

TRUMBULL COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Policy

Section 5.34

REMOTE WORK

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish requirements and guidelines for employees engaging in authorized remote work. "Remote Work" is a work flexibility arrangement under which an employee performs their work duties and responsibilities from an approved worksite other than the location from which the employee would otherwise work, such as a home-based office. The Trumbull County Board of Developmental Disabilities considers Remote Work to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all employees specifically authorized by the Board to perform Remote Work. Each job description is reviewed for the viability of Remote Work and the Superintendent makes the final determination if it is authorized for that position. The authorization of an employee to work remotely is not an entitlement, it is not a Board-wide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the Board.

REQUIREMENTS:

- A. Initial Requirements: Only positions established as having the ability to perform Remote Work are authorized to work in a location other than the employees assigned location.
 - Employees authorized to work remotely, must sign a formal acknowledgement that they have received a copy, and fully understand the requirements of this policy.
 - 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

- B. Supervisor Authorization: Before an employee is approved, by their supervisor, to Remote Work for all or part of their workweek, the following factors will be evaluated;
 - Employee suitability, job responsibilities, equipment needs, and scheduling issues.
 - The employee must have successfully completed his/her probationary period.
 - The employee must meet expectations on their most recent performance evaluation.
 - The employee cannot be on a performance improvement plan.

- C. Location of Remote Work: Employees must provide the Employer the physical address and telephone number of the location at which they will be Remote Working.
- A dedicated workspace must be safe and free from hazards.
 - The workspace must be reasonably free from interruptions and distraction that would affect work performance.
 - The workspace must allow for the employee to preserve the confidentiality of sensitive or non-public information.
 - For employees who must verbally communicate with others as part of their duties, the workspace must be quiet and allow for professional communications during those times.
 - Remote Work employees shall not meet with the public or clients in their home office in any official capacity or connected with the Board's business. The Board is not responsible for any injuries to family members, visitors and others in the employee's home.
 - The Board is not responsible for any loss to the employee's property whether caused by physical damage, computer virus attacks or other intrusions via the internet.
 - The Board will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.
- D. Hours of Work:
- Exempt Employees are authorized to engage in Remote Work during their normally scheduled workdays and hours, or on days/times pre-approved by their supervisor.
 - Non-Exempt Employees may not work outside of normally scheduled workdays and hours without prior supervisor approval. Non-Exempt Employees are responsible for accurately reporting their time worked each day. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the immediate termination of the employee's authorization to Remote Work.
 - The total number of hours an employee is expected to work will not change, regardless of the work locations.
 - Employees must include their Remote Work location and work hours on their Outlook calendar and update their calendar as changes occur.
 - Outlook calendars must be shared with, and viewable by, the employee's immediate supervisor as well as the Department Director, if applicable.
 - Appointments, virtual visits, teleconferences and other periods when the employee will not be available by phone should be clearly indicated on the employee's Outlook calendar
- E. Remote work schedule:
- Remote work is available to each employee for up to 3 working days each week as approved by their supervisor. Two days a week, employees are expected to begin their day at their assigned office and to work the majority of their day at that location. The only exception to this practice would be in the event that an employee is scheduled to attend a work-related meeting at the beginning or end of the work day.

- Employees shall submit a work schedule to their supervisor prior to the work week that includes the days of in-office and Remote Work. Supervisor approval is required. In the event a schedule is not submitted or approved, the employee is to report to the facility for the work week.
- Any employee responsible for mentoring or training should plan to limit remote work during the training/mentoring period.

F. Paid Leave from Work:

- All employees are expected to request and utilize appropriate leave time, such as sick or vacation, when such time is needed during typical office hours.
- Remote Work is not to be used in place of personal leave, sick leave, vacation leave, unpaid leave, or bereavement leave.
- If the employee must be absent while scheduled for Remote Work, the employee must follow the standard procedure for calling off as outlined in the Board Policy Manual.

G. Dependent Care

- Remote Work is not to be used in place of child care, pet-care or elder-care arrangements.
- Employees are expected to dedicate their full workday to performing TCBDD related work and appropriate personal leave, sick leave, vacation leave, unpaid leave, or bereavement leave must be utilized if the employee is not able to work the entire day.

H. Tracking Hours

- Employees will be expected to utilize the electronic timekeeping system to clock in and out daily.

I. Communication

- During Remote Work, employees must be available and accessible to their supervisor or other stakeholders during their normal working hours, and any other times designated by the Board.
- Reasonable response time is expected and is defined as within the workday. Supervisors may call or visit the Remote Work location if needed during normal work hours.
- If the employee becomes aware of or anticipates any disruption in technological communication during their normal working hours, they are to immediately notify their supervisor.
- Failure to meet any of these requirements, or reasonable work performance expectations, will be grounds for ending the Remote Work arrangement.

J. Security and Confidentiality: During Remote Work, employees must take steps to preserve the security and confidentiality of Board information.

- Employees must keep confidential documents and materials in secure locations.
- Employees must maintain password protection to the same extent as required at the workplace.

- If working on personal devices, employees must have valid up-to-date anti-virus software and appropriate computer and internet security installed and activated.
- Any suspected hacks or breaches of security must be reported to the Employer immediately.

K. Policies:

- This Remote Work arrangement does not change the basic terms and conditions of employment, including rate of pay and benefits.
- Employees are expected to comply with all Employer policies, procedures and performance standards.
- As noted, Remote Work is a privilege and the privilege can be revoked at any time if the employee fails to follow the agreed to requirements and procedures of this Remote Work policy.
- The Employer retains the right to investigate alleged abuse of this Remote Work policy and may cease or modify an employee's approval for Remote work at any time.

L. Evaluation: Employees are expected to meet agency productivity and efficiency requirements.

- Evaluation of the employee's performance during Remote Work will include regular interaction by phone and e-mail between the employee and the Supervisor.
- Evaluation of the employee's performance 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.

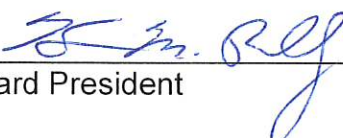
M. Equipment: The Board will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, cellular phone and/or other office equipment) for each Remote Work arrangement. The information technology department will serve as resources in this matter.

- Employees utilizing Board Owned equipment during Remote Work must protect the equipment from damage, loss, or theft. A technology equipment acknowledgement and waiver form will be signed by the employee and Information Technology (IT) Department whenever equipment is provided. All equipment supplied by the Board will be maintained by the Board.
- Prior to the employee using or installing software or equipment not supplied by the Board, the employee must notify and receive approval from the IT Department. The Board accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment.
- Equipment supplied by the Board is to be used for business purposes only. Employees provided Board Owned equipment should have no expectation of privacy.
- If the employee is no longer authorized to Remote Work, or upon termination of employment, all Board-owned property will be returned to the Board.

- Board will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary.

N. Ad Hoc Arrangements: Temporary Remote Work 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 informal Remote Work arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the organization. Informal Remote Work arrangements shall be time limited and must be approved by the employee’s supervisor prior to implementation.
- Ad-hoc Remote Work will not be approved or used for child care, pet-care or elder-care arrangements. Employees are expected to dedicate their full workday to performing TCBDD related work.



Board President



Superintendent

Adopted: 9/28/2020
Revised: 3/20/2023

References: