

TELECOMMUTING AGREEMENTS

Introduction

The NWESD 189 Board of Directors and leadership believe that in-person work is necessary and valued as a preferred and generally more effective means of team development and maintenance; onboarding and mentoring of new employees; team and cross-functional collaboration; innovation; planning; developing, reviewing, and refining goals and action plans; relationship building; maintenance of a healthy organizational culture; trust-building; and conduct of activities such as many types of professional learning that are better suited to an in-person experience.

Likewise, the Board and leadership recognize the important role that telecommuting and other forms of remote work can play in facilitating the mission, vision, values, and goals of the NWESD 189 while maintaining expected levels of service, responsiveness, and productivity. The Board and leadership recognize and support the mutual benefits telecommuting can provide to NWESD 189 employees and clients.

Definitions

Remote work is defined as working at an alternative location that is different from the employee's official workstation.

- Working in a district, client's locations, or attending a regional, statewide, or national meeting, conference, or training is considered remote work at an alternative location, not telecommuting.
- Similarly, working at a NWESD 189 site that is not an employee's official workstation is also considered working remotely at an alternative location, not telecommuting.

Telecommuting is defined as a pre-arranged, written agreement for an employee to work at a pre-determined off-site location periodically or on a more regular schedule, typically at the employee's local residence.

Foundation and Purpose of Telecommuting

The vision statement of the NWESD 189 articulates a collective aspiration to be an indispensable partner to our region's school communities. As such, the service needs of school districts, other clients, and NWESD 189 teams remain primary. Telecommuting is a supported and viable option for employees to perform their work remotely when it is consistent with meeting the NWESD 189 vision.

Telecommuting is premised on an expectation of mutual trust and accountability between an employee and supervisor for maintaining expected levels of performance, service, and responsiveness to internal and external colleagues and constituents. Telecommuting is an earned privilege – rather than a right or entitlement – for those positions and employees whose duties, essential functions, and demonstrated performance levels are conducive to remote work as determined by an employee's supervisor and the employee's position description.

Telecommuting serves several purposes, including:

- Enhancing employee productivity, engagement, satisfaction, recruitment, and retention.
- Reducing commute trips and contributing to a healthier environment.
- Addressing space constraints.
- Promoting flexibility and efficiency, such as telecommuting for the balance of a workday when returning to the employee's official workstation from another off-site location would be an inefficient use of time.

Telecommuting is voluntary for the employee and cannot be required by supervisors. Either the employee or supervisor may rescind telecommute privileges at any time if deemed not to be effective or desired.

Telecommuting Procedures and Expectations

1. Telecommuting occurs by mutual, signed agreement on the NWESD 189 Telecommute Procedures and Agreement form (5225-P and 5225-F1) between an individual employee and supervisor with concurrent approval from the department Director, Assistant Superintendent with departmental oversight, and the Superintendent.
2. New employees or existing employees in new positions are typically expected to work in-person during their six (6)-month probationary period while they orient to their roles; experience onboarding and mentoring; and learn organizational policies, procedures, and routines.
3. Approved employees may telecommute up to sixty percent (60%) of the time, measured on a monthly basis.
4. For the benefit of co-workers and supervisors, employees are expected to note telecommute days and/or days working remotely on their calendar banner.
5. Telecommuting exceptions for employees in their probationary period or for approved employees beyond sixty percent (60%) telecommuting due to unique and/or temporary circumstances must be approved by the Superintendent upon the recommendation of the department Director and Assistant Superintendent with departmental oversight.
6. Supervisors will determine the appropriate level of telecommuting for individual employees based on position description, role, duties, experience, performance, required level of supervision and direction, attendance, disciplinary history, and other relevant factors. Departments may also implement additional internal telecommuting procedures and expectations that remain consistent with NWESD 189 telecommuting policy and procedures applicable to all employees. The final decision on the appropriate level of telecommuting for individual employees occurs at the Director and Assistant Superintendent level.
7. A Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) non-exempt employee shall work no more than the number of hours set on the established work schedule unless the additional work time is authorized in advance by the employee's supervisor.
8. An employee is expected to provide on-site client service on a scheduled telecommute day if that day is the client's preference or best option.
9. Telecommuting employees should continue to take accrued leave as appropriate; telecommuting should not be utilized in lieu of accessing leave as intended and provided.

