

SANILAC COUNTY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

NUMBER: BA152

NAME: ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES: FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULE/REMOTE WORK

INITIAL APPROVAL DATE:	07/28/2020	APPROVED BY: Sanilac CMH Board
(LAST) REVISION DATE:	10/15/2024	APPROVED BY: HR Manager
(LAST) REVIEW DATE:	10/17/2024	REVIEWED BY: Policy Committee
DISCONTINUED DATE:	N/A	REPLACED BY: N/A

I. POLICY

Sanilac County Community Mental Health Authority (Sanilac CMH) shall establish guidelines for Agency staff when completing job duties in a remote work and/or flex schedule arrangement. Working off site and flexible hours is a privilege for employees and will benefit the Agency; however, the remote work and/or flex schedule agreement can be terminated at any given time.

II. APPLICATION

Populations: Eligible Agency staff considered for remote work and/or flex schedule arrangement. This will vary in departments dependent upon job tasks and duties and supervisory approval.

III. DEFINITIONS

Remote Work: An arrangement in which Agency staff work outside of the office, often working from home or other mutually agreed upon location. Also referred to as remote work, telework, working from home or e-commuting.

Flexible Work Schedule: A flexible work schedule or flex schedule is an alternative to the conventional workweek. It allows employees to start and end a workday when they request/are approved, as long as services are delivered during the core hours discussed/approved by their supervisor.

IV. STANDARDS

Remote Work:

The employee remains subject to the terms and conditions of employment set forth in the Agency's policies and procedures and elsewhere. The employee will act as a representative of the Agency regardless of work location and will conduct him/herself in a professional manner.

In addition to their existing obligations and responsibilities, the remote worker agrees to the terms and conditions outlined in the Remote Work Agreement (Form #0556).

Agency employees may be eligible to work off site during regular business hours and have access to the telephone, computer network, electronic medical record and email systems. For this to occur, the employee must meet the following criterion:

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- a) Hold a position conducive to remote work. Because the nature of work may vary, not all positions will be eligible for remote work.
- b) Have permission from his/her Supervisor and Officer.
- c) Have access to appropriate technology to perform job duties.
- d) Must have completed probationary status.
- e) Have satisfactory performance status within the last three months, which includes acceptable productivity levels.
- f) A written Remote Work Agreement, Safety Check List and Supervisor's Expectation sheet (Forms #0556, #0557 and #0558) must be filed and approved with Human Resources prior to the commencement of Remote Work.

If Remote work is appropriate, details will be developed between the supervisor and the staff member including technology needs, schedule, work assignments and completion expectations. The Agency shall not incur any additional costs from a staff working remote. The Agency will not provide equipment that would not have been otherwise issued for the position, including laptops, internet cards, cellphones, etc.

It is expected the staff member will work their required number of hours. Hours should be tracked and reported in the payroll system in an accurate manner. The employee is expected to maintain their regular work schedule. Any deviation of work hours or site needs to be discussed with and approved by the employee's supervisor. An employee may not work overtime without prior authorization from his/her supervisor.

Employees may be approved to work remotely up to two (2) assigned days each work week. Deviations to this schedule is at the Supervisor's discretion, changes may be required for Agency need and requested for an employee need. Specialized departments, including ACT, may be approved for remote work for up to 15 hours each week. Staff should be working in the office, on average, three (3) days each week. Drive time to staff's home will not be counted as time worked nor will mileage to and from a remote worksite be reimbursed when partial days are approved for remote work. Exceptions to this rule may be made with Officer/CEO approval pursuant to the Program Closure Due to Extreme Weather Policy (BC009) and/or the State of Emergency Policy (BA149).

The Remote Work Agreement (Form #0556) will be valid upon signing and remain in effect until it is terminated by the employee's Supervisor, an Officer, the Employee, or the CEO. This agreement is required to be reviewed, at minimum, annually.

Employees working remote will practice the same safe work habits as would occur at the Agency's offices. Employees must complete the Remote Work Safety Checklist (Form #0557) and return it with the Remote Work Agreement (Form #0556) to Human Resources. The employee confirms the off-site location complies with the safety regulations that apply to an office. This means having a safe work environment free of clutter, exposed wiring, slippery surfaces and other potential hazards. A smoke detector, unobstructed exits, proper ventilation and other basic safety precautions must be in place. Employees working remote are approved to work at the remote work site address listed on the Remote Work Location Safety Checklist (Form #0557).

The employee agrees to maintain a work environment allowing for proper security of protected health information as outlined in HIPAA. This means having a secure environment where information in the employee's computer, audible conversations and any printed information is protected from unauthorized disclosure.

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The employee agrees to not allow remote site visitors access to his/her remote work. The employee is expected to manage dependent care or personal responsibilities in a way that allows him/her to successfully meet job responsibilities and requirements. Working remotely is not a substitute for child or other dependent care.

The employee may not utilize remote work while on medical leave without the appropriate approval and releases on file. Reasonable accommodations to work remotely may be permissible at the discretion of the Supervisor, Officer and CEO once Human Resources has received a physician's return to work consent form.

Employees working remotely will have a designated official work office. Employees will not receive a mileage reimbursement to travel from the remote work location to the designated official work office when required for business operation.

