

## **Hybrid Teleworking**

### Purpose/Objective

Hybrid teleworking (teleworking) allows employees to remotely for a part of their workweek. Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) considers teleworking to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement. Teleworking may be appropriate for some employees and jobs but not for others, is not an entitlement, is not an agency wide benefit, and in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with SCOE.

Teleworking does not change the number of hours worked or work schedule. The teleworking policy is a supportive arrangement between employees, their supervisors, and in partnership with the Human Resources Department.

Teleworking may be utilized where it is operationally feasible and serves as a viable option that clearly defines the benefits to the employee and management. This is a privilege not a right or expectation.

Any work being done remotely out of state needs the approval of the Superintendent.

Managers and employees must understand that adherence to the policy and procedures are an essential requirement of the teleworking program. Teleworking does not change the duties, obligations, responsibilities, or terms and conditions of SCOE employment.

SCOE employees who are teleworking must comply with all SCOE rules, policies, practices, and instructions. They must meet the same standards of performance and professionalism related to job responsibilities, work product, timeliness of assignments, and contact with other employees and the public, as they would be expected to meet if working onsite. It is required that employees who are teleworking present themselves professionally including appearance, attire, and background.

Further, employees may not engage in activities while teleworking that would not be permitted at the regular worksite, i.e., shopping at stores, taking long lunch breaks, consuming alcohol and/or drugs, etc. An employee that is teleworking must perform work during approved scheduled working hours.

All SCOE rules regarding the use of computers, the internet, and SCOE provided equipment apply while an employee is teleworking.

### Eligibility

Eligibility for teleworking is based on both the position and the employee. Not every position, nor every employee, may be well-suited for teleworking due to the nature of their work and the operational needs of the department.

New employees may be required to work in the office at the Supervisor's discretion to facilitate training and relationship building.

At all times, employees teleworking must maintain performance that meets or exceeds expectations. SCOE reserves the right to suspend the telework option for employees with performance issues.

### Responsibilities and Approvals

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that their departments have coverage during core SCOE business hours (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.), including the lunch period.

Participation in the teleworking program is voluntary and subject to prior written approval by Human Resources after prior written approval by the employee's Cabinet level administrator in consultation with their immediate supervisor **before** the start of the employee's teleworking schedule. The employee, Human Resources, and the employee's supervisor will retain a copy of the approved form. A copy of the employee's teleworking schedule will be maintained by the employee and their immediate supervisor.

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An employee must submit a completed **Teleworking Agreement Form** and mutually agree on the best method to track and communicate the status of their daily work (i.e., google docs, etc.) with their immediate supervisor. Department heads are responsible for ensuring necessary adjustments are implemented and that the teleworking policy is administered in a manner that will positively impact their department, while being approved without bias.

Teleworking schedules will be approved for six (6) months to allow sufficient time to evaluate department impact. Any adjustments to the employee's original request should be discussed with the employee to develop a work schedule and should be well documented.

The Teleworking Agreement may be cancelled at any time at the supervisor's discretion due to the operational needs of the department, change in the employee's work function, and/or employee work performance.

While teleworking, overtime requires prior approval by the employee's supervisor and department/program director. In addition, employees must obtain approval to use vacation, sick, or other leave in the same manner as when working on-site. Employees working remotely who become ill will use sick leave for hours not worked.

### Teleworking Schedule

SCOE will offer telework up to three (3) days per week, not to exceed 60% of the employee's work calendar, and possibly utilizing shared space as assigned, depending on the role and organizational needs. Some roles may be offered less remote time, if required to ensure performance of job tasks and coverage of core business hours and functions.

Department/program directors are responsible for maintaining schedules that consider department needs, coverage of core office business hours, and time for collaboration and staff meetings, both within and between departments. To the extent possible, schedules will be consistent week to week, with flexibility for organizational needs.

Employees must be available and accessible by phone, text, and email during previously agreed upon work schedule and respond in a timely manner. Noncompliance with this expectation may result in a termination of the teleworking agreement.

***Employees may be called into the office when necessary to meet operational needs. The employee must then forgo teleworking.***

### Equipment and Supplies

SCOE will not provide employees with materials or supplies needed to establish an alternate worksite (i.e., desk, chair, additional computer systems, software, cell phone, copier, etc.), and assumes no responsibility for set-up or operating costs at an alternate worksite (telephone, utilities, or internet services, etc.). Expenses incurred as a result of teleworking will not be reimbursed including travel to the work site if required to come in on a teleworking day.

