not permit the allocation of income for time spent outside of Grand Rapids for tax purposes.

#### **4. Supervisor Expectations**

- a. Supervisors must manage employees' adherence to all of the above listed Employee Expectations.
- b. Supervisors must review employee work schedules. Supervisors must be clear about expectations with employees for maintaining their current work schedule or openness to flexing scheduling based on needs of service. Supervisors are encouraged to allow flexibility, especially during unforeseen emergency situations.
- c. Supervisors must consider which routine responsibilities/tasks can be fulfilled while working remotely and how it will impact operations, customers, or co-workers. It is the supervisor's responsibility to review processes to minimize the impact on employees working in the office.
- d. Supervisors should proactively encourage telework and in office staff to maintain overall communication expectations.
- e. Supervisors should ensure teleworking staff have meaningful projects that advance departmental objectives and avoid busy work.
- f. Supervisors should communicate the expectation related to attendance at events or meetings in the telework agreement. Supervisors should consider alternate ways for staff to connect such as video-conferencing or other online collaboration platforms.
- g. Supervisors must make a communication and accountability plan. Supervisors should communicate how quickly they expect the employee to respond while telecommuting and the best ways for the employee to contact the supervisor while working remotely.

- h. Supervisors must maintain team meetings and one-to-one check-ins. The frequency of those check-ins will be left to supervisor discretion. If needed, supervisors are encouraged to alter schedules to accommodate any alternative schedules that have been approved.
- i. Supervisors should complete an evaluation report for the period of time an employee teleworks to assess what has worked well and any challenges. This feedback is critical to having continued telework opportunities. A copy of this report should be provided to Labor Relations each July 1st.

## **5. Technical Requirements**

The City of Grand Rapids will provide all employees with the necessary technology to perform their jobs including the following: laptop/desktop computers, peripheral devices (such as mouse, keyboard, monitor, dock, portable hard drives, etc.), and VPN access if required. [See the City's Electronics Use policy here](#). (During unforeseen emergency situations, management may reduce technology requirements.)

- a. The employee and supervisor shall work with the Information Technology department to maintain an inventory of all equipment provided to the employee, including associated serial numbers/asset tags.
- b. All employees are financially responsible for their own internet access; however, departments may issue a mobile hotspot at their discretion.
- c. All employees are expected to utilize VPN to access the City's network where direct access to network systems or files is required.
- d. City of Grand Rapids equipment will not be used by anyone other than the employee and only for business-related work. As it relates to computers/laptops, all work done on behalf of the City of Grand Rapids should be done on City of Grand Rapids equipment.
- e. Employees must not make any changes to security or administrative settings on City of Grand Rapids equipment. The employee understands that all tools and resources provided by the City shall remain the property of the City at all times.
- f. All City of Grand Rapids data will be used and stored on City authorized programs. Personally-owned programs such as Gmail, Google Drive, or Drop Box will not be used to house or transport City data. Additionally, City of Grand Rapids owned information and documents should not be downloaded and stored on personally owned devices that are not approved by the [City's Bring Your Own Device policy](#). All communication as a City employee while conducting business for the City of Grand Rapids must be done through City owned communications platforms.
- g. The employee agrees to protect City tools and resources from theft or damage and to report theft or damage to their supervisor immediately.
- h. The employee agrees to comply with City of Grand Rapids' policies and expectations regarding information security. The employee will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary organizational and customer information accessible from their telecommuting location.

- i. Employees are responsible for connecting their device to their remote workplace wireless LAN or hotspot if provided. IT will not provide onsite support for remote wireless troubleshooting or connection to non-City of Grand Rapids equipment.
- j. Any IT support will be attempted through remote access. In the event that an issue cannot be resolved remotely the employee may have to return to their workplace for IT support. IT will not visit telework locations to provide support.

## **6. Safety Requirements**

Employees have a responsibility to maintain a safe workspace when teleworking just as they would be required to do so within the workplace. The following considerations should be evaluated before and during teleworking arrangements.

### **a. General Safety**

- i. Floors should be clear and free of hazards
- ii. The work area should be reasonably quiet and free of distractions
- iii. Temperature, ventilation, and lighting should be adequate
- iv. First aid supplies should be readily available
- v. Walkways, aisles and doorways should be unobstructed
- vi. There should be an available exit from the workspace, as well as to the exterior of the building (door or window)
- vii. There should be a working smoke detector covering the designated workplace
- viii. The workspace should be kept free of trash, clutter and flammable liquids

### **b. Electrical Safety**

- i. Computer equipment should be connected to a surge protector
- ii. Electrical outlets should be grounded with three-pronged plugs
- iii. The electrical system should be adequate to power required office equipment
- iv. Electrical cords, plugs, outlets and panels should be in good condition – no exposed/damaged wiring
- v. Extension cords should not be used as a solution to provide power to the work area
- vi. Power cords and power strips should not be tangled
- vii. Electrical cords should be run in non-traffic areas, should not run under rugs and should not be nailed or stapled in

### **c. Ergonomics**

- i. Office furniture and equipment should be ergonomically correct in line with OSHA guidelines. [See OSHA guidelines here.](#)
  - 1) Chair should be sturdy and adjustable, with a backrest and casters that are appropriate for the floor surface
  - 2) Feet should reach the floor when seated, or fully supported by a footrest

- 3) Forearms should be near parallel with the floor while typing
- 4) Monitor should be 20-24 inches from the eyes, with the top of the screen slightly below eye level
- 5) Screen should be free of noticeable glare
- 6) Ensure there is adequate lighting at the workstation

## **7. Additional Resources**

To support employees and supervisors in teleworking successfully, the Human Resources Department has developed the following additional tools and resources that can be found on the City's Digital Workplace:

[Prioritizing Time](#)

[Stretches for Sedentary Work](#)

[GROW Model](#)

[AID to Boost](#)