

**CALHOUN COUNTY
POLICY STATEMENT**

SUBJECT: Telecommuting Policy	DATE APPROVED: 10/7/2021	EFFECTIVE: 1/1/2022	POLICY NO. 345
		REPLACES: New	

- I. **PURPOSE:** Calhoun County’s commitment to responsive leadership includes providing employees with support and flexible work arrangements whenever possible, including telecommuting (or remote work). Telecommuting is an option that allows employees, when appropriate, to work at home, on the road, or in a satellite location for all or part of their work week, as long as work productivity, operational needs, and customer service requirements can be met effectively and efficiently.

- II. **SCOPE:** This policy applies to all employees with a position and job duties that are conducive to a telecommuting arrangement and can be performed by the employee in an effective, efficient, and productive manner.

- III. **RESPONSIBILITY:** The County Administrator/Controller is responsible for the administration of this policy through the Human Resources Department. The County’s Information Technology and Central Services offices will support telecommuting equipment and technical support needs.

- IV. **POLICY:** Telecommuting may be permitted when the job duties of a position are advantageous and conducive to working remotely. There are positions throughout Calhoun County that require employee(s) to be physically present at the worksite, such as but not limited to, critical infrastructure workers, public facing customer service providers, and those with direct care/enforcement duties. Department Heads/Elected Officials are responsible for determining which employees in their departments may be able to telecommute based on job duties/descriptions, availability of equipment and resources, as well as the employee’s ability to perform remote work satisfactorily.

Remote work arrangements are generally designed to be mutually beneficial to the employee and the County. The following procedures, provisions, and rules shall be required for telecommuting:

- 1. A Department Head who has determined that a telecommuting arrangement is appropriate for a particular position, must complete the attached Telecommuting Agreement with their recommendation. The Agreement must be signed by both the Department Head and the employee to confirm acknowledgement of the telecommuting requirements. The completed Agreement should then be sent to the Human Resources (HR) Department for approval. Prior to any denial of a telecommuting request, the HR Director shall consult with the Administrator/Controller and the Department Head. Once a final determination has been made, the completed Agreement will be returned to the Department Head and employee.

2. Once telecommuting has been approved by the HR Department, the employee shall be required to:

Job Performance Expectations

- Comply with all County policies and rules that would apply if the employee was working in-person at a County worksite;
- Perform job duties, obligations, and responsibilities in an effective, efficient, and productive manner and achieve/maintain expected standards of performance;
- Remain accessible at all times during their normal work schedule unless prior arrangements have been made with their supervisor;
- Request supervisor approval to use Paid Time Off or other leave in the same manner as when working in-person at a County worksite; and
- Be available for teleconferences, phone calls, and meetings, as scheduled and be available to come into the office if a business need arises, possibly with short notice.

Safety and Security

- Maintain the remote workspace in a safe and hazard-free manner, and notify the Employer of any injuries in accordance with the workers compensation policy;
- Use County-issued property for business purposes only and in accordance with applicable policies. All County-issued property must be returned to the County premises at the end of the telecommuting arrangement or employment separation;
- Understand they are liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to their home worksite, as well as any damage to their own property or equipment;
- Note that the County will not be responsible for costs associated with set-up of the employee's home office, including but not limited to, remodeling, furniture, lighting, or for repairs or modifications to the office space. Office chairs and equipment may be approved on a case-by-case basis within the normal County purchasing processes; and
- Ensure the protection of confidential information in the home, including limiting access to information, locking file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job.
- Understand that employees that have been approved for telecommuting may be required to work remotely during a building closure and/or required to continue to work remotely if already scheduled at a location outside of the applicable building(s) that are closed.

Time Tracking and Other

- Accurately record and report all hours worked if hourly, non-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Time reporting should happen in the same manner as if working in-person at a County worksite and supervisor approval is required in advance of working any overtime hours;
- Request pre-approval from their Department Head to work remotely during travel or any other short-term variance that is not noted/approved in the Telecommuting Agreement. If a long-term variance or change is requested, a new Telecommuting Agreement must be completed and approved through HR;
- Understand that the Department Head or the County may require employees to return to regular, in-office work locations at any time and possibly without notice; and

- Acknowledge and agree that failure to comply with these requirements may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge from employment and/or loss of telecommuting privileges.
3. Department Heads are responsible for monitoring remote workers' job performance, efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity, as well as all of the employee requirements noted above. Department Heads failing to appropriately manage remote workers shall lose the privilege of utilizing remote work options in their department, and/or be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

V. **NON-DISCRIMINATION:** While not all positions or employees are conducive to telecommuting due to job duties and/or performance, the County will make determinations regarding Telecommuting Agreements in a non-discriminatory manner and in accordance with all applicable laws and County policies.

VI. **OTHER:**

1. During emergencies, pandemic situations, or other unique circumstances, the Administrator/Controller may recommend or approve remote work for employees on a short-term, temporary basis with the approval of the Department Head and without the requirement for the approval process noted above. In those instances, the Department Head(s) will be notified of the available option.
2. In the case of conflicting language between the provisions of this policy and the provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement prevail. Remote work is not an entitlement or a County-wide benefit and does not change the terms and conditions of employment.
3. This Policy can be amended or terminated at any time by the Board of Commissioners.

VII. **SUMMARY:** Calhoun County is committed to providing a flexible telecommuting option for employees when appropriate, while maintaining County government operations in the most effective and efficient manner.



TELECOMMUTING AGREEMENT

Employee Name	
Department	
Position	
Phone Number	
Department Head Name	

Remote Work Location:
Expected Duration or Long-Term:
Summary of the Telecommuting Arrangement and Work Schedule:
Equipment to be Provided by County:

Acknowledgment of Policy Receipt & Agreement

By signature below, employee certifies that they received a copy of the Telecommuting Policy and agrees to abide by all of the requirements. The employee also understands and agrees that if there is a separation of employment, all County property must be returned within five (5) days or the cost of the property shall be taken from the employee's final paycheck. Employee also understands that any violations of the Telecommuting Policy and/or the items specified above may result in telecommuting privileges being suspended, modified, or revoked, and/or disciplinary action(s) up to and including termination of employment. All terms and conditions of employment remain unchanged, except those specifically addressed in this agreement.

Employee Signature

Date

Department Head Signature

Date

Human Resources Approval

Date

If Denied - Reason for Denial/Comment: