

## TELECOMMUTING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### **Purpose**

Chico State Enterprises (CSE) recognizes that with current technology and ever-changing professional landscapes, it is beneficial for some employees to perform a variety of job functions from their residences or other locally based equipped sites (“Telecommuting Site”). CSE considers telecommuting to be a flexible work option to support employees in effectively managing their work duties in conjunction with day-to-day personal responsibilities when both the job functions and the employee are suitable for such an arrangement.

### **Objective**

This policy is designed to provide options for work location flexibility that meet business needs and also offer additional benefits to employees. Telecommuting has the potential for improved workplace efficiency and productivity, enhanced employee well-being, enhanced ability to recruit highly qualified candidates, and increased retention of a talented workforce. Reduced commuting is also environmentally friendly and saves personal transportation costs.

### **Policy**

Telecommuting can be performed intermittently, for short-term projects, or in renewable six (6) month scheduled increments. This does not include the occasional remote response to business needs while an employee is not on campus. An employee may request to participate in the Telecommuting Program if they meet all eligibility requirements. Telecommuting agreements do not automatically transfer if an employee’s role or status changes. Agreements are subject to approval, modification, or revocation at any time at the sole discretion of CSE. CSE recognizes the significant value and, at times, need for in-person, on-site engagement. Many positions within the organization that are student or public-facing or have similar characteristics may not be conducive to a productive telecommuting arrangement and therefore may not be appropriate for employees in those job functions.

Telecommuting is not an organization-wide entitlement and employees in positions meeting eligibility guidelines are in no way guaranteed to be approved to participate. Employees in positions meeting eligibility guidelines require prior approval by the supervisor and CSE HR. If approved, telecommuting shall only occur within the State of California.

Telecommuting will include regular interaction via video meetings, by phone, and through e-mail between the employee and their supervisor as well as face-to-face meetings to discuss expected outcomes, work progress, and opportunities. The employee and supervisor are expected to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the arrangement and make adjustments, modifications, or even cancel the agreement if outcomes are not comparable to expected on-site results in both work quality and quantity.

Telecommuting arrangements do not create any additional obligations upon CSE to provide reimbursement of additional expenses, equipment, supplies, etc. incurred by the telecommuter. Those obligations are based upon the on-site status of the employee only and as approved by Management and CSE Leadership in compliance with applicable policies.

The Director of Human Resources is responsible for overseeing and implementing the Telecommuting Policy (“Policy”). Questions regarding this policy should be directed to Human Resources at [csehr@csuchico.edu](mailto:csehr@csuchico.edu).

### **Eligibility**

Eligibility for telecommuting is not guaranteed for all employees and is not feasible for many positions and individuals. Any CSE employee may request consideration to participate in the Telecommuting Program if they meet the following requirements. A telecommuter must:

- Be self-motivated and results driven requiring minimal face-to-face daily supervision.
- Complete the full breadth and depth of their job responsibilities in a timely fashion.
- Demonstrate conscientious observance of scheduled work hours including consistent availability, regular attendance, punctuality, and productivity.
- Demonstrate effective use of remote technology.
- Actively seek to aid co-workers and undertake actions designed to enhance company performance and contribute to forwarding the mission.
- Be in good standing, with no corrective or disciplinary action in the last 24 months.
- Complete a Telecommuting Safety Checklist as called for in the Telecommuting Request Form (“TRF”)

### **Expectations & Requirements While Telecommuting:**

- Maintain consistent access to necessary resources, programs, software, and technology to complete all job duties.
- Remain readily available during working hours via phone, email, video conference, and any collaborative platform.
- Adhere to all applicable laws and CSE policies including, but not limited to, taking all appropriate rest and meal breaks.
- Only record time (clock in for non-exempt employees) during work and standard rest periods.
- Ensure personal activities are conducted and lunch periods are taken while not on duty (clocked out for non-exempt employees).
- Represent CSE with appropriate professionalism when interacting, via any means, with colleagues, vendors, university partners, and members of the university community.

