

## **Telecommuting Policy and Procedure**

### **Objective**

Telecommuting allows employees to work at home, on the road or in a satellite location for all or part of their workweek. Lochmueller Group considers telecommuting to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting is not an entitlement, it is not a companywide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with Lochmueller Group.

### **Procedures**

Telecommuting can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term project or on the road during business travel, or it can involve a formal, established schedule of working away from the office as described below. Employees should submit a request to their manager and Human Resources. To ensure Lochmueller Group is flexible to the extent possible, managers must provide a business justification to deny the request as described below under Eligibility.

All telecommuting arrangements will be on a trial basis for the first three months and may be discontinued at will and at any time at the request of either the telecommuter or the organization. Every effort will be made to provide 30 days' notice of such change to accommodate commuting and other issues that may arise from the termination of a telecommuting arrangement, though there may be instances when no notice is possible.

### **Eligibility**

Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and manager, with the assistance of the human resources, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

- **Employee suitability:** The employee and manager will assess the role, needs and work habits of the employee in comparison to traits customarily recognized as appropriate for successful telecommuting.
- **Job responsibilities:** The employee and manager will discuss the job responsibilities and ability to work independently to determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement.
- **Equipment needs, workspace design and scheduling issues:** The employee and manager will review the physical workspace needs and the appropriate location for the telework to make sure that the employee is properly prepared.
- **Tax and other legal implications:** The employee must determine any tax or legal implications under IRS, state and local government laws, and/or restrictions of working out of a home-based office. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.

If the employee and manager agree, and the human resource department concurs, a draft telecommuting agreement will be prepared and signed by all parties, and a three-month trial period will commence.

Evaluation of telecommuter performance during the trial period will include regular interaction by phone and e-mail between the employee and the manager, as well as face-to-face meetings

(preferable weekly and possible with virtual video meetings) to discuss work progress and problems. Evaluation of telecommuter performance beyond the trial period will be consistent with that received by employees working at the office in both content and frequency but will focus on work output and completion of objectives rather than on time-based performance.

An appropriate level of communication between the telecommuter and manager will be agreed to as part of the discussion process and will be more formal during the trial period. After conclusion of the trial period, the manager and telecommuter will communicate at a level consistent with employees working at the office or in a manner and frequency that is appropriate for the job and the individuals involved.

## **Equipment**

On a case-by-case basis, Lochmueller Group will use information supplied by the employee and the supervisor to determine equipment needs (including hardware, software, modems, phone and data lines, and other office equipment) for each telecommuting arrangement. The Human Resource and Information System departments will serve as resources in this matter and Lochmueller Group reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, which may be subject to change at any time.

Lochmueller Group will cover the cost for all necessary equipment at one working location, typically at the office. If that equipment is located at a remote location, it must be returned upon termination of the telecommuting agreement or the employment. Upon the establishment of a part-time telecommuting arrangement, Lochmueller Group will also provide a one-time \$250.00 stipend for employees to subsidize the purchase of equipment for their remote working location. All other equipment costs will be the sole responsibility of the employee. The employee must ensure they have all necessary equipment to meet the requirements and expectations of their job.

Equipment supplied by the organization will be maintained by the organization. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the organization, will be maintained by the employee. Lochmueller Group accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment.

Equipment supplied by the organization is to be used for business purposes only. The telecommuter must sign an inventory of all Lochmueller Group property received and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment, all company property will be returned to the company, unless other arrangements have been made.

Lochmueller Group will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary for the employee to complete their job responsibilities (these supplies are not intended for personal use). Lochmueller Group will also cover the cost of required anti-virus and patch management software.

To ensure optimal performance, employees are expected to maintain high speed internet with an appropriate router that will satisfy bandwidth and distance needs, and ensure operating machine is equipped with the appropriate operating system and web browser. See specific technology requirements attached.

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. Lochmueller Group 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 the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary company and customer 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.

Telecommuting is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate childcare. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate childcare needs, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting business demands. Prospective telecommuters are encouraged to discuss expectations of telecommuting with family members prior to entering a trial period.

### **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 Lochmueller Group'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 the immediate termination of the telecommuting agreement.

### **Ad Hoc Arrangements**

Temporary telecommuting arrangements may be approved for circumstances such as inclement weather, special projects or business travel. These arrangements are approved on an as-needed basis only, with no expectation of ongoing continuance.

Other informal, short-term arrangements may be made for employees on family or medical leave to the extent practical for the employee and the organization and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if appropriate.

All informal telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the organization.

## Technology Requirements

### Minimum Home Internet Specs:

- High Speed Internet (Fiber, Broadband Cable, or DSL)
- Minimum of 10Mbps\*

*\* If you have other family members using the Internet at the same time, then you need to adjust accordingly.*

#### *Benchmarks:*

##### **10+ Mbps:**

- Regular browsing
- Music streaming
- Standard video streaming
- Audio teleconferencing
- Casual gaming
- Ideal for 1 person

##### **20+ Mbps:**

- Multiple users
- HD / Ultra HD video streaming
- Audio/Video teleconferencing
- Frequent gaming
- Ideal for 2-4 people

##### **40+ Mbps:**

- Multiple users
- Simultaneous HD streaming
- Simultaneous gaming
- Ideal for 4+

### Minimum Home Network:

- 1st Choice: Router with a 100M wired connection is preferred (AutoCAD/Microstation/GIS users)
- 2nd Choice: Wireless router w/ 5Ghz band available (more bandwidth, but shorter distances)
- 3rd Choice: Wireless router w/ 2.4GHz band (less bandwidth, but longer distances)

### Minimum Hardware\*:

- PC only (no Macs or Chromebooks)
  - Can be laptop or tower
- Processor: 2GHz CPU
- Memory: 4GB RAM
- Hard Drive: Any type (at least 40GB free space for Lochmueller Group installed software)
- Screen resolution: 1920 x 1080
- Wired network port available (either dedicated port or USB/RJ45 adapter)
- Ability to connect external keyboard/mouse if desired/needed
- Ability to connect one or two external monitors if desired/needed
- Enough USB ports to handle ALL needed peripherals

*\* This hardware is only used to VPN & Remote Desktop into your work provided computer at the office*

**Minimum Software:**

- Windows 10 Operating System
- Chrome Web Browser
- Carbon Black Anti-Virus Agent (Provided by Lochmueller Group)
- Baramundi Patch Management Agent (Provided by Lochmueller Group)
- Microsoft Teams (Provided by Lochmueller Group)
- Microsoft Office 365 (Optional)(Online available, but can also download)(Provided by Lochmueller Group)

## Telecommuting Agreement

Telecommuting Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Days of Telecommuting: M\_\_\_ T\_\_\_ W\_\_\_ TH\_\_\_ F\_\_\_

### Availability/Schedule:

Telecommuting Days: \_\_\_\_\_

In-Office Days: \_\_\_\_\_

### Telecommuting Stipend:

All full-time employees that establish a telecommuting agreement are eligible for a one-time \$250 stipend. If the company gives the employee equipment for their home office, IT will assess the value and the stipend will be reduced by that amount.

\$250.00

- \_\_\_\_\_ value of company equipment given to employee (if applicable)

= \_\_\_\_\_ stipend amount to be paid

\*Once HR received the fully executed agreement, the stipend will be added on the following pay cycle.

### IT Requirements:

IT equipment and performance requirements have been reviewed and meet or exceed the requirements of the position.

Manager Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Manager Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*If you are an employee in the St. Louis office, please notify HR to discuss the Downtown St. Louis taxes.