



## **SARPY COUNTY REMOTE WORK PROGRAM POLICY**

### **I. Purpose**

A Remote Work Program (“Remote Work”) is an arrangement that allows eligible Sarpy County employees to work at home or at some other off- site location for all or some of their regularly scheduled work hours.

### **II. Policy**

Remote Work is a privilege, not a right. County employees who work remotely must have an approved remote work agreement consistent with the guidelines identified in this policy on file with the Human Resources Office. Remote work does not change the duties, obligations, responsibilities, or terms and conditions of county employment. Employees who work remotely must comply with all county rules, policies, practices, and instructions.

Employees may not engage in activities while on the remote work program that would not be permitted at the regular worksite. Employees working remotely may take care of personal business during breaks and unpaid lunch periods as they would at the regular worksite. Remote work is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate child or adult dependent and those activities are prohibited.

The county administrator, elected official, or a department head may deny, end, or modify a remote work agreement for any reason, except for an illegally discriminatory reason. Similarly, an employee working remotely may end or request to change a remote work agreement at any time. Employees may be removed from the program if they do not comply with the terms of their remote work agreement but may also be removed from the program at any time at the complete discretion of the above-named parties for any reason, including but not limited to circumstances not under the control of the employee being removed.

### **III. Remote Working Agreement**

Remote Work can occur on a regular or occasional basis.

Occasional remote work employees are employees who do not work more than one day remote per pay calendar month (never successive days or on days preceding or following a holiday). The county board chairman may also authorize additional occasional remote workdays any month under certain circumstances, i.e., power failure, inclement weather, etc.

Regular remote work employees are employees working remote more than one day per calendar month. Regular remote work employees must agree to the terms of a remote work agreement.

This agreement will outline their responsibilities as remote employees and the responsibilities of supervisors to monitor the remote workers' performance. The remote work agreement will include policy guidance that includes, but is not limited to: Attendance, work schedule, confidentiality, equipment and records, work safety, dress code, social media / internet use, weekly status report requirements, time keeping instructions, summaries of work performed, etc., essentially all applicable items that would normally be covered for any on-site position.

#### **IV. Eligibility**

Eligibility for working remotely is based on both the position and the employee. Not every job nor every employee is well suited for the remote work program. When determining if a position is eligible for remote work, the county administrator, elected official or department head shall consider the following:

- Employee's position is independent in nature.
- Employee possesses good time-management and organizational skills, is self-motivated, self-reliant, and disciplined.
- Employee is in good standing and have no disciplinary actions pending or be enrolled in a performance improvement plan.
- Employee has a quiet and distraction-free working space away from the office.
- Employee can dedicate their full attention to their job duties during working hours.
- Employee can adhere to work break and attendance schedules agreed upon with their manager.
- Employees on probation are not eligible for remote work assignments.

#### **V. Compensation and Benefits**

Compensation is determined by job role. Health insurance, PTO and other individual or group benefits (collective bargaining agreements, etc.) are not altered by a remote work agreement.

- Employees may be required to report to the office in lieu of remote work at the discretion of the county administrator, elected official or department head as applicable.
- Employees must account for and report time spent working remotely the same way they would at the regular worksite, or according to the terms of the remote work agreement.
- Employees must obtain approval to use vacation, sick, or other leave in the same manner as employees who do not work remotely.
- Accumulation and payment of overtime and or compensatory hours for employees working remotely is prohibited.

#### **VI. County Equipment and Records**

Sarpy County will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary. Sarpy County will also reimburse the employee for business-related

expenses, such as mileage for work related travel (excluding travel to and from the courthouse), shipping costs, etc., that are reasonably incurred in carrying out the employee's job.

Without exception, a remote worker must possess:

- An internet connection that is adequate for their job.
- A desktop or laptop computer suitable for use for work-related duties.
- A printer that can also function as a copier and scanner.
- A landline or mobile telephone and be reachable during duty hours.

On a case-by-case basis, the county may provide equipment to the employee to enhance their ability to support remotely. Any county purchased equipment provided must be cost neutral. No additional budgetary line items will be created to accommodate remote work. Equipment supplied by the organization will be maintained by the organization. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by information systems, will be maintained by the employee. Sarpy County accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. Sarpy County reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time.

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

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. Sarpy County will not be 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.

## **VII. Security of Confidential Information**

All files, records, papers, or other materials created while working remotely are county property. Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, remote employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary county and customer information accessible from their home office. Steps include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment. Employees shall not maintain or store original public records or confidential work files at their remote work sites.

## **VIII. Public Records Law**

The Nebraska Public Records Law regarding public information and public records apply to remote work employees. Public records include any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public's business prepared, owned, used, or retained by the county regardless of physical form or characteristic. Public information means the contents of a public record. Upon receipt of an appropriate request, and subject to authorized exemptions, a remote work

employee must permit inspection and examination of any public record or public information in the employee's custody, or any portion of a public record, within required time limits. This requirement exists regardless of where the public record is located.

#### **IX. Denial of Application**

Remote work is not an entitlement, it is not an employee benefit; and it in no way changes the terms of employment. The denial of an application or termination of the ability to work remotely is not grievable.