

## Guidelines

<b>Title:</b>	Guidelines for working remotely
<b>Related to:</b>	Department of Administrative Services (DAS) 50.050.01 Working Remotely
<b>Effective date:</b>	09/13/2021

### Purpose

The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) is committed to optimizing remote work where appropriate. In ODHS plans to operationalize remote work, it is incumbent on program leadership to evaluate their program service needs, the portability of all positions, and the suitability of individuals interested in working remotely. This coordination ensures ODHS is timely and responsive in providing services to individuals. ODHS business operations, work standards and service delivery must be maintained regardless of the location where the work of the agency is performed. Employees who are working at an alternate worksite must still comply with all applicable rules, policies, procedures, and management guidance. This includes maintaining professional behavior and conduct that supports a professional work environment

Use of remote work options promotes the health and safety of Oregonians; ensures high-quality work and optimal use of resources for agencies; ensures cultural, equity, and accessibility issues are addressed in a meaningful way; and supports flexibility and work-life balance for employees. Working remotely also offers the opportunity to be more flexible in interaction with the Oregonians we serve and decreases the agency's impact on the environment. To ensure equity, it is important that managers and supervisors complete the remote work assessment process in the same manner for every individual with consistent and defensible decisions.

The purpose of this document is to provide managers and staff with information help them assess positions for portability and suitability related to remote work. This document is also intended to provide information that supports managers and their teams in the transition to using remote work as a long-term employment and management strategy.

### Guidelines

1. As part of the process for approving remote work, managers should collaborate with program leadership and senior management to ensure clarity around operational processes and measures that support service delivery and desirable program outcomes.
  - a. **First-Line Supervisors and Middle Managers** (Eligibility Supervisors, CW Program Managers)
    - A. Ensure positions descriptions are regularly reviewed and updated to accurately reflect assigned duties and responsibilities.
    - B. Develop and implement performance measures.
    - C. Assess position portability of essential job duties.
    - D. Collaborate with Human Resources to assess individual ability for remote work using the guidance provided in the working remote guidelines, section five.

- b. **Program Leadership or Senior Management** (District or Region Managers, Operations Director, Program Director)
    - A. Ensure program operational processes and measures are established and communicated.
    - B. Collaborate with first-line supervisors and middle managers to ensure program operations are maintained at an effective and efficient level for each office and district or region.
    - C. Coordinate with Human Resources to research employment laws and liability about remote work outside of Oregon.
    - D. Ensure ongoing collaboration with Human Resources to identify and address employment related trends with remote work occurring inside and outside Oregon.
  - c. **Human Resources** (HR Business Partner, Assistant HR Managers)
    - A. Collaborate with first-line supervisors and middle managers to assess the ability of an individual to work remotely.
    - B. Collaborate on behalf of program leadership with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to research employment laws and liability about remote work, including specifically remote work outside of Oregon.
    - C. Track and report employment related trends with remote work inside and outside of Oregon.
    - D. Develop and update policies, processes, and resources to assist ODHS leadership with maintaining successful remote work arrangements.
  - d. **Employees**
    - A. Agree to report to a central worksite for onboarding, training or other activities as required by their program or by the agency.
    - B. Balance personal needs with work obligations and commitments.
    - C. Have a plan in place to access care within a reasonable time frame for a child, elder, or other dependent if required by a manager to report to the central office.
    - D. Select an alternate worksite suitable for performing official ODHS business. Requirements for the alternate worksite will vary depending on the nature of the work and equipment needed. Such requirements may be determined by the agency.
    - E. Select an environment that allows for the safe and efficient performance of assigned duties.
    - F. Ensure the alternate work area complies with confidentiality, health, and safety requirements. Refer to the webpages located in Resources for more information regarding ergonomics and working remotely.
2. Remote work may include many remote location options, including home or a community partner setting.
  3. Prior to approving remote work for an individual, managers should update the position description (PD). When updating the PD, managers and supervisors should collaborate with leadership to ensure program operations are effectively maintained.
  4. An updated PD should include information that supports working remotely.
    - a. Section 3 should include documentation related to essential duties that require a presence in an ODHS office and what percent of time those responsibilities require an office presence.
    - b. Section 4 of the PD should:
      - A. Include the location of the state office worksite to which the position is assigned.