10. While telecommuting is not a substitute for dependent care, an employee's child(ren) or family member(s) may be present when an employee is telecommuting so long as productivity is maintained.
11. Telecommuting employees are expected to be reasonably available to clients and team members by email, phone, and/or videoconference during their regularly scheduled work hours.
12. A supervisor may require an employee's in-person presence at the employee's official workstation or an alternative site on a scheduled telecommute day as necessary with reasonable advance notice (at least 24 hours except in the case of a sudden or unanticipated emergency).
13. An organizational need or constraint – such as the availability of technology support, staff availability for cross-functional collaboration, a required training or meeting, etc. – may also require an employee's in-person presence at the employee's official workstation or an alternative site on a scheduled telecommute day.
14. Supervisors will identify and schedule team meetings and other days of expected in-person attendance with sufficient advance notice to provide reasonable opportunity for employees' planning purposes.
15. Telecommuting employees are expected to check-in on a mutually agreed schedule with their supervisor to communicate work plans. Such check-ins can occur via phone, email, shared calendar/document, or other means approved by the supervisor.
16. Employees are generally expected to provide and fund the technology, software, supplies, and a safe and ergonomically appropriate workstation needed to work effectively in a remote environment, including a sufficient internet connection and appropriate technology security that comply with NWESD 189 Electronic Information Systems Procedure -2022P. The telecommuter's computer must be configured as a secured and password-protected environment which is dedicated to the exclusive use of the employee. Additionally, all precautions must be taken to appropriately secure and encrypt any information subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Technology security must also meet the requirements of external clients when such external requirements exceed or differ from the NWESD 189 requirements.
17. The NWESD 189 may, at its discretion, provide technology resources and other support to facilitate telecommuting.
18. If a concern arises about the appropriateness or safety of the telecommuting site, the NWESD 189 reserves the right to inspect the telecommuting workspace with reasonable advance notice to the employee.
19. Employees remain subject to all applicable NWESD policies, procedures, and expectations while in telecommute status.
20. Telecommuting effectiveness will be periodically reviewed by the employee and supervisor – minimally once annually – and continued, adjusted, or discontinued as deemed appropriate based on the employee's performance effectiveness working remotely, as determined by the supervisor. Consistent with the NWESD 189 Operating Principles, an employee or supervisor with concerns about telecommuting are encouraged to address those concerns directly. Any unresolved concerns about application of the

telecommuting policy should be addressed through the NWESD 189 Policy 5274 – Resolution of Staff Complaints/Grievances.

21. The NWESD 189 telecommute policy and procedures will be periodically reviewed for effectiveness and recommended for adjustment, as deemed appropriate, based on collective experience.

Insurance

Telecommuting employees will be covered by workers’ compensation for job-related injuries occurring at the telecommuting workspace during scheduled work hours. Telecommuting employees are not covered for non-work-related injuries sustained at the telecommuting site or for injuries sustained by any household members or third parties while at the telecommuting site.

Telecommuting employees are encouraged to review their homeowner’s or renter’s liability insurance policy, applicable covenants, and/or lease agreement for any provisions that may create a personal liability or lapse in coverage when the employee is utilizing the residence as a telecommute location.

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Second Reading:	03/23/05
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Likewise, the Board and leadership recognize the important role that telecommuting and other forms of remote work can play in facilitating the mission, vision, values, and goals of the NWESD 189 while maintaining expected levels of service, responsiveness, and productivity. The Board and leadership recognize and support the mutual benefits telecommuting can provide to NWESD 189 employees and clients.

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Foundation and Purpose of Telecommuting

The vision statement of the NWESD 189 articulates a collective aspiration to be an indispensable partner to our region's school communities. As such, the service needs of school districts, other clients, and NWESD 189 teams remain primary. Telecommuting is a supported and viable option for employees to perform their work remotely when it is consistent with meeting the NWESD 189 vision.

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19. Employees remain subject to all applicable NWESD policies, procedures, and expectations while in telecommute status.
20. Telecommuting effectiveness will be periodically reviewed by the employee and supervisor – minimally once annually – and continued, adjusted, or discontinued as deemed appropriate based on the employee's performance effectiveness working remotely, as determined by the supervisor. Consistent with the NWESD 189 Operating Principles, an employee or supervisor with concerns about telecommuting are encouraged to address those concerns directly. Any unresolved concerns about application of the

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