



## **Telecommuting Policy**

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### **I. Definition and Purpose**

Telecommuting is defined as a work arrangement in which some or all of the work is performed at an off-work site such as the home or in office space near home in lieu of UCP provided office space.. Telecommuting includes any method that is used to work “at a distance” from the UCP home office. The telecommuting policy will confirm expectations regarding telecommuting for any staff member who is approved to work from home on a consistent, planned basis. This policy does not apply to staff who are approved on occasion or unscheduled exceptions due to weather, etc., however if staff are consistently being approved for working from home/off-site (as defined by more than three full days a month on average over a three month period), this policy would apply.

### **II. Policy**

United Cerebral Palsy of Maine (UCP) recognizes that there may, on occasion, be circumstances where it would be beneficial for the employee to work at home, either on a permanent basis, a special circumstance, or to complete a particular task. It is not possible to offer telecommuting to all employees as the requirement of some jobs will not be suitable for such arrangements/and or it may not meet the business needs of UCP. UCP will limit telecommuting to those arrangements that are necessary and to the benefit of UCP. This policy does not cover situations in which an emergency plan is executed due to the need for immediate off-site work, and such situations will be covered by agency/departmental emergency plans as applicable.

### **III. Procedures**

#### **A. APPROVAL PROCESS**

The following procedure should take place prior to the commencement of a telecommuting arrangement:

1. An employee proposal is submitted to the direct supervisor. The UCP supervisor reviews the employee request and discusses the proposal with their Director and the Director of Operations.
2. If a supervisor is making a request on behalf of an employee due to UCP space issues, the supervisor should work with their Director to submit a telecommuting plan to the the Director of Operations.

3. An ergonomic review is conducted by Human Resources and/or UCP's Workers' Compensation carrier. This ergonomic review is conducted through use of an ergonomic checklists completed by the employee and pictures taken of the employee at the workstation.
4. An IT review is completed by UCP's IT to ensure adequate internet bandwidth and IT security
5. The reports and recommendations related to ergonomic, safety and IT needs are provided to the immediate supervisor and the Director of Operations by HR and IT. The immediate supervisor is responsible for sharing recommendations/requirements with the requesting employee.
6. If/When the Director of Operations receives approval from Human Resources and IT on changes recommended being implemented, the Director of Operations will issue an approval for telecommuting.
7. The supervisor communicates the approval (or denial) to the requesting employee.
8. Supervisors are responsible for adequate communication and follow-up with the telecommuting employee regarding telecommuting issues.
9. Telecommuting staff who experience ergonomic issues or injuries should immediately contact their supervisor and Human Resources for appropriate follow up, including but not limited to an updated ergonomic assessment. In the event that ergonomic issues cannot be resolved at the off-site location, an employee may be required to return to in-office work.

#### B. QUALIFICATIONS OF TELECOMMUTERS

1. Ability to learn new technology
2. Able to work independently
3. Self-sufficient with good critical thinking skills without the hourly feedback from colleagues/supervisors like one would receive being onsite.
4. Access to required equipment and sufficient connectivity to UCP electronically and via telephone

#### C. EQUIPMENT/TECHNOLOGY

1. UCP will provide the following equipment for approved telecommuters:
  - a. Laptop with camera
  - b. Mouse
  - c. Keyboard
  - d. Keyboard wrist rest
  - e. Cell Phone

Any requested equipment not in the above list, must be approved by the Program Director on a case-by-case basis.

2. The telecommuting employee will provide the following:
  - a. Desk
  - b. Chair
  - c. Private workspace where business can be conducted confidentially (see #2)
  - d. Locking file cabinet

- e. Noise machine if other individuals will be present in the work location during work hours
- f. Internet with appropriate bandwidth to perform the role. The internet must be password protected.

Employees that are required by UCP to work from home on a full-time basis may be provided or be reimbursed for items g – j and UCP may provide a printer/scanner/fax machine as well as related supplies.

- 3. Work space in an employee's home that is approved to be used for telecommuting purposes should be designed and used in the following manner:
  - a. To avoid distractions
  - b. For the security of confidential information, such as protected health information (PHI), and other UCP confidential documents or conversations. Confidential information includes any information containing any client, employee, or non-public agency operational information. Please reference UCP's Confidentiality policy for more information. Employee will have a locking filing cabinet dedicated for work purposes. Employees will have and make use of noise makers to ensure that work conversations are not overheard by others if applicable and will always conduct such conversations behind closed doors.
  - c. For the safety of the employee, and in a manner that protects the ergonomic and environmental health of the employee.
- 4. Employees must be accessible by cell phone to allow for emergency contacting. While telecommuting, the employee must be reachable by telephone, within reason, during agreed upon work hours.
- 5. Unless otherwise agreed upon in writing, UCP is not responsible for any loss, damage, or wear of employee owned equipment.
- 6. Office supplies will be provided by UCP and must be requested by the employee as needed. Out of pocket expenses for supplies available in the UCP office will not be reimbursed.
- 7. UCP owned software may not be duplicated.

#### D. SCHEDULING


- 1. Telecommuting is not a universal employee or employer benefit. Telecommuting may be terminated at any time by UCP with or without notice. Limits and restrictions may be established as appropriate.
- 2. Certain tasks or job functions may require telecommuting employees to travel to UCP offices and is a requirement of employment. Exceptions to traveling to the office to perform printing, mailing and other in-office tasks must be approved by the Director with an alternate plan approved by the CEO. Mileage to and from the office is not a reimbursable expense.
- 3. Schedules and changes to schedule must be approved by supervisor.
- 4. All paperwork and other work deadlines will be the same for employees approved for telecommuting. In no case will deadlines be extended simply due to an approved telecommuting agreement.

E. TRAINING, SUPERVISION, AND SUPPORT

1. Any employee with a proposal for telecommuting must have the proposal reviewed and approved by the supervisor and the Director of Operations. Some cases may be developed at hire. The plan must include:
  - a. Projects worked on
  - b. Plan for how daily issues will be resolved
  - c. Schedule
  - d. All other related matters.
2. Before the start of a telecommuting arrangement, the employee and Supervisor must discuss, plan, and document:
  - a. Time management
  - b. Communication with co-workers and clients
  - c. Attendance and/or participation in required trainings, meetings, and supervision at UCP office.
  - d. Home office set up
  - e. Home workplace safety
3. Since the employee's home work space is an extension of UCP of Maine's workspace, UCP retains the right to observe home workspace with a three (3) day notice.

F. OTHER

All employment policies remain in effect for employees who telecommute, including but not limited to work schedules, breaks, and other personnel related matters.

  
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Scott Tash, CEO

  
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Date