

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI Mississippi Library Commission	TOPIC: REMOTE WORK POLICY
EMPLOYEE GUIDE	EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon Approval Approved: 9/27/2022 Revised: 5/27/2025

## 1. **POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy is created to ensure effective internal controls and consistency for Mississippi Library Commission employees assigned to remote work at an approved alternative worksite.

## 2. **PURPOSE**

- 2.1. Remote working is an assignment that allows eligible Mississippi Library Commission employees to work in a designated area outside the office.
- 2.2. Remote working benefits to employees, departments and the community can include:
  - 2.2.1. Ability to function when the regular worksite is inaccessible;
  - 2.2.2. Continuity of operations;
  - 2.2.3. Efficient use of agency resources, including office space;
  - 2.2.4. Recruitment and retention of highly qualified employees;
  - 2.2.5. Greater flexibility for employees and departments.

## 3. **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all agency offices, departments, divisions, and employees. The scope of implementing this policy will be directed by the Mississippi Library Commission and communicated through the department directors and/or their designee.

## 4. **POLICY DETAILS**

- 4.1. Remote working is a privilege, and this policy does not create an expectation of any right to remote work. An employee's remote work status may be revised at the sole discretion of the agency. All agency employees who remote work shall have an approved remote work assignment under this policy. An agency department may have additional remote work requirements, guidelines, or procedures, provided they are consistent with the intent of this policy.
- 4.2. Remote working does not change the job duties, obligations, responsibilities, or terms and conditions of agency employment. Remote working employees must comply with all agency rules, policies, practices, and instructions. Department directors or their designee shall continually assess whether an employee's remote work assignment is effective and

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accomplishing the responsibilities and mission of the department.

- 4.3. A remote worker must have a knowledge of both essential job functions and performance expectations and be an organized, highly disciplined, conscientious self-starter who needs little supervision. Each remote worker must independently set priorities, efficiently manage time, and effectively communicate with supervisors, co-workers, and others, while consistently maintaining high performance ratings.
- 4.4. An employee approved to remote work may request to modify a remote work assignment, but any modification to the assignment is at the sole discretion of the department director and/or their designee. If notified that an employee's remote work assignment has been terminated, the employee shall comply with applicable directives concerning reporting to the workplace.
- 4.5. A remote work assignment is intended to be cost neutral. The agency is not required to provide remote working employees with materials or supplies needed to establish an alternate worksite (i.e., desk, chair, computer, software, cell phone, fax, copier, etc.), and assumes no responsibility for set-up or operating costs at an alternate worksite (i.e., telephone, internet services, etc.).
- 4.6. Department directors or their designee have the discretion to provide equipment, software, or supplies, or allow employees to use their personal devices and equipment while remote working.
- 4.7. Department directors or their designee providing equipment, software, or other supplies to remote working employees must reasonably allocate those resources based on operational and workload needs.
- 4.8. The agency will not reimburse employees for the costs of using personal equipment while remote working.
- 4.9. All agency policies, procedures and rules apply while an employee is remote working, including policies and procedures regarding the use of computers, security standards and the Internet, regardless of whether the employee is using agency provided or personal equipment.
- 4.10. The agency head or appointing authority may waive the requirements of this policy as determined necessary to meet business needs.

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## 5. **PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

- 5.1. Eligibility for remote working is based on both the position and the employee. Remote work suitability depends on job duties and not the job title. Because there are no hard and fast criteria, department directors must consider specific positions and duties on a case-by-case basis. Factors to consider can include, but not be limited to the following:
  - 5.1.1. Are the employee's duties independent in nature;
  - 5.1.2. Are the employee's duties primarily knowledge-based;
  - 5.1.3. Do the employee's duties allow for measurable deliverables;
  - 5.1.4. Do the employee's duties require in person interaction at the regular worksite with supervisors, colleagues, clients, or the public;
  - 5.1.5. Do the employee's duties require the need for his or her immediate presence at the regular worksite to address unscheduled events which cannot be managed by other means; and
  - 5.1.6. Are the employee's duties not essential to the management of on-site workflow.
- 5.2. Employees remote working are expected to demonstrate and maintain:
  - 5.2.1. Dependability and responsibility;
  - 5.2.2. Effective communication with supervisors, coworkers, and clients;
  - 5.2.3. Motivation to ensure success of the remote working assignment;
  - 5.2.4. The ability to work independently;
  - 5.2.5. A consistently high rate of productivity;
  - 5.2.6. A high level of skill and knowledge of the job;
  - 5.2.7. The ability to prioritize work effectively; and
  - 5.2.8. Good organizational and time management skills;
- 5.3. An employee's remote work assignment may be revised or terminated at the sole discretion of the department director or his or her designee.