### Considerations

Many of SCOE's job assignments require access to the computer network for work-related information, processing work and communicating. The effectiveness of performing work at a remote location, such as a home office, will be greatly diminished if an employee does not have access to the computer network. Participation in SCOE's teleworking program will be based on the ability of the employee to perform tasks that can be completed from remote locations, such as a home office, and the manager's assessment of the employee's ability to complete those tasks satisfactorily. Consideration, on a case-by-case basis, will be given to the following:

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1. Does the employee have the necessary knowledge to perform the required job tasks remotely, or does the employee need close supervision or input from others that is only available at the office?
2. Does the employee have a history of reliability and responsibility in reporting to work on time and completing work assignments? Is the employee motivated and self-directed?
3. Does the employee demonstrate an ability to establish priorities and effectively manage their time?
4. Does the individual already effectively work independently handling information tasks such as planning, coordinating, writing, reading, analysis, teleconferencing, computer programming, word processing or data entry? Can tasks, which can be completed away from the office, be grouped, and scheduled for teleworking days? Can staff meetings and conferences be grouped and scheduled for non-teleworking days or accommodated through other means?
5. What portion of the employee's job is devoted to face-to-face contact with other agencies, the public or internal staff? Can this contact be structured to allow for communication via phone or computer, or grouped into non-teleworking days, or can alternatives be established to provide this contact on teleworking days?
6. What portion of the job requires the use of reference materials or resources located on-site? Are these resources available through other means?
7. Will response time on computer equipment used remotely be fast enough to allow for required productivity? Has the employee completed training for and demonstrated an adequate level of skill in use of the computer and software that will be used for teleworking?
8. Will SCOE meeting schedules be impacted by employees' teleworking schedules?
9. What portion of the job relies upon access to copiers or other specialized equipment? Can access be managed to allow employee's needs to be met on non-teleworking days?
10. What portion of the job uses secured or otherwise confidential information? How might the integrity of that information be secured in accordance with information security policies if accessed off-site?
11. Does the job involve fieldwork? Can trips begin or end at the employee's off-site office rather than at the work site? An employee's mileage claim process and criteria will not change as a result of this policy.

Responsibilities

1. Department/Program Directors (in consultation with their Cabinet level administrator and Human Resource Department)
  - a. Administer the teleworking program in their respective divisions, including ensuring compliance with all applicable policies and procedures, identifying positions suitable for the teleworking option.
2. Managers and Supervisors
  - a. Determine if proposals for their employees to telework are likely to contribute to SCOE's objectives and Guiding Principles while maintaining or improving program objectives, efficiency, productivity, service, benefits, and safety conditions.
  - b. Ensure that employees who remain in the office are not burdened by being required to handle the regular assignments of the employee who is teleworking (i.e., answering telephone calls, providing information, etc.).

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- c. Using tracking tools, provide specific, measurable, and attainable performance expectations for the employee teleworking; define assignments, corresponding deadlines, and the quality of the work expected in detail.
  - d. Inform employees that failure to comply with teleworking policy may be cause for terminating participation in the program and/or possible performance improvement action.
  - e. Maintain copies of signed Teleworking Agreement form and employee's approved work schedule.
  - f. Obtain Cabinet level administrator approval.
  - g. Meet regularly with employees who are teleworking.
3. Employees who are Teleworking
- a. Work with the manager/supervisor to follow an acceptable teleworking schedule.
  - b. Abide by the provisions set forth in SCOE's Hybrid Teleworking Policy.
  - c. Adhere to all applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures regarding information security as outlined below.
  - d. Possess and utilize the skills necessary to meet department requirements and operate independently from a remote site.
4. Human Resources Department
- a. Consult with Cabinet level administrator related to consideration and approval of request to telework.
  - b. Maintain approved teleworking request documents.
  - c. Assist SCOE employees and management in understanding the teleworking policy and procedures.
  - d. Maintain and update SCOE's Hybrid Teleworking Policy as needed.

Teleworking Requirements

- 1. Equipment, software, services, maintenance, repair, and replacement
  - a. If the teleworker requires VPN access, a SCOE issued computer system is required to connect to the VPN.
  - b. Remote workers will need to use multi-factor authentication for all external access of SCOE computers and programs, when applicable.
  - c. SCOE will issue a computer system to staff. SCOE will not purchase additional computers, software, software licenses, Internet/Wi-Fi or phone services or office equipment such as printers, calculators, or furniture for remote work.
  - d. Selection, installation, maintenance, repair or replacement of employee-owned equipment and software is the responsibility of the employee.
  - e. Keep their electronic equipment password protected.
  - f. Follow all data encryption, protection standards and settings.
  - g. Adhere to the SCOE Acceptable Internet Use Policy.
- 2. Work Environment Criteria

