

DSHS Administrative Policy No. 18.87

Subject: DSHS Modern and Mobile Workplace

Information Contact: DSHS Human Resources

Authorizing Source: [Governor Executive Order 16-07](#)
[RCW 41.04.390](#)
[Chapter 82.70 RCW](#)
[RCW 70A.15.4000-4100](#)

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Approved by: **Original signed by Lori Manning**
Interim Senior Director, Human Resources Division

Purpose

This policy provides guidance to the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) for the integration of workplace strategies to increase mobilization for employees in eligible positions regardless of their work location.

A goal of DSHS is to provide excellent services and an organizational culture that supports employee needs for flexibility and mobility, reduces our impact on the environment, provides a supportive and productive work environment, attracts and retains talented employees, and promotes a positive work/life balance.

This policy is designed to support a workplace strategy that is about the work, not where it is done, when work type and duties allow.

Scope

This policy applies to all DSHS programs and DSHS employees in positions that have been designated as eligible. For represented employees, the collective bargaining agreements (CBA) supersede specific provisions of agency policies with which it conflicts.

Additional Guidance

[Out-of-state remote work guidance and resources | Office of Financial Management \(wa.gov\)](#)
[Modern and Mobile Workplace guidance](#)

Definitions

Alternative duty station: An approved location, reflected in a teleworking agreement, other than the employee's official work location, where the employee performs work duties normally performed at the employee's official duty station.

Compressed workweek: A work schedule that eliminates at least one work day every two weeks by working longer hours during the remaining days.

Duty station: The city, town, or other location where the employee's office is located.

Flexible work schedules: An overarching term referencing different work schedules within DSHS. These schedules include: flex time, compressed workweek, and telework schedules.

Flex time: Allows employees some flexibility in starting and ending times outside of DSHS's normal work hours.

- **Formal flex** – A documented official schedule with beginning and/or ending times outside of DSHS's normal work hours agreed upon between the employee and their supervisor.
- **Informal flex** – An alteration of a schedule for a single event or short-term duration agreed upon between the employee and their supervisor.

Mobile work: The ability to work in a variety of locations. Mobility also encompasses work that is functionally required of certain jobs, such as fieldwork.

Telework: A program where at least once every two weeks, the employee performs work duties normally performed at the employee's duty station from their home, from an office near the employee's home, or an alternative location identified in a teleworking agreement, rather than the employee's official duty station.

Telework participant agreement: A written plan detailing the understanding of, and commitment to, teleworking as mutually agreed upon by the employee, supervisor, and appointing authority.

Work environment: Everything that shapes the employee's involvement with the work itself, including the organizational culture, physical space, safety considerations, technology and tools, and interactions with co-workers and supervisors.

Workplace: The physical location where an employee works.

Workplace strategy: The alignment of an organization's work patterns with the work environment to enable peak performance and reduce costs while maintaining or improving business operations, customer service and employee engagement.

Policy:

It is the policy of DSHS to encourage or broadly allow the use of mobile or flexible work schedules within the bounds of good public practice, within resource limitations imposed or adopted, with consideration of business need, and with continued performance standards being met.

Mobile work and flexible work schedules allow for the following (but not limited to):

- Supports the Washington Clean Air Act and the commute trip reduction program without impairing services provided to the public.
- Improves employee morale, productivity, and business efficiency resulting from scheduling flexibility.
- Allows for flexibility for work/life balance to include caregiving activities and reducing or eliminating commute times allowing employees increased time for personal activities.

A. Flexible work schedules

1. Employees wishing to participate in flexible work schedules must initiate the request with their supervisor/manager.
2. Employees participating in flexible work schedules must adhere to all departmental policies including, but not limited to:
 - a. Confidentiality of information;
 - b. Work schedules and work hours;
 - c. Use of electronic equipment;
 - d. Ethics;
 - e. Performance; and
 - f. All leave provisions of Administrative Policy 18.31 (or the CBA for represented employees).
3. Initial approval and ongoing participation will be based on business needs, the position's eligibility based on an evaluation of the position description form, and an evaluation of the impact to the employee's performance.
 - a. Not all positions will be eligible for participation.
 - b. Approval decisions will be made at the local division/unit level.
 - i. Employees may request a review by the appointing authority when a supervisor has denied or revoked a flexible work schedule.

