



I. Purpose

This remote work policy establishes guidelines for employees who work from a location other than our Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC) offices. The purpose of the Remote Work Policy is to provide clarity about who is eligible to work from home, parameters of when employees can work from home, the conditions for approving and or denying work from home requests, expectations of employees working from home, and available resources and support to ensure each employees productivity and success working from home. This policy will replace the past Telecommute policy¹ dated January 3, 2019, previously in place and in no way does it override existing labor law or the American with Disabilities Act.

This policy will pertain to full time and part time employees. Interns or new hires will be covered by this policy once they have completed their initial training and obtain approval by their manager. Requirements for contractors are delineated in their contract with VMRC. **Full implementation of this policy will begin March 1, 2022.**

Remote work can improve productivity, reduce office and parking space, reduce traffic congestion, enhance work/life balance, reduce space impact during company growth, and protect the health and safety of employees during times of community viral spread.

II. Eligibility requirements

1. Employee must have completed their initial training period as outlined by their manager. Any special circumstance request will require appropriate Department Head² level approval.
2. Remote schedule will not compromise services being delivered to consumers or place a burden on other members of employees' team; this includes court attendance, consumer planning meetings, family visits, clinics, etc.
3. Employee will not be on a plan of corrective action unless telecommuting is part of that plan.

¹ [Telecommute Policy](#), (APs in InsideXchange) January 3, 2019, June 20, 2020.

² Positions include Executive Director, Chief Fiscal Officer, Director of Information Technology, Director of Human Resources, Clinical Director, Director of Community Services, Director of Consumer Services (Children), and Director of Consumer Services (Adults) Director.

4. Employees may continue to work from home upon request which will be granted as long as the employee continues to demonstrate an ability to work effectively at home. Typical objective measures to demonstrate this include Targeted Case Management units (TCM) numbers, being current in their work, or some other agreed upon measure between the employee and supervisor). Managers must stay current with the latest management methods specific to managing remote workers as they are expected to stay current on management and supervision skills in general.³
5. Employees will verify in writing that they will not be personally providing continuous care of another person who cannot be left home alone during the hours scheduled for telecommuting. This means that if there are persons in need of care and supervision in that home that there is another person present who can provide that supervision or care. If the employee is needed for an emergency at the office, that cannot be performed remotely, employees are expected to exert every effort to arrange for their child or other individual needing their care. (The agency quarantine policy, in the event of a COVID-19 exposure, supersedes this provision. An exposed employee may work from home, but MAY NOT come into the buildings.)
6. Remote schedule agreement must be approved and will continue at the discretion of VMRC management.
7. If there is a permanent or short-term change in the day(s) of the week telecommuting will occur, the employee will submit in writing their request and obtain their manager's approval.
8. The Remote schedule/agreement will be reviewed at least once per year or more often at managers' discretion. In order to stabilize the workplace during this rapid change, we will maintain the Remote Work schedules for the first 120 days following implementation of this policy (March 1, 2022), and quarterly thereafter. Modifications to schedules can begin again starting on July 1, 2022. If there is an important or urgent business case for changing an employee's schedule a manager and department director may make the change.
9. Employees working remotely must still maintain the ability to travel to the office and into the field when needed. Living outside of the counties in VMRC's catchment area will require your manager **and** senior management approval.
10. Some positions (such as OT/SOT Support, reception, and reception backup) may not be suited for remote work, due to employees needing to use certain equipment that cannot be replicated at home, access documents available only in the workplace, or regularly interacting with visitors, vendors, and the public. It will be up to the managers and senior management to determine which positions may not be able to work remotely.

³ [How Managers Can Address These 5 Bad Habits of Remote Workers](#), SHRM, By Ed Beltran, May 18, 2021 and please reach out to our Human Resources department Training Manager for additional resources

