



## **1.0 Purpose**

Nord Country School (the “School”) recognizes that teleworking, especially during the COVID19 pandemic, may occasionally be necessary and beneficial to both employees and the school. The purpose of this policy is to clarify conditions and expectations for employees working at home.

## **2.0 Definition**

Teleworking allows employees to work at home or another preapproved location for all or part of their regular workweek. Teleworking is not an entitlement, nor is it a school-wide benefit. This temporary or irregular arrangement in no way alters or changes the terms and conditions of employment with the School, and this Policy creates no employee rights in relation to teleworking. Furthermore, the School retains the right to refuse to make teleworking available to an employee and to terminate a teleworking assignment without cause at any time in its sole discretion.

## **3.0 General Requirements**

Employees shall not telework unless they receive advance written approval from the School. Employees shall make arrangements with their supervisor and co-workers to address the on-site job demands that arise, including returning to the work site to perform certain job duties as needed or as directed by their supervisor. Employees shall be responsible for following all School policies and procedures when teleworking. Employees shall also be solely responsible for the performance of their teleworking duties; assistance from third parties is strictly prohibited.

Nonexempt employees will be required to:

1. Record all hours worked as assigned by the School
2. Take and document applicable meal/rest periods
3. Receive written approval from a supervisor prior to working additional hours or overtime

Failure to comply with timekeeping and work hours requirements may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment.

## **4.0 Eligibility Considerations**

Consideration will be given to employees who work in positions adaptable for teleworking assignments, particularly those who have demonstrated work habits and performance well-suited to successful teleworking. In the sole discretion of the School and its management, the following eligibility factors will be considered:

1. The employee has a position where effective communication can be accommodated electronically;

2. The employee's telework assignment will not be detrimental to the productivity or work quality of other employees or the effective operation of the School;
3. The employee must be able to perform work from home or another preapproved location without distractions or unnecessary risk to the security of School data, records, networks, or confidentiality in general;
4. The employee's equipment and software must meet the School's guidelines/standards, and the employee's needs for Information Technology ("IT") support must be minimal;
5. Telework sites must be at an employee's home or another preapproved location and in California;
6. The employee must be effective at working independently for extended periods of time;
7. The employee has demonstrated or can demonstrate effective time-management skills by completing tasks efficiently and within any required deadlines;
8. The employee must maintain connections with work groups or teams from their remote work location; and
9. The employee has no recent or pending corrective or disciplinary actions.

## **5.0 Supervisor Responsibilities**

Supervisors managing employees who have been permitted to telework must effectively:

1. Implement the telework policy/guidelines;
2. Conduct remote supervision;
3. Understand the technology and tools necessary for successful remote supervision; and
4. Establish communication protocols with telework employees, including making continued efforts to involve telework employees in office/department events and messages as applicable to preserve teamwork.

Supervisors will assess each employee's progress on a telework assignment periodically to ensure the employee's compliance with telework requirements, and address any work-related issues, including completing evaluations and other performance management as appropriate.

## **6.0 Communication and Accessibility**

Employees and supervisors must determine how communication between the teleworking employee, the worksite, and other employees also teleworking will be handled. Employees shall keep their supervisor and, as needed, their co-workers or other School stakeholders (such as parents and/or students), informed of their availability so these individuals know how and when to reach the employee during the employee's telework assignment. Employees must be accessible by phone and email at all times to their supervisor, co-workers, School stakeholders, and the School generally during assigned work hours. Employees must also remain flexible in their scheduling, and shall be available to attend staff meetings and other meetings as required by their supervisor.

## **7.0 Safety**

The telework space is considered an extension of the School's worksite. Employees will have the same responsibility for safe practices, accident prevention, and accident/injury reporting as in the regular worksite. In case of injury, accident, theft, loss, or tort liability related to telework, the employee must immediately report the event to their supervisor and allow the School or its authorized agent to investigate and/or inspect the telework site as needed.

Employees are responsible for establishing and maintaining a designated, adequate workspace at their telework location. Since the telework location is the employee's home or another preapproved location over which the employee has control, the employee is responsible for ensuring the location is safe (free from hazards and other dangers to the employee or equipment), clean, professional, and free from distractions (such as children, pets, electronic devices, etc.).

## **8.0 Supplies, Equipment, and Furniture**

Supplies may be requested from the School. Purchased supplies will not be reimbursed unless approved in writing prior to purchase.

The School will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, modems, phone and data lines, printers and copiers) for each telework site on a case-by-case basis. Any equipment provided by the School must be returned to the School upon the cessation of the telework assignment.

The School will not provide office furniture for the telecommute workspace.

## **9.0 Information Security and Confidentiality**

Employees must never provide any third parties access to the School network or share network access passwords, and must comply with all policies and procedures related to information security and network access.

Consistent with the School's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, teleworking employees must ensure that their telework location is secure and communications provided or sensitive work performed from the telework location remain confidential, away from the presence of family members or guests. Any School materials taken off site, such as confidential personnel or pupil records, must be kept in a secure space within the telework location and not be made accessible to any third parties, including the employee's family members or guests. Steps which employees may take to increase security of School materials/information include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, shielding computer monitors, and any other actions appropriate for the position and the telework location.

## **10.0 Performance Standards**

Employees must maintain the same or an improved level of productivity and work quality while teleworking. If productivity and/or work quality begin to decline, the telework assignment will be reevaluated to determine if changes can be made or termination of the telework assignment is warranted. Telework allows a high amount of flexibility for an employee to complete their work in a timely and proper manner, and it is expected that

employees will not abuse this opportunity by allowing their productivity or work quality to decline.

## **11.0 Professional Boundaries**

Employees must maintain appropriate levels of professionalism when interacting remotely with students and/or student's family members in full compliance with the School's Staff-Student Interaction policy and as summarized below:

1. Limit communications with students to issues involving School activities or classes only;
2. Ensure professional communications with students by avoiding conversations of an overly personal, inappropriate, sexual, offensive, or indecent nature;
3. Respect the privacy rights of students by ensuring communications and/or documents involving confidential pupil information are safeguarded properly;
4. Maintain the same degree of formality as would be appropriate when working on-site, including the manner of speech, tone, method of communication, and appearance and dress, particularly when the employee may be communicating with students via video chat; and
5. Continue to comply with any and all School policies, including enforcing appropriate student behavior and student discipline, child abuse and neglect reporting protocols, and prohibitions on harassment or other inappropriate conduct.

For a copy of the School's policy on Staff-Student Interactions, please visit <http://www.nordcountryschool.org/board-policies.html> and refer to the Employee Handbook section detailing Standards of Conduct. Employees who fail to demonstrate acceptable professional boundaries during a telework assignment may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment.

## **12.0 Evaluation and Duration**

Evaluation of employee performance during the telework assignment may include daily interaction by video, phone, and/or email between the employee and the supervisor, and weekly face-to-face and/or video meetings whenever possible to discuss work progress and problems, as needed.

The School may modify or terminate telework assignments at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. Although not required, the School shall endeavor to provide seven (7) days' notice of the modification or termination of any telework assignment whenever possible. All telework assignments shall be subject to termination upon resumption of regular onsite duties at the School following the COVID-19 pandemic or any other disruption that may result in a temporary telework assignment.

## **13.0 Adoption and Review**

13.1 Originally Adopted: August 12, 2020

13.2 Most Recent Revision: