P R O C E D U R E

Section: **Human Resources**

Subject: **Teleworking, including Home Duty Station**

Approved By: **DENR Secretary**

RESPONSIBILITIES

DENR Teleworking Coordinator Responsibilities

The DENR Coordinator shall:

1) Provide oversight for the agency teleworking program.

2) Arrange briefings to educate management about the teleworking program.

3) Work with agency management to determine the parameters of the agency teleworking programs.

4) Work with division advisory committee to provide training to teleworkers and supervisors.

5) Meet with teleworking participants in periodic focus groups to learn of their experiences and to address problems and suggest resolutions, if necessary.

6) Meet with upper management to discuss survey results, recommend program revisions, and identify program expansion opportunities within the agency.

Division Director

The Division Director is responsible for approving an employee for long range teleworking based on standards for selection.

An employee must be in a position with job duties and responsibilities that can be effectively and efficiently performed during teleworking.

The director may authorize supervisors and division management to approve employees for short-term teleworking.

A position will not be approved for teleworking if other positions are negatively impacted. A job may be considered for teleworking if:

- Internal and client needs can and will be met.
- Clear work objectives, with timelines and expectations, have been established.
- Workflow can be scheduled and controlled.
- Defined tasks are clearly set for teleworking days.
- Productivity and performance of responsibilities will benefit from quiet or uninterrupted time.
- Meetings can be scheduled so that teleworking has no negative impact.

Division Telework Advisory Committee

Each division is encouraged to establish a Telework Advisory Committee. It is suggested that committees be sponsored by the division director or deputy director and consist of three to five members.

The division committee should advise the division director and make recommendations by:

- Identifying jobs/tasks suited to telecommuting and assist directors in documenting, evaluating, and analyzing the division teleworking programs.
- Developing implementation guidelines and communication to all employees to encourage participation representative of the diversity of the division's jobs, working environments and people.
- Providing guidance to the DENR coordinator and to participating teleworkers/supervisors.
- Determining criteria for evaluating employee and supervisor requests to participate in teleworking.
- Evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of division teleworking programs and making recommendations to the director regarding continuation of the telework program.

Supervisor responsibilities

- Be confident that the employee can do the job without constant face-to-face supervision.
- Have a results-oriented management style and establish clear, measurable objectives and desired results.
- Be flexible and open to ideas from employees, and allow new approaches and solutions.
- Keep an open, positive attitude toward teleworking.
- Provide timely and constructive feedback.
- Facilitate open communication among the members of the team, including the supervisor, teleworker, co-workers and support staff.
- Attend orientation sessions for managers and supervisors.
- Establish clear and measurable performance standards.
- Attend scheduled training sessions.
- Sign and abide by a Long term Teleworking Agreement (Exception: occasional, intermittent, and short-term periods).
- Participate in surveys, focus groups, and evaluation.

Employee responsibilities and abilities

- Demonstrated ability to work independently.
- Require minimal supervision.
- Require minimal face-to-face interaction while teleworking.
- Have a high level of job knowledge and skill.
- Be results oriented; comfortable setting priorities and deadlines.
- Have demonstrated a high level of productivity.
- Have a history of reliability.
- Have a full understanding of the operations of the office and the specific requirements of the telecommutable job.
- Keep supervisor informed of progress and/or problems.
- Know the organizational structure and who can make what decisions.
- Have a mutual trust and respect with the supervisor.
- Have performance and conduct ratings at the good or above level.
- Have a safe, adequate, and secure work site free from interruptions.
- Understand that teleworking is a work option granted by management.
- Agree to clear and measurable performance standards
- Attend scheduled training
- Sign and abide by a Long term Teleworking Agreement (Exception: occasional, intermittent, and short term periods)
- Participate in surveys and focus groups

LOGISTICS

Orient and Train Teleworkers and Supervisors

All participants in a teleworking program will attend orientation and training sessions provided by ENR. The orientation sessions will introduce them to teleworking and instruct them on factors that will assure the success of this effort. Training will be provided to enhance the teleworking experience by preparing teleworkers and supervisors to discern and resolve the key issues which may be involved in their new working relationship.

Equipment and Furniture

Personal owned equipment
Teleworkers using their own equipment for state use do so at their own option and risk. The State assumes no liability for State use of personal equipment.

State owned equipment
The division may provide a desktop or notebook computer, modem, and printer subject to availability from existing inventory and as determined necessary by the supervisor. Any State equipment/ software used in the home office must be used in accordance with established policies for state equipment usage. Any state-owned equipment removed from state property shall be signed for by the employee and a copy of the document maintained by the supervisor or other person responsible for such equipment.

Furniture
The division will not purchase office furniture specifically for a teleworkers home work place.

All State equipment and furniture must be returned immediately upon termination of the teleworking agreement or when otherwise directed by management.

Software

The division shall provide a copy of the standard desktop software including personal productivity tools (MS Word, Excel, etc.), web browser, antivirus and other required software. All software, hardware and other state-owned equipment is subject to the state, department and division personal use policies.

Technical Support

Information technology (computer) technical support for teleworkers shall be the same as for central or regional office employees. Technical support staff will not make house calls nor provide consultation or other services for personally owned equipment except that as is necessary to connect to the central office server, transfer files and communicate.

Internet Service Provider

Teleworkers may utilize any existing dial-in services provided by the State or elect to purchase an internet service provider service at their own expense. The division may elect to pay for additional telephone lines, Internet service provider or telecommunications equipment if it is a cost benefit to the state.

