

How do we start telecommuting?

1. Why to offer the telecommuting option?
 - *Space Issues in the office
 - *Staff issues/high caseloads/not able to increase staffing
 - *Morale booster/save travel time, etc.
 - *Electronic Data Files/Paper Files
2. Setting Expectations for telecommuters/qualifications to telecommute
3. Contract
4. Safety Checklist for Home-based office
5. Equipment
6. Office Coverage for telecommuters

Department Vision:

Department Mission:

Goals:

Examples

1. Protect children and vulnerable adults
2. Support communities and families in raising children who develop to their fullest potential
3. Assure that all people's basic needs are met
4. Build self-reliant communities and individuals

Team Mission:

Team Annual Goal/ Work Environment Goal: What goals from the mission and vision does your team work to achieve?

Who are your Customers?

List Key Results/tasks that your team or individuals complete: (If your whole team performs the same tasks, create team results. If each individual worker completes different tasks, create individual results) List each result/task separately.

For each result:

What is the activity? An activity is a work task that you do which helps you accomplish the result. Think of the result and consider all the work your team will need to be successful; to meet the goal or the target of the team result. Also consider work you could do or should do; work you may not currently perform. Remember to list the most important activities. Begin to think about this specifically. Clearly describe the tasks to be accomplished by your team that produce fully successful results for the Service Area and HSHPHD. Sometimes there is more than one activity that will need to be completed in order to achieve the result. Be ready to discuss how this activity will be measured and reported.

What are the indicators? Fill the Indicators fields with what your team believes are desired indicators of success. Remember, this about your future target or goal. Your team will develop ways to measure your progress toward meeting these indicators as you move toward the target of the result.

Set a S.M.A.R.T. Goal.

Goal is **S**PECIFIC.

Goal is **M**EASURABLE.

Goal is **A**TTAINABLE.

Goal is **R**ELEVANT.

Goal is **T**IME BOUND.

Team goals that are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-Bound) are more likely to be achieved than goals that are developed without these attributes. Your team will develop SMART goals to focus activities, work plans and commitment to performance indicators. Because meaningful

and practical measures are built in, SMART goals also enable feedback and learning that can keep your team on track to success. Part of reporting your progress is the communication of your goal performance. You and your team need to be clear about the process of appraising the measurement and assigning a summary performance rating. Setting targets or goals does not help unless you are able to report your progress. Not reporting your progress toward meeting the goal is like having no goals or vague goals.

Explain the Communication Process for this SMART Goal:

How will you develop the Results? Management, Supervisors, Supervisors and Staff, Staff, team sub-committee.

Set Expected Goals/Standards: What collection rates do they need to reach monthly? How many worklists should they have at a set date of the month? Suspense items? Mail items?

Set up regular periodic reviews and goal setting meetings: Annual review, Quarterly meetings, create projections so they know what they need to do to meet the set standards for their annual review.



Example of setting a results document:

Human Services Vision:

Better lives, stronger communities

Human Services Mission:

Strengthen individuals, families and communities by increasing safety and stability, promoting self-reliance and livable income, and improving the health of our communities.

Human Services Goals:

1. Protect children and vulnerable adults
2. Support communities and families in raising children who develop to their fullest potential
3. Assure that all people's basic needs are met
4. Build self-reliant communities and individuals

Team Vision:

Support communities and families in raising children to develop to their fullest potential

Team goal:

We will continue to improve trust between team members, increase teamwork and mentoring opportunities, and improve communication while supporting each other as we adapt to the changes with the work we do and within the department.

Who is your customer?

Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents, Employers, Other State Agencies, Lawyers and other partner agencies.

Result #1:

Provide on-the-job training to new staff (Key Result Area 1 is the PRIMARY ROLE of the Lead Worker and will impact the other Key Result Areas below when training is being provided to a new hire group.)

