




# Hybrid Telework Policy

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**Policy**

It is the Policy of the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) to allow for the use of a Hybrid-Telework Program, in situations where work conditions and business needs deem it appropriate. Teleworking shall only be implemented when it is considered and approved as a viable option by leadership, with clearly defined benefits to client needs (if applicable), program or division operations, and the needs of the Department and employee.

DBH’s implementation of a hybrid telework schedule is determined by Executive Leadership. DBH is under no obligation to approve a hybrid telework schedule. DBH may roll-out, amend, modify, or terminate a hybrid telework agreement for any employee, classification, program, division, or for the entire department at any time.

**Purpose**

To ensure capability of initiating a hybrid telework schedule as an option within DBH, as it is recognized to be a potential benefit to business, societal, and/or personal circumstances. Telework provides DBH the potential to optimize resources and maintain employee productivity, as well as foster flexibility for its workforce.

**Definition(s)**

**Hybrid Telework (also referred to as telecommuting):** An alternative work arrangement allowing qualifying DBH employees to work remotely, rather than commuting and working at a designated worksite; and shall not exceed 50% of an employee's standard tour of duty (STOD).

**Telehealth:** Mode of delivering health care services via information and communication technologies to facilitate the diagnosis, consultation, treatment, education, care management, and self-management of a client’s health care while the client is at an originating site and the health care provider is at a distant site.

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# Hybrid Telework Policy, Continued

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## Eligibility

If an individual employee's classification, job duties and work conditions, as well as the Department's business needs allow for a hybrid telework schedule. The DBH Director, or designee, may approve a hybrid telework schedule not to exceed 50% of an employee's standard tour of duty (STOD), as defined in Work Schedules Policy (HR4007). It is expected employees, supervisors, managers, and Executive Leadership have read, understand, and agree to comply with the 'San Bernardino County Telework Program Guidelines', the 'Department Telework Program Guidance', and the Health and Human Services (HHS) Telework Program Policy & Standard Practice prior to the approval of a hybrid telework schedule.

Department managers and supervisors must review the following factors when considering the suitability of a telework agreement:

Considering Factors	Description
Job Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assess the department needs and work assigned to staff;</li><li>• Review position responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a hybrid telework arrangement;</li><li>• Assess equipment needs, workspace design considerations and scheduling issues.</li></ul>
Employee Suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most recent work performance evaluation (WPE), at minimum, "Meets Job Standards" in all measured categories;</li><li>• Demonstrate a high-performance level with minimal supervision;</li><li>• Ability to maintain a consistent and dependable level of productivity, with strong time-management skills;</li><li>• Self-motivated, organized, and conscientious about work schedule and maintaining proper communication with supervisor;</li><li>• Exhibits strong oral and written communication skills.</li></ul>

**Note:** Online telework training offered by Performance, Education & Resource Centers (PERC) must be completed prior to the start of a telework agreement.

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# Hybrid Telework Policy, Continued

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## **Telehealth Services**

The delivery of behavioral health services via telehealth capabilities must be approved by the teleworker's supervisor and shall Comply with the DBH Telehealth Policy (MDS2027) and Telehealth Procedure (MDS2027-1).

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## **Telework Equipment**

Qualifying employees must have a safe and ergonomic home office environment accessible to them, the primary materials and equipment needed at their home in order to telework and be able to operate a computer or other equipment independently, to the degree that they will be able to work remotely.

An Equipment Loan Agreement (as found in the Employee Telework Agreement) must be completed and returned to the supervisor for approval of loaned equipment, if applicable. It is the employee's responsibility to securely transport any equipment loaned by the County.

The employee is responsible for ensuring proper use and security of any County-owned equipment, if applicable. Any lost, stolen, or compromised County information technology equipment must be reported to the immediate supervisor immediately and DBH Compliance notified in accordance with Privacy or Security Incident Policy (COM0944).