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## **6. WORK HOURS**

- 6.1. Any deviations from the approved remote working assignment must be pre-approved by the employee's department director;
- 6.2. Employees shall account for and report time spent remote working as required according to the terms of the remote working assignment.
- 6.3. Employees shall work overtime only when directed to do so and must be pre-approved in advance by the supervisor;
- 6.4. Employees must obtain approval to use accrued leave benefits in the same manner as employees not approved to remote work;
- 6.5. Employees unable to work due to illness shall use applicable accrued leave for hours not worked; and
- 6.6. Employees approved for remote working shall report to the worksite when directed by his or her supervisor.

## **7. WORKSITE**

- 7.1. A remote working employee shall designate a work area suitable for performing his or her job duties and responsibilities. Requirements for the designated work area may vary depending on the nature of the work and resources needed.
- 7.2. Remote working employees shall work in an environment that allows them to perform their duties safely and efficiently.
- 7.3. Employees are covered by workers' compensation laws when performing work duties at their designated alternate locations during scheduled work hours. Employees who suffer a work-related injury or illness while remote working shall immediately notify their supervisor, follow established reporting protocols, complete any required forms and/or assist with any necessary worksite inspections as determined by the department director or designee.
- 7.4. The agency is not liable for damages to an employee's personal or real property while the employee is working at an alternate worksite.

## **8. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**

- 8.1. An employee approved for remote working shall communicate with their department director to identify necessary equipment, software, supplies, and support required to

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perform his or her duties at the alternate work location. Availability and assignment of such needed support items will be considered in determining an employee's eligibility to remote work.

- 8.2. Remote working should be accommodated with portable technology (e.g. laptop or tablet). The relocation of non-portable technology equipment such as desktop computers, monitors, printers, or other equipment is at the sole discretion of the department director or designee.
- 8.3. In the event that a department director or designee chooses to relocate non-portable equipment under the authority of this policy, the Agency Asset Tag # must be identified in the remote work assignment and the remote working employee must do the following:
  - 8.3.1. Take appropriate precautions to package and transport the agency-owned equipment safely; and
  - 8.3.2. Set up must be performed by the employee or other department personnel.
- 8.4. The remote working employee must notify the Mississippi Library Commission Property Officer, in writing, of the change of any asset location. Notification should include at least the Agency Asset tag #, asset description (make, model, quantity), employee name and number who will have possession of the equipment, and physical location of the equipment.
- 8.5. All equipment, software, and/or supplies provided by the agency shall be used for official agency business use only.
- 8.6. A remote working employee does not obtain any right to agency equipment, software, or supplies provided in connection with remote working. The employee shall immediately return all agency equipment, software, and supplies at the conclusion of the remote work assignment or at the department's direction.
- 8.7. A remote working employee shall take reasonable measures to protect agency equipment, software, and supplies from possible theft, loss, and damage. In such circumstances, the remote working employee may be liable for replacement or repair of the equipment, software, or supplies consistent with Mississippi Library Commission and state property/equipment regulations.
- 8.8. Any equipment, software files, and/or databases provided by the agency shall remain the property of the agency.

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- 8.9. A remote working employee shall adhere to all software copyright laws and may not make unauthorized copies of any agency-owned software.
- 8.10. Employees may not add hardware or software to any Agency equipment without prior written approval from the department director and Technology Services.
- 8.11. A remote working employee, who uses personal equipment for remote working, is responsible for the installation, repair, and maintenance of the equipment.
- 8.12. A remote working employee shall immediately contact his or her supervisor if equipment, connectivity, and/or other supply problems prevent them from working.

## **9. SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

- 9.1. All files, records, papers, and/or other materials created while remote working is agency property and designated Mississippi Library Commission officials may have access to any personal equipment used while remote working, such as a personal computer, telephone and internet records. Remote working employees shall cooperate fully to assist designated Mississippi Library Commission officials when access to such personal equipment is required. Remote working employees and their supervisors shall identify any confidential, private, personal information, and/or records to be accessed and ensure appropriate safeguards are used to protect them. A department director or designee should require employees to work in private locations when handling confidential and/or sensitive information. A department director or designee may prohibit employees from printing confidential information in remote working locations to avoid breaches of confidentiality.
- 9.2. Employees may not disclose confidential or private files, records, materials, or information, and may not allow access to agency networks or databases to anyone who is not authorized to have access.

## **10. STATE OF MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT AND RECORDS RETENTION REQUIREMENTS**

The Mississippi Public Records Act and Records Retention requirements apply to information created by remote working employees in the course of carrying out their job duties and responsibilities for the agency. Public records include all information relating to the conduct of agency business regardless of where the information is stored. Upon receipt of a request for access to information relating to Agency business, a remote working employee must permit inspection and examination of any information in the employee's custody that relates to Agency business as directed by the department director. This requirement exists regardless of where the

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public record is located. Records created during remote working are subject to all applicable record retention laws and Agency record retention policies.

## **11. PROCEDURES**

11.1. Employees assigned to remote work should have the following:

- 11.1.1. A fully executed and approved remote work assignment form;
- 11.1.2. Applicable Virtual Private Network (VPN) security agreement; if necessary;
- 11.1.3. Applicable Mississippi Library Commission Property Office form(s).