Activity:

1. Coordinate training schedule with Lead Worker Team and DHS within 2 weeks after being notified of new hire's name and start date.
2. Assess trainee's individual learning style by providing a written learning style assessment by the end of the second week of training. Tailor their training for their individual learning needs by adjusting your training style whenever necessary.
3. Provide one-on-one or lab training* and assistance to new Child Support Officers during their first four months employment to reinforce the training provided by our classroom presentations and DHS. *Lab training may be provided to allow trainees to learn from one another and to maintain consistency with the trainees.
4. Provide an additional 1 -2 months of training after the formal training calendar has ended to cover any topics not covered elsewhere and to cover all aspects of case management. This may include gradually decreasing one-on-one time with the trainee to promote the trainee's independence and growth. This time will be used to emphasize "day in the life" training.
5. Pull work in advance of the time it will be used for training purposes or leadworker assignments so that an adequate volume is available whenever possible. Solicit help from teams or supervisors when work will need to be saved for training purposes. Communicate timely with those teams and/or supervisors when work no longer needs to be held for leadworker training purposes. Return any unused work to the assigned case manager as soon as it is clear the work will not be needed for training purposes.
6. Review and correct work submitted by new trainees within a week of completion and forward any follow-up work to the assigned CSO. Provide additional training as needed.
7. Deliver, score and analyze New Worker Assessments at two, four and five months. Provide additional training as needed.
8. Communicate trainees' progress to their Supervisor via bi-weekly training summaries.
9. Communicate to trainee's team any coverage needs on their assigned caseload biweekly unless needed earlier.
10. Keep Supervisor apprised of any areas of concern within 48 hours.

Indicators:

Communication w/Leads, Trainees Assessments as well as Feedback from Trainees and their supervisors

SMART Goal:

Develop and conduct training sessions, monitoring progress and communicating with Supervisors within time frames listed under the activities.

Explain the Communication Process for this SMART Goal:

1:1 Meetings, Team Meetings, Email Communication

Result #2:

Offer training and support to new and experienced child support officers and supervisors

Activity:

1. Establish and update monthly schedule for resource availability by the 20th day of the previous month.
2. Communicate with supervisors and/or staff upon determining that resource hours will be reduced or stopped for extended periods of time due to providing training to a new training group. Communicate with supervisors and/or staff when resource hours are available again after finishing working with a training group.
3. Assist staff with finding the information they need to do their jobs by directing them to existing written procedures/resources or topic owners so they can locate this information in the future independently. Rather than just answering their questions, by doing the above, we are providing staff the tools they need to help them learn and retain information.
4. Keep up-to-date on all changes in the Child Support manual to be prepared to answer questions in the future.
5. Submit manual feedback and encourage others to do the same when resource questions indicate an update to the manual is necessary.

Indicators:

Communication w/Leads, Trainees Assessments as well as Feedback from Trainees and their supervisors

SMART Goal:

Provide scheduled lead worker resource hours and individual assistance within time frames listed under the activities.

Explain the Communication Process for this SMART Goal:

Reviewing of ASKLW email databases and team meeting check in with the leads

Result #3:

Result #4:

Result #5:

Result #6:

Result #7:

Create a result for each activity/work task. If clear results are created and work standards are set, the need to see your employee in person is eliminated. Results are going to be a better

indicator of an employee's performance than seeing them at their desk working. Just because they are at their desk doesn't mean they are working.

TELECOMMUTING POLICY

County requirements for telecommuting are summarized in Dakota County policy # 3182 (Telecommuting).

In addition to county policy, E and EA will use the following criteria in evaluating requests for telecommuting:

1. Individual has been employed by Dakota County E and EA for a minimum of 1 year.
2. Individual's performance rating is at the overall Achiever level.
3. Individual has demonstrated the ability to work independently.
4. The telecommuter will have an increased caseload or work assignment. EX. An individual who is a one day per week child support specialist telecommuter will have an increase of 10% in caseload size over the average size caseload of non-telecommuters.
5. Telecommuting will be limited to a maximum of no more than 20 hours of a 40 hour work week.
6. Telecommuting is not expected to create office coverage problems for co-workers or delay return phone calls to clients.
7. A written telecommuting agreement will be developed and agreed upon by both the employee and the appropriate level of management in Dakota County. The telecommuting agreement will specify the length of the arrangement. It is understood that the needs of the county, the employee or agency could require an immediate change to the agreement.
8. It is the employee's responsibility to have a computer with Windows XP (or higher) and have a high-speed Internet connection.
9. Child care arrangements, if applicable, must be in place during the employee's telecommuting hours.

Telecommuting Agreement

Between

Dakota County E and EA and **EMPLOYEE NAME**

02/01/10

EMPLOYEE NAME is requesting, and **SUPERVISOR NAME**, Program Supervisor is recommending, that **EMPLOYEE NAME** be allowed to telecommute ___ hours per week. It is understood this agreement can only be made from ___DATE_____ to ___DATE_____.

A. Position function and task review

The mission/goal for the pilot is to provide quality customer service while maintaining a higher caseload, process cases at intake at agency standard, and increase collections as a result of using advanced enforcement tools.

Duties for enforcement CSS:

1. Evaluate cases for collection action
2. Determine if a case meets advanced enforcement criteria
3. Prepare documents for interstate actions, contempt actions, account reviews and stipulations when criteria is met
4. Enter court orders
5. Complete worklist items
6. Other duties as assigned

B. Supervision of telecommuter's work

The supervisor will be responsible to monitor the telecommuter's work and ensure Dakota County policy and procedures are followed. The supervisor will evaluate that work product is measurable for performance evaluation purposes and public services are not compromised. Casework will be subject to random case reviews. Employment and Economic Assistance (EEA) management at any time, based on specific organizational needs, may modify these details.

C. Expectations and work plan for future performance by the telecommuter

The employee and EEA management recognize that ongoing communication regarding the pilot project status and feedback are essential. The employee agrees to ensure availability to EEA staff/management by adhering to the agreed upon work schedules and procedures.

D. Positive/negative effects on customer service

EEA management will monitor and evaluate the telecommuting pilot with emphasis on productivity and effective and quality customer service.

E. Positive/negative effects on the rest of the unit

The telecommuting pilot used in Dakota County/EEA will require organizational and employee flexibility as the telecommuting pilot evolves. This will be evaluated during the pilot project.

F. Outcome of cost/benefit analysis

No costs are added in addition to what is currently being expended for this position.

G. Labor agreement provisions

This is a union position, as are all Child Support Specialist positions.

H. Availability of equipment

The telecommuter will use a Dakota County laptop computer or use personal equipment. Dakota County will provide office supplies.

It is the telecommuter's responsibility to provide high speed Internet access.

If the telecommuter needs to make or return business phone calls, the employee agrees to make such calls while in the office, and/or can block the home phone number when necessary.

SoftPhone equipment will be provided when equipment becomes available.

In the event of termination of employment or leave of absence, all supplies, materials, and pertinent documents must be promptly returned to EEA.

I. Telecommuters current and past job performance

The employee has worked for Dakota County as a child support specialist for 1 (one) year. The most recent annual review has been at the achiever level.

J. Employee's preference

This is a temporary telecommuting pilot position and is being requested by the employee.

Terms and Conditions of the Agreement

As a Dakota County EEA telecommuter, I understand and agree to the following:

Telecommuting is a voluntary agreement between the employee and EEA. It is neither a benefit nor a right. Telecommuting is a privilege and may be discontinued at the discretion of the county when it is determined to be in the best interest of the County.

Consistent with E and EA's good steward responsibility to effectively and efficiently utilize Dakota County resources, management reserves the right to cancel or modify specifics of this agreement at anytime based on specific organizational needs or Dakota County business operating requirements. EEA management agrees to give the employee as much notice as possible regarding cancellation or modification of the telecommuting agreement.

Telecommuters will manage dependent care and personal responsibilities in the same way they meet these responsibilities while working at the county work site.

The EEA Supervisor and the employee will complete the worksite safety checklist and agree on any changes.

The provisions of the worker's compensation plan govern the telecommuter. Any job related injuries must be reported to the supervisor immediately.

For purposes of mileage reimbursement, the employee's primary work location will be the workspace designated for the employee at the Northern Service Center

The employee and supervisor will develop a telecommuting schedule according to the department guidelines, with final approval by the EEA Manager and/or Director. During the core hours, the employee shall be available for consultation with the supervisor and/or county staff. The employee shall inform the supervisor of any absences from the telecommuting location during the core hours. This is a full time position the under the provisions of the pilot project, the schedule will be ___ hours in the office location and ___ hours at the telecommuting location a week. Any change to this schedule must be approved in advance. There may be some flexibility due to holidays, flex leave, unit meetings and other trainings.

When significant modifications to the telecommuting agreement are made they will be detailed in writing, initialed by the EEA Manager and/or Director and the employee and attached as an addendum to the original telecommuting agreement.

