

# Office of Human Resources

## ***111 Telework***

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# Table of Contents

Section A: Definitions	1
Section B: General Provisions	2
Section C: Eligible Positions	3
Section D: Eligibility Criteria	4
Section E: Application Process & Employee Responsibilities	5
Section F: Management Responsibilities	6
Section G: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)	8
Section H: Agency Telework Coordinator	8
Section I: Emergency Situations	8
Section J: Use of State-Owned Equipment	9
Section K: Use of Employee-Owned Equipment	10
Section L: Worksite Safety and Liability	10
Section M: Workers' Compensation	11
Section N: Dependent Care	11
Section O: Confidentiality and Information Security	12
111 A1 Telework Guidelines	13
111 A2 Telework Self-Assessment	16
111 A3 Telework Workspace Self-Certification	16
111 A4 Telework Application	16
111 A5 Telework Agreement	16
111 A6 Telework Property Removal Form	17
111 A7 Telework Application Checklist	17
111 A8 Telework Activity Log	17
111 A9 Governor's Executive Order	17



Georgia Department of Human Services  
Human Resources Policy #111

Telework

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**References:** Department of Administrative Services Statewide Telework Policy  
DHS Human Resources Policy #106 – Assignment of Duties  
DHS Human Resources Policy #1201 – Conduct Standards and Ethics in Government  
DHS Human Resources Policy #1704 – Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title I provisions  
DHS Human Resources Policy #1503, Attachment 1, Unlawful Discrimination Complaint Form

Telework is an authorized work arrangement, where work is performed at an approved location other than the employee’s primary DHS workplace, known as the alternate workplace, alternate worksite or telework site. This may include the employee’s home or field location. Telework may be used as a recruitment and retention tool, while providing positive impact on the environment, traffic gridlock and urban sprawl. Telework may also be used as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for individuals who also meet the guidelines outlined in this policy.

## Section A: Definitions

1. **Alternate Workplace** means a workplace other than the employee’s conventional worksite, such as the employee’s residence. Alternate workplace, alternate worksite and telework site are used interchangeably throughout this policy.
2. **Continuous Telework** occurs as part of an ongoing and regular schedule that is preauthorized. Employees have scheduled telework day(s) that happen the same day(s) each week.
3. **Conventional Worksite** means the normal agency worksite where the employee would perform their work if they were not teleworking, whether it is the DHS state office or field location.
4. **Eligible Employee** means an employee who is in a position eligible for telework and has been identified by DHS as meeting the agency’s conditions for telework.
5. **Eligible Position** means a position determined by DHS as eligible for telework. The eligibility of a position may change depending on circumstances.
6. **Full-time Telework** refers to employees that telework five (5) days a week.
7. **Non-exempt Employee** means an employee that is not exempt from the overtime compensation provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and who may be entitled to overtime compensation.
8. **Occasional Telework** is approved on a case-by-case basis, in which the hours worked are not part of a continuous telework schedule.

9. **Part-time Teleworker** refers to employees that telework four (4) days or less.
10. **Primary Workstation** means the location the employee is considered to report to for work and designated as such by DHS per the State Accounting Office Statewide Travel Policy. The primary workstation may be the conventional worksite or the alternate workplace if the employee teleworks full-time.
11. **Reasonable Accommodation** means any change in the work environment or customary procedures that enables an individual with a disability to apply for, perform, or gain equal access to the benefits and privileges of a job that does not cause an undue hardship to DHS. (Please refer to DHS Policy #1704: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title I Provisions for additional information.)
12. **Teleworker** means an employee approved to work at an alternate workplace during predetermined days of the work week.
13. **Telework Agreement** means the document outlining the understanding between DHS and the eligible employee regarding the telework arrangement.
14. **Telework as a Reasonable Accommodation** means that an employee's request to telework because of a disability is approved with a determination that the essential functions of the employee's job can be performed in a telework setting. (Please refer to DHS Policy #1704: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title I Provisions for additional information.)

