

CPS Central Office Remote Work Guidelines

Revision Spring 2024



CPS Remote Work Guidelines, Policies and Process

Overview

Cincinnati Public Schools Board Policy 3133 – Remote Work Policy permits remote work or hybrid remote work arrangements for eligible employees.

Remote work allows employees to work from home (or another non-District location) during their work schedule through telecommunications technology rather than commuting to a District building. Remote work can be established for the employee's full schedule or in a hybrid model in which certain days per week are split between in-person and remote work.

The Board of Education recognizes the benefits of remote working arrangements. The Board believes that remote work expands the District's ability to recruit and retain the most talented employees. Additionally, a remote work arrangement can create advantages for both the District and its employees. Such advantages may include increased productivity and performance, cost reduction, environmental sustainability, improved crisis response, greater work-life balance and increased job satisfaction.

The District allows the use of remote work arrangements within the bounds of responsiveness to our community, business operations and resource limitations. Employees who wish to participate in a remote work arrangement must be: (i) in good standing; and (ii) in a position whose work duties and responsibilities are suitable for a remote work arrangement. The District will approve a remote work arrangement for appropriate positions in accordance with the terms of this policy the job description and consistent with the department's and District's needs. The District also has the authority to authorize temporary remote work assignments in circumstances such as extreme weather, widespread illness or other emergency situations

There are many jobs at Cincinnati Public Schools that have a significant and necessary in-person component. A Remote Work Position Assessment Form is included herein to assess whether a position is appropriate for a remote work assignment. While a remote work arrangement may be mutually beneficial to the employer and employee, CPS will only approve remote work for employees who can effectively perform work remotely.

Guidelines for Remote Work

1. Remote work is not an employee benefit, entitlement or right; rather, it is a job assignment for employees to complete their assigned duties and responsibilities from a location other than the assigned worksite.
2. Employee participation in remote work is voluntary and is not mandated; however, special circumstances may require temporary remote work for some employees at times (e.g., department moves/space renovations, extreme weather, widespread illness or other emergency situations)
3. Remote work arrangements are subject to cancelation at any time at the discretion of either the supervisor or the employee.
4. Remote work may not be used in lieu of taking personal leave, sick leave or annual leave.



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5. Remote work is not a childcare substitute or other substitute for providing dependent care (or pet care). Employees who have dependent care responsibilities at home will still need to make arrangements for care during working hours.
6. Employees approved for remote work must comply with all CPS policies and procedures, including “Work Schedules,” and meet all evaluation performance standards.
7. During the employee’s normal working hours, the employee must be available to communicate with his or her immediate supervisor.
8. Employees working remotely must keep the Treasurer’s Department apprised of any changes to the employee’s work location to ensure that appropriate payroll taxes are deducted and withheld.

Remote Work Eligibility

To be eligible, employees must:

- Be in good standing (e.g., no pending disciplinary or attendance issues)
- In a position whose work duties and responsibilities are suitable for a remote work arrangement
- Agree to the terms of a remote work agreement (example attached), including attending required training
- Have an appropriate workspace
- Have access to the tools and equipment needed to perform job duties
- Receive approval from their supervisor, department leader and ELT member

Eligible employees may apply for remote work using the attached form. Employees will need to apply and agree to the terms each year. Employees whose physical presence at the assigned worksite is essential to the performance of their duties will not be eligible for a remote work agreement.

Remote Work Agreements

Remote work arrangements are for regularly recurring, weekly remote work and must be supported by a remote work agreement that specifies the requirements and details of the arrangements. Employee’s work hours and location must be specified in the agreement. It is recommended that the employee and their supervisor set up a consistent remote work schedule. In a hybrid model, predictable remote schedules for the same day(s) each week will be set. Any deviations to the agreed upon work hours must be submitted to the supervisor in writing and receive supervisor approval.

In-person attendance for on-site meetings, conferences, training sessions and similar activities may be required on scheduled remote work days at the sole discretion of the supervisor and overrides regular remote schedules. Employees generally may not substitute remote / in-person days for days that they are required to be in-person. Transportation for such attendance is the employee’s responsibility.



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Remote Worksite and Equipment

The employee's remote worksite must be conducive to fulfilling job duties and expectations efficiently and effectively and should be considered an extension of the CPS workspace. As part of the remote work application, employees must provide a description of their workspace and verify that it is adequate for fulfilling job duties and expectations (e.g., table or desk, phone, internet, electrical outlet, and any other requirements necessary based on the nature of the work to be done). The remote worksite must be free of distractions, and the employee must be accessible by email and phone during work hours.

CPS will provide equipment (computer, phone, office supplies, etc.) at its discretion for the employee's primary in-person work location. It will be the remote worker's responsibility to arrange for any additional equipment or services (computer, printer, phone, phone service, internet service, etc.) necessary to facilitate working from off-site location. There will be no reimbursement for remote work expenses that are not expressly agreed to by the District in advance. CPS retains ownership and is responsible for maintenance/repair/replacement of all equipment provided for remote work.

Reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that District property is safeguarded. Remote working employees must ensure that CPS equipment is kept in a secure location and used solely by the authorized user for CPS business only. Employees are responsible for maintaining and protecting all CPS equipment.

Remote-work employees must adhere to all District policies regarding confidentiality of student information. Eligible employees whose job duties require access to confidential information or systems (e.g., Citrix Receiver) should utilize VPN access and comply with all CPS confidentiality and security policies. The District assumes no responsibility for personally-owned equipment and will not service or repair such equipment. All work should comply with Board Policy 7540.04 - Employee Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety.

Employees working remotely remain subject to District records retention and public records policies as well as state laws. The employee should follow standard District data retention and data security policies, and ensure backup of data used in a remote working location and apply approved safeguards to protect records from unauthorized disclosure or damage. All work should comply with Board Policy 7540.04 - Employee Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety.

Remote Work Availability, Leave and Time Keeping

Employees working remotely are expected to uphold high-quality responsiveness and service-level commitments to their constituents. The employee shall ensure telephone accessibility during scheduled work hours or as specified by the employee's supervisor. A busy signal, no-answer, or accessibility only through electronic-mail is not acceptable as norms when working remotely. If the remote worker uses an answering service, it must have a business message (rather than a personal greeting). In-person attendance is required when requested from an employee's supervisor and overrides regular remote schedules (e.g., department meetings, in-person training).



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Remote working employees are expected to be working and available during normal business hours, with the same meal breaks and rest periods as they would have in a CPS building. Employees should continue to adhere to all district policies and collective bargaining agreements regarding timekeeping and leave requests. Supervisors may ask employees to keep a record of hours worked during remote work. Non-exempt (hourly) employees are not to work overtime without prior written approval from their supervisor and are required to take rest and meal breaks while working remotely in full compliance with the collective bargaining agreement, federal, state and local guidelines.

Employees must abide by the District regulations and policies governing personal leave, annual leave, sick leave, as well as overtime or other premium pay provisions. The same advance notice and approval provisions that apply to leave for in-person employees apply to employees working remotely. Failure to obtain approval for leave and/or overtime may result in termination of the remote work arrangement and/or disciplinary action.

An employee working remotely agrees and understands that the remote-work arrangement is for the convenience of the employee and has not been required by the District.

Work Performance and Productivity

The quantity and quality of work performed while working remote must be comparable to the work completed in the CPS workspace. An employee may be required to adhere to deadlines and to meet established objectives. Supervisors may require employees to provide reports, artifacts or other work products that demonstrate work performed or accomplished on remote work days. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the supervisor immediately of any situation that interferes with his/her ability to perform the job at the remote work site. Employee job performance will be evaluated according to the employee's evaluation cycle and the District timeline. Concerns around performance and productivity could lead to an employee's remote work eligibility being revoked, and/or poor evaluations, discipline and termination of employment.

Termination or Renewal of Remote Work Eligibility

Employees who wish to work remotely must reapply at the conclusion of the approval period. Remote work can be terminated at any time by either party for reasons including but not limited to: change in job duties, change in eligibility status or violation abuse of the Remote Work Guidelines.

Injury

If a remote worker incurs an injury related to the assigned job duties while working remotely, the workers' compensation provisions in place for the state or country may apply. The employee must notify his or her supervisor immediately and complete all necessary documentation.



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Procedure for Requesting the Opportunity to Work Remotely

1. Employees desiring remote work should submit the Remote Work Assessment Form, Job Functions Checklist and Request Form to their immediate supervisor.
2. Authorization to work remotely requires the approval and recommendation of the immediate supervisor to the Department Head and the Senior Leadership Team member.



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REMOTE WORK REQUEST FORM

To be completed by the Employee Requesting Remote Work

Employee Name: _____ Position: _____

Department: _____ Supervisor: _____

Date: _____

Requested Remote Worksite Address (Street, City, State, Zip code)

Requested Remote Worksite Description (Describe the workspace in which you will work remotely and verify that it is adequate for fulfilling job duties and expectations. For example, note whether it has a table or desk, phone, internet, electrical outlet, and any other requirements necessary based on the nature of the work to be done.)

