


TEXAS CIVIL COMMITMENT OFFICE

 POLICY AND PROCEDURE	NUMBER:	1.25
	EFFECTIVE DATE:	05/12/2026
	SUPERCEDES:	03/18/2020

Subject: Telework

Authority: Texas Government Code §§658.001; 658.010 - 658.012

Purpose: The Texas Civil Commitment Office (TCCO) does not allow telework for employees. In the event the TCCO Executive Director makes an exception by allowing an employee to telework, the requirements of this policy shall be followed.

Definitions:

“**Alternate Work Site**” is a location, other than the employee’s headquarters, from which an employee is approved to telework.

“**Headquarters**” refers to an employee’s primary duty location.

“**Telework**” refers to an arrangement that allows an employee to conduct, on a regular basis, all or some agency business at a place other than the employee’s headquarters during all or a portion of the employee’s work hours. Non-scheduled or ad hoc at home work is not considered telework. Employees who travel to client locations to perform assigned duties are not considered to be teleworking.

Procedures:

I. Telework

- A.** Telework is a work arrangement in which an employee is approved to work remotely at an alternate work site on a regular basis.
- B.** Telework may be authorized to address a lack of available office space or provide reasonable flexibility that enhances TCCO’s ability to achieve its mission.
- C.** Telework is authorized by written agreement between the Executive Director and the employee.

- D. An employee who has been approved for telework, shall submit a written request to renew the approved telework annually. Telework Agreements (TCCO-04-20) shall be reviewed and signed annually for renewal purposes.
- E. Approval to telework is a privilege that may be revoked at any time, including without notice, if the employee fails to abide by the requirements for telework or if it is determined that the employee's telework is not in the best interests of the agency.
- F. Telework may be approved on a part-time or full-time basis for jobs that can be conducted from an alternate work site without diminishing the quality of the employee's work or disrupting agency operations.
- G. An employee may be approved on a temporary basis by the Executive Director to work at an alternate location to continue operations to address specific time sensitive assignments or during an emergency or disaster. This temporary adjustment does not constitute telework as defined by this policy.

II. Decision-Making Process

- A. An employee interested in telework shall submit a request for approval via email to the employee's direct supervisor. The employee shall include details regarding the reason for the telework request, the alternate work site address and the proposed telework schedule. Additionally, the request shall include the employee's acknowledgement to comply with this policy, including performance expectations. Upon receipt of a telework request, the employee's supervisor shall staff the request with the TCCO Executive Director to determine whether the request will be approved.
- B. An employee who was subject to any disciplinary action in the previous twelve (12) months is not eligible to telework.
- C. An employee must be in good standing and have completed all applicable probationary periods to be considered for telework.
- D. Factors which may be taken into consideration, include but are not limited to:
 - 1. The extent to which the employee's job duties can be performed at an alternate work site;
 - 2. Whether the position includes measurable tasks or projects;
 - 3. The extent to which the employee teleworking may impact agency operations, including any impact to TCCO clients, key stakeholders and other staff;
 - 4. Whether the proposed alternate work site is an appropriate work environment; and
 - 5. The employee's individual performance, disciplinary status, and ability to maintain time management and productivity with minimal supervision.
- E. TCCO may require supervisors to visit and approve the alternate worksite prior to approving the employee's telework agreement.

- F. If an employee is approved for telework by the Executive Director, the Executive Director will provide written approval which will be routed to the employee and their supervisor. The approval will not be effective until the employee and the Executive Director sign the Telework Agreement (TCCO-04-20). A copy of the Telework Agreement (TCCO-04-20) will be provided to the employee and their supervisor. The original telework request and Telework Agreement (TCCO-04-20) shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

III. Telework Requirements

- A. TCCO employees approved to telework must abide by the requirements listed below.
 - 1. All TCCO employees approved for telework shall sign the Telework Agreement Form (TCCO-04-20) and shall have a current Emergency Contact form (TCCO-05-20) on file with the TCCO central office.
 - 2. Employees approved for telework are subject to the same rules and disciplinary procedures as non-teleworking employees.
 - 3. Employees shall maintain their regular work schedule as approved by their supervisor and shall not conduct personal business during that time. Any deviation from the employee's regular work schedule shall be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor.
 - 4. Employees shall maintain their approved alternate worksite as an environment that is conducive to productivity and free from distractions including childcare, dependent care, or household obligations.
 - 5. Employees shall be reachable via email, phone and other electronic communication during telework hours.
 - 6. Employees shall follow all TCCO policies concerning records retention, safety of client records, and leave.
 - 7. Employees shall follow directives provided by TCCO Management.
 - 8. Employees shall not conduct in-person business at their alternate work site.
- B. Supervisors shall routinely review an employee's work product to ensure productivity is maintained and agency information remains secure.
- C. Any deviations from the above requirements shall be approved by the TCCO Executive Director.

