

Temporary Emergency Telecommuting Arrangement

Effective March 18, 2020

Due to the current COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak, many employees are inquiring about the ability to work from home. Livingston County is implementing voluntary/temporary telecommuting arrangements for employees whose job duties are conducive to working from home but who do not regularly telecommute. However, there are some positions at Livingston County that require the employee to be physically present in the workplace. These employees are defined as critical personnel. Department heads will determine who qualifies for telecommuting.

Critical personnel are defined as County employees who are working in a public safety classification. Public Safety Departments include, but are not limited to; Sheriff, 911 Central Dispatch, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

Critical personnel are expected to report to work as scheduled unless otherwise notified. Regular leave policies and procedures should be followed for employees who are unable to report to work due to illness.

Essential and Non-Essential/Non-Critical positions may be approved to work from home temporarily as determined by the department head.

Telecommuting / working from home arrangements are expected to be short term and Livingston County will continue to monitor guidance from health officials and the need for remote work arrangements. Employees should not assume any specified period of time for telework, and Livingston County may require employees to return to regular, in-office work locations at any time.

Should the current health crisis warrant, Livingston County may require some employees, with the exception of critical personnel, to work from home. Employees should be proactive with department directors in preparing for these circumstances to ensure employees have the resources necessary to work remotely.

General Work Arrangement

While telecommuting, Employees will:

- a. remain accessible during their work schedule;
- b. check in with their supervisor to discuss status and open issues;
- c. be available for teleconferences, scheduled on an as-needed basis;
- d. be available to come into the office if a business need arises;
- e. request supervisor approval in advance of working any overtime hours (if employee is non-exempt); and

- f. request supervisor approval to use vacation, sick, or other leave in the same manner as when working at employee's regular work location.

Employee's duties, obligations, job responsibilities, standards of performance, and performance appraisals remain the same as when working at the regular County work site. The supervisor reserves the right to assign work as necessary at any time.

Equipment

Department heads and the IT department will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, modems, phone and data lines and other office equipment) for each telecommuting arrangement.

Equipment supplied by Livingston County will be maintained by the organization. However, employees are responsible for setting up their own equipment in the home work space. IT will not be setting up the equipment. Should assistance be needed, IT will do their best to support staff remotely, however, if an employee cannot be assisted remotely, an employee may be required to go to the IT department for assistance. IT will not be traveling to homes to assist employees working remotely. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the organization, will be maintained by the employee. Livingston County accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. Livingston County reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the organization is to be used for business purposes only. The telecommuter must sign an inventory of all Livingston County property received and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. All County property will be returned to the County premises at the end of the Telecommuting arrangement.

Livingston County will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary. Livingston County will also reimburse the employee for business-related expenses, such as phone calls and shipping costs, that are reasonably incurred in carrying out the employee's job. All additional costs must be pre-approved by the Department Director.

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. Livingston County will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.

Security

Consistent with Livingston County's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of private County information accessible from their home office. Steps include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

Safety

Employees are expected to maintain their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Injuries sustained by the employee in a home office location and in conjunction with his or her regular work duties are normally covered by the company's workers' compensation policy.

Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying the employer of such injuries as soon as practicable. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to his or her home worksite.

Time Worked

Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all hours worked using Livingston County's time-keeping system. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval of the telecommuter's supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge from employment.

Dependent/Child Care

The focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting business demands during normal business hours. All telecommuting work arrangements must be agreed and determined between an employee and their department head.