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## **Security of Confidential Information**

Teleworkers assigned duties that require accessing and engaging with electronic protected health information (e-PHI), must ensure they complete the required HIPAA, Privacy, and Security Training prior to beginning their telework duties and annually, thereafter. An Oath of Confidentiality must be signed and on file with DBH prior to telework considerations. Teleworkers must also ensure adherence to physical, technical and administrative safeguards, as well as adhere to all relevant privacy laws (i.e., HIPAA, Welfare and Institutions Code 5328 and Section 42 Part 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations).

Teleworkers must be familiar with Security of Protected Electronic Health Information Policy (COM0923), Confidentiality of Protected Health Information (PHI) Policy (COM0905), and Data Integrity Policy (COM0925) as well as all other applicable DBH security policies. Additionally, any potential breaches shall be reported in accordance with DBH Privacy or Security Incident Policy (COM0944).

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## Hybrid Telework Policy, Continued

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### Communication & Accountability

Supervisors will monitor the individual productivity of each teleworking employee. Every teleworking employee is subject to reporting their telework productivity as directed by their direct supervisor.

Department supervisors, managers and executives must complete the County's Performance, Education and Resource Centers (PERC) **Managing and Evaluating Teleworker Performance (E-E04760)** training course, prior to monitoring teleworking employee activity.

A description of the productivity tracking method--format and frequency, should be clearly documented in the employee's telework request documentation, as well as reflected where appropriate in employee file and work performance evaluations. Additionally, this information must be added to the 'DBH Telework Tracking log,' by the supervisor.

Teleworkers must ensure all breaks and lunch periods are taken in accordance with applicable County practices, employee contract, and/or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provisions, and current Work Schedule Agreements.

Existing laws, rules, policies and procedures, which govern DBH operations and practices, are applicable to all teleworkers. If the teleworker is conducting authorized DBH business and their actions are within the course and scope of their employment, the same workplace rules that apply to County facilities will be applicable to teleworkers' home workspace. This includes, but is not limited to, policies on Internet usage, equipment usage, privacy, health and safety, and standards of workplace conduct.

Telework is a voluntary arrangement and can be terminated at any time by the manager or supervisor with or without cause. Unprotected excessive leave usage is cause to terminate a telework arrangement.

**Note:** Consultation with the Department's HR Business Partner (HRBP) and providing advanced notice to an employee prior to removing them from teleworking is recommended.

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### Disclaimer

The DBH Hybrid Telework Policy and subsequent telework procedure(s) shall be governed by and be subject to, San Bernardino County Telework Program Guidelines, County Human Resources policies, procedures, rules and regulations applicable to telework practices. County policy shall supersede any DBH policy or procedure on this subject matter.

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## Hybrid Telework Policy, Continued

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### Related Policy or Procedure

#### [San Bernardino County Standard Practice Manual:](#)

- HSPSP Section 10 – Telework Program
- HSPSP Section 15 – Confidentiality

#### [DBH Standard Practice Manual:](#)

- Oath of Confidentiality (COM027)
- Confidentiality of Protected Health Information (PHI) Policy (COM0905)
- Code of Conduct (COM0914)
- The Security of Protected Electronic Health Information Policy (COM0923)
- Data Integrity Policy (COM0925)
- Privacy or Security Incident Policy (COM0944)
- Work Schedules Policy (HR4007)
- Hybrid Telework Procedure (HR4032-1)
- Telehealth Policy (MDS2027)
- Telehealth Procedure (MDS2027-1)

#### [DBH Intranet Form:](#)

- Telework Tracking Log (HR021) (Requires supervision access permissions)
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### Reference(s)

#### [Human Resources Commuter Services Telework webpage](#)

- Employee Ergonomic Guide
  - Employee Telework Agreement
  - Department Telework Program Guidance
  - Department Telework Justification form
  - PERC access instructions
  - New Telework Users Training
  - San Bernardino County Telework Program Guidelines
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