



## TOWN OF BLUFFTON TELECOMMUTING POLICY

### Overview

The Town of Bluffton ("the Town") considers that telecommuting can be a viable alternative work arrangement in cases where the individual and their job are suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting may allow an employee to work at home, on the road, or in a satellite location for all or a portion of their regular workweek. Telecommuting is a work alternative that may be appropriate for some employees and some jobs. It is not an entitlement; it is not a Town-wide benefit; and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the Town.

Telecommuting is also an option in instances where business cannot be conducted at Town Hall or at the employee's normal workstation or office location. This can be due to a number of reasons to include, but not limited to temporary construction activity, emergency, inclement weather, and/or health conditions which preclude the ability to enter the workplace (please reference the Town of Bluffton's Declared Emergency [Temporary Telecommuting Policy](#)).

### Telecommuting Procedure:

1. Either an employee or a supervisor can suggest telecommuting as a possible work arrangement.
2. Telecommuting can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term project or on the road during business travel; or formal, as outlined below. All informal telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the Town.
3. Any employee may be eligible for telecommuting consideration with Town Manager approval.
4. Eligible positions will be recommended by the Department Head, reviewed by Human Resources, approved by the Town Manager and will be based upon functional role and business needs. A [Telecommuting Agreement](#) must be completed prior to implementing a telecommuting schedule. Please see eligible list – Exhibit A
5. Any approved telecommuting arrangement may be discontinued, at will, at any time by either the telecommuter or the Town.
6. The approval of employee's telecommuting request does not mean that another employee who later may fill the same position will be authorized to telecommute. Also, a telecommuting employee who changes positions or whose responsibilities change may be subject to review and possible cancellation of previous telework arrangements.
7. Prior to telecommuting, employee is required to attend on-line security training.
8. Telecommuters must be available by phone or other electronic communication during the agreed upon telecommuting hours of work.
9. Supervisors should remind staff to take breaks and not work excessively in front of the screen. Teleworking is about achieving an expected level of productivity.
10. The employee and supervisor will agree on the number of days of telecommuting allowed each week, the work schedule the employee will customarily maintain, and the manner and frequency



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of communication. The employee agrees to be accessible by phone or modem during the agreed upon work schedule.

11. Telecommuters who are hourly employees or non-exempt, will record all hours worked in the same manner as if they were working on Town Premises. Accrual of overtime or compensatory time will be administered under the same provisions as if the work were performed at the regular work location. Overtime work must have prior Supervisor approval.
12. Telecommuters who are salaried or exempt do not ordinarily complete a timecard at their regular place of work. However, when telecommuting, they will keep a record of actual time worked at the alternate work location for the purposes of demonstrating accountability to their agreed upon work schedule.
13. Before entering into any telecommuting arrangement, the employee and supervisor will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement paying particular attention to the following areas:
  - a. Job Responsibilities - the employee and supervisor will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate or suitable for a successful telecommuting arrangement.
  - b. Employee Suitability - the employee and supervisor will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, compared to traits customarily recognized as appropriate for successful telecommuters.
  - c. Equipment needs, work-space design considerations and scheduling issues.
  - d. Tax and other legal implications for the business use of the employee's home based on IRS and state and local government restrictions. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.
14. The supervisor and employee will establish a routine communication schedule to monitor assigned work projects and tasks. Evaluation of telecommuter performance will be consistent in both content and frequency with that received by employees working at the office.
15. 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 prior to entering into a telecommuting agreement.
16. Employees entering into a telecommuting agreement may be required to forfeit use of a personal on-site office or workstation in favor of a shared arrangement to maximize Town office space needs.
17. The availability of telecommuting as a flexible work arrangement for employees of the Town can be discontinued at any time at the discretion of the Town. Every effort will be made to provide 30 days' notice of such a change to accommodate commuting, childcare and other problems that may arise from such a change. There may be instances however, where no notice or less notice is possible.