If the telecommuter reports equipment problems, all “trouble shooting” IT efforts fail, and the recommendation by IT is to return the equipment for repair, the telecommuter will contact their supervisor for direction. This could involve returning to the official work location or requesting flex leave approval for the remainder of the day.

The telecommuting location is considered an extension of the Dakota County workspace. The telecommuting workspace will accommodate any equipment used to perform my duties. The workspace will be free from hazards and dangers. All precautions shall be taken to secure and prevent unauthorized access to all data used in the performance of the work responsibilities following policies, laws and rules regarding data privacy.

Telecommuters must conform to all Dakota County policies.

In particular, but not limited to:

- Use of county equipment
- Data privacy
- Computer security issues

Except as specifically stated in the telecommuting agreement all other terms and conditions of employment remain consistent with normal Dakota County provisions for the employment of classified staff. The telecommuter’s salary, benefits and work status will not change as a result of telecommuting.

Child Support Specialist

Department Director

Child Support Supervisor

Department Manager

EMPLOYEE WORK SITE SAFETY CHECKLIST

The following checklist should be used by each telecommuter in organizing a home workspace. The checklist must be completed prior to the start of telecommuting and submitted to telecommuter's supervisor for review. The adequacy of the workspace must be determined between the employee and supervisor. The success of the telecommuting arrangement depends on their assessment of the workspace and the ability of the employee to successfully complete their work in this environment. Inspection of the workspace by supervisor is permissible with 24 hours prior notice to telecommuter.

Work Space

	Telecommuter has a separate and reasonably quiet area designated for County work only.
	Workspace is kept clean and orderly.
	The work area is adequately illuminated.
	House exits are free of obstructions. There must be two separate unobstructed means of egress at all times.
	Supplies and electrical equipment (both departmental and employee-owned) are in good condition.
	The work area is well ventilated and heated.
	Storage is organized to minimize risks of fire. Avoid paper supplies next to heating sources etc.
	Surge protectors are used for computers, fax machines, and printers.

Emergency Preparedness

	Emergency phone numbers (nearest hospital, fire department, police department) are posted in home work site.
	A first aid kit is easily accessible and periodically inspected and replenished as needed.
	There is an accessible, portable fire extinguisher which is rated for A, B, and C (paper, liquid, and electrical) fires.
	Extinguishers are maintained on an annual basis (invert and shake until powder dislodges. Inspect pressure gauge.)

Telework Office Ergonomic Checklist

Use this checklist as a guide for setting up your telework office. Ideally, you should be able to answer "yes" to all questions.

1. Is the workstation deep enough to accommodate the monitor and keyboard directly in front of the user? Elbows at a 90 degree angle? Yes No
2. Does the workstation provide sufficient leg room (depth and width), so there are no obstructions for knees, legs, shins or thighs? Yes No

3. Are the mouse (or other pointing device) and keyboard able to be positioned next to each other and on the same level? Yes No
4. Is there adequate room for the monitor to be positioned 16 to 29 inches from the user's eyes? Yes No
5. Can the monitor be raised or lowered to accommodate the correct viewing height (uppermost line of the document at or slightly below the user's eyes)? Yes No
6. Is the chair stable (with a five-point base)? Yes No
7. Does the chair adjust in height? Yes No
8. Is there at least 3 inches between the front edge of the chair and the back of your knees when sitting back in the chair? Yes No
9. Does the chair provide lower-back support? Yes No
10. Are your feet flat on the floor or on a footrest when sitting back in the chair? Yes No
11. Are your forearms, wrists, etc. free from contact with hard sharp edges? Yes No
12. Are wrist rest used to support straight wrist position? Yes No
13. Do you use a document holder when you key from documents? Yes No
14. Is the monitor screen positioned so there's no glare? Yes No
15. Do you avoid clutching the phone receiver between your ear and shoulder? Yes No
16. Are frequently used items such as phone and calculator close when in use to prevent reaching with your arms? Yes No

Comments _____

We agree that in our opinion this is an acceptable home office space that allows the employee a reasonable opportunity to meet their job requirement as a telecommuter. Employees are responsible for informing their supervisor of any significant changes that occur subsequent of the date noted below. Employees are responsible to notify supervisor immediately if any injury occurs or if they need help with ergonomic issues.

 Employee's Signature

 Date

 Supervisor's Signature

 Date