
The Roman Catholic Church of the Diocese of Phoenix
Human Resources Policies and Procedures

Policy 2-7.1.20 Telecommuting

Telecommuting is a viable alternative work arrangement in cases where individual, job and supervisor characteristics are best suited to such an arrangement. It is not an entitlement; it is not a company-wide benefit; and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the employer. Telecommuting on an occasional basis is handled between the employee and supervisor.

Procedures at the Diocesan Pastoral Center:

1. An employee or a supervisor can suggest telecommuting as a possible work arrangement. Formal telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing on the business needs of the employer first.
2. Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and supervisor will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement paying particular attention to the following areas:
 - a. Employee Suitability – the employee and supervisor will assess the needs and work habits of the employee and the likelihood of the employee being a successful telecommuter. An evaluation will also be done of the supervisor’s ability to manage remote employees.
 - b. Job Responsibilities – the employee and supervisor will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement.
 - c. Equipment needs, work space design considerations, and schedule issues will be addressed.
 - d. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations with regards to tax and other legal implications for the business use of the employee’s home based on IRS and state and local government restrictions rests solely with the employee.
3. If the employee and the supervisor agree, a telecommuting agreement will be prepared and signed by all parties.
4. The employee and supervisor will determine the appropriate equipment needs for each telecommuting arrangement. The Finance Office will serve as a resource in this matter. When employer owned equipment is provided to the employee, a Property Receipt Form must be filled out. When equipment is supplied by the employee, the employee will maintain the equipment with the approval of the employer. The employer accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. Equipment supplied by the employer is to be used for business purposes only. The telecommuter must sign an inventory of all office property and agrees to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment all company property will be returned to the employer, unless other arrangements have been made.

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5. Employer owned software shall not be duplicated. To ensure hardware and software security, all software used for telecommuting must be approved by the Finance Office before installation and only approved systems may be connected. Systems are required to have current virus protection loaded at all times. Restricted access materials shall not be taken out of the office or accessed through the computer unless approved in advance by the employee's supervisor.
6. The employee and supervisor will agree on the number of days of telecommuting allowed each week, the work schedule the employee will maintain, and the manner and frequency of communication with the supervisor and office. The employee agrees to be accessible by phone or modem within a reasonable time period during the agreed upon work schedule. Telecommuters must notify the office if they leave their telecommuting location, much like they would inform their administrative assistant when leaving the traditional office during the workday.
7. Telecommuting employees who are nonexempt from overtime requirements will be required to record all hours worked in a manner designated by the employer. Telecommuting employees will be held to a higher standard of compliance than office-based employees due to the nature of the work arrangement. Hours worked in excess of those specified per workweek, in accordance with state and federal requirements, will require the advance approval of the supervisor. Employees' salary, benefits and employer-sponsored insurance coverage will not change as a result of telecommuting. The employee's supervisor must approve sick leave, vacation or any other leave request in the same manner as when working in the office. If a telecommuter is ill while working at home, the telecommuter reports days worked and must use sick leave for days not worked. Failure to comply with this requirement can result in the immediate cessation of the telecommuting agreement.
8. Telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary employer information accessible from their home office. Steps include, but are not limited to, use of locked file cabinets, disc boxes and desks, regular password maintenance, a data backup system, and any other steps appropriate for the job and the environment.
9. The employer will not be responsible for costs associated with the initial setup of the employee's home office such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to existing home office space.
10. A designated representative of the employer may inspect the home work site for possible work hazards and suggest modifications. Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying the employer of work related injuries in accordance with the employer's workers' compensation procedures.
11. The employer will provide supplies (pens, paper, etc.) for successful completion of the job responsibilities. The employer will also reimburse the employee for all other business-related expenses such as phone calls,

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shipping costs, etc. that are reasonably incurred, in accordance with job responsibilities, and as approved by the supervisor.

12. Evaluation of telecommuter performance includes daily interaction by phone and e-mail between the employee and the supervisor, and weekly face-to-face meetings to discuss work progress and problems. Performance evaluations of telecommuters will be consistent with that received by employees working at the office in both content and frequency and focuses on work output and completion of objectives.
13. Telecommuting is NOT designed to be a replacement for appropriate childcare.
14. The availability of telecommuting as a flexible work arrangement for employees can be discontinued at any time at the discretion of the employer. Every effort will be made to provide 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 is possible.

See Forms: Property Receipt Form; Telecommuting Work Agreement

Approved by Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted on October 27, 2006