

# OAK PARK TOWNSHIP

## TELECOMMUTING POLICY (DRAFT 07-17-2020)

### 1. POLICY

Oak Park Township is committed to increasing employee productivity and improving talent recruitment by providing employees with work alternatives that enable employees to meet work and family needs. Telecommuting is a work alternative Oak Park Township offers to eligible employees when it is beneficial to both Oak Park Township and its employees. Telecommuting does not change the terms and conditions of employment with Oak Park Township nor should it interfere with operational business needs or the delivery of Oak Park Township services.

### 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the rules for the use of an alternate work location for employees to perform usual job duties away from assigned main office locations.

The alternative work arrangement is intended to help Oak Park Township retain and recruit excellent employees and to provide more flexible work arrangements for eligible employees.

### 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all eligible full-time and part-time employees with at least 6 months employment. Eligible employees must have satisfactory job performance and supervisor permission to telecommute. The Township Manager has the final decision to determine eligibility for telecommuting.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Alternate Work Location** – An approved work site other than the employee’s assigned main office location where official Oak Park Township business is performed.
- B. **Dependent Care** – The care provided to infants, toddlers, preschoolers, school-aged children, or adults and elderly adults.
- C. **Main Office Location**– The assigned Oak Park Township office location of the employee.
- D. **Telecommuting** – An alternative work arrangement under which an employee performs the duties and responsibilities of such employee’s position, and other authorized activities, from an approved worksite other than the employee’s assigned main office location.
- E. **Telecommuting Agreement** – The written agreement between the supervisor and employee, which details the terms and conditions of the eligible employee’s work away from the main office location. Telecommuting agreements are required for eligible employees who are authorized to telecommute.

OAK PARK TOWNSHIP  
TELECOMMUTING POLICY (DRAFT 07-17-2020)

**5. ELIGIBILITY**

Participation of employees in the telecommuting program will vary among departments depending upon the operational business needs and the functions and responsibilities of employees. Initial determination eligibility for telecommuting is at the discretion of the employee's immediate Supervisor; however, the ultimate decision for eligibility for telecommuting is at the discretion of the employee's Township Manager. In determining whether an employee is eligible to telecommute, the Supervisor, Directors and Township Manager must consider whether:

- A. Service delivery to internal and external customers will be maintained;
- B. The department will maintain adequate coverage during normal business hours;
- C. The employee has satisfactorily performed job responsibilities prior to telecommute request as evidenced through current observations and performance evaluations;
- D. The employee demonstrates the ability to work independently;
- E. The position has clearly defined deliverables and measurable tasks and productivity may be effectively quantified with minimal supervisor observation;
- F. Confidentiality will not be compromised; when applicable, employee will maintain HIPAA compliant at all time; and
- G. Increased employee engagement will be supported through improved work-life balance.

**6. LIMITATIONS**

Telecommuting is not appropriate for all employees and no employee is entitled or guaranteed the opportunity to telecommute or to the continuation of telecommuting. An employee is not eligible to telework if:

- A. The employee's day-to-day essential job functions includes:
- B. Continuous in-person customer service that must be provided on-site;
- C. Direct handling of secure materials determined to be inappropriate for telecommuting by the Supervisor, Director or Township Manager; or
- D. Any additional on-site activity that cannot be handled remotely or at an alternative work location.
- E. The employee does not have a history of disciplinary actions. All disciplinary actions must be resolved at least 6 months prior to requesting telecommuting.
- F. The quantity or quality of an employee's work is unsatisfactory.

OAK PARK TOWNSHIP  
TELECOMMUTING POLICY (DRAFT 07-17-2020)

**7. TERMS FOR TELECOMMUTING**

- A. All employees eligible to participate in the telecommuting program must:
1. Complete an annual Telecommuting Agreement for their department and have it on file with their immediate Supervisor. The Telecommuting Agreement must be refiled by the employee whenever:
    - a. The employee has a change in direct supervision;
    - b. The employee changes position, or
    - c. There is a change in the employee's job classification.
  2. Adhere to the approved telecommuting schedule and work from an approved worksite;
  3. Seek prior approval for any deviation from the approved telecommuting schedule including overtime, compensatory time, and flex time;
  4. Be available by telephone and/or e-mail during scheduled work hours, with the exception for breaks.
  5. Account for time spent at alternative work locations in the same manner as if the employee reported for work at the main office location
  6. 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 in Paylocity. 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.
  7. Maintain a level of performance that meets or exceeds the expectations and timelines for completing all assignments and tasks associated with the position; and
  8. Not use telecommuting as a substitution for sick leave, vacation, and dependent care.
- B. Further, employees eligible to participate in the telecommuting program must acknowledge and agree that:
1. A specific workspace is designated at the alternate private work location (no public setting such as coffee shops, restaurants, libraries, etc.) with reliable internet and phone access.
  2. The employee's alternate work location will be considered an extension of the Oak Park Township's main office location. Therefore, the Oak Park Township will continue to be liable for job-related accidents of employees that occur in the alternate work location during the employee's working hours. Workers' compensation liability is limited to the designated workspace as opposed to all areas of the alternate work location.

