

DSHS Administrative Policy No. 18.87

Subject: DSHS Modern and Mobile Workplace Policy

Information Contact: DSHS Human Resources

Authorizing Source: Governor Executive Order 16-07
RCW 41.04.390
RCW 70.94.521-551

Effective Date: November 1, 2017

Revised: New ¹ Housekeeping 1/3/18

Approved by: original signed by David L. Stewart
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 and improve the work environment.

A goal of DSHS is to provide 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 Department 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.

Definitions

Flexible-Time Work Schedule: A work schedule that allows employees to eliminate at least one work day every two weeks by working longer hours during the remaining days, resulting in less commute trips (compressed workweek), or allows the employees some flexibility in starting and ending times outside of the agency's normal work hours (flex schedule) consistent with WAC 357-28-225 and RCW 41.04.390.

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

Telework: At least once every two weeks, the employee works from his or her home, or from an office near the employee's home, rather than the employee's official work station.

Teleworking 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 the Department of Social and Health Services to encourage or broadly allow the use of mobile or tele-working arrangements and flexible scheduling within the bounds of good public practice and within resource limitations imposed or adopted.

Staff participating must adhere to all departmental policies including, but not limited to, policies regarding confidentiality of information, work schedules, work hours, use of electronic equipment, ethics, performance, leave use and tracking of mobile work hours.

Mobile work, telework and flexible-time work schedules allow for the following:

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

Participation will be based on business needs and the work being completed as defined in the employee's position description. Not all positions will be eligible for participation. Final approval decisions will be made by each administration's management.

Employees are expected to complete all work assignments as required, attend meetings and conduct all day-to-day tasks as they would normally.

Requirements for Telework Agreements and Flexible-Time Work Schedules

For employees who telework, a Telework Agreement must be signed by the employee and supervisor. The Department reserves the right to terminate the agreement at any time. Participants will receive seven (7) calendar day's written notice of any plans to terminate the agreement, unless it is for alleged misconduct or an emergency.

For employees to establish a flexible-time work schedule, a Work Schedule/Shift Change Notice must state the hours agreed to and be approved by their management structure.

- Employees will not use telework as a substitute for regular dependent care (e.g. child or elder care).
- Overtime-eligible employees must receive prior approval from their management structure to work overtime.

Supervisors and employees will comply with the requirements of the Telework Agreement and the Flexible-Time Work Schedule.

The supervisor and the employee must review and evaluate the telework agreement annually. The agreement may be reviewed more often if appropriate. The review should include:

- Work being accomplished at the telework or mobile worksite;
- The impact of telework on clients or customers served by the employee; and
- Whether the cost of the agreement exceeds the predicted benefits.

To document completion of the annual review, the employee and supervisor must date and resign the original DSHS Telework Participant Agreement, and the Work Schedule/Shift Change Notice if applicable.

Requirements for Supervisors and Employees

Supervisors will communicate and review work/performance expectations with the employee as recorded in the performance evaluation for the current evaluation period.

Employees will provide advance notice to the supervisor regarding any deviation from the agreed-upon/signed Telework Agreement and Flexible-Time Work Schedule.

All leave provisions of Administrative Policy 18.31 (or the CBA for represented employees) continue to apply under a telework agreement.

Expectations

Modern and mobile workplace decisions must take into consideration existing program resources, IT support and available systems compatibility and how space will be used in new,

efficient, and creative ways in order to support a mobile and changing workforce and environment.

Workplace designs and decisions will be made collaboratively by DSHS Administrations, programs, and the Leased Facilities Design team. The design process will include early employee engagement to ensure employees are involved designing their workspace for maximum effectiveness and efficiency. Space planning professionals will design workplace environments that efficiently support business needs and best align with client service delivery.

Executive leadership will ensure decisions are made based on existing resources, IT support and system capabilities and support a mobile and changing workforce and environment.

Program leadership will promote the Modern and Mobile Work Environment concept and ensure DSHS space requirements are followed and supported to ensure a safe and productive workspace for staff.

Roles and Responsibilities for Space Use

DSHS will apply workplace strategies to create a modern work environment by:

- Evaluating the kind of work being done and where it's being done from.
- Building workplace environments that efficiently support the business needs for the services being provided and the workers providing them.
- Designing spaces that best align with client service delivery.
- Increasing space utilization, while maintaining space standards and enhancing employee mobility whenever possible.
- Building workplace environments that include collaboration and enable peak team and employee performance.

DSHS shall update and maintain internal space use standards that are in alignment with Office of Financial Management (OFM) and support the business functions performed. These standards shall be filed with OFM whenever updated.

Resources

[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](#)

¹ Removed a note left inadvertently from "Requirements for Telework Agreements"