REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:

Effective: 5/1/96
Revised: 6/29/04
Revised: 6/11/07
Revised: 7/10/08
Revised: 10/18/10
Revised: 8/1/12
Revised: 6/1/15

SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:

- Added reference to Governor’s Executive Order on expanding telework and flexible work hours programs
- II.E. - Adjusted language for clarification
- III.B. - Adjusted process for requesting to connect personal computer equipment to Department equipment

APPROVED:

Signature on file

BERNARD WARNER, Secretary
Department of Corrections

4/29/15
Date Signed
POLICY

REFERENCES:

DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; DOC 200.900 Travel Regulations; Governor's Executive Order 14-02; State Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM) Chapter 10

POLICY:

I. The Department recognizes the potential benefits of allowing employees and contract staff to make arrangements for the workplace to be located temporarily or part-time at an alternate work site (e.g., home office, satellite office, neighborhood center), generally located closer to the employee/contract staff’s residence than the regular work site. Basic terms and conditions of employment will remain in practice. All rules and policies regarding salary, benefits, leave usage, hours of work, safety standards, and job responsibilities apply equally to telecommuters.

II. A telecommuting arrangement may provide employees/contract staff and the Department with benefits that could not have been achieved without this option. Benefits may include:

   A. Enhanced job performance, morale, and job satisfaction,
   B. Increased ability to attract and retain valued employees/contract staff, as well as expanded access to labor markets, including part time and semi-retired individuals, and individuals with disabilities,
   C. Continued productivity despite severe inclement weather or its effects,
   D. Conservation of space and energy, and/or
   E. Increased ability to meet air quality or commute trip reduction requirements.

DIRECTIVE:

I. Eligibility and Responsibilities

   A. Supervisors are encouraged to consider telecommuting alternatives for permanent employees and contract staff who have demonstrated successful performance of their job responsibilities. The Telecommuting Application/Agreement Checklist (Attachment 1) should be used when considering the plan. Due to the need for interaction with coworkers and access to information, full time telecommuting will not be offered as a permanent work arrangement.

   B. Supervisors and employees/contract staff should consider both the nature of the work that will be performed and the ability to monitor offsite productivity. Some job duties are not suitable for home-based telecommuting (e.g., face to face business contact with clients or customers), but may be appropriate at some other alternate work site.
C. Supervisors must ensure:
   1. The employee/contract staff is reliable in meeting all work deadlines and program expectations.
   2. Necessary staffing to perform all in-office responsibilities is maintained.
   3. Implementation of a telecommuting arrangement does not create an undue financial burden on the Department or an increased workload on coworkers.

D. Employees/contract staff must:
   1. Maintain job performance standards while telecommuting,
   2. Be accessible during work hours and be responsible for maintaining effective communication and workflow among clients, coworkers, and their supervisor, and
   3. When working from home, provide a work environment free of interruptions, distractions, or other responsibilities that could detract from the ability to get work done.
      a. Only those duties ordinarily part of their job responsibilities during work hours will be performed.
      b. Telecommuting is not a substitute for inadequate dependent care.

II. Agreement

A. The employee/contract staff will submit DOC 03-240 Telecommuting Application/Agreement to his/her supervisor.

B. The supervisor has the authority to:
   1. Deny the request,
   2. Discuss with the employee/contract staff any modifications that may be needed to finalize the agreement, and/or
   3. Approve the request and forward it to the appropriate Appointing Authority for final approval.

C. Only the employee/contract staff’s Appointing Authority may approve a telecommuting work agreement.
D. Once the agreement has been established, the supervisor may approve a telecommuter’s request for changes in the agreement regarding working hours and/or overtime hours. Requests will be reviewed and approved in advance of the actual change date(s), even if temporary in nature.

E. The cost, effectiveness, and feasibility of a telecommuting arrangement must be reviewed at least every 3 months, or more often as determined by the supervisor, and will be evaluated as a part of the annual Performance and Development Plan.

F. A telecommuting work agreement may be terminated at any time by either party, with written notice. If an agreement is terminated by the supervisor, the employee/contract staff may request a review of the decision by the Appointing Authority.

III. Equipment and Support

A. Department-provided equipment is not an entitlement of telecommuting. However, laptop computers, software, and portable printers may be provided for telecommuter use on an as needed basis within available funds.

1. The Department will be responsible for the repair and maintenance of Department-owned equipment.

2. The telecommuter will be responsible for any damage from negligence or misuse, or from a power surge if no surge protector is used.

3. Telecommuters must adhere to all Department policies and regulations related to network access and equipment hardware/software, as well as the software manufacturer’s licensing agreement.

4. Items purchased by the Department must be returned upon request or termination of the telecommuting work agreement.

B. Telecommuters connecting personal equipment to Department-owned equipment must obtain approval in advance from the Chief Information Officer/designee by submitting a service request.

1. Telecommuters will not be reimbursed for use of or loss/damage to their own equipment.

2. Telecommuters are advised that using personal computer equipment in connection with their telecommuting assignment may impact the privacy of personal data stored on that equipment in the event of a public disclosure or discovery request.
IV. Safety and Security

A. The supervisor will ensure that the telecommuter complies with all safety and security precautions necessary for telecommuting.

B. Telecommuters must maintain a designated work space at their alternate work site. This space is considered an extension of the Department work space. Telecommuters will have the same responsibility for safe practices, accident prevention, and accident reporting as in the regular work site. This includes:

1. All electrical devices must be plugged into a surge protector,
2. The area must be free from any displaced items (e.g., electrical cords, extension cords, other hazards), and
3. Work space items/equipment will be physically stable.

C. The Department will continue to be liable for job-related accidents per Department of Labor and Industries rules.

D. The alternate work site is subject to periodic inspections by the supervisor. If the telecommuter is working from home, s/he must give prior approval of the date and time for the inspection.

E. Telecommuters must be able to demonstrate they have taken all precautions necessary to secure property and confidential information and to prevent unauthorized access to any Department computer system. This includes preventing the introduction of computer viruses.

F. Restricted access materials, such as offender records or personnel/payroll files, will not be taken from the regular work site without prior approval from the supervisor or appropriate authority.

1. The telecommuter is responsible for material(s) during transport and at the alternate work site.
   a. The telecommuter will not leave his/her vehicle unattended when transporting material(s) between permanent and alternate work locations.
   b. Materials must be stored in a secure, out-of-sight location (e.g., vehicle trunk, home closet).

G. Official in-person meetings with coworkers, clients, or citizens will not be conducted at the telecommuter's home.
V. Expenses

A. Telecommuters who work at home will be responsible for:

1. Costs related to the set up (e.g., furniture, remodeling) of their telecommuting work space.

2. Individual automobile/homeowners or rental insurance, tax implications, and incidental residential utility costs.

B. Telecommuters who do not have a Department-issued cellular telephone will use Department-provided CenturyLink Worldcard cards for job-related long distance telephone calls made from non-state telephones. If approved in advance as a requirement of the telecommuting arrangement, the installment and basic monthly fees for a designated communications or data line in a telecommuter's home or other alternate work site, including voicemail or other necessary services, may be billed to the Department.

C. On telecommuting days, the alternate work site will be designated as a second official workstation per DOC 200.900 Travel Regulations for the purpose of calculating travel expenses. Telecommuters will not be reimbursed for any costs associated with travel between the 2 work sites or between the work sites and their residence.

**DEFINITIONS:**

Words/terms appearing in the policy may be defined in the glossary section of the Policy Manual.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

*Telecommuting Application/Agreement Checklist (Attachment 1)*

**DOC FORMS:**

*DOC 03-240 Telecommuting Application/Agreement*