



Policy #5: Telecommuting

Policy Overview

Telecommuting or teleworking allows employees to work at home or in a satellite location for all or part of their workweek. The Mill Neck Family of Organizations supports telecommuting as it achieves administrative efficiencies, supports continuity of operations, reduces traffic congestion and sustains the hiring and retention of a highly qualified workforce by enhancing work/life balance. Telecommuting also plays an important role in addressing public health emergencies, such as the outbreak of infectious diseases.

Mill Neck 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, is not a companywide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with Mill Neck Family of Organizations.

General Procedures

Telecommuting can be informal, such as working from home on a short-term, time limited project or as a formal, routinely 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.

Telecommuting employees are required to provide the same level of service. Telecommuting employees must receive the same training and resources as campus-based employees obtain. Telecommuting employees are entitled to reasonable accommodations such as sign language interpreters and other accommodations necessary to perform their job.

Any telecommuting arrangement made will be on a trial basis for the first month 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 10-days' notice of such change to accommodate commuting, childcare and other issues that may arise from the termination of a telecommuting arrangement. There may be instances, however, when no notice is possible.

An employee may request telecommuting from their immediate supervisor/director. The request must be in writing and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If an employee is requesting telecommuting based on a verifiable health condition or the healthcare needs of a family member, the request will be evaluated pursuant to the Mill Neck Family of Organization's guidelines and consistent with State and Federal guidelines, such as those relating to Family Medical Leave Act, New York Cares Act, and Short-Term Disability. For more information, please contact Mill Neck's Human Resources.



Individuals requesting formal telecommuting arrangements must be employed with Mill Neck Family of Organization for a minimum of 12 months of continuous, regular employment and must have a satisfactory performance record.

Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and supervisor, with the assistance of the human resource department, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

1. **Employee suitability.** The employee and manager will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, compared to traits customarily recognized as appropriate for successful telecommuters.
2. **Job responsibilities.** The employee and manager will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement.
3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **Public Health Needs:** Mill Neck may initiate broader telecommuting requirements for employees based on public health needs, such as an outbreak of infectious disease. In this case, the employer will have broad authority to assign employees to telecommuting work status until public health issues have abated.

If the employee and manager agree, and the human resource department concurs, 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 daily work-log, regular interaction by phone and e-mail between the employee and the manager, and weekly face-to-face meetings to discuss work progress and problems. 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 more formal during the trial period. After conclusion of the trial period, the manager and telecommuter will communicate 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 & Supplies

On a case-by-case basis, the Mill Neck Family of Organizations will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, modems, phone and data lines and other office equipment) for each telecommuting arrangement. The Human Resources and Information System departments will serve as resources in this matter. Equipment supplied by the organization will be maintained by the organization. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the organization, will be maintained by the employee. Mill Neck accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. Mill Neck reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the organization is to be used for business purposes only. The telecommuter must sign an inventory of all Mill Neck property received and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment, all company property will be returned to the company, unless other arrangements have been made.

Mill Neck will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary. Mill Neck will also reimburse the employee for business-related expenses, such as phone calls and shipping costs, that are reasonably incurred in carrying out the employee's job.

The employee will establish an appropriate telework environment within his or her home for work purposes. Mill Neck 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.

Safety & 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.

Employees are expected to maintain their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. 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.

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.

Time Worked

Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Telecommuting employees are required to accurately record all hours worked using Mill Neck Family of Organization's time-keeping system. 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.

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

Related Policies

All staff should be familiar with related policies to ensure a clean and hygienic work environment, including but not limited to:

- Policy #1: COVID-19
- Policy #2: Universal Precautions
- Policy #3: Infectious Disease Control