The opportunity to participate in a teleworking program is offered with the understanding that it

is the employee's responsibility to ensure a proper work environment is maintained as follows:

- a. Designate an area that allows for working in as close to an office setting as possible. Ensure that the equipment necessary to perform the work is in the designated area. It is required that employees that are teleworking present themselves professionally including appearance, attire, and appropriate background including lighting.
- b. Make advance arrangements for dependent care to ensure a productive work environment. Teleworking is not intended to be a substitute for day care or other personal obligations.
- c. Work environment must be focused and free of distractions. Keep personal disruptions such as non-business telephone calls and visitors to a minimum.
- d. Remote work employees working in public locations, as approved, shall be mindful of surroundings and maintain privacy and confidentiality.
- e. Current SCOE policies related to vacation time and sick leave will be followed.

### 3. Information Security

Security of confidential information is of primary concern and importance to SCOE. Employees who are teleworking are expected to adhere to all applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures regarding information security:

- a. Use SCOE information assets only for authorized purposes and ensure that confidential information is not disclosed to any unauthorized person.
- b. Back up critical information on a regular basis to assure the information can be recovered if the primary source is damaged or destroyed.
- c. Adhere to all applicable laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures regarding information security and take all appropriate measures to safeguard SCOE's data and property. Employees who work with protected health or student information are responsible for ensuring full compliance with SCOE's HIPAA and FERPA policies.
- d. Employees who are teleworking will need to use multi-factor authentication for all external access of SCOE computers and programs, when applicable.
- e. Employees who are teleworking will be expected to ensure the protection of staff, and student, information accessible from their home office. Steps include regular password maintenance, ensuring non-employees in one's workspace cannot overhear confidential information and any other steps appropriate for the job and the environment.

### 4. Health and Safety

Failure to maintain a proper, safe, and ergonomically sound work environment may be cause for terminating the remote working agreement. If an employee incurs a work-related injury while working remotely, worker's compensation laws and rules apply just as they would if such an injury occurred at the work site. Employees must notify their supervisor immediately of any work-related injury and complete all necessary documents regarding the injury.

#### Attachments:

- Remote work agreement – Hybrid Teleworking Request and Agreement
- Safety Checklist for Teleworking Agreement

#### Policy Cross-Reference:

- 4040 Employee Use of Electronic Information Resources
- 4040.1 Acceptable Use Agreement





## SAFETY CHECKLIST FOR TELEWORKING AGREEMENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department

YES	NO	GENERAL SAFETY & SECURITY
		1. Is the workspace away from noise, distractions, and devoted to your work needs?
		2. Does the workspace accommodate a workstation, equipment, and related material?
		3. Are the floors clear and free from hazards?
		4. File drawers do not open into hallways, and heaviest items are in lower drawers?
		5. Are phone lines and electrical cords secured and away from heat sources?
		6. Are the temperature, ventilation, and lighting adequate?
		7. Do all stairs or steps greater than four (4) have handrails?
		8. Are carpets well secured to the floor and free of frayed or worn seams?
		9. Are files and data secure and in compliance with privacy laws (FERPA, HIPAA, etc.)?
		10. Are materials and equipment secure and protected from damage and misuse?
		11. Do you have an inventory of all SCOE equipment, including serial numbers?
YES	NO	FIRE SAFETY
		1. Is there a working smoke detector in the workspace area?
		2. Are walkways, hallways, and doorways unobstructed?
		3. Is the workspace kept free of trash, clutter, and flammable liquids?
		4. Are radiators and/or portable heaters located away from flammable items?
		5. Do you have an evacuation plan in place in the event of a fire?
YES	NO	ELECTRICAL SAFETY
		1. Are there sufficient electrical outlets available and are they accessible?
		2. Is SCOE computer equipment properly connected to a surge protector?
		3. Is the electrical system adequate for SCOE office equipment?
		4. Are all electrical plugs, cords, outlets, and panels in good condition?
		5. Is equipment spaced away from electrical outlets?
		6. Extension cords and power strips are not improperly connected to one another?
		7. Is equipment turned off when not in use?
YES	NO	COMPUTER WORKSTATION
		1. Is the chair sturdy, and are all of the wheels secure?
		2. Does your chair provide adequate bodily support?
		3. Are your feet flat on the floor or adequately supported by a footrest?
		4. Do you have enough legroom at your workstation?
		5. Is there sufficient light for reading?
		6. Is the computer screen free from noticeable glare?
		7. Is the top of the screen at eye level?
		8. Is the computer networked with SCOE, to ensure regular updates and security?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Manager's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Supervisor: Attach this document and route with the Teleworking Agreement. Subsequent semiannual checklists are to be retained by the supervisor and available upon request.*