- B. Speak to the portability of the position, including the percent of work that can be done by the employee working remotely. This is position dependent and not related to the individual holding the position.
  - c. Section 7 includes position-related decision-making requirements.
5. Managers should review the portability of a position using the following guidelines to objectively determine when the responsibilities of a position may be performed remotely and document those responsibilities that cannot be performed remotely. **Positions** may be portable when the essential duties of the position:
- a. Are not required for the administration of on-site business operations of the agency.
  - b. Include clear work objectives, well-defined tasks, and measurable deliverables.
  - c. Are independent in nature and can be accomplished without negatively impacting workgroup or team productivity or customer service.
  - d. Allow for successful and productive communications with supervisors, colleagues or members of the public through phone calls, emails, instant messaging, virtual meetings or conferences and other supported technology.
  - e. Do not include a need to be at a central worksite in order to address unscheduled events.
6. Managers should review the ability of an individual for remote work and respond within 30-days of a request for remote work, using the following guidelines. **Individuals** are able to work remotely when they:
- a. Understand the performance expectations of their position.
  - b. Use the self-evaluation tool to review their ability to perform in an alternate worksite.
  - c. Are committed to meeting performance expectations regardless of worksite location, including provisions outlined in their Working Remotely Agreement.
  - d. Are committed to complying with all applicable statutes, rules, policies and processes regardless of worksite location.
  - e. Have the knowledge and ability to preserve the confidentiality of sensitive data and software as required by their position as an individual bound by statute, administrative rules, and policy, just as if they were stationed in an ODHS|OHA office by preventing access by unauthorized individuals who may share a remote workspace.
  - f. Have adequate workspace and internet access at the remote worksite to perform their assigned duties.
  - g. Understand their responsibilities, and the limitations on state liability to the individual's real or personal property when the individual works at a remote location.
  - h. If a manager has concerns about approving an individual to work remotely, managers should consult their HR analyst before denying a request to work remotely. Exhaust authentic efforts to get to a "yes" before denying the request.
  - i. Business and operational needs that support any denial should be documented in Workday.
7. When a manager approves an individual to work remotely, the manager should:
- a. Develop and communicate expectations around service delivery, program outcomes, and operational processes and measures.
  - b. Review and discuss the Department of Administrative Services Policy on Temporary Interruption of Employment to clarify expectations if conditions prevent remote work from an alternate worksite.
  - c. Review and discuss expectations for any required reporting to the ODHS office worksite. When possible, an individual reporting to an ODHS worksite should begin and end their day from that location, in alignment with their normal work hours.

- d. Develop clear performance and reporting expectations for the individual to follow.
  - e. Establish guidelines for check-ins and one-to-one meetings.
  - f. Develop a clear communication plan with the individual.
  - g. Document performance and reporting expectations and the communication plan in a Working Remotely Agreement.
8. Individuals who are requesting to work remotely should agree to the following terms and conditions of employment:
- a. Working remotely does not change the duties, obligations, responsibilities, or terms and conditions of employment with ODHS.
  - b. Maintaining a professional work environment is expected regardless of the location where remote work occurs and it includes the virtual work setting during online meetings in which employees participate through live video or phone call.
  - c. Employees who are working at an alternate worksite will comply with all applicable rules, policies, processes, and management guidance. This includes professional behavior and conduct that supports the state and agency policies. Refer to the policies in the reference section.
9. Managers and individuals considering working remotely may opt for a trial period for remote work. Managers should:
- a. Use discretion in the assignment of unexpected duties and business needs to ensure equity through the team.
  - b. Periodically review Working Remotely Agreements with each individual to ensure all agreements reflect the changing needs and responsibilities of the program and individual.
10. Staff and managers should consult to determine the necessary and available tools to complete work from an alternate worksite, providing the same basic setup that would be available in the central workplace based on current business needs and standards.
- a. Individuals who work from an alternate worksite most of the time or all of the time will be provided with basic state equipment for their alternate workspace, including a computer, two monitors, keyboard and mouse, and a chair.
  - b. Printing equipment or other equipment may be provided based on need, availability, and budgetary constraints. Need for home printing capability requires significant justification.
  - c. ODHS provides standard office equipment for a single office site. Individuals who work from an alternate worksite more than two days each week are required to use a drop-in, hot-desk or other shared location when working in a central worksite such as a state office location.
11. Managers should review ADA and Workers Compensation Claiming process with individuals who are approved to work remotely.
- a. ODHS will process claims for work-related injury or occupational disease consistent with Oregon workers' compensation laws whether the employee works in a central or alternate worksite.
  - b. Employees who may need a reasonable accommodation when working at an alternate worksite should contact the Human Resources ADA program unit or their Human Resources business partner.
12. Travel and mileage expense policies should be reviewed with the individual for mutual understanding, following the guidance in the Oregon Accounting Manual.
- a. When working remotely the individual's central worksite is the official work duty station for travel related purposes. Commute travel to and from the individual's central worksite is not a reimbursable expense.

