

# **ANDOVER HOUSING AUTHORITY**

## **Remote Work & Telecommuting Policy**

### **I. Purpose**

This Policy establishes the terms by which employees of Andover Housing Authority may temporarily work remotely/telecommute upon written approval by the Executive Director (“Employer”). The employer considers employment at a remote location to be a viable alternative work arrangement only in cases where individual and departmental circumstances are best suited to such an arrangement. It is not an entitlement and does not change the fundamental conditions of employment with the Employer, including but not limited to attendance at the Employer’s premises. The Employer reserves the right to terminate any and/or all telework arrangements at its discretion.

### **II. Definition**

Telecommuting (also referred to as “teleworking” or “working remotely”) is a work flexibility arrangement in which some or all of an employee’s work is performed at an approved work site other than the physical location in which the employee would otherwise work, such as the employee’s home, or in alternative office space near home.

### **III. Assignment of, and Employee Eligibility for, Remote Work**

The Executive Director will determine the feasibility of a specific employee or position’s ability to work from home. Telecommuting will be an option for qualifying employees and may be discontinued, at the Employer’s discretion at any time.

To qualify for remote employment, the employee must be of good standing with at least 6 months on-site work experience for the Employer. An employee who has been disciplined in 6 months preceding the commencement of a remote work assignment will not be eligible. Where an employee is disciplined for any reason while telecommuting, the remote work assignment shall be revoked. All teleworking assignments shall be on an initial trial basis of two (2) weeks. After two (2) weeks, if the employee has not adequately complied with the terms of this Policy, or otherwise demonstrated adequate performance in a remote work assignment, the Employer may discontinue the availability of the employee’s telecommuting arrangement.

The Executive Director may discontinue an employee’s telecommuting arrangement at any time with or without cause, upon notice to the employee communicated in writing (including via e-mail). Such notice shall be provided no later than seven (7) days before the date that the employee is expected to return to work, except that in emergencies where such notice is impractical, in which event the employee shall be provided with as much advance notice as possible that they are required to return to work.

### **IV. General Conditions for Telecommuting**

Working from home or other non-traditional work settings imposes additional responsibilities on employees, as outlined in this Policy, any related telework guidelines, or as may be prescribed by the Executive Director.

#### *A. Remote Workspace and Equipment*

Teleworking employees must establish an appropriate work environment within their home for work purposes. The Employer reserves the right to inspect the employee's remote work location, generally upon 48 hours' advance notice to the employee, or sooner if the inspection is necessary due an employee's report of a work-related injury (see section F, below).

Employer will not be responsible for costs associated with initial setup of the employee's home office such as furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space. Similarly, employees shall be responsible for providing and maintaining their own computer equipment, printers, and internet connectivity through their Internet Service Provider. Equipment supplied by the employee will be maintained by the employee; Employer accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. Minimum hardware and software requirements will be identified by the Employer's information technology personnel/vendor. Employer reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Telecommuting employees shall not perform work while connected to any public Wi-Fi, or from any public location or location other than the employee's home, unless previously cleared with the Executive Director.

Employer will supply proprietary and licensed software necessary for the performance of Employees' duties. Employees will be provided a VPN account which will enable access to departmental network drives and standard in-house applications. Equipment supplied by Employer, and access to Employer networks and information systems, shall be used for business purposes only. Upon termination of the telecommuting arrangement, or upon termination of employment, any Employer-issued property will be returned to the employer in good physical and functional condition within five (5) business days of termination.

Connectivity problems unrelated to Employer's equipment, software, or networking systems are the responsibility of the employee. Productivity missed due to home connectivity problems must account for absence in some way (e.g., making up the time, paid vacation time, or unpaid time). In the event of local network connection problems that prevent the employee from working, the employee has the option of reporting to their normal workstation or other available workspace on the Employer's premises. Availability of shared workspaces shall be on a first come, first served basis. If no workspace is available, missed time must be made up during the week or taken as time unpaid.

In the event of a power outage or weather-related events:

- If the Employer's central office closes for a period of less than two business days, the telecommuting employee is not expected to continue working his/her normal hours, and they shall be paid to the same extent as non-teleworking employees.

- If the Employer's central office closes for a period of more than two business days, the telecommuting employee is expected to continue working their normal business hours, provided that they have power and internet connection.

In the event of a declared State of Emergency, teleworking may be suspended or adjusted as necessary, in the discretion of the Employer.