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### Equipment

1. The Town will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including software, modems, phone and data lines, facsimile equipment or software, photocopiers, etc.) and who (the Town or the employee) will supply the equipment for telecommuting for each telecommuting arrangement on a case-by-case basis. The Town's Information Technology Department will serve as a resource in this matter. Equipment supplied by the Town will be maintained by the Town. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the Town, will be maintained by the employee. The Town accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. The Town reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the Town is to be used for business only. The telecommuter shall sign an inventory of all office property and agrees to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Employees are responsible for the proper care and return of all Town property and equipment assigned to their possession. Unless other arrangements are made upon termination of employment, all Town property will be returned to the Town no later than the final day of employment.
2. After equipment has been delivered, a designated representative of the Town may visit the employee's off-site workplace to inspect for possible work hazards and to suggest modifications. Repeat inspections may occur on an as-needed basis. Injuries sustained by a telecommuting employee who is working at home are not normally covered by the Town's worker's compensation policy. If a telecommuting employee is convinced that an injury which he/she has sustained at home was directly related to performance of his/her duties for the Town, he/she is responsible for notifying the Town of such injuries in accordance with the Town's worker's compensation procedures applicable to all other employees. The telecommuting employee is solely liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to his/her office workplace.
3. The Town will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) to be charged against the employee's department budget for successful completion of job responsibilities. With Supervisor approval, the Town will also reimburse the employee for all other business-related expenses such as phone calls, shipping costs, etc. that may reasonably be incurred while performing job responsibilities.
4. Consistent with the Town's expectations of information asset security for employees working at the office full-time, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary Town and customer information accessible from their off-site workplace. Steps include, but are not limited to, use of the locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, locking your computer when stepping away from the workstation, and all other steps appropriate for the job and the environment.
5. The telecommuting employee will establish an environment appropriate for work purposes. The Town will not be responsible for costs associated with set-up of employee's off-site workplace such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs nor modifications to the off-site office space, nor for increased utility costs. Employees will be offered appropriate assistance in setting up a workstation designed for safe, comfortable work.



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### **Amendment of Policy**

This policy may be cancelled, suspended, or amended at any time by the Town Manager.



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### Exhibit A – Eligible list of positions for telecommuting

<u>Eligible list of positions for telecommuting</u>	
Data Entry Clerk	Emergency Manager
Victims Advocate	VP of Innovation DRCI
Stormwater Coordinator Field Assistant	GIS Manager
Customer Service Representative (PT/FT)	Public Information Officer
Quartermaster / Fleet Manager	Project Manager
Accreditation Manager	Accounting and Risk Manager
Capital Projects Administrator	Assistant Director of Finance
Payroll and Revenue Coordinator	Historic Preservationist
Planning and Growth Management Coordinator	Principal Planner
IT Coordinator	Technology Service Manager
Stormwater Technician	Town Clerk
Records and Evidence Administrator	Director of Compliance and Contracts
Budget and Procurement Analyst	Capital Improvement Programs Manager
Community Development Coordinator	Director of Community and Communications
Human Resources Generalist	Watershed Division Manager
Stormwater Inspector	Clerk of Court
Water Quality Program Administrator	CEO DRCI
Accounts Payable Coordinator	Director of Planning and Community Development
Stormwater Permit Administrator	Director of Projects & Watershed Resilience
Law Enforcement Technology Specialist	Chief Technology Officer
Lead Deputy Clerk of Court	Director of Human Resources
Special Events Manager	Assistant Town Manager Administration & Finance
Community Mental Health Advocate	Assistant Town Manager Projects
GIS Analyst I	Public Services Worker IV/Asset Manager
MS4 Manager	
Human Resources Manager	
DRCI Marketing and Operations Manager	
Senior Financial Analyst	
Records and FOIA Administrator	
Stormwater Project Manager	
Digital Communication Manager	
Senior Planner	
Special Projects and Program Administrator	
Applications Development Administrator	
Principal Customer Service Representative	
Customer Service Supervisor	
Chief Building Official	
Chief Plans Examiner	
Senior Financial Analyst	