## Section B: General Provisions

1. Successful teleworkers have the support of their supervisors and are approved based upon the suitability of their position. Employees may be allowed to telework when there are tangible benefits to DHS, and all expectations of the position are fully met. For telework to be considered, the job responsibilities of the position must be satisfactorily performed according to the supervisor's established standards. Each Division or Office has the authority to set/determine alternate work hours and locations depending on business/constituent needs.
2. Staff may be authorized flexible work arrangements such as alternate work schedule (AWS), compressed work week (CWW), or teleworking up to three (3) days per week unless the arrangement is being made as a reasonable accommodation. Employees are not permitted to combine work schedules.
3. Teleworkers must be mindful of the image presented when teleworking. They must not be involved in activities during the workday that will reflect negatively on DHS. Examples include, but are not limited to, working in the yard, shopping at the mall, child or adult care, being involved with secondary employment activities, etc.
4. Telework is a privilege not a universal benefit or employee right. The duration of an employee's ability to telework is entirely at the will and discretion of DHS, which retains the prerogative to determine the time, place, and manner of employment.
5. An employee's participation in telework is usually voluntary. The employee, employee's supervisor, or authorized official may terminate telework at any time; however, advanced notice should be given, when feasible. Issues regarding the approval of telework are not appealable, grievable, or subject to review.
6. Every teleworker must have a signed **Telework Self-Assessment** (Attachment #2), **Telework**

**Workspace Self-Certification** (Attachment #3), **Telework Application** (Attachment #4), **Telework Agreement** (Attachment #5) and **Telework Property Removal Form** (Attachment #6) on file with their supervisor, and a copy must be placed in the employee's personnel file.

7. The Telework Agreement must be updated whenever substantial changes are made such as:
  - a. **A major job change (e.g., promotion).**
  - b. **Teleworker or their supervisor change positions.**
  - c. **When performance does not align with expectations.**
  - d. **Any portion of the arrangement covered by the agreement changes.**
8. Telework agreements must be renewed annually during the Mandatory Training period and/or October 31<sup>st</sup>, whichever is sooner.
9. A supervisor must add telework expectations and arrangements to the employee's Performance Management Plan. Teleworkers remain accountable to the Performance Management Process and will be evaluated in the same manner as non-teleworking employees.
10. Random audits may be conducted to evaluate accountability and the success of the telework program.
11. Employee benefits (including leave and holidays) are not impacted by telework. Teleworkers must follow DHS Policy #1006: Absence from Work and established departmental policy relating to leave approval.
12. Continuous teleworkers must have an established work schedule, with a start time, end time, a meal period of at least 30 minutes and identified break periods. Occasional teleworkers will discuss their work schedules with their supervisor, on an as needed basis.
13. Teleworkers must be accessible in some manner (e.g., work cell, email, etc.) to their supervisor, customers, and coworkers during the agreed upon work schedule regardless whether at telework site or in office.
14. Teleworkers may be asked to report to the primary workplace on scheduled telework days if circumstances warrant.

## Section C: Eligible Positions

Positions most suitable for telework will have the following characteristics:

1. Infrequent face-to-face interaction with clients.
2. Communication can be managed by telephone and email.
3. Generally, works alone handling or preparing information (e.g., researching, writing, composing reports, developing procedures, creating documents, analyzing statistical data, etc.).
4. Responsibilities have clearly defined results.
5. Measurable duties with objectives that have identifiable timeframes and checkpoints.
6. Most tasks require concentration and/or large blocks of time to complete.
7. Telework would not negatively impact service quality or organizational operations.
8. Work can be performed without close supervision.

9. Requests requiring immediate responses from key stakeholders (law enforcement, juvenile courts, and other partners) be met timely.

## Section D: Eligibility Criteria

Unless an exception is granted, employees must meet the following criteria to be eligible to telework:

1. Position is suitable for telework.
2. Position does not require sensitive and/or protected material to be removed from an office.
3. Requires minimal or no special equipment to perform their job duties.
4. Has not received any corrective or disciplinary actions within six (6) months of the date teleworking agreement commences. Examples of corrective and/or disciplinary actions include work or attendance plan, written reprimand, written reprimand final warning, suspension without pay, etc. Telework arrangements may be discontinued if determined to have been used inappropriately.
5. Meets established performance management standards and received a minimum overall rating of “3” Successful Performer, on the most recent performance management evaluation.
6. Self-motivated, works independently, and is responsible.
7. Knows and understands the policies and procedures that govern their work.
8. Familiar with the requirements of their position.
9. Requires minimal supervision and feedback.
10. FOR DFCS Child Welfare Services (CWS): Some Child Welfare positions may be eligible for telework up to four (4) days a week. Social Services Specialists have a minimum requirement of full certification before beginning occasional telework.
11. FOR DFCS Office of Family Independence (OFI): Eligibility processing positions are appropriate for telework. OFI employees must successfully meet the following criteria to be eligible to telework:
  - a. Written approval from Supervisor/District Manager.
  - b. Successfully completed New Worker training.
  - c. Current with all DFCS and DHS mandatory training.
  - d. Must report to assigned office no less than one (1) day per pay period. This day will be a part of the approved work schedule.
  - e. No attendance issues (excessive calling out, excessively reporting late, etc.).
  - f. Have not received any disciplinary or corrective actions.