#### *B. Hours of Work, Overtime and Benefits*

Telecommuting employees will work a regular 8-hour day any time within the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M. in accordance with a pre-determined schedule set by the employee's Executive Director. Employees are entitled to a 30-minute unpaid meal break; employees will not be paid for working through a meal break unless expressly asked to do so by the Executive Director. Overtime must be approved in advance, in accordance with the Employer's existing overtime/compensatory time policy(ies). The Executive Director are expected to monitor employee work hours to ensure that unauthorized overtime is not worked.

Telecommuting employees' benefits will be the same as an individual reporting to work at Employer's premises. Teleworking employees are subject to the same policies and procedures governing the utilization of sick, vacation, personal or other paid leave as employees working on-site. Employees who wish to use said paid leave should request it according to existing Authority policies or applicable collective bargaining agreements. If the employee needs unexpected time off or a temporary schedule change, they must notify the Executive Director as soon as practical prior to the absence or schedule change, to obtain approval.

#### *C. Tracking Work Time/Performance Expectations*

Teleworking employees are required to meet all normal, reasonable performance expectations, and shall perform such duties required by their job descriptions and as may be assigned by the Executive Director. Each employee shall provide their supervisor with a "work at home" narrative report describing the work performed daily while telecommuting. Unless otherwise specified, that report shall be provided on a weekly basis. In addition, all teleworking employees are required to maintain daily timesheets, specifically identifying the time periods of work, and signed by the employee under the pains and penalties of perjury. Employees are required to submit their time sheets to the Executive Director on a weekly basis. The Executive Director is responsible for reviewing and approving employee time sheets on a regular basis, prior to submission to the Bookkeeper for processing.

#### *D. Communications/Attendance at Meetings*

Telecommuting employees shall communicate with colleagues at a level consistent with employees working on-site and with a frequency deemed appropriate by Employer. The employee agrees to be accessible by telephone, cell phone or e-mail within a reasonable time period during the agreed-upon work schedule. Telecommuting employees generally are not required to check or respond to e-mail or voice mail messages outside of the established hours of work, except in the event of an emergency.

Telecommuting employees are expected to attend telephone conferences, virtual meetings, and in-person meetings in the office, as necessary. The Executive Director will advise the employee of meeting requirements. These include, but are not limited to, regularly scheduled employment reviews, significant departmental meetings, and individual meetings at the request of the Executive Director. If the Executive Director requires the telecommuting employee to travel to the office for a meeting, commute time will be considered part of the employee's paid working day. If the employee chooses to attend a meeting in-person when they have the option of attending by remote or virtual means, commute time will not be paid, except as where required by law.

If an employee is required to travel to the office or an off-site meeting, from their remote work location, mileage reimbursements will be made in accordance with the Employer's reimbursement policy(ies).

#### *E. Conduct Expectations*

All Employer policies, including but not limited to the Prohibited Conduct and Discipline Policy, Electronic Communications and Computer Use Policy, CORI Policy, and policies related to the release of public records, will continue to apply to employees who are working remotely. Employees should raise any questions about the application of a policy in a remote work setting with their Executive Director.

Working remotely shall not be used as a substitute for dependent or childcare. Teleworking employees are expected to make appropriate dependent and childcare arrangements during the period they will be working at home and shall devote the same amount of attention to the performance of their duties as they would if working on Employer's premises.

Telecommuting employees are required to take adequate precautions to ensure that confidential or non-public information is not inadvertently lost or misplaced, or otherwise disclosed or released to any unauthorized person inside or outside the Employer's employment, unless required for a specific and *bona fide* business purpose or by law. Unauthorized release of such records, even where unintentional, may result in discipline up to and including termination. If an employee is unsure about its authority to release a particular record, they should first confer with the Executive Director.

#### *F. Reporting of Injuries while Working Remotely*

Telecommuting employees must report any injuries occurring during the period of their remote workday and in the performance of their job duties, to the Executive Director immediately, as soon as feasible after the injury.

### **V. Violations**

By accepting a telework assignment, an employee agrees to abide by the terms and conditions of this Policy, and any related telework guidelines, and/or telework instructions from the Executive

Director. Teleworking employees who violate this Policy, and any related telework guidelines, and/or telework instructions from the Executive Director, may be disciplined, up to and including termination from employment.

**Andover Housing Authority’s Remote Work and Telecommuting Policy**

This acknowledges that I have received and reviewed the Andover Housing Authority’s Remote Work and Telecommuting Policy (“Policy”). By signing this form, I agree to abide by the Policy and any Guidelines promulgated thereunder, and I agree to periodically review any changes or modifications. I recognize that the law and associated Policy regarding remote work and telecommuting may be amended from time to time and understand that my regular review of this Policy may be required.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*To be included in the employee’s personnel file.*

Board Review and Approval: 12/21/2022