III. Work expectations and schedule

1. Employee will fulfill all obligations that would be required if they were in the office.
2. Service Coordinators will be required to assist our consumers in-person in the OT/PT and telemedicine clinics unless the consumer is participating virtually, or the employee is at home under quarantine, or they have symptoms.
3. If you are unable to work from home on any given day because of technology problems, the employee should do other required tasks of their job, such as contact families, consumers, until technology is back up. If not feasible the employee shall return to the office to complete their work (unless such technology problems are a result of VMRC system failure/outage) or take vacation or flex your hours.
4. If scheduled to be the Officer of the Day (O.D.), the employee will be responsible for O.D. duties in the office or will be required to get O.D. coverage.
5. If you are scheduled to be the Program Manager Officer of the Day (PMOD), it is important that you be physically onsite at the office to perform this duty.
6. Employee will participate in all Regional Center sponsored mandatory meetings, trainings, or other events even if they fall on a day that the employee is scheduled to be telecommuting. This can be accomplished by utilizing technology such as zoom but if it is a required in person meeting then the expectation is that the employee will attend in person even if it is a remote workday.
7. Employees will be required to come into the office building at least one day a week. This will provide teams the opportunity to meet face to face, supervisors and employees can hold direct face to face meetings, employees can engage in in-person collegial support, employees can meet with consumers and community members, etc. Coming into the office does not obligate the employee to remain in the building all day as their case management demands may require field visits.
8. When using an online video application such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype, etc., employees are expected to maintain a professional and productive etiquette. Examples includes⁴:
 - a. Be early and test out your tech beforehand.
 - b. Mute when you're not speaking, unmute when you are (unless the meeting facilitator specifies an alternative).
 - c. Turn off or silence loud notifications.
 - d. Don't multi-task and pay attention.
 - e. Present a clean, calm background.
 - f. Wear the same professional attire as you would for meeting in-person.

⁴ [12 Essential Etiquette Rules to Follow Every Time You Join a Video Call](#), Virtual meeting etiquette is real, RS, By Maggie Seaver, March 01, 2021

- g. Look into the camera when speaking.
 - h. Always use your camera in small meetings of less than 10 and larger meetings if your technology is able to handle it.
 - i. Avoid eating mid-meeting.
 - j. Ensure no one can hear your conversation to secure HIPAA (includes children, spouse, other family etc.) and avoid, as practical, the presence of others in the video background.
9. Employee will always sign in or out on the Electronic In and Out Board (EIO). The same expectations regarding signing in and out will apply utilizing the EIO Board and include contact phone number if not using Jaber.
10. If for any reason your schedule has changed from your schedule indicated on the EIO board and you are unable to access it to make the change, please contact your supervisor and let them know.
11. If telecommuting is combined with field visits, the employee must sign out by EIO board, in advance. Any changes in field visits must be documented on the EIO board or notify your manager of your whereabouts for communication and safety reasons.
12. Remote schedule will be as follows:
- a. Employees may work remotely up to 4 days a week upon management approval^[5] but would be required to Hotel Share when in the office^[6].
 - b. If you work in the office 3 days a week or more, you would be assigned a designated office or cubicle, and hotel sharing would not be required.
 - c. Exempted positions from this "Hotel Sharing" requirement include Managers and Senior Service Coordinators, clinicians, or specialists (i.e., Cultural Specialist, Employment Specialist, Education Specialist, Autism Specialist, etc.). In addition, the San Andreas office, due to the size of the office will not be participating in the Hotel policy. If we exceed the capacity for this office space we will need to move to another building site to expand.
13. If an employee converts from Remote status to In-Office status, arrangements will be made to locate the employee with a personal cubicle, as close as possible to their manager.

Employees will be expected to work 8 to 10 hours per day, of their 40-hour work week, and take the required breaks and lunch. This includes still logging in and out for lunch on the EIO board. All employees identified by their supervisors as meeting the performance standards of their position will continue to have the option to complete their work between the hours of 5 am and 10 pm and have extended access to the VMRC information technology system. Objective examples of these metrics include Targeted Case Management (TCM) units at or above 400 a month for full time service coordinators and 200 for fulltime senior service coordinators, meeting all deadlines on non-case management activities and projects, being current in their work, or some other pre-determined agreed

upon measure between the employee and supervisor. Work hours for all others will be during the time of 7:00 am and 7:00 pm, Monday through Saturday, not to exceed 40 hours a week⁷. You may choose your own work hours during this time, but it will be required that you are accessible and reachable to consumers, families, and VMRC.

14. The Information Technology Department responds to system outages during the weekend and off hours. This includes an application, server or system that goes offline or unavailable. This department does not respond to regular helpdesk tickets over the weekend such as problems with Outlook or Password Resets. If an employee is working over the weekend, they should ensure they have access to everything they need prior to the weekend.
15. Changes in status for "remote work" can be made quarterly (January, April, July, October). Flag policy if the flag is up the cube is available.
16. Responsiveness is important to providing quality service to our consumers and families. The expectation of working remotely is that it is a productivity enhancement. It will be important that you are reachable by phone or email. Phone calls, emails, or messages of a general nature should be returned within 48 hours. However, phone calls, messages or emails of an important nature should be returned within 1-2 hours or as quickly as possible. Emails should be checked regularly at least as often as they would when working in the office.
17. Communication is always important but especially necessary when working remotely. Managers and employees should decide on a communication plan. Daily check-in, weekly email, zoom meetings or updates, or other method to assure clear and complete communication is in order. The daily work log will no longer be in effect. However, managers will utilize performance measurements to monitor productivity, time and attendance, responsiveness, and communication. Typical objective measures to demonstrate this include Targeted Case Management unit (TCM) numbers, being current in their work, or some other agreed upon measure between the employee and supervisor.
18. In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), non-exempt employees who work remotely are required to strictly adhere to required rest and lunch breaks, and to accurately track and report their time worked using VMRC's time-tracking system (Paylocity). Non-exempt employees must also obtain prior written approval from their manager before working any overtime or flexing their schedules.