# Section E: Application Process & Employee Responsibilities

1. Teleworkers must be knowledgeable of the provisions of this Telework Policy and the **Telework Guidelines** (Attachment #1).
2. Determine a dedicated telework site consistent with the requirements of this policy, the **Telework Guidelines** (Attachment #1) and the **Telework Workspace Self-Certification** (Attachment #3).
3. Employees applying for telework must submit the following documents to their supervisor for approval and signature.
  - a. **Telework Self-Assessment (Attachment #2)**
  - b. **Telework Workspace Self-Certification (Attachment #3)**
  - c. **Telework Application (Attachment #4)**
4. The supervisor has **five (5) business days** from the date of submission to approve or deny the Telework Application.
5. If approved, the employee must complete the following forms and provide each document to their supervisor for signature. Employees are also required to complete the online telework training course.
  - a. **Telework Agreement (Attachment #5)**
  - b. **Telework Property Removal Form (Attachment #6)**
  - c. **Provide the Online Telework Training Certificate of Completion to supervisor.**
  - d. **The supervisor is required to submit Attachments 2 through 6 and the Online Telework Training Certificate of Completion. The Telework Training Certificate must be forwarded to [OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov) for placement in the employee's personnel file.**
6. If denied, the supervisor must provide a written justification on the Telework Application **within five (5) business days** of receipt. Telework denials must be business related. The explanation should outline any steps the employee can take to be eligible for reconsideration. Business related denials are final and are not appealable, grievable, or subject to review. The supervisor is required to submit Attachments 2 through 6 and the Online Telework Training Certificate of Completion to [OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov) for placement in the employee's personnel file.
7. The Telework Agreement must be reviewed when there is:
  - a. **A major job change (e.g., promotion).**
  - b. **Teleworker or their supervisor changes positions.**
  - c. **When performance does not align with expectations.**
  - d. **Any portion of the arrangement covered by the agreement changes.**
8. When any modifications are needed, a new Telework Agreement must be completed and signed. The new agreement must be sent to [OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov) for placement in the

employee's personnel file.

9. If the teleworker changes their telework site, they must complete a new **Telework Workspace Self-Certification** (Attachment #3) and submit it to their supervisor for review and approval. The **Telework Workspace Self-Certification** must also be forwarded to [OHRPersonnel-Records@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:OHRPersonnel-Records@dhs.ga.gov) for placement in the employee's personnel file.
10. Establish work practices to ensure a successful telework experience.
11. Report for meetings, training, etc., as required by the supervisor.
12. Employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss any federal, state, or local tax implications. DHS will not provide tax guidance or assume any additional tax liability.
13. Teleworkers must report all time accurately. Teleworkers must devote all time reported as teleworked to completing agency assignments. Teleworkers must not engage in secondary employment activity or otherwise conduct personal business while in official work status. Intentionally misreporting time worked will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
14. Ensure the telework site fully complies with all applicable local ordinances, zoning requirements and neighborhood association guidelines (e.g., community/subdivision covenants).
15. Comply with all provisions of this policy, the Telework Guidelines, the Telework Agreement and all other terms and conditions of employment.
16. Telework agreements must be renewed annually during the Mandatory Training period and/or by October 31st, whichever is sooner. Employees must follow the process as outlined in this policy for annual renewal.

## Section F: Management Responsibilities

1. Managers and supervisors must be knowledgeable of the provisions of the Telework Policy and the **Telework Guidelines** (Attachment #1).
2. Objectively consider each employee's telework request.
3. Determine if telework is beneficial to the department and employee.
4. Ensure adequate in-office staffing for the business unit before approving telework.
5. Ensure employee meets the eligibility requirements listed in Sections C and D of this policy.
6. Ensure that performance can be adequately measured, and sufficient work exists for the employee to be productive at the alternate worksite before authorizing telework.
7. Ensure adequate measures are in place to protect confidentiality and information security at the alternate worksite.
8. Employees applying for telework must submit the following documents to their supervisor for approval and signature.
  - a. **Telework Self-Assessment (Attachment #2)**
  - b. **Telework Workspace Self-Certification (Attachment #3)**
  - c. **Telework Application (Attachment #4)**
9. The supervisor has **five (5) business days** from the date of submission to approve or deny the

Telework Application.

