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Owner: Daniel Pennington: President, Vail Health Foundation
Department: Human Resources

Telecommuting Policy

PURPOSE:

Based on a compelling business need, telecommuting may be granted with these guidelines and procedures.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Vail Health (VH) and Vail Valley Surgery Center (VVSC) considers telecommuting to be a viable alternative work arrangement in cases where individual, job, and leader characteristics are best suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting allows employees to work at home, on the road, or in a satellite location for all or part of their regular workweek. Telecommuting is a voluntary work alternative that may be appropriate for some employees and some jobs. It is not an entitlement, it is not a company-wide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment.

Leaders with employees who request telecommuting approval must be directed to the Director, Human Resources. The CEO, CFO, CAO and Director of Human Resources will discuss each request. Based on a **compelling business need** presented by the leader of the employee requesting approval, telecommuting may or may not be granted.

This policy does not apply to situations where a leader occasionally allows an employee to work at home on a temporary, irregular basis.

DEFINITIONS:

Telecommuting: technology-assisted work conducted outside of the organization's centrally-located work spaces.

PROCEDURES:

A. Assess the Feasibility

Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and leader will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement and present their request to the Director of Human Resources. Once received, approval must be made by the CEO, CFO and CAO, paying particular attention to the following areas:

1. **Employee Suitability:** Is the employee a good candidate for telecommuting? The employee and leader will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, compared to traits customarily recognized as appropriate for successful telecommuters. For example:

- *Proven ability to perform*
- *High job knowledge*
- *Ability to establish clear objectives*
- *Flexibility*
- *Ability to work independently*
- *Dependability*
- *No disciplinary action within the last 12 months*

2. **Job Responsibilities:** Does the nature of the work lend itself to telecommuting? The employee and leader will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement. For example:

- *Jobs that entail working alone and with equipment that can be kept at an alternate work site*
- *Essential functions of certain positions may not be suited to a telecommuting arrangement*
- *Clearly-defined tasks and objectives*
- *Measurable work activities*
- *Little face-to-face communication required*

3. **Equipment needs, workspace design considerations, and scheduling issues.**

4. **Tax and other legal implications for the business use of the employee's home, based on Internal Revenue Service and state and local government restrictions.** Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.

B. Trial Period

1. The employee and leader will agree on the number of days of telecommuting allowed each week, the work schedule that the employee will customarily maintain, and the manner and frequency of communication.
2. If the employee and leader agree and have the support of the CEO, CFO, CAO and the Director of Human Resources, a draft telecommuting agreement will be prepared and signed by all parties, and a trial period will commence not to exceed twelve months.
3. Evaluation of the telecommuter's performance during the trial period will include weekly interaction by phone and/or email between the employee and the leader, and may include weekly status updates to discuss work progress and problems.
4. An appropriate level of communication between the telecommuter and leader will be agreed to as part of the discussion process, and will be more formal during the trial period.
5. At the conclusion of the trial period, the employee and leader will each evaluate the arrangement, and make recommendations to the Director of Human Resources for continuance and/or modifications. The CEO, CFO, CAO and the Director of Human Resources will evaluate and provide a response to the requesting leader.

C. Telecommuting Agreement

1. Employee must have met the job-specific duty requirements, and have proven to leader to be self-motivated and an independent worker.

2. After conclusion of the trial period, the leader and telecommuter will communicate at a level consistent with employees working on-site, in a manner and frequency that is appropriate for the job and the individuals involved. Employee will be accessible by phone within a reasonable time period during the agreed-upon work schedule.
3. Evaluation of telecommuter performance beyond the trial period will be consistent in both content and frequency with those received by employees working on-site, but will focus on work output and completion of objectives rather than on time-based performance.
4. Employees entering into a telecommuting agreement may be required to forfeit the use of a personal office or workstation within the organization's centrally-located work spaces, in favor of a shared arrangement to maximize on-site office space needs.
5. Employee is expected to be available to come in to the office when needed for meetings.
6. Any telecommuting arrangement may be discontinued, at will, at any time at the request of either the telecommuter or the organization. In addition, the availability of telecommuting as a flexible work arrangement for employees may be discontinued at any time, at the discretion of the organization. Every effort will be made to provide 30 days' notice of such a change, to accommodate commuting, child care, and other factors involved with such a change. However, there may be instances when no notice is possible.

D. Requirements

1. Environment:

- a. Employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his/her home for work purposes. Employee must have a work environment that affords privacy, and is ergonomically correct.
- b. VH will not be responsible for costs associated with the initial setup of the employee's home office, such as:
 - *remodeling*
 - *furniture*
 - *lighting*
 - *repairs or modifications to the home office space*
- c. VH will offer appropriate assistance in setting up a work station designed for safe, comfortable work.
- d. Consistent with VH's expectations of information security for employees working on-site, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of organization and patient information that may be accessible from their home office. Examples of steps to take include use of locked file cabinets and desks, and regular password maintenance.
- e. If employee has children at home, provisions must be made for child care - telecommuting is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate child care. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate child care 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 into a trial period.

2. Equipment:

- a. VH will determine, with input from the employee and the leader, the appropriate equipment needed for each telecommuting arrangement. Determinations regarding appropriate equipment will be made

- on a case-by-case basis, and are subject to change at any time. The Information Systems and Human Resources departments will serve as resources for equipment determination.
- b. Equipment supplied by VH is to be used for business purposes only. The telecommuter will sign an inventory of all equipment supplied by VH, and will take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft.
 - c. After VH / VVSC-supplied equipment has been delivered, a designated representative of VH may visit the employee's home work site to inspect for possible work hazards and suggest modifications. Repeat inspections may occur on an as-needed basis.
 - d. Equipment supplied by VH will be maintained by the organization. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the organization, will be maintained by the employee. VH accepts on responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment.
 - e. Employee will supply an Internet connection with speed sufficient to meet the requirements of the job. If the employee's Internet connection should become unavailable, the employee must notify their leader. The option may be made for the employee to work on-site, or to use earned time off.
 - f. Employee should have no expectation of privacy with regard to home office. Office, computer files, computers, telephone lines etc. may be monitored and subject to inspection.
 - g. If the telecommuter's employment with the organization is terminated, all VH / VVSC-supplied property will be returned to the organization, unless other arrangements have been made.

3. Safety:

1. Injuries sustained by the employee while at his/her home work location and in conjunction with his/her regular work duties, would normally be covered by VH's workers' compensation policy.
2. Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying their leader of any job-related injuries, in accordance with the organization's workers' compensation procedures.
3. Employee agrees to maintain the home workstation in compliance with OSHA safety requirements and will be in agreement to allow the organization to enter the employee's premises and investigate when necessary.
4. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to his/her work site.
5. Employee should ensure that they are in compliance with any and all local zoning ordinances.

4. Time Tracking:

1. Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (generally, hourly employees) will be required to record all hours worked via time stamp through KRONOS.
2. Hours worked in excess of those specified per day and per workweek, in accordance with state and federal requirements, will require the advance approval of the employee's leader. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in immediate cessation of the telecommuting agreement.
3. While on the clock, telecommuting employees should not be performing personal tasks, such as doing household chores.

Attachments

[Telecommuting Agreement.pdf](#)

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
	Tanya Rippeth: Senior Director, Human Resources	03/2020

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