Remote Work Terms (initial by each):

_____ I have reviewed and understand the Remote Work Guidelines and understand that remote work is a privilege, not a right

_____ I agree to attend the required remote work training

_____ I agree to be available during assigned business hours and to promptly respond to texts, emails and calls

_____ I agree to follow the district and collective bargaining policies for requesting and obtaining leave

_____ I agree to protect any CPS equipment, to use it only for CPS business and to adhere to all CPS security and confidentiality policies

_____ I agree to maintain a safe work environment and to hold CPS harmless for injury to others and any other liabilities while at my remote worksite

_____ I agree to uphold the spirit of the Remote Work Guidelines and understand that if I abuse or violate the guidelines, my remote work privilege will be terminated

_____ I understand that management can modify or terminate this agreement at any time



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Daily Work Schedule

Arrival Time: _____ Departure Time: _____

Type of Remote Work Requested (mark with X):

_____ Regular schedule (1-2 days permitted each week)

_____ Episodic schedule (occurring intermittently or during inclement weather or emergency conditions).

Requested End _____ **Requested Start Date:** _____

Date: _____

Proposed Remote Work Schedule: Day, Weekly, or Monthly Schedule (mark which days you plan to work remotely and which days you plan to be in the CPS workspace). Sample month:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1					
Week 2					
Week 3					
Week 4					

Employee Signature _____ **Supervisor Signature:** _____

Date: _____

Supervisor

_____ Approved _____ Approved with modification listed below _____ Denied

Signature _____ Date: _____

Department Head (if applicable)

_____ Approved _____ Approved with modification listed below _____ Denied

Signature _____ Date: _____



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Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Member

_____ Approved _____ Approved with modification listed below _____ Denied

Signature _____ Date: _____

Modifications

REMOTE WORK POSITION ASSESSMENT FORM *To be completed by the Supervisor Requesting Remote Work*

Position Title: _____ Date: _____

School/Department: _____

Describe the reason for considering a remote work option:

Is the position exempt or non-exempt? _____ Exempt _____ Non-Exempt

If the job is non-exempt and subject to overtime requirements, can work hours be accurately determined and measured when the employee is working remotely? _____ Yes _____ No



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JOB FUNCTIONS

Function	Always	Sometimes	Never
Tasks or functions can be independently performed			
Primary tasks require large blocks of time that involve analysis, planning, data entry, reading, writing, programming			
Clearly defined tasks and projects with measurable objectives			
Work can be scheduled/time controlled			
Other employee functions are minimally affected			
Core responsibilities require ongoing access to equipment, materials, and files that can only be accessed on site			
Core responsibilities require time in meetings or performing on projects			
Need for face-to-face interaction is minimal; telephone or email is sufficient			



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Decision (Please Check)

Can the time spent on the above types of work support remote work? _____ Yes _____ No

Can the position's duties be arranged to support remote work? _____ Yes _____ No

Do the current assigned duties support remote work? ? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, how many days of the week can the work be done remotely? _____ 1 day _____ 2 days _____ Occasional for special projects

Comments: _____

Person Submitting Form: _____ **Date:** _____

Department Head: _____ **Date:** _____

Employee Signature _____ **Supervisor Signature:** _____

Date: _____

Date: _____



APPENDIX A

Checklist for Employee: Preparing to Work Remotely

This document is intended to provide guidance and a checklist to ensure you are prepared to work remotely. Please note: Desktop computers may not be removed from your CPS work space.

- _____ I have a computer issued by CPS.
- _____ I have VPN software installed on my computer and know how to access secure apps and files using the VPN.
- _____ I know how to access my voicemail remotely
- _____ I have the internet (WIFI or Ethernet cable connection) at my remote location.
- _____ I know how to schedule a virtual meeting (Bluejeans or Google Meet).
- _____ I understand that I must VPN connect before using Business Plus.
- _____ I can scan a document (for saving or emailing) using my cellular phone.
- _____ I know I can seek support by emailing or calling the ITM help desk.
- _____ I have completed the SafeSchools remote work training



APPENDIX B

Remote Work Tips for Supervisors

This document is intended to assist supervisors with effective management tips for when employees work remotely. Department heads should be mindful of the overall team's remote work schedule and its impact on team functions and availability. For example, it is important to ensure that there are not days when an entire team is working remotely.

1) Set up regular communication structures and norms for your team to collaborate

- Discuss and align as a team on how you will communicate and when you will use different tools (e.g., google chat, video conference, phone call, text, email)
- Ensure you have ways of reaching all employees with urgent information (i.e., update your staff emergency contact sheet)
- Set up a regular and consistent cadence of communication. For example, hold team meetings or huddles at the same time on the same days each week; say hello each morning via group chat or group text and "sign off" at the end of each day in the same way; send a weekly update email memo
- Hold 1:1 check-ins to meet individually with your direct reports on a regular basis and monitor progress-to-goals

2) Coach employees to select well-suited projects or work streams for remote work

- Examples include: analysis, research, upskilling or training, creative and design projects, writing, long-term planning

3) Arrange and lead effective meetings.

- Be intentional about meeting duration when employees are working remotely. A meeting of 45 minutes or less ensures employees have visual and auditory breaks before their next meeting.
- Be aware that unspoken communication - a friendly smile or nod - may be missing in remote conversation. Make an effort to verbalize what might be conveyed without words (e.g., "It's good to see everyone!").
- Make space during 1:1 check-ins and in team meetings to ask people how they are doing and how they are adjusting to remote work. Be prepared to make adjustments as you learn together what works best.