10. If approved, the employee must complete the following forms and provide to their supervisor for signature. Employees and their supervisors are also required to complete the online telework training course.
  - a. **Telework Agreement (Attachment #5)**
  - b. **Telework Property Removal Form (Attachment #6)**
  - c. **Provide the Online Telework Training Certificate of Completion to supervisor.**
  - d. **Supervisors are required to submit Attachments 2 through 6 and their Online Telework Training Certificate of Completion to [OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov) for placement in the employee's personnel file.**
11. Retain a copy of Attachments 2 through 6 for all employees approved to telework and send a copy of all these documents, as signed by both the supervisor and the employee (including the employee and supervisor online telework training certificate of completion), to [OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov) for placement in the employee's personnel file.
12. Provide the employee with a copy of all the forms submitted.
13. Managers and supervisors must complete the online training course through IOTIS prior to the employee beginning telework. The certificate of completion should be sent to [OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov) for placement in the employee's personnel file.
14. If the request to telework is denied, the supervisor must outline the reason for their decision on the Telework Application and provide it to the employee within **five (5) business days** from the date of submission. Telework denials must be business related. The explanation should outline any steps the employee can take to be eligible for reconsideration. This decision is final and is not appealable, grievable, or subject to review.
15. Retain a copy of the denied application and send a copy of signed **Attachments 2 through 4** to [OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov) for placement in the employee's personnel file.
16. Each Division/Office is responsible for determining whether there is a 90-day probationary period, when an employee is initially approved for telework. Prior to the conclusion of the probationary period, a review should be conducted to determine, if telework is the best work arrangement.
17. The Telework Agreement is to be reviewed when there is:
  - a. **A major job change (e.g., promotion).**
  - b. **Teleworker or their supervisor change positions.**
  - c. **Any portion of the arrangement covered by the agreement changes.**
18. When any modifications are needed, a new Telework Agreement must be completed and signed. The new agreement must be sent to [OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov) for placement in the employee's personnel file.
19. If the teleworker changes their telework site, they must complete a new **Telework Workspace Self-Certification** (Attachment #3) and submit it to their supervisor for review and approval. The **Telework Workspace Self-Certification** must also be forwarded to [OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:OHRPersonnelRecords@dhs.ga.gov) for placement in the employee's personnel file.
20. Telework approval must be renewed on a rolling annual basis. Employees should follow the

process, as outlined in Section E of this policy for annual renewal.

21. Maintain an inventory of state-owned equipment at the employee's telework site.
22. Prepare an amendment to the employee's Performance Management Plan, specifically detailing responsibility areas and standards of performance pertaining to the terms of the Telework Agreement.

## Section G: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

1. FLSA non-exempt employees must obtain approval from their supervisors before performing overtime work. Failure to do so may result in the termination of their Telework Agreement and/or corrective or disciplinary action.
2. Both **Exempt and Non-Exempt FLSA employees** will be required to complete the **Telework Activity Log** (Attachment #8) or a similar instrument that allows them to accurately record assignments performed daily, while teleworking. Employees should submit an electronic or hard copy of the activities to their manager/supervisor on a weekly basis. The manager/ supervisor does have the discretion to request this information more frequently.

## Section H: Agency Telework Coordinator

1. A named Agency Telework Coordinator will oversee the telework program.
2. The Agency Telework Coordinator will ensure compliance with the procedures, agreements and guidelines outlined in this internal policy and the statewide telework policy.
3. The Agency Telework Coordinator is the liaison for the Statewide Telework Coordinator.
4. All employees who are authorized to telework must have the following documents on file with OHR, prior to the commencement of Telework.
  - a. **Telework Self-Assessment (Attachment #2)**
  - b. **Telework Workspace Self-Certification (Attachment #3)**
  - c. **Telework Application (Attachment #4)**
  - d. **Telework Agreement (Attachment #5)**
  - e. **Telework Property Removal Form (Attachment #6)**
  - f. **Online Telework Training Course Certification of Completion**
  - g. **Supervisor's Online Telework Training Course Certification of Completion**

## Section I: Emergency Situations

1. Although a variety of circumstances may affect individual situations, the principles governing administrative leave, dismissals, and closings remain unchanged. The ability to conduct work (and the nature of any impediments), whether at home or at the office, determines when an employee may be excused from duty.
2. If the Governor orders a statewide closure or within certain geographic regions, employees who

are scheduled to telework on those days will not be required to telework. This guideline also applies to a departmental wide closing or county closings by the DHS Commissioner. If you are **Essential Personnel**, you will be required to report to your designated workplace.

