



**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
POLICY/PROCEDURE**

SUBJECT TELECOMMUTING	POLICY NO. 603.07	EFFECTIVE DATE 01/01/2005	PAGE 1 of 5
APPROVED BY:  Director	SUPERSEDES 603.7 01/01/2005	ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE	DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S) 1

PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide guidance to managers, supervisors and employees on the Department of Mental Health (DMH) telecommuting policy and procedures.
- 1.2 This policy and the procedures described below are intended to be consistent with the Telecommuting Policy established by the County Board of Supervisors and the Chief Administrative Officer instructions issued to County departments.
- 1.3 Telecommuting is an important part of DMH's vehicle trip reduction plan designed to comply with the South Coast Air Quality Management District's Rule 2202.
- 1.4 Questions related to the telecommuting procedures should be addressed to the DMH Telecommuting Coordinator in the Human Resources Bureau (HRB). Questions regarding personnel policies and practices should be addressed to the HRB.

POLICY

- 2.1 Telecommuting in DMH is the status that permits an employee to work in an alternate or remote work site rather than his/her assigned work site.
 - 2.1.1 For timekeeping and payroll purposes, scheduled work days/hours are the same as when the employee is at his/her usual County work site. Any variations to the work schedule and/or overtime requests must be pre-approved by the employee's supervisor.
- 2.2 Telecommuting is a privilege, not a right, resulting from a mutual agreement between the employee and his/her management. With notice of not less than one day, it may be cancelled by DMH or by the employee.



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- 2.3 Employees are expected to maintain a satisfactory standard and rate of productivity, whether working from the office, from home or from an alternate site. If the quality or quantity of an employee’s work while telecommuting is unsatisfactory to management, the telecommuting will be terminated.
- 2.4 Managers of telecommuting employees will set their productivity standards and will monitor productivity at least once a week.
- 2.5 Managers will provide monthly reports to the Telecommuting Coordinator in HRB (Attachment I) on the numbers and names of staff telecommuting, the dates and times of the telecommuting, and the type of work being performed.
- 2.6 Telecommuting may be approved by management when all of the following conditions exist:
 - The nature of the employee’s work is such that close supervision is not necessary;
 - The employee has demonstrated that he/she works productively without close supervision; and
 - Productivity will be enhanced by permitting telecommuting, or will be maintained by permitting an employee who is recovering from illness or injury to telecommute when he/she is approved to do so by his/her treating practitioner.
- 2.7 Employees who telecommute must adhere to all departmental policies including, but not limited to, policies regarding confidentiality of information, work schedules and work hours, reporting of absences and work safety.
- 2.8 Employees who telecommute must work in one of the following types of work area:
 - A County-approved telecommute work site;
 - Another DMH office; or
 - An area in the employee’s home where work can be performed consistent with safety and confidentiality requirements.
- 2.9 The following additional requirements apply to those employees who telecommute from home because of the nature of the work environment:



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- Meetings may not be held in the employee's home. This includes sessions with clients;
- Employees may not release their home telephone numbers or home addresses to the public or clients; and
- Requests for reasonable accommodation under DMH policy on Employment Practices Regarding People with Disabilities and the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act will be evaluated in accordance with those procedures.

2.10 Telecommuting does not change employee performance requirements.

2.10.1 Telecommuters are expected to attend meetings in the departmental work site, as specified by management.

2.10.2 Telecommuters are expected to respond to any job-related telephone calls and other communications as if they were working in their assigned departmental office.

2.10.3 Employees are expected to maintain satisfactory standards of work while telecommuting.

2.11 A change in the employee's assigned departmental work location, a change in position or a change in work schedule shall automatically terminate the telecommuting status and require the employee to obtain a new authorization if he/she wishes to continue telecommuting.

2.12 All telecommuters, regular and occasional, must receive written approval using the Employee Request to Telecommute (Attachment II) and the Telecommuting Standards Agreement (Attachment III) before actually telecommuting.

2.13 The Deputy Director-level manager for each Bureau shall decide whether and to what extent, telecommuting will be permitted within his/her organization.

2.13.1 Facility and on-site managers are responsible for establishing specific procedures to ensure that telecommuting time results in productive work, that absence reporting and work schedules are monitored, and that the overall departmental standards for performance, productivity



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and time accountability are maintained while employees are telecommuting.

- 2.13.2 The supervisor of a telecommuting employee is responsible to review the work produced by the employee while telecommuting, at least weekly.
- 2.13.3 The on-site manager shall review the telecommuting plan or each employee and approve or deny the plan and agreement.
- 2.13.4 The Deputy Director-level manager shall meet monthly with subordinate managers with telecommuting employees to review the overall impact the telecommuting is having on productivity and on the budget.

PROCEDURES

- 3.1 Employees who wish to telecommute must submit an Employee Request to Telecommute and an unsigned Telecommuting Standards Agreement to his/her on-site manager.
- 3.2 The on-site manager will review the request with the employee’s immediate supervisor and, within five business days, will forward the documents and make a recommendation for approval or denial to the Deputy Director-level manager.
- 3.3 The Deputy Director-level manager will approve or deny the request and return the forms to the manager within five working days.
 - 3.3.1 Approval may be subject to the employee’s acceptance of modification to the proposal as specified by the Deputy Director-level manager.
 - 3.3.2 The decision of the Deputy Director-level manager is final.
- 3.4 The on-site manager will review the approved request (including any modifications) and agreement with the employee and his/her immediate supervisor. If there are no modifications, or if the employee agrees to the modifications, the employee, the supervisor and the manager will sign both documents and telecommuting will be approved. If the employee does not agree to the modifications, he/she will not be permitted to telecommute.



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- 3.4.1 The original, signed forms are sent to the DMH Telecommuting Coordinator.
- 3.4.2 Copies of the forms shall be given to the employee, the supervisor (for the office file) and to HRB (for the Personnel file).
- 3.5 If the Deputy Director-level manager denies the request, the on-site manager will inform the employee and the immediate supervisor.
- 3.6 If the employee or management wishes to end the telecommuting, they shall notify the other party in writing with at least one day's notice. A Telecommuting Participation Termination form (Attachment IV) shall be filed with the Telecommuting Coordinator in HRB.

AUTHORITY

Board of Supervisors Telecommuting Policy
Chief Administrative Officer Instructions

ATTACHMENT

- Attachment I Monthly Telecommuting Report
- Attachment II Employee Request to Telecommute
- Attachment III Telecommuting Standards Agreement
- Attachment IV Employee Participation Termination Form

REVIEW DATE

This policy shall be reviewed on or before December 2009.