IV. Equipment and supplies

1. VMRC will provide remote employees with a laptop, headset, cell phone stipend⁵, paper and pens, other equipment determined medically necessary to

⁵ Employee must sign the Cell Phone use agreement to receive this stipend.

accommodate work can be requested. Printers will not be allowed at home due to HIPAA restrictions. Other supplies that are essential for your job duties may be requested.

2. VMRC is not responsible for the following expenses associated with working at home, including heat, electricity, internet, or phone service. VMRC will not supply office furniture such as desks, chairs, stand up/sit down stations.
3. All employees will be fully equipped to work productively in one site, either at home or in the office. Employees who work on site 3 days a week or more will be provided the amenities of a dedicated workspace and all others will be provided with a pooled “Hotel Space” that will be fully equipped.
4. VMRC will continue to provide employees with the COVID stipend through the rest of the calendar year and will end the stipend on January 1, 2022.

V. Technical support

VMRC provides *technology support during business hours*, Monday through Friday 8 am – 5 pm). Remote employees experiencing technical difficulties should *submit an IT ticket for assistance*. IT tickets can be submitted during all access hours, but the IT staff are available only during their business hours, with the exception of emergencies.

VI. Workspace safety guidelines

Remote employees are expected to keep their workspace free of safety hazards. To ensure employee health and safety. In the event of a work-related illness or injury, remote employees should follow normal incident reporting procedures. Please contact Bud Mullanix, Director of Human Resources for a copy of the most recent workers Comp policy.

VII. Security and confidentiality

Remote employees are expected to take proper measures to ensure the protection of company data, proprietary information and assets. This includes being aware of HIPAA, keeping equipment password protected, documents confidential, and keeping all VMRC documents secure and protected.

VIII. Compensation

No changes will be made to an employee’s base compensation if they work remotely, regardless of their location. Remote employees will be eligible for STEP and COLA increases and promotions based on company policy. We are no longer going to be paying employees to drive to their assigned office building from home or from the office to return home regardless of splitting work at home and in the office. When calculating their mileage, the employee shall consider the

distance from the office to their first field location and the distance from their house to the first field location and use the shorter of the two as their starting mileage distance.

IX. Consequences

Failure to fulfill work requirements or adhere to policies and procedures while working remotely may result in *termination of remote work agreement, or other corrective action*. Prior to termination of remote work, a workplan to address issues will be developed and the employee will have 2 weeks to demonstrate progress on implementation of the workplan. If the employee is unable to demonstrate progress, then the remote work agreement will be terminated.



Remote work from home form

Please indicate your proposed Remote Work Form (RWF) is to be specific with regards to start times, finishing times, breaks, lunch, and any other items you would like considered. (Check if you will be working at your home office or your regularly assigned VMRC office.) Remember if you decide to work from HOME 3-4 days a week when you are in the office you will need to use a HOTEL Office. Furthermore, by signing below you acknowledge that you will not be personally providing continuous care for another person during the hours scheduled on this request. Please complete this form and return it to your manager within 5 days.

MANAGERS: Please provide HR with the signed forms from your staff accompanied by an email re-cap listing your staff by name and the number of days they plan to work from home.

NOTE: Check the days and times you would like to work remotely or in the VMRC office, home office hours will be 7am to 8pm.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Effective From: _____

To: _____

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Time	Office: ____ Home: ____	Office: ____ Home: ____	Office: ____ Home: ____	Office: ____ Home: ____	Office: ____ Home: ____	Office: ____ Home: ____
7 a.m.						
8 a.m.						
9 a.m.						
10a.m.						
11a.m.						
12p.m.						
1 p.m.						
2 p.m.						
3 p.m.						
4 p.m.						

5 p.m.						
6 p.m.						
7 p.m.						
8 p.m.						
Total Hours						

This schedule is subject to review by your immediate manager and can be changed or cancelled at managers' discretion.

Employee name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Manager's name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Send copies to: Manager, Human Resources, and Employee