3. When an emergency only affects the telework site (e.g., power outage, etc.), the teleworker is expected to report to the regular office or request supervisory approval of annual leave, comp time, leave without pay, etc.
4. When a teleworker knows in advance of a situation that would preclude working at home, the employee must either come to the conventional office or request leave.

## Section J: Use of State-Owned Equipment

1. All maintenance of state-owned equipment will be performed by an authorized DHS technician and may be conducted at DHS State Office or at a Division/Office approved site.
2. Personally owned software may not be used on state-owned equipment. All software installed on state-owned equipment must be appropriately licensed.
3. All expenditures (e.g., laptops, monitors, printers, desks, file cabinets, chairs, etc.) except general office supplies, must have prior approval of the respective DHS Division or Office Director.
4. Office supplies and equipment will be provided to the teleworker by DHS and should be obtained during the teleworker's in office work period. DHS will not reimburse teleworkers for out-of-pocket supplies normally available in the office. However, all requests for reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will be reviewed by the supervisor and OHR on a case-by-case basis.
5. DHS may also give written permission for certain equipment to be checked out and used at the alternate worksite. This equipment remains the property of the State and the department retains the responsibility for the inventory and maintenance of state-owned property following State laws and procedures. Employees are not authorized to use state-owned equipment for personal use.
6. Issues relating to connectivity of state-owned equipment and security of information are subject to required standards of the Office of Information Technology (OIT). **All systems MUST be password protected.**
7. If a piece of equipment that is vital to work performance breaks, needs repairs or otherwise becomes inoperable, the teleworker may be asked to report to the office until the equipment is fully functioning and usable.
8. Transfer of state-owned equipment to and from the office and telework site is the responsibility of the teleworker.
9. The employee's telework site is subject to department audits and security reviews as appropriate.
10. The employee and their supervisor will complete and sign the **Telework Property Removal Form** (Attachment #6) prior to the commencement of telework.
  - a. The teleworker's supervisor will use the Telework Property Removal Form to maintain an inventory of state-owned equipment at the employee's telework site. The Telework Property Removal Form should be updated each time the employee is issued new equipment or

returns old equipment.

11. All state-owned equipment remains the sole property of DHS and, upon the separation of the employee, must be returned to DHS by the employee. If equipment is not returned and/or damaged, the employee may be subject to financial assessments and/or legal action in accordance with DHS Policy #1901: Employment Separations and its attachments.

## Section K: Use of Employee-Owned Equipment

1. Teleworkers may not use their own equipment (e.g., fax machine, printer, copier, etc.). Employee should only use state-issued equipment to complete DHS work duties.
2. DHS does not assume liability for loss, damage, or wear of employee-owned equipment.
3. When a teleworker receives authorization from OIT and their Leadership team to use their personal computer, DHS files must be kept on a separate disc or jump drive. All discs or jump drives must be password protected.
4. Software which is not appropriately owned by or licensed to DHS or the teleworking employee may not be run if DHS data resides on the computer or if the computer accesses a DHS network.
5. All DHS information must be properly secured. The teleworking employee and their supervisor should consult with OIT to establish and implement an appropriate information security protocol.
6. If a piece of equipment that is vital to work performance breaks, needs repairs or otherwise becomes inoperable, the teleworker may be asked to report to the office until the equipment is fully functioning and usable. Employees should only use state-issued equipment to complete DHS work duties.

