

City of New London COVID-19 Telework Guidelines

All employees who engage in telework during this National Health Emergency must follow these telework guidelines. Please note that teleworking and remote work arrangements are temporary and offered based upon the need for social distancing of all employees at this time. Any teleworking arrangement made will be on a trial basis and may be discontinued at will and at any time at the request of either the teleworker or the City of New London (the “City”). Every effort will be made to provide two (2) weeks’ notice of such change to accommodate issues that may arise from the termination of a teleworking arrangement. There may be instances, however, when no notice is possible.

A. City Policies Remain in Effect

Employees who work remotely must continue to abide by the City’s employment policies, including its Anti-Harassment policy, timekeeping policy, and all other policies contained in the Employee Handbook. Failure to do so may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

B. Performance Expectations and Work Schedules

An employee who teleworks must meet City of New London standards of professionalism in terms of communication, job responsibilities, work output, and orientation in the public’s interest. Engaging in telework does not lower or change the amount of time an employee is expected to work, and performance expectations will not change due to teleworking. Employees who telework must reach an agreement with their managers as to the hours they are expected to work and any other standards. Once the City has approved a teleworking arrangement, the teleworking employee is responsible for maintaining regular contact with his or her manager to ensure the manager is kept apprised of all necessary events or information. Teleworking employees are expected to respond as soon as possible, but no later than during the same workday, to any communications from their manager unless circumstances make it physically impossible to respond.

Teleworking is not a replacement for appropriate childcare or an opportunity to do activities other than City work during regular working hours. Unless authorized by the City Administrator, employees may not perform telework on a flex schedule. City employees who are teleworking are expected to be working and available during all standard City work hours. Although an employee’s schedule may be modified to accommodate childcare needs during the COVID-19 crisis, the Administrator must specifically authorize such modification in advance. An employee teleworking must remain focused on job performance and meeting the needs of the City and the community. Prospective teleworkers are encouraged to discuss expectations of teleworking with family members prior to entering a trial period.

When work conditions change and employees are again able to be present in the office, telework arrangements will cease and employees will be expected to resume daily presence, unless otherwise expressly authorized in advance by the City Administrator.

C. Equipment and Technology Support

The City 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 teleworking arrangement. The City will maintain equipment supplied by the City and it remains the property of the City. The employee will maintain any equipment supplied by the employee. The City accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. The City reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. The City is not responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, or other costs incurred by employees in the use of their homes as teleworking alternate work locations.

Equipment supplied by the City is to be used for City of New London-business purposes only. **Computer and telework equipment may be accessed, and used, only by the City employee who is performing the telework.** Employees are prohibited from allowing family members, or any other individuals to access City property that is being used for telework. This includes but is not limited to the City-supplied computer laptop and any related hardware or software, City cellular telephone, and City records.

Employees' access and connection to the City's electronic network(s) may be monitored and there should be no expectation of privacy while using City equipment or network(s).

D. Security

Consistent with the City of New London's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, teleworking employees will be expected to ensure the protection of confidential City and personnel private information accessible from their home office. Teleworking employees are required to take steps to ensure such protection including, but not limited to the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

E. Safety

Employees are required to maintain their home workspace free from safety hazards. City safety policies must be followed while teleworking. Injuries sustained by the employee while at the employee's home work location and that are incurred in conjunction with regular work duties are usually covered by the City's workers' compensation policy. Telecommuting employees are responsible for immediately notifying Human Resources of any injury incurred in the course of employment in accordance with the City's worker's compensation procedures. The City bears no responsibility or liability for any injuries or damages sustained by visitors to telework work site. The City also assumes no responsibility for any activity, damages, or injury that is not directly associated with, or resulting from, the teleworking employee's performance of standard job duties.

F. Time Worked

Teleworking employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all hours worked using the City's time-keeping system. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval of the teleworker's supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the immediate termination of the teleworking agreement or in discipline. All employees are required to accurately record all working time that identifies the work performed each day and to provide the record to their supervisor weekly. Failure to do so may result in discipline, up to and including termination.