**OAK PARK TOWNSHIP  
TELECOMMUTING POLICY (DRAFT 07-17-2020)**

3. Telecommuting is not a substitute for dependent care. Employees must arrange for dependent care same as if they are at their assigned main office location;
- C. The supervisor retains the right to require a telecommuting employee to commute to an Oak Park Township office on a regular schedule based on the needs of the department.
- D. The Telecommuting Agreement may be terminated by the supervisor or employee upon one (1) week notice to the other party. In cases involving a security breach or violation of Oak Park Township Policy, telecommuting privileges shall be terminated immediately without prior notice.

**8. EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY**

When appropriate, Oak Park Township will purchase equipment necessary to function in a telecommuting environment.

- A. Necessary equipment, hardware and software for the job will be available for loan upon request. Equipment is to be used by the employee only and strictly for Township-related projects. All items provided by the township must be recorded on an equipment list and provided to the employee's supervisor. All equipment will be returned to the office upon request.
- B. Oak Park Township will maintain the equipment. This equipment must be used for business purposes only.
- C. Office supplies will be provided by the Township as needed. Out-of-pocket expenses for other supplies will not be reimbursed unless by prior approval of the employee's supervisor.
- D. Unless otherwise agreed to in advance in writing, Oak Park Township will not be responsible for any other costs the employee may incur while telecommuting.

**9. TELECOMMUTING WORK SITES**

The telecommuter should designate a workspace, from a private residence, for installation of any equipment to be used while telecommuting. The private residence must have reliable internet and phone coverage. This workspace should be maintained in a safe condition, free from hazards to people and equipment. Any Township materials taken home should be kept in the designated work area at home in a secure environment and not be made accessible to others.

**10. MILEAGE AND TRAVEL**

- A. Mileage is paid based on miles from Oak Park Township offices to destinations within the Oak Park Township Service area.
- B. Travel is based on the need to meet with Oak Park Township clients, professional meetings, trainings, and other events approved by the employee's

OAK PARK TOWNSHIP  
TELECOMMUTING POLICY (DRAFT 07-17-2020)

supervisor.

- C. For additional travel questions, employees must contact their direct supervisor.

## 11. TAX DEDUCTION

Employee is responsible for any income tax implications of remote work. The Township will not provide tax guidance and encourages employees to consult with a qualified tax professional regarding any home office-related deductions.

## 12. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

- A. Oak Park Township employees may have access to confidential and proprietary information not accessible to the general public. Generally, confidential and proprietary information shall not leave the assigned main office location. Further, duplicating or disclosing confidential or proprietary information, unless it serves as a business necessity, is strictly prohibited. When telecommuting, employees are required to maintain confidentiality of all Oak Park Township information as they would at their main office location. Employees shall also take the necessary precautions to ensure that confidential and proprietary information is protected while in transit between the main office location and alternative work locations.
- B. When applicable, telecommuting employees must maintain HIPAA compliance at all times.
- C. Failure to exercise due care in safeguarding the Oak Park Township's confidential and proprietary information is a job performance matter and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## 13. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. **Employee Responsibilities.** Employees eligible to telecommute shall:
1. Initiate the telecommute approval process;
  2. Complete Telecommute Agreement
  3. Complete timesheets in accordance with Oak Park Township Personnel Manual in Paylocity;
  4. Maintain safe working conditions at their alternative work location as the employee would at the main office location;
  5. Report any work interruption while at the alternative work location (examples include, but not limited to, major construction/ repairs, loss of internet). In the event the interruption requires the employee to work at the main office instead of telecommuting, the employee must immediately notify their supervisor; and
  6. Report any job-related injury at an alternative work location to their direct supervisor within 48 hours.

OAK PARK TOWNSHIP  
TELECOMMUTING POLICY (DRAFT 07-17-2020)

- B. **Supervisor Responsibilities.** Supervisors of eligible telecommuting employees shall:
1. Review and approve the eligible employee's Telecommuting Agreement. If the request to telecommute is not approved, the Supervisor must still forward the request to the department director with a written reason why the employ was denied the request and any evidentiary support;
  2. Discuss any changes and issues regarding the Telecommute Agreement or schedule with the employee;
  3. Hold regularly scheduled meetings with the telecommuting employee to discuss assignments during the telecommute period and any work-related issues while at the alternative work location.
  4. Maintain work performance to ensure work objectives are being met or exceeded.

**14. COMPLIANCE**

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including, termination of employment. All employees are required to promptly report violations of this policy to their direct supervisor.

**15. AUTHORITY**

The Oak Park Township Manager recommended changes to the Oak Park Township Personnel Manual to the Board for approval.

**16. INTERPRETATION**

The Oak Park Township Manager reserves the right to revise or eliminate this policy at any time. The Oak Park Township's Board reserves the right to approve proposed policy revisions or eliminations.