## Section L: Worksite Safety and Liability

1. Teleworkers are expected to perform their duties and responsibilities at the telework site at the same level as if they were in the conventional office and work for the entire period scheduled.
2. Teleworkers must keep their alternate worksite free from hazards as well as avoid distractions and obligations that impede a productive workday.
3. The teleworker's designated workspace must meet the Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules for the workplace including smoke detectors, working fire extinguisher, unobstructed exits, removal of hazards that could cause falls, adequate electrical circuitry, and appropriate furniture.
4. The employee must verify their telework site is safe and suitable by completing the **Telework Workspace Self-Certification** (Attachment #3). If it is not, telework may be denied.
5. DHS reserves the right to inspect the telework site to ensure safety compliance and adherence with the telework program requirements regarding space and furnishings.
6. DHS assumes no liability for any injuries to teleworker's family members, visitors, or others at the employee's alternate worksite. Teleworkers may not have business guests at the alternate

worksite or any other location except DHS offices. Use of the telework site for work-related meetings is prohibited. Teleworkers are encouraged to utilize teleconferencing if a work-related meeting becomes necessary.

7. DHS is not responsible for any loss or damage to the teleworker's real property, or any structures attached thereto. This includes, but is not limited to, any personal property owned by the teleworker or any of the teleworker's family members, property of others in the care, custody, or control of the teleworker or any of the teleworker's family members.
8. The teleworker is responsible for contacting their agent or tax consultant and consulting local ordinance, restrictive covenants, and applicable neighborhood association guidelines for information regarding home workplaces.
9. Individual tax implications, auto insurance, homeowner's insurance, and utility costs are the responsibility of the teleworker.

## Section M: Workers' Compensation

1. The employee's alternate worksite is considered an extension of their DHS workspace. When the employee is performing official duties in the designated work area of the telework site during their designated work hours, they will be covered by Workers' Compensation. Please note, attending to personal comfort needs is not considered performing official duties.
2. For purposes of Workers' Compensation coverage, the teleworker's "designated work hours" are the hours specified by the employee on their **Telework Agreement** (Attachment #5) and the "designated telework site" is the area specified by the employee on their **Telework Workspace Self-Certification** (Attachment #3). Employees and supervisors must take care to describe workspace and work hours on the appropriate forms to avoid confusion over Workers' Compensation coverage.
3. DHS assumes no liability for injuries occurring at the teleworker's alternate worksite outside of the agreed-upon work hours and/or outside of the agreed-upon designated workspace. The teleworker must report on-the-job injuries to their supervisor, as soon as possible after the accident/injury occurs and submit supporting medical documentation of the accident/injury to their supervisor and/or designated Human Resources Representative as soon as such documentation becomes available.
4. If necessary, teleworkers shall permit the appropriate DHS representative to access the telework site to investigate an injury report.

## Section N: Dependent Care

1. DHS offers telework with the understanding that it is the employee's responsibility to ensure that a proper work environment is maintained. The employee and their family must understand that the designated workspace is an area set aside for the employee to work. Family responsibilities must not interfere with work time.
2. Telework is not a substitute for dependent care. Employees must continue to arrange dependent care to the same extent as if they were in the conventional office.

# Section O: Confidentiality and Information Security

1. Security of confidential information is of primary concern and importance. Teleworkers, like all State employees, are expected to adhere to all applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures regarding information security. All data assets (e.g., equipment, software, and confidential information) used while teleworking is subject to these security policies.
2. Divisions allowing employees to access records subject to the Privacy Act from an alternate worksite must maintain appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to ensure the security and confidentiality of such records. Security and confidentiality protection measures shall be discussed between the employee and their supervisor.
3. To help ensure confidentiality and information security, the teleworker will:
  - a. Be responsible for maintaining confidentiality and security at the alternate worksite as the teleworker would at the primary workplace. The teleworker must protect the security and integrity of data, information, paper files, and access to agency computer systems. DHS internet and technology use policies apply to telework, as they would in the conventional workplace.
  - b. Safeguard confidential information maintained in files, in computers, on jump drives, etc. When the hard drive of an alternate worksite computer is inoperable, arrangements must be made to remove sensitive information from the hard drive prior to the computer being serviced. Employees should only use state-issued equipment for DHS work duties.
  - c. Ensure software is virus inspected and each laptop or PC used by the teleworker has virus protection software installed.
  - d. Return all materials (e.g., paper documents, jump drives, etc.) containing confidential information to the office worksite for proper handling or disposal.
  - e. Adhere to copyright law by not copying or sharing any State-owned software utilized by teleworkers.
  - f. Back up critical information, as necessary, to assure the information can be recovered if the primary source is damaged or destroyed.
  - g. Ensure that confidential information is not disclosed to an unauthorized source.
  - h. Immediately notify your supervisor, OIT, and your designated Human Resources Representative of any suspected or actual security violation.
  - i. Understand that adherence to the above is an essential requirement of the Telework Program. Failure to comply with these provisions may be cause for termination of telework and/or corrective or disciplinary action.
  - j. All external drives, jump drives, and laptops are to be password protected.

