

Department of Health Policy

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| Title: | Mobile Workforce | Number: | 07.025 |
| Procedure: | See associated procedure | | |
| References: | Civil Service Rules , Fair Labor Standards Act , Governor's Executive Order 16-07 and DOH Policy 07.008 , 17.003 , 17.005 , WFSE CBA and SEIU CBA | | |
| Applies to: | All DOH employees | | |
| Contact: | Workforce Development Manager, Office of Human Resources | | |
| Effective Date: | March 1, 2017 | Review Date: | March 1, 2022 |
| Supersedes: | DOH Policy dated January 1, 2011 | | |
| Approved: | Jessica Todorovich | Chief of Staff, Department of Health | |

Policy Statement:

The Department of Health (DOH) recognizes the potential benefit of teleworking, mobile working and home-basing to the state, the agency and individual employees.

Mobility is a workplace strategy that enables an employee to have the capability and flexibility to shift to and from different modes of work to maximize productivity and to be effective and efficient regardless of their location. The Department of Health uses mobile working as a business strategy to help achieve organizational goals like recruiting and retaining employees, enabling increased productivity and performance, fostering an engaging work environment, supporting health and wellness, ensuring continuity of operations, and reducing facilities costs and our environmental footprint.

For represented employees the collective bargaining agreements (CBA) supersede specific provisions of agency policies with which it conflicts.

Definitions:

Mobile Work is the overarching term that includes each of the specific ways employees may work outside of a DOH office.

Mobile Work Agreement is the document outlining the agreement between the employee and the supervisor regarding the terms allowing the employee to mobile work.

Telework is the use of telecommunications and computer technologies to allow employees to perform assigned duties at other than the assigned duty station during identified work hours. Telework means working from the employee's home or alternate worksite near the employee's home, rather than from their assigned duty station at least once every two weeks resulting in fewer commute trips by the employee.

Duty Station: The location where the employee's worksite is located or work is performed on a permanent basis. An employee's official duty station is designated by the agency.

Home-basing is an arrangement in which the employee's assigned duty station is their primary personal residence.

Mobile computing is occasional ad hoc remote access from an alternate site, such as while traveling on business or working out of the employee's primary personal residence. Remote access may connect to DOH information services as authorized by the immediate supervisor and Appointing Authority or their designee.

Framework:

Mobile Work Agreements should be approved or denied by the supervisor within 10 business days of receipt. The maximum term of Mobile Work Agreements is twelve (12) months and must be renewed on an annual basis. Any agreements are subject to business needs, customer service needs and employee performance or attendance and may be denied or rescinded for any of these reasons. Mobile Work Agreements must be approved by the Appointing Authority or designee and in place prior to the employee starting the arrangement. The term(s) of the arrangement will be stated in the signed Mobile Work Agreement.

Additionally, such arrangements may be designated by the Appointing Authority or designee to cover critical functions during a natural disaster, building closure, pandemic or as part of an agency emergency response plan.

Mobile Work options for telework and home-basing are limited to locations in Washington State or in adjacent communities bordering the state. If special circumstances arise, the Appointing Authority or designee will consult with the Chief Human Resource Officer or designee to determine if an exception is warranted. Any approved exceptions will be fully documented in the Mobile Work Agreement.

Eligibility and Other Requirements or Considerations:

All DOH positions are eligible for mobile work, with the focus for employee approval/denial being based on specific job tasks. All employees (which includes permanent, non-permanent, project, employees in review periods, etc.) have the opportunity to request participation with consideration being given to the following requirements or considerations:

- An employee's salary, job duties and responsibilities, work schedule and state-provided benefits do not change as a result of an approved Mobile Work Agreement. Employees currently involved in corrective or disciplinary action may not be eligible to participate, which will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- Managers should consider cost-benefit as part of the proposed Mobile Work Agreement. The nature of the job, equipment requirements, additional agency costs, and expected results are considerations for individual determinations.
- Costs associated with mobile work should be documented as part of the final agreement.
- Existing Civil Service Rules, Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) regarding leave, hours of work and scheduling work; Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) rules on overtime; Office of Financial Management (OFM) and DOH travel policies and regulations shall apply to everyone working with an approved Mobile Work Agreement. When staff is teleworking in a Mobile Work Agreement, the alternate worksite is the official duty station for travel expense voucher purposes except that travel to and from the employee's regular DOH office shall not be a reimbursable expense.

Work Hours/Accessibility

While a Mobile Work Agreement may facilitate employees' working around family responsibilities; it is not intended to be a substitute for family care. The employee shall not have the primary responsibility for child care, dependent adult care, or other duties not ordinarily part of his or her job duties during working hours. The exceptions are employees who have been approved to participate in the Infants at Work Program (IAW) (DOH policy/procedure HR07063). These employees are authorized to care for their infant between the ages of six weeks to six months old at the alternate worksite.

Employees will remain accessible to their supervisor, co-workers and customers, as agreed upon and as stated in the approved Mobile Work Agreement.

Appeals Process

An employee may appeal the denial of their request for a Mobile Work Agreement or rescission of an existing Mobile Work Agreement. The appeal must be in writing and sent to the Chief of Staff within 15 calendar days of receiving the denial. The Chief of Staff must review the appeal in cooperation with the respective Division/Office Appointing Authority or designee to determine the suitability of the denial or rescission and provide a final ruling in writing within 30 calendar days of receipt of the appeal.

Review and Approval

The Workforce Development Manager, Office of Human Resources, will be responsible for coordinating any updates or rescinding of this policy or its associated procedure(s) with the Labor Relations Manager in the Office of Human Resources. The Secretary, Department of Health, has full authority to review and approve this policy and associated procedure. The Secretary also has the authority to delegate this responsibility.