Mileage reimbursement in excess of traditional commuting mileage to the workplace will be made for travel to field assignments if approved by the employee's Supervisor. Reimbursement will be based on the remote worksite to the field assignment and return, but in no case will such mileage charge exceed the amount had the assignment started and terminated at the designated official work office.

Employees are solely responsible for any costs incurred in working remote. This includes any increase in utility costs associated with preparing and maintaining a remote work location, including the cost of internet. Home internet connections should be used when possible while phone internet connection should be reserved for off-site work.

The Supervisor will frequently monitor the output of the staff member. Regular communication is expected between the Supervisor and staff member. Approval of days/times working off site will be based on department needs and employee coverage needed in the office. Hourly staff will work with their supervisor and schedule a consistent day to work remotely. Performance and productivity expectations must be agreed upon with the supervisor. Employees shall participate in regularly scheduled meetings either via conference call or in person if needed. Employees are expected to be flexible enough in scheduling off-site work to allow for personal attendance at meetings to maintain working relationships with co-workers and as directed by their supervisor. Employees may be required to come into the office to manage emergency situations at the discretion of their supervisor. Electronic calendars must be kept up to date and indicate when an employee is working off site. Employees must provide a phone number where they can be accessed when working off-site. This can be either a home phone or cell phone number. Personal communication fees will not be charged to the Agency. Employees must check email messages throughout the time they are working off site. Messages should be responded to as if working in the office setting. Priority should be given to messages that require an urgent response. Employees unable to work off site due to technical issues must report to the office. Office supplies and material may be taken to an off-site location but can only be used for Agency business purposes. Any unused office supplies or materials must be returned to the Agency. An employee's remote work approval may be revoked at any time, should standards set forth not be met.

The reporting requirements for workplace injury to a remote worker are the same as those for an injury on Agency premises and will require an investigation. The employee agrees to immediately notify his/her supervisor and Human Resources of injuries suffered arising out of, and, while performing official duties at the remote work location during set work hours.

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IT considerations:

- a) Off-site printing will not be supported.
- b) Staff are expected to provide their own internet connection, computer, cell phone, etc. unless already issued to meet position requirements. The Agency is not responsible for the cost of the required internet connection.
- c) Virus protection is required on at-home computers. Windows 10 is recommended. Update for the browser should be made to the most recent versions.
- d) No Agency work will be saved to at-home computers.

Flexible Work Schedule:

Agency employees may be eligible to work an alternative work schedule, not typical to the conventional workweek. For this to occur, the employee must meet the following criterion:

- a) Hold a position conducive to a flexible work schedule. Because the nature of work may vary, not all positions will be eligible to work a flexible schedule.
- b) Have permission from his/her Supervisor and Officer.
- c) Have the ability to complete all tasks and meet all individuals' needs with the flexible work schedule in place.
- d) Must have completed probationary status.
- e) Have satisfactory performance status within the last three months, which includes acceptable productivity levels.
- f) A written Flex Schedule-Request, Form #0538, must be submitted by the employee to their supervisor. This must then be submitted to HR.
- g) A Flex Schedule Supervisor Response Form #0537 must have been received by the staff prior to commencement of starting a flex schedule. This must be submitted to HR.
- h) Flex schedules may be approved for up to one year.
- i) A flex schedule can be revoked at any time, per the employee, or Agency.
- j) Staff are required to cover their full shift with the appropriate PTO when they take days off work.

Examples:

If a staff works a nine (9) hour shift, they must have nine (9) hours of accruals available to cover when calling in/taking a day off.

If a staff calls in, and they normally work six (6) hours on that day, they will need to have six (6) hours of time off available to cover.

- k) **Holiday:** When a flex day falls on a paid Holiday, the staff will revert back to a five (5) day work week/traditional schedule; hours will be determined by their supervisor. If there is a holiday during the week, staff will be able to flex their time with a schedule that is predetermined by their supervisor for that week, or use PTO to cover the remainder of the Holiday (time above 7.5 or 8 hours, depending on weekly hours worked, 37.5 or 40 hours).
- l) **Snow Days/Emergency Closure Days:** Staff will be paid up to 7.5 or 8 hours (depending on weekly hours worked) for a day the Agency is closed if it falls on their scheduled workday. Staff will be required to use PTO to cover the remainder of their shift as necessary.

Examples:

If a staff working 37.5 hrs/wk. is scheduled to work nine (9) hours on a day that the Agency is closed, 1.5 hours of PTO will need to be designated for that day. 1 hour of PTO will need to be designated for a staff that works forty (40) hours weekly.

If a staff is scheduled to work three (3) hours on a day that the Agency is closed, they will be paid for 3 hours.

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If the Agency is closed on a staff's regularly scheduled day off, they will not be paid for the snow day.

- m) Understand that failure to submit a flex schedule request prior to expiration of this approval will result in reverting to a traditional work schedule.
- n) The employee is expected to maintain their assigned work schedule. Any deviation of work hours or site needs to be discussed with and approved by the employee's supervisor. An employee may not work overtime without prior authorization from his/her supervisor.

FORMS AND EXHIBITS:

Form #0556 – Remote Work Agreement
Form #0557 - Remote Work Location Safety Checklist
Form #0558 - Supervisor's Expectations-Remote Work

REFERENCES:

Program Closure Due to Extreme Weather Policy (BC009)
State of Emergency Policy (BA149)
Flex Schedule Request Form (0538)
Flex Schedule Supervisor Response (0537)