### **Eligible Positions**

The job responsibilities of the telecommuter, as determined by CSE, must be of a nature in which the work is not required to be physically performed on business site. Requests will not be approved if the employee’s position requires immediate access to information or equipment located only in the office workplace, directly serving students or the public in a face-to-face manner, and/or duties that cannot be facilitated via technology without compromising the level of service. Eligible job responsibilities do not guarantee the employee’s automatic participation in telecommuting.

### **Request Process**

Telecommuting is voluntary and approved upon mutual agreement between the employee, supervisor and CSE when it is determined that telecommuting is operationally feasible and the employee’s work performance meets eligibility requirements. An eligible employee who wants to participate in telecommuting must begin by submitting a completed Telecommuting Request Form (TRF) to their immediate supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for verifying full eligibility and ensuring there is sufficient on-site departmental coverage to maintain high service levels. If all criteria are met, the

supervisor submits the TRF to their Director or Manager for review and approval prior to forwarding the completed document to CSE Human Resources. Human Resources must confirm receipt of a completed TRF before telecommuting may begin.

**Temporary Telecommuting Agreement:** Temporary Telecommuting Agreement may be approved by Management for circumstances such as inclement weather or special projects. These Agreements are approved on an as-needed basis only, with no expectation of ongoing continuance.

**Emergency Telecommuting Designation:** Telecommuting is voluntary, except under emergency conditions that prohibit the employee's duties and responsibilities from being performed on campus. The designation of Emergency Telecommuting is only initiated by CSE's Chief Executive Officer.

### **Job Responsibilities**

The telecommuter will be expected to perform all job responsibilities listed within their job description and as directed by their supervisor. The telecommuter must continue to meet work goals, expectations, assignments, and benchmarks of work productivity. This includes a maintained ability to impact individual, departmental, divisional, and company-wide goals.

The telecommuter agrees to immediately notify their supervisor when unable to perform work assignments due to equipment failure or other unforeseen circumstances. The telecommuter may be directed to immediately report to an on-site work location or use personal leave credits.

### **Additional Performance Standards**

Telecommuter: Telecommuters must meet the same work performance, service level, professionalism, and collaboration standards expected of on-site employees. This includes productivity, communication, and interaction with members of the extended CSU Chico and CSE communities.

Compliance with Policies: Telecommuters will comply with all applicable policies and procedures.

Availability while Telecommuting: Telecommuters shall be readily available to communicate at all times during the work schedule specified in their Telecommuting Agreement or as otherwise directed by their supervisor. Communication must be maintained in the manner of readily available technology ordinarily used in the workplace such as email, network access, messaging applications, video conferencing with camera video, phone, or other related technologies, and as directed by their supervisor. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that this access is maintained at all times during the employee's scheduled work hours.

Telecommuting Schedule: Telecommuters must maintain a consistent work schedule, in accordance with the TRF and approved by a supervisor, to ensure regular and predictable availability. Flexibility to work hours and days must be pre-approved by the supervisor. The telecommuter will remain flexible to the needs of CSE as their supervisor may make changes to the on-site scheduling requirements as operational functions evolve. A telecommuter will attend in-person job-related meetings, training sessions, and other functions as requested by their supervisor or other CSE leadership. This includes in-person attendance at urgent same-day meetings or other activities.

Overtime: A non-exempt telecommuter shall not work overtime without prior verbal approval from their supervisor or designee in compliance with CSE policy. A telecommuter's failure to obtain prior

approval for overtime work may result in termination of the Telecommuting Agreement and/or disciplinary action.

**Rest Periods:** An eight-hour shift includes two paid rest periods not to exceed fifteen minutes each. Rest periods will be awarded based on the total number of hours worked daily at the rate of one fifteen-minute break period for each four hours (or major fraction thereof) worked. Rest periods need not be provided for employees whose total daily work time is less than three and one-half hours.