Management Option

Offering the opportunity to work at home is a management option; teleworking is not a universal employee benefit. Any teleworking situation is voluntary for the employee and at the discretion of management and/or the employee's supervisor.

Conditions of Employment

The teleworkers conditions of employment with the State remain the same as for non-teleworking employees. Salaries, benefits, leave and state sponsored insurance will not change as a result of teleworking. Travel between the telework site, unless designated as the Home Duty Station, and the central workplace will not be reimbursed.

Safety and Workers' Compensation

Since the teleworker's home or other workplace is an extension of the agency workplace, the State's liability for job-related accidents will continue to exist during the teleworker's approved work hours at the designated work location. It is the teleworker's responsibility to maintain a safe, ergonomically correct home workplace. To assist the teleworker in conforming to universal safety standards, and to minimize the state's liability, the teleworker must submit, with the telework agreement for approval, a photograph signed by the teleworker as a "certified true photograph of the work place".

Liability

The State assumes no liability for the use of a teleworker's home, computer or other

equipment regardless of circumstances. Costs and/or losses incurred in the pursuit of teleworking are the responsibility of the teleworker.

Office Supplies

Office supplies will be provided by the State and should be obtained during the teleworker's in-office work period. Out-of-pocket expenses for supplies normally available in the office will not be reimbursed.

Security

To insure hardware and software security, all software used for teleworking must be approved by the supervisor and manager before installation and comply with agency requirements. Restricted-access or confidential information shall not be taken out of the office or accessed through the computer unless approved in the teleworking agreement.

Work Hours

The Teleworking Agreement shall establish working hours. Work hours of the teleworker should normally be the same as for regular office days, and must be documented in the written Teleworking Agreement. Any existing policies covering flexible hours can be extended to teleworkers. Any changes to the employee's approved work hours shall be reviewed and approved by the supervisor and manager in advance. While teleworking, the employee should stay reasonably available via telephone, email or pager during agreed-upon work hours. Teleworkers must obtain supervisor's prior approval before working overtime or earning compensatory time. The supervisor and teleworker shall establish communication modes and frequency to be used during regular work hours.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Each Teleworking Agreement must prescribe measures of work output both in quantifiable and qualitative terms. All teleworkers and their supervisors shall participate in studies and surveys when necessary to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the teleworking program.

Each teleworking employee and his/her supervisor shall establish measurable performance standards which are results-oriented and which describe quantity and quality of work. Ideally such standards would apply to both teleworkers and office-based workers.

Each employee approved to participate in the teleworking program will be expected to meet the established responsibilities of the position. Teleworking does not affect the established responsibilities of the position.

The supervisor, in consultation with management, is responsible for determining the expected results for the agreed upon work arrangement. These results should be discussed and agreed to by the teleworker, supervisor, and management prior to the dates for the teleworking and should be put in writing for the teleworker, the supervisor and the manager. The teleworker's direct supervisor should be involved in the decision process since any work done by the teleworker must be within the framework of the current assignment.

CANCELLATION OF AGREEMENT

Due to the voluntary nature of the program, teleworkers and/or management have the right to terminate the teleworking agreement at any time. Although teleworking is not an employee entitlement or right, cancellation of employees from the program must be done in writing and with appropriate notice except in emergency situations.

Cancellation of an agreement by management is not a grievable issue under personnel policies. An employee who terminates an agreement cannot be subjected to disciplinary action for such termination.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR HOME DUTY STATION

Process

The division director is responsible for determining the duty station during the job description phase when establishing or moving a position.

When a vacancy occurs in a position that has a home based designation, program management must reevaluate the duty station designation before recruiting to fill the position.

The division/office director is responsible for recommending approval of home duty stations to the DENR Secretary. The director must make annual recommendations by the first of December of the preceding calendar year for all employees whose home is their duty station.

The director shall submit written recommendations to the Assistant Secretary. The Assistant Secretary will send his/her concurrence to the Director of Budget, Planning and Analysis (BPA) for further processing and forwarding to the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM).

Budget, Planning and Analysis will forward the requests to OSBM for prior approval before the home duty station designation becomes official.

An employee may contest a duty station by filing an appeal with their Assistant Secretary within two (2) weeks of receiving notice of the decision.

Items for managers to consider in recommending a duty station.

To the extent possible, managers should focus on entire classes or groups, not on individuals in the job.

Position Focus (What do they do?)

-Direct client service (activity) that occurs in the community.
-On-call beyond normal business hours
-Consultation/technical assistance/regulatory activity with defined clientele.
-Enforcement occurs in the community.

Position Characteristics (How do they do it?)

-Little need for interaction with other staff; works independently.
-Little or no need for direct supervision.
-Low or no need for office support.
-Files, information, and specialized equipment are readily available when the employee is working in the field.
-No supervisory responsibility at the Regional Office.
-No need for an office for public access purposes.
-Limited need for time in the office.

Other considerations

-Efficiency and cost effectiveness. The duty station designation must benefit the state. It is not done for the convenience of the employee.
-Employee has timely communication with customers and is easily accessible by management.
-Training periods may require alternative duty station
-Concurrence of managers.

Employee considerations

-Morale
-Equity
-Historical precedent
-Employee concurrence
-Residence in relation to territory served.

See DENR Human Resources SOP Manual, Section 16, for Long Term Teleworking Agreement Form.