

HELEN M. PLUM MEMORIAL LIBRARY

P-15 Telecommuting

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees, July 15, 2020

General Overview

Telecommuting is a work arrangement that allows an employee to work at a location other than the Library for part of their regularly scheduled work week. Telecommuting may be a viable alternative work arrangement in cases where an employee and an employee's manager are suited for telecommuting and the employee's job responsibilities are conducive to this alternative. Not all positions at the Library have tasks and responsibilities that can be performed remotely. Telecommuting may be considered when a position is designated as eligible for telecommuting and when telecommuting arrangements can provide a mutually beneficial option for the employee and the Library.

Telecommuting may provide a reasonable and practical solution to temporarily sustain essential library services during times when the library building cannot be safely open to the public, including during severe weather, unsafe travel conditions, a library disaster or other local, state or national emergencies.

Telecommuting is not an entitlement and in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment. The Library may require employees to return to regular, in-building work at any time.

Telecommuting arrangements are voluntary. Requests for telecommuting may be initiated by the Library or by the employee and will be considered on a case-by-case basis subject to the approval of the Executive Director with the concurrent agreement of the employee and the employee's manager. Telecommuting may be temporary for a defined period of time or ongoing based on both the employee's circumstances and their job responsibilities. Telecommuting schedules will typically include only part of an employee's regularly scheduled hours for the work week. Exceptions may be made allowing telecommuting for the full work week in situations where the library building cannot be opened for staff or where an employee is approved for a pre-defined period of time due to special circumstances.

Occasional one-time remote work arrangements may be made for an employee with the approval of their manager. In this circumstance, a signed telecommuting agreement is not required.

Employee Eligibility

To be eligible for telecommuting, an employee must:

- Have a position that includes responsibility for tasks that can be accomplished working remotely
- Consistently demonstrate strong time-management and organizational skills
- Maintain or enhance the quantity, quality, and timeliness of their work
- Have no warnings, disciplinary actions, or performance improvement plans initiated within the prior 12 months

A telecommuting arrangement must not adversely affect the services provided to the Library's patrons, departments, or any business or services the Library conducts or provides. Additionally, telecommuting must not cause the need for additional staff or require existing staff to work added hours.

Consideration for telecommuting is directly related to the requirements and autonomy of the job performed by the employee. Employees must be able to carry out, to a reasonable degree, some or all

of their duties, assignments, and work responsibilities at an offsite location. Basic requirements may include job duties that:

- Have clearly defined tasks and objectives
- Involve working alone with no required patron interaction, or alternately, involve patron interaction that can be supported virtually
- Require infrequent face-to-face interaction with co-workers or managers, or alternately, involve periodic interaction that can be supported virtually
- Involve work activities that can be defined, accounted for, measured, and/or reported

Expectations

The employee and their manager will establish the necessary work schedules, identify the amount of telecommuting each week, set expectations for communication and check-in (including manner and frequency), and determine the method of tracking progress.

While setting defined work schedules may not be necessary when employees are working offsite, they are expected to work their assigned number of weekly hours and to not exceed their typical hours without the approval of their manager.

Expectations for telecommuting employees include:

- Signing the Telecommunications Agreement
- Adhering to timekeeping policies and procedures
- Being available by phone, email, or videoconferencing during telecommuting hours
- Attending meetings at the Library as requested
- Responding to emails and voicemails promptly
- Providing updates/reporting on pending projects and assigned work
- Contacting their manager with any questions or information needed to complete assigned work
- Communicating with their manager as to any needed equipment, materials, supplies and resources needed to effectively complete their work duties and responsibilities
- Being available for service shifts as scheduled by their manager for virtual patron services (phone reference, as an example)
- Maintaining work productivity and quality comparable to in-library work
- Abiding by all Library policies
- Safeguarding the confidentiality and security of Library information when telecommuting or accessing records and files remotely
- Maintaining patron privacy

Telecommuting is not intended to replace child or adult care. Employees should arrange for necessary care during times they intend to work.

The Library will not provide furnishings for an employee's home office (chairs, desk, lighting, etc.) but some equipment needed to fulfill job duties may be provided by the Library (laptops or tablets, software, etc.).

Employees are responsible for maintaining a safe and comfortable work environment conducive to completing their assigned tasks.

Telecommuting is not intended to be used in place of paid time off (vacation, personal, sick time, etc.).

The Library and the employee agree to abide by all laws governing telecommuting.

Employee Reimbursement

Telecommuting is voluntary. The Library will maintain onsite workspace for the employee and typically will not reimburse phone and internet costs associated with telecommuting.

Reimbursement of additional expenditures will be considered on a case-by-case basis as authorized by the Executive Director and consistent with Illinois law.