**Meal Periods:** Employees working more than five hours will take a meal period, normally of one hour but not less than thirty minutes. However, if an employee completes his/her workday in less than six hours, the meal period may be waived by mutual consent of the employee and the supervisor. For employees working a day more than 6 hours, a meal period may not be waived. Employees working over a 10-hour day are entitled to a second meal period of no less than thirty minutes. This second meal period may be waived if the total hours worked do not exceed 12.

**Recording Time:** Non-exempt telecommuters must clock in during all working hours using either a CSE-issued or personal device. Non-exempt telecommuters are responsible for ensuring they are clocked out during non-work periods. This includes, but is not limited to, lunch periods that must commence prior to the fifth hour of work. Any errors must be reported to the supervisor or CSE Payroll for immediate correction.

### **Designated Workspace**

Employees are expected to maintain their telecommuting site in a secure manner that is free from safety hazards and free from regular interruptions and distractions. The telecommuter is responsible to ensure that safe working conditions exist, including adhering to the Telecommuting Safety Checklist.

**Work-place injury:** If an alleged work-related injury occurs, CSE shall have the right to promptly make an on-site inspection of any telecommuting site, with advance notice or at a mutually agreed upon time. Injuries sustained by the employee in a telecommuting location and in conjunction with the employee's regular work duties may be covered by the company's Workers' Compensation Policy. Telecommuting employees are responsible for immediately notifying CSE Human Resources and their supervisor of such injuries. CSE is not liable for any property damage to the telecommuting site, nor any injuries sustained by visitors or household members of the employee's telecommuting site.

**Ergonomic Evaluations:** It is the responsibility of the telecommuter to notify CSE Human Resources as soon as possible of any potential ergonomic issues while telecommuting.

**Equipment and maintenance:** A company issued electronic device will be provided for use at the telecommuting site. The telecommuter must take reasonable precautions to secure and prevent damage or theft to provided equipment. Only CSE employees are authorized to access, view, or use company data, services, and equipment assigned to them. Upon termination of employment or the Telecommuting Agreement, voluntary or otherwise, the telecommuter shall return all property to the campus at the telecommuter's expense. Any equipment, utility charges, internet access, or other infrastructure not provided by CSE is the responsibility of the employee to procure/arrange at the employee's sole expense, except as specifically provided in the TRF or other applicable policy. Any maintenance of CSE-supplied equipment, including but not limited to hardware upgrades and software installation, will be performed by a CSE-authorized person either on campus or remotely.

CSE will not provide off-site workspace furniture. The provision for off-site furniture is not part of the routine telecommuting guidelines, however employees with documented ADA Reasonable Accommodations in need of off-site furniture will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Office Supplies: CSE will provide the same supplies to telecommuting employees and to employees working on-site. In general, telecommuters should come on-site to pick up office supplies, as needed. CSE will not reimburse expenses for any supplies that CSE normally provides to employees when working on-site. The telecommuter may submit an advance written request to their supervisor for the purchase of any special supplies not normally available at the on-site work location.

### **Information Access & Security**

Information Security: The CSU, Chico and CSE are expected to safeguard data, preserve network and information system integrity, and ensure continued delivery of services to users. Data created or available as work product is a critical asset and must be appropriately secured. Work performed on behalf of CSE by the telecommuter at the telecommuting site is official CSE business. Telecommuters are expected to use good judgment and reasonable care to protect and preserve the integrity of equipment, its data and software, and its access. Telecommuting information security controls should simulate those implemented on campus including regulatory compliance, data privacy, segregation of duties, etc. This includes FERPA, HIPAA, PCI, JDIC, and similar. Concerns of unauthorized access should be reported to your supervisor and the IT Department.