For additional information or assistance regarding telework, please contact your designated Human Resources Representative.

# 111 A1 Telework Guidelines



## Georgia Department of Human Services Human Resources Policy #111 A1

### Telework Guidelines

The Telework Policy and Telework Guidelines must be reviewed prior to applying for or approving telework. The conditions listed below apply to all teleworkers.

#### 1. EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

Telework is approved at management's discretion. It is not an employee right. Telework is a work arrangement between an employee and their supervisor. An employee's participation in telework is usually voluntary. The employee, their supervisor, or an authorized official may terminate telework at any time. Issues regarding telework are not appealable, grievable or subject to review.

Teleworking employees' conditions of employment remain the same as for non-teleworking employees. The employee is covered by and will adhere to all policies, rules, and regulations of the department and state while teleworking. The teleworker agrees not to conduct personal business while teleworking.

#### 2. TELEWORK SELF-ASSESSMENT

Employees applying for telework must complete and submit the **Telework Self-Assessment** (Attachment # 2) to determine, if telework is suitable for their position and work style. The official copy is maintained by the supervisor. A copy must also be sent to the Agency Telework Coordinator.

#### 3. TELEWORK WORKSPACE SELF-CERTIFICATION

Employees must verify their telework site is safe and suitable by completing the **Telework Workspace Self-Certification** (Attachment #3). If it is not, telework may be denied. The official copy is maintained by the supervisor. A copy must also be sent to the Agency Telework Coordinator.

#### 4. TELEWORK APPLICATION

Employees applying for telework must submit the **Telework Self-Assessment** (Attachment #2), the **Telework Workspace Self-Certification** (Attachment #3), and the **Telework Application** (Attachment #4) to their supervisor for approval and signature. The supervisor has **five (5) business days** from the date of submission to approve or deny the Telework Application. The official copy is maintained by the supervisor. A copy must also be sent to the Agency Telework Coordinator.

## 5. TELEWORK AGREEMENT

The **Telework Agreement** (Attachment #5) must be completed and signed by the employee and their supervisor prior to the start of telework. The agreement must be reviewed whenever there is a major job change (such as a promotion), or whenever the teleworker or their supervisor changes position. The official copy is maintained by the supervisor. A copy must also be sent to the Agency Telework Coordinator.

Employees must also agree to participate in studies, inquiries, reports, or analysis relating to telework at the Agency Telework Coordinator's direction.

## 6. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Office supplies (e.g. pens and paper) will be provided by the department and should be obtained during the teleworker's in-office work period. DHS will not reimburse teleworkers for out-of-pocket expenses for supplies normally available in the office. DHS may also give written permission for certain equipment (e.g. laptops, printers, etc.) to be checked out and used at the alternate worksite. As department equipment is the property of the state, the department must retain the responsibility for the inventory and maintenance of state-owned property following state laws and procedures.

The employee is expected to use their own furniture, telephone lines, etc. Any use of private facilities by the employee will be at the employee's discretion and not at the direction or expense of the department. This applies to all physical improvements and conveniences, as well as services.

Employees are responsible for ensuring that all department issued equipment is maintained in a safe and secure manner. Equipment must be connected to a grounded electrical outlet and into a surge protector. All state-owned equipment, material and/or other property will be immediately returned upon request, termination of telework and/or termination of employment. Employees are not authorized to use department issued equipment for personal use. Employees taking equipment and/or supplies to and from the telework site will be responsible for completing the Telework Property Removal Form (Attachment #6). This is a detailed list of all equipment in the employee's possession. The official copy is maintained by the supervisor. A copy must also be sent to the Agency Telework Coordinator.

## 7. WORKSPACE AND WORK HOURS

A designated workspace and designated work hours are necessary to: (1) reduce the state's exposure to risk, (2) facilitate proper management of teleworkers and (3) ensure work is done in a safe environment.

The employee will maintain a clean and safe workspace that is adequate for work and free of obstructions and distractions. To ensure that productive working conditions exist, it may be necessary to make on-site visits at mutually agreed upon times. However, this will be handled by the department on a case-by-case basis. The teleworker must designate a specific workspace at the telework site and will conduct work for the department from that location.

If the teleworker changes their telework site, they must complete a new **Telework Workspace Self-Certification** (Attachment #3) and submit it to their supervisor for review and approval.

This must also be forwarded to the Agency Telework Coordinator.

Teleworkers must develop a work schedule with their supervisor and the supervisor must agree in advance to any changes to the employee's schedule. FLSA non-exempt employees must obtain approval from their supervisor before performing overtime work. Teleworking privileges may be terminated for a FLSA non-exempt employee working overtime without approval. Teleworkers must obtain management/supervisory approval prior to taking leave during a designated telework day.

The employee must maintain contact with the office during their agreed upon work schedule, per the Telework Policy and the Telework Agreement.

An employee's activities outside their designated telework hours or outside their designated workspace for telework will be deemed to be in the employee's own personal time and place, which is unconnected with work activities.

## **8. EXPENSES AND COMPENSABLE TIME**

An employee may work from their home or another alternate worksite that has been approved by the department. Mileage between the home and the employee's telework site is considered commute mileage and not subject to reimbursement.

Work-related long-distance phone calls should be planned for in-office days. At the discretion of the supervisor, expenses for work-related long-distance calls may be reimbursed, if the reasons and costs for the calls are documented. The teleworker is responsible for the cost of maintenance, repair and operation of personal equipment not provided by the state.

## **9. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SECURITY**

The employee is responsible for maintaining confidentiality and security at the telework site, as the employee would at the primary workplace. The employee must protect the security and integrity of data, information, files, and access to departmental computer systems. Any compromise of data, records or other information must be immediately reported to the employee's supervisor, IT, and the Agency Telework Coordinator.

## **10. DEPENDENT CARE**

Telework is not a substitute for dependent care. The teleworker shall continue to arrange dependent care to the same extent, as if they were in the conventional office. Teleworkers will manage dependent care in a way that allows them to successfully fulfill their work responsibilities.

## **11. LIABILITY**

The employee's telework site, when used during scheduled telework is an extension of their DHS workspace. The state's liability for job-related accidents will continue to exist during the approved work schedule and in the employee's designated workspace. The teleworker is covered under the State Workers' Compensation Law for injuries occurring during the actual performance of official duties at the alternate worksite during the designated work hours. Please note, attending to personal comfort needs is not considered performing official duties.

If an injury occurs during telework hours, then the employee will immediately report the injury to their supervisor. The employee and their supervisor should follow the state's policies regarding the reporting of injuries for employees injured at work.

The State of Georgia is not responsible for any injuries to family members, visitors, and others in the employee's telework site. The teleworker may not have business guests at the alternate worksite or any other location except the departmental offices.

The teleworker is responsible for contacting the teleworker's insurance agent, a tax advisor, and consulting local ordinances for information regarding home workplaces, including neighborhood association guidelines (e.g. community/subdivision covenants).

Employees are responsible for maintaining a safe and secure work environment at their telework site. Employees' telework site may be subject to inspection to ensure proper safety. Employees are required to immediately notify their supervisor, as conditions change.

## **12. COMPLIANCE WITH FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT (FLSA)**

Managers/supervisors must ensure that all telework employees adhere to designated work schedules. Non-exempt employees must comply with all provisions of the FLSA. Non-exempt employees are required to maintain accurate timesheets when teleworking. Please reference, DHS Human Resources Policy #1001, for additional information on FLSA.

## **13. TRAINING**

Managers/supervisors and employees must complete the online telework training through LMS or IOTIS prior to the employee's commencement of telework. The certificates of completion must be sent to the Agency Telework Coordinator.

## **14. EXPECTATIONS FOR MONITORING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

Jobs suitable for telework are characterized by clearly defined results. Since teleworker performance is measured by results rather than presence at the main work site, it is critical to ensure that performance expectations are clearly defined so that a proper evaluation can be conducted at designated intervals.

# **111 A2 Telework Self-Assessment**

## **111 A3 Telework Workspace Self-Certification**

## **111 A4 Telework Application**

## **111 A5 Telework Agreement**

**111 A6 Telework Property Removal Form**

**111 A7 Telework Application Checklist**

**111 A8 Telework Activity Log**

**111 A9 Governor's Executive Order**