

**Policy No. 2.21**                      **Telecommuting Policy**  
**Date of Issuance:**                **July 1, 2021**  
**Revision Date:**

**PURPOSE:** This policy establishes rules and procedures for identifying eligibility for Town of Rome employees to telecommute as well as for the use of telecommuting. In the event of an emergency, the Town may require employees to work from home for the purpose of continuity of operations. Additionally, under special circumstances, employees may request working from home for a specified period of time. Employees should not assume any specified period of time for telecommuting and the Town may require employees to return to regular in-office work at any time.

**POLICY:** The Town of Rome supports telecommuting as an alternative work arrangement and will permit telecommuting as provided by this policy when it benefits the productivity of the employee, his or her work unit, and is not detrimental to either the Town of Rome or the employee. Telecommuting is not appropriate or possible for all employees. No employee is entitled to, or guaranteed the opportunity to telecommute. Offering the opportunity to work at home or a remote location is a management decision, based on the discretion of the employee's Department Head. Final approval by the Town Administrator is required. A Telecommuting Agreement must be completed and approved in order to be allowed to telecommute.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Telecommuting** – means working one or more days during a work week from home instead of commuting to a centrally located worksite.

**Centrally Located Worksite** – means the Town of Rome worksite where the employee would be required to work if they did not telecommute.

**PROCEDURES:**

1. **Eligibility.** The telecommuting policy shall apply to all non-represented employees in the Town. The application of this policy to Town represented employees may be the subject of collective bargaining between the Town of Rome and the exclusive bargaining agents for those employees. All other positions are eligible to telecommute at the discretion of the supervising Department Head, with written approval of the Town Administrator. Telecommuting decisions are not subject to grievance procedures.

Positions that may be considered for telecommuting are those that:

- Are focused predominately on the electronic production and/or exchange of information by computer;
- Involve measurable or quantifiable work product;
- Have job functions that can be performed at a remote site without diminishing the quality of the work or disrupting the productivity of a department;
- Do not require an employee's presence at the regularly assigned place of employment on a daily or routine basis;
- Have a minimal or flexible need for specialized materials or equipment available only at the regularly assigned worksite;
- Allow for an employee to be effectively supervised, as he or she would be, if the job functions were performed at the assigned place of employment;
- Have been employed by the Town of Rome for a minimum of one (1) year prior to the effective date of the telecommuting agreement, unless telecommuting is a requirement of the position or exigency exists for the purpose of continuity of government.

2. **Requests to Telecommute.** Any employee requesting authorization to telecommute must first provide a written request to his or her immediate supervisor. The employee's direct supervisor shall make the initial determination of the employee's suitability for telecommuting. The supervisor will review the telecommuting request and will consider the unique circumstances of each request in light of the following factors, to ensure the requested telecommuting scheduling is not detrimental to the Town:

- Safety concerns
- Liability issues
- Employee's work duties and the ability to set clear and quantifiable objectives in order to measure work-performed
- Customer service requirements
- Communication with co-workers
- Effect on the rest of a department's work group
- Availability of needed equipment
- Adequate and appropriate work space at the employee's home or other off-site location
- Nature of employee's duties (ability to perform work off-site)
- Whether the employee has demonstrated conscientiousness about work time and productivity, self-motivation and ability to work well alone, and is performing currently at an overall satisfactory level or above in their position
- Undue administrative burden
- Whether scheduling would be detrimental to the Town
- Confidentiality of information within the home worksite
- Other items deemed necessary and appropriate by the Department Head

Where the employee's supervisor or department head agrees under an initial determination to an employee's request to telecommute, the employee and his or her supervisor shall identify expected work duties and a specific work schedule, including workdays and hours. Work schedules shall not exceed the hours/week of the employee. Under no circumstances shall a telecommuting schedule exceed 40 hours/week, without advance authorization by the Town Administrator.

After the employee's supervisor review, where circumstances are deemed appropriate for an employee to telecommute, the Town Administrator shall review the request and recommendation from the employee's supervisor. The Town Administrator may request further information from the employee to support the telecommuting request, including a written analysis of work tasks to be performed by the employee, and how the employee will keep an accurate accounting of what he or she works on while telecommuting.

The Town Administrator shall inform the employee in writing of the determination. If acceptable, the Town Administrator may include the date a telecommuting arrangement will be implemented and date it will end. If denied, a written explanation of why the request has been denied shall be provided to the employee.

3. **Work Space Requirements and Telecommuting Expectations.**

Telecommuters are responsible for maintaining a safe and ergonomic working environment, including the work area, bathroom, and other areas that may require access during the workday. The duties, obligations, and responsibilities of a telecommuter are the same as those

of an employee at the centrally located worksite. Telecommuting is not a solution for day care or dependent care. A telecommuter will not carry out dependent care or personal responsibilities in a manner that interferes with the successful performance of his or her job responsibilities. Non-work-related events and activities should not disrupt or interfere with work at the remote worksite.

If Town of Rome equipment is provided to a telecommuting employee, each piece of equipment must be listed as part of the request to telecommute. Employees must return the equipment in the same condition in which it was originally received, minus normal wear and tear. Employees are personally liable for missing or damaged equipment.

Employees who telecommute are subject to the same Town policies as that of employees at the centrally located worksite. An employee who telecommutes shall maintain the confidentiality of Town of Rome and related information and documents, prevent unauthorized access to any information, set up password protection, and dispose of work-related documents in a manner that will not jeopardize the interests of the Town in accordance with the Town's Computer, Internet, and Email Acceptable Use Policy. Town information and/or documents stored on an employee's personal computer or device may be subject to public disclosure requirements.

Employees who telecommute must be available by phone or email during all scheduled work hours. Both exempt and non-exempt employees who telecommute shall keep a daily log as to when they start and end their work day. The employee will also notate when he or she takes a lunch break, any other break or time away from the remote work site. The employee's weekly time sheet should be a direct reflection of the time spent in and out of the office during the predetermined regularly scheduled hours of work. Any use of benefit leave time normally scheduled during a telecommuting employee's scheduled workday must be logged and arranged with the employee's supervisor in the same manner as if the employee was at the centrally located worksite. The employee's supervisor shall verify all hours logged and provided by the employee.

The employee's supervisor or Town Administrator shall have the right to return a telecommuting employee to a standard on-site schedule with reasonable notice.