Information classified under the CSU Data Classification Standard as “Level 1 – Confidential” or “Level 2 - Internal Use” must be stored on CSE-designated information systems and/or devices. Level 1 protected information is intended for use within CSU, Chico and access is limited to those with a business “need-to-know”.

Securing On-site Work Products: Telecommuters shall not leave Level 1, Level 2, confidential, and sensitive paper documents unattended in areas accessible by unauthorized persons. A telecommuter shall protect these documents from the view or access by unauthorized persons. All sensitive documents shall be maintained in accordance with CSU/CSU, Chico/CSE policy.

The telecommuter must keep CSE computing devices secure at all times limiting physical access by logging off or locking the computer screen when unattended. A telecommuter shall immediately report any security incidents including account or system compromises, unauthorized use or disclosure, loss of a CSE-owned computing device or data, software irregularities that may indicate a possible virus, or similar activity.

Record Retention: Retention, release, or destruction of CSE records should be done only in accordance with CSE records retention policy and procedure, and with the approval of the telecommuter's supervisor and appropriate data custodian where applicable.

Technical Support: Regular IT support will be provided to telecommuters, as it is provided to all employees. Telecommuters may be required to bring equipment to office or campus if necessary. CSE-owned assets shall not be serviced by a third-party technician without CSU, Chico ITSS approval.

**Disclosure and Employee Administrative Responsibilities**

CSE shall have no responsibility for any private property that may be used, lost, or damaged as a result of telecommuting with the exception of damage caused by CSE or University-owned equipment that has been documented as defective and having caused the damage. CSE shall have no responsibility to reimburse the telecommuter for any wear and/or repair of non-CSE property, even if such property is used by the employee in connection with telecommuting.

Off-Site Maintenance Costs: CSE is not responsible for operating costs, home maintenance, property or liability insurance, or other expenses e.g., utilities, cleaning services, etc. associated with telecommuting, or the telecommuting site.

Travel Reimbursement: Teleworkers will be reimbursed for travel and other work-related expenses in accordance with the appropriate equipment, travel, and expense reimbursement policies. CSE will not reimburse teleworkers for travel to campus/office base from the teleworker's home, or vice versa. Requests for travel reimbursements will follow the CSE Travel Reimbursement policy.

Time-off Requests: Requirements and the procedure for requesting personal time off such as sick leave, vacation, leave of absence, and other types of leaves will not change as a result of participating in telecommuting and will follow applicable CSE policy and department attendance reporting procedures.

Dependent Care: Both parties agree that the Telecommuting Program will not be a substitution for in-home child or dependent care. If a child or dependent is present during scheduled work hours, they should make arrangements for the care of that child or dependent. If a child or dependent is ill or home because of a school closure, however, the employee may, on a temporary basis, provide primary care for that child or dependent while telecommuting or use Sick or Family Leave, subject to the approval of the employee's supervisor.

Legal and Tax Implications: The employee shall be responsible for considering and addressing any personal income tax issues relating to telecommuting, including without limitation issues relating to the employee's ability to deduct related expenses. The employee must determine any tax or legal implications under IRS, state and local government laws, and/or restrictions of working out of a home-based office. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.

Right to Investigate & Recover: CSE may pursue recovery of university and CSE property from a telecommuter through wage garnishment or other means if the property is not returned at the conclusion of the telecommuting agreement and/or employment, deliberately, or through negligence, damage, destruction, or loss while in the telecommuter's control. In case of injury, theft, loss, or liability related to telecommuting, a telecommuter must allow agents of the organization to investigate and/or inspect the telecommuting site. CSE shall provide reasonable notice of inspection and/or investigation to the telecommuter.

Failure to Comply: Failure to comply with the requirements of this Policy or follow CSE policies, rules, and procedures may result in the immediate termination of the employee's telecommuting agreement and may include disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. In the event of security incidents, telecommuters are required to cooperate in internal investigations, outside investigators, law enforcement, and/or criminal and/or civil prosecution, when applicable.