

## **Winnefox Library System**

### **Telecommuting Policy**

#### **Objective**

Telecommuting allows employees to work at home, on the road or in a satellite location for all or part of their workweek. Winnefox Library System considers telecommuting to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some employees and jobs but not for others. Telecommuting is not an entitlement, it is not a company-wide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with Winnefox Library System.

#### **Procedures**

Telecommuting can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term project or on the road during business travel, or a formal, set schedule of working away from the office as described below. Either an employee or a supervisor can suggest telecommuting as a possible work arrangement.

Any extended telecommuting arrangement made will be on a trial basis for the first three months and may be discontinued at will and at any time at the request of either the telecommuter or the organization. Every effort will be made to provide 30 days' notice of such change to accommodate commuting, child care and other issues that may arise from the termination of a telecommuting arrangement. There may be instances, however, when no notice is possible.

#### **Eligibility**

Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and manager, with the assistance of the Business Manager, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

- Employee suitability. The employee and manager will assess the needs and work habits of the employee.
- Job responsibilities. The employee and manager will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement.
- Equipment needs, workspace design considerations and scheduling issues. The employee and manager will review the physical workspace needs and the appropriate location for the telework.
- Tax and other legal implications. The employee must determine any tax or legal implications under IRS, state and local government laws, and/or restrictions of working out of a home-based office. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.

If the employee, manager, and Winnefox Director agree, a draft telecommuting agreement will be prepared and signed by all parties, and a three-month trial period will commence.

Evaluation of telecommuter performance during the trial period will include regular remote interactions between the employee and the manager, and face to face meetings, as necessary. At the end of the trial period, the employee and manager will each complete an evaluation of the

arrangement and make recommendations for continuance or modifications. Evaluation of telecommuter performance beyond the trial period will be consistent with that received by employees working at the office in both content and frequency but will focus on work output and completion of objectives rather than on time-based performance.

An appropriate level of communication between the telecommuter and supervisor will be agreed to as part of the discussion process and will be at a level consistent with employees working at the office or in a manner and frequency that is appropriate for the job and the individuals involved.

### **Equipment**

On a case-by-case basis, Winnefox Library System will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, and other office equipment) for each telecommuting arrangement. Equipment supplied by the organization will be maintained by the organization and should be used for business purposes only. Winnefox Library System reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time.

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. Winnefox Library System will not generally be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, although exceptions may be considered on a case by case basis.

### **Security**

Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary company and customer information accessible from their home office. Steps include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

### **Safety**

Employees are expected to maintain their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Winnefox Library System will provide each telecommuter with a safety checklist that must be completed at least once per year. Injuries sustained by the employee in a home office location and in conjunction with his or her regular work duties are normally covered by the company's workers' compensation policy. Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying the employer of such injuries as soon as practicable. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to his or her home worksite.

### **Time Worked**

Telecommuting is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate childcare. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate childcare 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 a trial period.

Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all hours worked. Hours worked in

excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval of the telecommuter's supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the immediate termination of the telecommuting agreement.

While telecommuting employees may have flexibility setting their schedules, at least half of their working hours should occur during normal business hours. This availability should keep the member libraries, and other system staff in mind and unusual variations to a telecommuting employee's schedule should be communicated to necessary parties.

### **Ad Hoc Arrangements**

Temporary telecommuting arrangements may be approved for circumstances such as inclement weather, special projects or business travel. These arrangements are approved on an as-needed basis only, with no expectation of ongoing continuance.

Other informal, short-term arrangements may be made for employees on family or medical leave to the extent practical for the employee and the organization and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if appropriate.

All ad hoc telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the organization.