# Objective

To establish the conditions and requirements under which employees may be permitted to participate in the Hamilton County Telecommuting/Telework program for the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Department.

# Scope

This policy is applicable to all full-time, non-probationary, employees who have been approved to participate in the program by their Elected Official and/or Department Head.

# Definition of terms

Telecommuting or Telework allows employees to work from home for part of their regular work week as a viable workplace alternative to a traditional workplace.

# POLICY STATEMENT

Telecommuting is a voluntary workplace alternative that is approved for certain positions. The Hamilton County Board of Commissioners support telecommuting when it is reasonable and practical to do so and where operational needs will not be adversely affected. Elected Officials and/or Department Heads have the sole discretion to determine which positions are appropriate for telecommuting. Telecommuting is a privilege; it is not an entitlement, it is a not a County-wide benefit, and it in no way changes any terms and conditions of employment. This is a temporary program and may be revoked or changed at any time at the County’s sole discretion.

# program Eligibility

1. **Program Requirements**

Employees who wish to be considered for the program will need to obtain their Elected Official and/or Department Head approval prior to participation in the program. Eligibility in the temporary program will be denied where duties and assignments make working remotely difficult or impossible.

In every case, the employee will be required to obtain approval from their Elected Official and/or Department Head prior to participation in the telecommuting program. Any employee eligible for telecommuting is required to submit an email request to their Elected Official and/or Department Head. If approved, a Telecommuting Agreement will be required.

A Telecommuting Agreement is not a contract of employment. The Elected Official and/or Department Head my revoke participation in this program at any time.

Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the Elected Official and/or Department Head will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement based on the factors such as, but not limited to:

1. **Employee suitability:** On a case-by-case basis, the Elected Official and/or Department Head will consider several criteria when determining whether the individual employee will be successful in his/her job when telecommuting, including, but not limited to: the employee’s proven ability to perform, high job knowledge, ability to establish clear objectives, flexibility, ability to work independently, dependability, and the employee’s access to a workspace that is professionally suitable.
2. **Job responsibilities:** The employee and Elected Official and/or Department Head will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement.
3. **Equipment needs, workspace design, and scheduling issues:** must be factored in for consideration.
4. **Equipment, Work Environment & Security**

Hamilton County will determine the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software) for each telecommuting arrangement on a case-by-case basis. ISS will serve as resources in this matter. The employee is required to provide internet connectivity, and a printer if applicable. If additional specialty equipment is required, as determined by the department, the County may provide these resources (when appropriate).

Equipment supplied by Hamilton County is to be used for business purposes only. The employee must sign an inventory of all office property and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment all County property must be returned to the County, unless other arrangements have been made.

The employee must configure Microsoft 365 (Teams) on their laptop, desktop and mobile phone. The County will also configure a CISCO soft-phone on the laptop or as an alternative, the employee’s desk phone must be forwarded to his/her cellular device so that the employee is accessible at all times.

**Hamilton County accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment.**

The employee is responsible for creating a safe and productive appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. Hamilton County is not 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.

The employee is required to comply with all the data security standards established at Hamilton County. If the employee has access to confidential information or related infrastructure, then they also need to ensure that their telework environment complies with security rules related to maintaining the confidentiality of such information.

1. **Accessibility**

Working remotely means that the employee continues to maintain the same level of accessibility as he/she would maintain if he/she were working in the office. This includes being responsive to emails, telephone calls, voicemails, and text messages. This also includes participating in meetings either telephonically or via videoconferencing equipment (i.e. Microsoft Office 365(Teams) or other tools). Additionally, if department-wide (i.e. All Hands) or other meetings take place that necessitate the employee’s physical presence in the office, he/she will be required to come into the office.

1. **Participation**

During the initial temporary program, the Elected Official and/or Department Head will determine the amount of worktime permitted to each employee in this program. In order to meet staffing necessities, Elected Officials and/or Department Heads may consider flexing employee work schedules in order to achieve departmental needs and employee work/life balance.

Telecommuting employees will be required to maintain his/her regular work schedule and are expected to be “at their desks” and available the same way he/she would be at the office unless circumstances created by the pandemic event warrant otherwise. Employees are required to maintain communication with their Elected Official and/or Department Head throughout the workday as necessary. The employee’s Elected Official and/or Department Head must agree on a work plan for telework. This plan must include specific tasks and expected time to be spent on those tasks, with a form of measuring if the tasks are completed. Additionally, the participating employee will be required to maintain daily productivity logs to document work performed during the telecommuting program.

The availability of telecommuting as a flexible work arrangement for Hamilton County employees can be discontinued at any time at the sole discretion of the employee’s Elected Official, Department Head and/or the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners.

# Non-compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in the discontinuation of an individual employee’s participation in the Telecommuting/Telework Program, and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

**Elected Official and/or Department Head Approval**

| **Name & Title** |  | **Signature** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Approved Date  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Effective Date:  (if not approved date)  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |  |