4. Employees are expected to complete all work assignments as required, attend meetings (virtually and in person) and conduct all day-to-day tasks as they would as if they were working in person at their official duty station.
5. Equipment used for flexible work schedules remains the property of DSHS and must be returned upon request or end of employment in the position.
 - a. DSHS will not create multiple workspaces for employees (one in alternative location and one in office). For space standards, see [leased facilities space standards](#).
6. Supervisors will communicate, review, and document the work performance expectations for the current evaluation period with the employee.
7. Supervisors will coordinate flexible work schedules to ensure adequate coverage for business needs and to ensure there is adequate working space in office.
8. Supervisors must submit notification of schedule change as appropriate.
 - a. Overtime eligible employees must receive prior approval from their management structure to work overtime.
 - b. Employees will provide advance notice to the supervisor regarding any deviation from the agreed upon schedule.

B. Telework

1. Employees may be required to return to their official duty station or another location for the following reasons, but not limited to, business needs, meetings or trainings. This is not for a regular schedule change but is to meet a specific in office need.
 - a. The supervisor must document the amount of advanced notification to be provided to the employee when required to return to the official duty station in the telework agreement.
 - i. The advance notice should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and allow for flexibility for the employee to make personal arrangements while still meeting business needs.
2. The duty station of the employee will remain the city, town, or other location that is the employee's work location identified in HRMS. The duty station is not the employee's home.
 - a. The telework location is an alternate location that is identified in the telework agreement.
3. Employees may be authorized to telework while providing regular dependent

care (e.g., child or elder care).

- a. Employees must document a plan for dependent care when they are required to be at their official duty station as outlined in B.1.

4. Telework out of Washington state may be approved for the reasons listed by [State HR in the out of state remote work guidance and resources](#).

- a. Supervisors and managers must consult with their HRD business partner when an out of state telework agreement has been requested. (See [Modern and Mobile Workplace Guidelines](#) for Out of State telework requests [03-514](#) for periods of 30 days or less.)
 - i. The consultation will need to ensure it meets DSHS policies and State HR guidance.
- b. Supervisors and managers must consider (but not limited to):
 - i. Equipment logistics;
 - ii. Travel expectations; and
 - iii. Data privacy.
- c. Appointing authorities must take into consideration budget impacts and other consideration to include but not limited to the new state's:
 - i. Benefits (unemployment insurance, PFML);
 - ii. Taxes; and
 - iii. Wage and hour laws.

5. Appointing authorities must consult with their senior business partners for approval when an employee requests to temporarily work out of country for any period of time. Out of country telework is only considered in very limited circumstances.

C. Telework participant agreement

1. Employees who telework must complete a telework participant agreement and it must be signed by the employee and supervisor.
 - a. Supervisors and employees will comply with the requirement of the telework agreement and the flexible work schedule.
2. The supervisor and the employee must review and evaluate the telework agreement annually. The review should include:
 - a. Work being accomplished at the telework or mobile worksite; and
 - b. The impact of telework on clients or customers served by the employee.
3. The agreement may be reviewed more often if appropriate and must be updated whenever there is a change.

- a. Supervisors and managers may periodically check in with the employee on business need or performance and adjust course accordingly.
 4. The employee and supervisor must date and re-sign the original DSHS Telework Participant Agreement to document completion of the annual review.
 5. The telework agreement must be stored in the employee's personnel file. Any other attachments or expectations shall be stored in the supervisory file.
 6. DSHS reserves the right to terminate the agreement at any time. Best practice is to provide 30 days' notice but no less than seven (7) calendar days' written notice of any plans to terminate the agreement, unless it is for alleged misconduct or an emergency.
 - a. Supervisors and employees can periodically check in on business need or performance and adjust course accordingly.
- D. Mobile and flexible workplace standards and design
1. Per administrative policy [14.04 DSHS leased facilities policy](#), the leased facilities and maintenance operations team establishes, publishes, and maintains DSHS space and furniture standards which support the business functions performed and align with Office of Financial Management (OFM) guidance.
 2. Per administration policy [14.04 DSHS Leased Facilities policy](#), the leased facilities and maintenance operations team designs reconfigurations and alterations of leased space.

Resources

[DSHS Telework Review Checklist](#), Form 17-239
[DSHS Telework Application](#), Form 17-199
[DSHS Telework Application Disposition](#), Form 17-200
[DSHS Telework Application Withdrawal](#), Form 17-201
[DSHS Telework Safety Assessment](#), Form 17-202
[DSHS Telework Site Agreement](#), Form 17-203
[DSHS Telework Participant Agreement](#), Form 17-204
[DSHS Telework Employee Self-Assessment](#), Form 17-205
[DSHS Out of State Telework Request](#) Form 03-514
[DSHS Telework Application Score Sheet](#), Form 17-240
[DSHS Candidate Assessment Addendum](#), Form 17-240A

¹ Correct reference in 3.a. and authorizing statute from RCW 70.94.521-551 to chapter 82.70 RCW.

² Added link to out of state telework request form

³ Added forms and links to resources

⁴ Updated link to resources

DSHS Official