- b. An employee's personal residence will not be considered a central worksite, primary workstation, or a temporary workstation as defined by the DAS Oregon Accounting Manual (OAM).
  - c. Travel reimbursement, whether using a state or personal vehicle, will be in accordance with the DAS OAM.
13. Whether expenses are reimbursable depends on the situation.
- d. ODHS will reimburse individuals for work-related expenses similar to those incurred by the agency if the individual is working at their central worksite.
  - e. Whenever possible, supplies required to complete assigned work at the alternate worksite should be obtained from ODHS during periods the individual is working from their central worksite.
  - f. Out-of-pocket expenses for materials and supplies which are otherwise available from the ODHS central worksite will not be reimbursed.
  - g. The cost of internet access, mobile hotspot usage, personal utilities, personal furnishing and non-standard office supplies or equipment are the individual's responsibility and will not be reimbursed by the agency.
14. Working Remote Agreements may be denied, ended or modified.
- a. An individual's supervisor, manager, executive manager or director may deny, end, or modify a Working Remotely Agreement to meet the agency's business or operation needs or the need of the agency's customers, unless doing so conflicts with a State of Oregon Executive Order given during a state of emergency.
  - b. No request to work remotely can be arbitrarily denied or rescinded.
  - c. Managers will provide a written response to individuals with the reason for denying or rescinding requests to work remotely.
  - d. Once the written response is provided the manager may rescind the Working Remote Agreement with a minimum of seven days advance notice.
  - e. Every effort will be made to allow an individual to address commuting, childcare and other issues that may arise from the termination of the agreement so that a smooth transition back to a central worksite can occur.
  - f. An employee may end or modify a Working Remotely Agreement at any time, provided their request does not conflict with a State of Oregon Executive Order given during a state of emergency.
  - g. Employees can rescind their Working Remote Agreement with 7 days advance notice.
15. If a request to work remote has been denied or rescinded, the individual can request a reconsideration review to be completed by designated leadership within the program.
- a. When the reconsideration is reviewed, the final outcome will be communicated to the individual.
  - b. Reconsideration review is an optional process.
16. When an individual is being offered or is selected for a **developmental or job rotation** opportunity, it is important for the receiving manager and the sending manager to collaborate during the assessment process for working remote. Since these opportunities are time limited or can be ended at any time, it is important that the decision to approve remote work is evaluated for both positions. There may be differences between the positions and working remotely as part of a developmental or job rotation may not be an option.
- a. Both managers collaborate and assess the portability of the positions.

- A. If the managers agree that the developmental or job rotation position and the base position are portable, a working remote agreement may be completed and uploaded into Workday.
  - B. If the temporary position is portable but the base position is not the working remote agreement will provide for a time limited approval, “while on developmental or job rotation”, **and** communication of the decision with the individual on rotation.
  - C. When returning to a base position that is NOT portable, the developmental or job rotation manger must give the individual in the temporary position at least 7 days advance notice before the individual returns to the base position in the central worksite.
- b. The Working Remote Agreement should be reviewed at the beginning and end of every position change including:
- A. Transfers
  - B. Promotions
  - C. Developmental
  - D. Job rotation

## References

[Oregon Revised Statutes, Chapter 659](#)  
[Ergonomic Resources and Guides](#)  
[Working Remotely at ODHS](#)  
[ODHS Core Values](#)  
[Incident and Accident Reporting](#)  
[Working Remote Guidelines](#)  
[General Provisions of Working Remotely](#)  
[Working Remotely Out of State](#)  
[Working Remotely: Work Hours, Availability and Overtime](#)  
[Working Remotely: Computer Hardware, Software, Equipment, and Supplies](#)  
[Working Remotely: Confidentiality and Security](#)

## Forms referenced

[Working Remote Assessment Tool](#)  
[Working Remotely Agreement](#)  
[Working Remote Self-Assessment Tool](#)  
MSC 0050 Employee Assigned Property Tracking

## Related policies

[DAS 50-010-01 Discrimination and Harassment Free Workplace](#)  
[DAS 50-010-03 Maintaining a Professional Workplace](#)  
[DAS 50-000-01 Drug Free Workplace Policy](#)  
[DAS 50.050.01 Working Remotely](#)  
[DAS 107-004-050 Information Asset Classification](#)  
[ODHS|OHA 010-014 Agency Compliance with Statewide Administrative Policy](#)

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## **Keywords**

Alternate, activities, alternate schedule, asset survey, chair, collaboration, collaborative, collective bargaining agreements, computer, contract, desk, engagement, ergonomic, equipment, facilities, flex, flexible, flexible work solutions, flexibility, flex time, FWS, home, home office, interaction, keyboard, manage, managers, meetings, mouse, office, PD, position description, printer, remote, remote access, safety, schedule, status, support, telecommute, telecommuting, telework, teleworking, virtual, WFH, work, Workday, work from home, work life balance, working remotely, workplace, workspace

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