IV. Availability and Time

- A. An employee approved for telework shall maintain their approved work schedule. Any deviations to the approved schedule should be discussed with the employee's supervisor for prior approval.
- B. Teleworkers shall remain available and responsive while working at the alternate work site via phone, email, videoconferencing, instant messaging and text messaging.
- C. Teleworkers who have a phone at their assigned headquarters shall update their voicemail outgoing messages with alternate contact information and check their office voicemail frequently throughout the day.

- D. Any requests for overtime or hours worked over a regular work week require advance approval from the Executive Director.
- E. Telework employees shall attend meetings in the office when instructed and continue to attend offsite activities as normal such as meetings, case management activities, and site visits. Any deviation from the attendance at offsite activities must have Executive Director approval.
- F. Leave requests should be communicated to the supervisor with as much advance notice as possible.

V. Work Environment

- A. The telework agreement requires that the employee has a work environment which is conducive to the successful completion of assigned tasks. A work environment conducive to the successful completion of tasks is an environment free from distractions in which the employee can work efficiently and productively. Possible distractions could include, but are not limited to: environmental distractions such as construction work and other obligations such as familial or caregiving obligations, household responsibilities, social activities and obligations, or obligations related to outside education or employment. This does not mean someone else cannot be at the alternate work site while an employee is teleworking, but they should be self-sufficient and should not impact the employee's ability to work.
- B. A conducive alternate work site includes:
 - 1. Adequate workspace;
 - 2. Control over lighting and sound;
 - 3. Access to the internet, telephone service and electrical outlets;
 - 4. Agency issued laptop or tablet;
 - 5. Necessary office equipment including a printer and scanner;
 - 6. Safety and security of work materials;
 - 7. Appropriate arrangements for dependent care; and
 - 8. Controlling personal disruptions such as non-business telephone calls and visitors.
- C. The alternate work site should include proper placement of agency property to ensure the safety and security of state-owned equipment and information is not compromised.
- D. Telework employees are responsible for the cost of internet service and any related expenses at their alternate work site.
- E. Telework employees shall ensure the alternate work site office adequately safeguards the confidentiality of TCCO information. Electronic resources such as tablets, laptops, and mobile phones shall be locked when not in use by the TCCO employee and the employee shall not permit access by others. Documents or paperwork shall also be properly secured to safeguard confidentiality.
- F. Employees who are teleworking are expected to have a designated workspace in the alternate work site, such as a home office, and are expected to keep that space free of safety hazards. Employees are responsible for the safety of their alternate work site.

- G.** Telework employees are expected to maintain the same safety standards at their alternate work sites as at their regular work sites. Employees are subject to the same policies and reporting processes, regardless of their work locations.
- H.** Injuries sustained in the course and scope of employment at an employee's alternate work site may result in a workers' compensation claim. The employee's injury must occur in the course and scope of employment to be considered a valid claim under the Texas Workers' Compensation Act. Workers' Compensation does not provide coverage to employees who are injured while doing household chores, running errands, or engaging in personal activities during their breaks.

VI. State Property

- A.** TCCO employees are responsible for all state-issued property in their possession including at alternate work sites. State equipment should always be stored in a safe place. Any state equipment that is lost, stolen, damaged, or compromised in any way shall be reported to the employee's supervisor immediately.
- B.** State equipment shall be used only by the TCCO employee and only for state business purposes.
- C.** Telework employees shall have internet access of a sufficient speed and bandwidth so as not to impede the employee's productivity. If an employee's internet access or lack thereof impedes with the employee's productivity, telework approval may be rescinded.
- D.** Telework employees shall save files to OneDrive on their agency computers. Agency documents shall not be saved or stored on personal resources such as personal flash drives or external hard drives.
- E.** TCCO technical support is limited to TCCO-provided devices (laptops, keyboards, etc.), TCCO network access, and agency approved software. Teleworking employees may need to bring state-issued equipment to headquarters for periodic updates or repairs.

VII. Office Closures

If a teleworking employee's assigned headquarters closes due to inclement weather or another emergent issue on the employee's approved telework day, the employee shall continue to work unless the inclement weather or other emergent issue also prevents the employee from teleworking.

VIII. Telework Cancellation

- A.** Management may cancel the employee's approval for telework, at any time, without any notice.
- B.** An employee who wishes to cancel their telework arrangement shall provide written notification (email is sufficient) to the employee's supervisor.

SIGNATURE ON FILE

Marsha McLane
Executive Director

Associated Forms:

- Telework Agreement Form (TCCO-04-20)
- Employee Data/Emergency Contact Form (TCCO-05-20)