

# SANILAC COUNTY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

**NUMBER: BA152**

**NAME: TELECOMMUTING/REMOTE WORK**

INITIAL APPROVAL DATE:	07/28/2020	APPROVED BY: Sanilac CMH Board
(LAST) REVISION DATE:	07/19/2023	APPROVED BY: HR Manager
(LAST) REVIEW DATE:	07/27/2023	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 telecommuting arrangement. Working off site is a privilege for employees and will benefit the Agency; however, the telecommuting agreement can be terminated at any given time.

### II. APPLICATION

Populations: Eligible Agency staff considered for a telecommuting arrangement. This will vary in departments dependent upon job task duties and Supervisory approval.

### III. DEFINITIONS

Telecommuting: 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.

### IV. STANDARDS

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 his/her existing obligations and responsibilities, the remote worker agrees to the terms and conditions outlined in the Telecommuting Agreement, Form #0556, has reviewed and signed Form #0557 Telecommuting Location Safety Check, and understands the Supervisor's expectations outlined in Form #0558 Supervisor's Expectations- Telework

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

- a) Hold a position conducive to telecommuting. Because the nature of work may vary, not all positions will be eligible for telecommuting.
- 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.

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- f) A written Telecommuting Agreement, Safety Check List and Supervisors Expectation sheet (Forms #0556, 0557, and 0558) must be filed and approved with Human Resources prior to the commencement of telecommuting.

If telecommuting is appropriate, details will be developed between the supervisor and the staff member including technology needs, schedule, work assignments, and expectations. The Agency shall not incur any additional costs from a staff telecommuting. 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 telecommute 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 telecommuting for up to fifteen (15) hours 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 Telecommuting Agreement (Form #0556) will be valid upon signing and remain in effect until it is terminated by the employee's Supervisor, Officer, the Employee, or the CEO. This agreement is required to be reviewed and updated, at minimum, annually.

Telecommuting employees will practice the same safe work habits as would occur at the Agency's offices. Employees must complete the Telecommuting Safety Checklist (Form #0557) and return it with the Telecommuting 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 telecommuting are approved to work at the remote work site address listed on the Telecommuting Location Safety Checklist (Form #0557).

The employee agrees to maintain a work environment allowing for proper security of protected health information as outlined by 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.

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

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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 be required to 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 from 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 telecommuting. 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 telecommuting 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, in the course of, performing official duties at the remote work location during set work hours.

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.

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d) No Agency work will be saved to at-home computers.

**V. FORMS AND EXHIBITS:**

Form #0556 – Telecommuting Agreement

Form #0557 - Telecommuting Location Safety Checklist

Form #0558 - Supervisor’s Expectations-Telework

**VI. REFERENCES:**

Program Closure Due to Extreme Weather Policy (BC009)

State of Emergency Policy (BA149)