

RISK SIMPLIFIED

RESOURCES:

- [CA State Telework Model Policy](#)
- [SHRM Telecommuting Policy and Procedure](#)
- [CA Dept of HR Telework Policy](#)
- [Risk Simplified: Remote Worksite Health and Safety Guidance](#)

QUESTIONS:

[Email PRISM Risk Control](#)

or call 916.850.7300

Remote Work Policy Considerations

By Sarah Bruno

Many public agencies are considering allowing remote work, also referred to as telecommuting or telework. In order to have a successful program in place, leadership should implement a comprehensive policy which establishes clear expectations, requirements, and work arrangements – for both supervisors and staff.

There are many benefits to offering remote work including; improved employee morale, improved recruitment and retention, reduced absenteeism, efficient use of office and parking space, and bolstering your business continuity plan.

With this in mind, there can also be concerns, the most common of them surrounding public (constituents') perception and reduced employee productivity. If your organization is putting a program together, be ready to address these concerns with your governing board/council.

A good remote work program should consider and address the following:

Eligibility

- Who will be eligible?
 - Exempt/non-exempt employees
 - Based on job title/classification
 - Based on tenure with agency
 - Based on most recent performance review
 - Based on direct supervisor/manager/department head approval?
- If eligible, what events or actions might make an employee ineligible?

Communication & Responsibility

- How will employee time/productivity be tracked? This becomes especially important for non-exempt positions, where employer encouragement to take meal and rest periods is necessary. Consider a different timesheet or software that could assist in this regard.
- What additional software can be utilized to assist team and departmental communication?



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- Will an employee-employer agreement be implemented as part of your program? This type of agreement should be signed by the employee in order to work remotely and would include expectations, as well as actions that would render an employee ineligible for remote work.

Equipment & Expenses

- Will your organization provide all the necessary business equipment, services and supplies or will the employee be responsible for supplying (thus likely incurring a reimbursable business expense per [CA Labor Code section 2802](#)). A good policy should address what will be covered by the employer, what is reimbursable and what will not be reimbursed (furniture/fixtures/utilities). Some items to take into consideration include; laptop, cell phone, cell phone service, internet service, office supplies.



Health & Safety

- How will safe and healthy remote workplaces be established and maintained?
- An employer is still responsible for the health and safety of employees when working remotely. Consider implementing a safety self-certification or checklist regarding the remote workstation and area.

Information Security

- What requirements will be included in the policy to address security of agency equipment, such as laptops? If employees are using their personal computers, how will you ensure confidential or protected information is secured? Employees will be using home internet or potentially public Wi-Fi – how will confidential and protected information be secured?

It is important to include bargaining groups as well as legal counsel in the process of putting a remote work program and policy together.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the PRISM [Risk Control](#) department.