

City of Northampton
COVID Work from Home Policy
Adopted on: June 25, 2020

PURPOSE

This policy outlines the City of Northampton's telework policy for the period of time determined by the Mayor. All other policies remain in effect unless otherwise noted. While we transition back to fully staffed on-site, municipal operations, we are aware of some employee difficulties related to childcare, underlying medical issues, etc. In order to stop the spread of the Coronavirus, and depending on the business need of the department, the aforementioned group of applicable employees are encouraged to telework in accordance with this policy, and with their supervisor's permission. The City of Northampton has the right to cancel or suspend employee telework arrangements at any time, for any reason, or for no reason, without notice. **This policy does not entitle employees to telework after the World Health Organization determines the global pandemic has ended.**

While temporarily working remotely, employees will work just as if they were in their regular City of Northampton work location, and maintain productivity, performance, communication and responsiveness standards as if they were not temporarily remote working. This Agreement does not change the basic terms and conditions of Employee's employment with the City of Northampton. Employees will perform all of the duties as set forth in their job descriptions, as well as those additional and/or different duties that the Department may assign from time to time. Further, employees remain obligated to comply with all City of Northampton (as well as the Department's) policies and procedures.

ELIGIBILITY

Employees who are eligible for telework have been notified by their managers. The ultimate authority on which positions can work remotely resides with the Mayor as recommended by Department Heads.

EQUIPMENT/FURNISHINGS/OFFICE SUPPLIES

Employees are required to use City of Northampton-issued or approved equipment for telework. If equipment fails, employees should notify their managers immediately. Technical support for city-approved equipment and software will be provided through the Information Technology Department according to their stated policies for providing such support. The City of Northampton does not provide office furnishings—such as desks, chairs, file cabinets, and lighting—for employees who are teleworking.

- The City of Northampton is not responsible for operating costs of any personal equipment (including, but not limited to, computers, personal devices, cellular or standard telephones), home maintenance of personal equipment, or any other incidental costs (utility provider costs, telephone costs or for any supply costs used in the home) associated with the use of an employee's alternative work arrangement.
- Employees are solely responsible for the configuration associated with their remote workspace. This includes ensuring and maintaining an ergonomically appropriate and safe remote worksite. Employees

are required to certify that such is the case and that they have reviewed the [Ergonomic advice/materials] page. Employees must affirm that they will utilize these resources for the purpose of assessing and maintaining their remote worksite in a safe and ergonomically appropriate manner.

DATA SECURITY

Employees must comply with all of the City's electronic communication, data security policies and procedures while teleworking, including but not limited to the City's Cell Phone, City Property, and Computer Use policies. Please see the City's IT policies for more information, available at <https://www.northamptonma.gov/1888/Policies>. If an employee will be using their own personal devices for any Telework, they will be required to sign and abide by the terms of the *Use of Personal Electronic Devices for Authorized COVID-19 Telework Policy*, attached hereto. Failure to follow security policies and procedures will result in discipline up to and including termination.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Reasonable accommodations are available for the known physical or mental limitations of qualified employees with disabilities. The City is committed to providing accommodations so long as accommodations do not place an undue hardship on business operations or pose a threat to the health or safety of employees. Employees who were receiving an accommodation before this policy became effective, and employees who need a new accommodation should review the American's with Disabilities Act and check in with their immediate manager or Glenda Stoddard, HR Director at gstoddard@northamptonma.gov.

WORK SCHEDULES AND RESPONSE TIME

While employees and supervisors can develop arrangements tailored to employee and departmental needs, employees are expected to meet the following minimum requirements:

- Employees must maintain a presence with their Department while temporarily working remote. Presence may be maintained in the manner and using the technology, directed by the Department, which remains readily available such as by laptop computer, mobile phone, email, messaging application, videoconferencing, instant messaging and/or text messaging at all times during the times the Department expects or requires them to work.
- Employees must be available to their supervisors and co-workers during work hours.
- Employees are expected to maintain the same response times as if they were at a regular City of Northampton work location, and as required by their Department manager.
- Employees must carry out assigned duties, assignments, and other work obligations.
- Employees must be available to attend scheduled video meetings, conference calls and participate in other required office activities at the home office as needed. Employees must make themselves available to physically attend scheduled work meetings as requested or required by their Department.

OVERTIME

No employee is to work overtime without prior approval from their supervisor, and employees are required to take rest and meal breaks while working remotely in full compliance with federal, state, and local guidelines.

Employees working remotely agree to follow such procedures as their manager or their Department may establish in order to minimize the likelihood of interruptions or delays to rest or meal breaks in a way that causes a violation of City of Northampton policy. Employees are required to notify their manager within one business day if they believe they were unable to take a rest or meal break in full compliance with the requirements of federal, state or local policy on a day on which they worked remotely.

CAREGIVING RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees are expected to arrange for child/dependent care as necessary for the hours in which the employee works from home. Personal tasks and errands should only be performed during the employee's scheduled breaks and lunches.

The City recognizes that employees may be unable to find child or elder care during the global pandemic. Employees should contact their managers if they have caregiving responsibilities that will affect their work schedule or ability to telework. The City is committed to working with employees to find solutions, such as allowing flexible schedules and intermittent leave, for employees in such situations when feasible.

PUBLIC RECORDS

Employees working remotely are subject to the same requirements for maintaining and safeguarding public records as are employees working at City of Northampton work locations. Employees working remotely must affirm that they understand and will comply with these policies.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Employees working remotely are subject to the same requirements for maintaining and safeguarding confidential information in the course of performing their job duties as are employees working at City of Northampton work locations. Employees working remotely must affirm that they understand and will comply with these policies.

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