

# Township of Brock Corporate Policy



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**Policy Name:** Telecommuting Policy

**Policy Type:** IT/Administration

**Policy Number:** AP22

**Reference:**

**Date Approved:**

**Date Revised:**

**Approval By:**

**Point of Contact:**

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## **Policy Statement:**

The Township of Brock supports flexibility in employee work arrangements wherever it is possible and practical to do so without compromising the effectiveness and efficiency of the Township.

Telecommuting is an employee privilege and not a guarantee or an entitlement, in the absence of health reasons for all staff to have this opportunity such as not being open to the public.

Telecommuting and in-office work arrangements may also be considered.

## **Purpose:**

This Policy will help the Township apply clear and consistent standards to pre-determine what positions are eligible for Telecommuting (e.g. "Designated Positions") In addition, the Policy is meant to ensure that the employees continue to provide a level of service equal to or better than that which would be provided in person.

## **Scope:**

This Policy will apply to all non-union Township employees who have successfully completed their probation and have been authorized by their supervisor or manager to telecommute.

For return-to-work accommodations employees with non-occupational or occupation injuries or illnesses, eligibility to work from home will be assessed on a case by case basis.

**Definitions:**

**Standard business hours:**

Standard business hours are between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. Those permitted to Telecommute must be available to service the public remotely via Teams chats, etc., and are not essential to issue information directly to the public, i.e. counter help, etc.

**Designated Positions:**

This refers to positions pre-determined by Departments and approved by the CAO as suitable for Telecommuting. Designated Positions are selected based on the following criteria:

1. Working off-site will not negatively impact customer service and will not affect the ability of the employee's co-workers to perform their duties.
2. The employees work is operationally feasible i.e. work can reasonably done off-site.

**Ineligible Positions**

Ineligible telecommuting positions include:

1. Positions that require special equipment or vehicles
2. Positions that are necessary to protect and serve the safety of Township of Brock residents
3. Positions that have dedicated responsibility to manage service counters

**Telecommuting Agreements:**

An approved Telecommuting Agreement needs to be executed prior to permission being granted. It will need to be filled out by an employee who is regularly Telecommuting. It should contain but is not limited to a) the agreed upon purpose(s) of the Telecommuting; (b) the duration of the time frame; (c) information with regard to supervision, oversight, safety, accountability, compliance, progress reporting, and/or on-site time.

**Maximum Days for Telecommuting for 2022-2023- 2 days per week.**

### **Principles of Telecommuting:**

1. Efficient and effective delivery of service must be assured and is the primary consideration in the scheduling of work. Each Department must maintain the appropriate number of employees on site for the Township to function effectively.
2. Telecommuting must conform to Ontario employment laws (e.g. employment standards such as meal/break times, overtime, etc.) All Township of Brock terms and conditions of employment between the Township and the employee must be adhered to. The Occupational Health and Safety Act does not apply when an employee is working in his or her own home.
3. Employees scheduled to telecommute on certain days may occasionally be called into work on short notice and must remain flexible to accommodate the Townships requirements, if called in to do so.
4. If an employee is called into work on short notice, they will not be compensated for mileage for their drive in or drive home from work.
5. All employees must ensure they work the set number of hours and days as per their job requirements.

### **Information Technology (IT) validation:**

Will “sign-off” on the Telecommuting Agreement after determining whether the employee has the necessary capabilities to work effectively from home. This would include appropriate access to the Townships server, ability to log on and necessary internet speed and capability to effectively work from home.

May be asked to provide recommendations on the ability to deliver technology equipment and costing requirements (licencing, hardware, etc.) to protect the security of the Township’s information and data.

Will set-up, support, maintain and replace supplied software and equipment on corporate issued laptops and other technology that is loaned for Telecommuting arrangements. Employee will be required to sign off on the use of this equipment acknowledging that the equipment belongs to the Township.

### **Information Technology- Employee Responsibilities:**

All completed and working copies of documents must be saved on the Township of Brock drives. This is to ensure that information is available to those who may require its use from the Municipal Administration Building. Should employee decide to use their personal equipment to print a document, they agree to remove Township of Brock files after the document is completed.

Company-owned resources may only be used for business purposes. Employees must take reasonable steps to protect any company property from theft, damage, or misuse. Depending on the circumstances, the employee may be responsible for any damage to or loss of company property.

### **Telecommuting Employees Responsibilities:**

Select a “designated workspace” at home to limit distractions and perform work at this location.

Make appropriate dependent care arrangements and manage personal responsibilities to ensure successful completion of job responsibilities.

In the event of a work-related injury or incident in the Designated Workspace, immediately report the injury to their supervisor.

Maintain communication with supervisor and clients and ensure other employees are aware of their designated workspace as per the Telecommuting Agreement.

Do not use personal computers when telecommuting.

Perform due diligence to protect the security of the Township’s data and information such as client records, confidentiality while working from home.

Continue to abide by the Township’s policies as they relate to technology (need works)

Work hours, compensation, and time-off requests will continue to conform to applicable policies and agreements. Requests to use vacation or time-off must be approved by the employee’s department head in the same manner.

### **Health and Safety**

The Township of Brock is committed to ensuring that the alternate worksite is safe and ergonomic, and employees may be required to provide information or details on their work from home set up.

The Employee agrees:

- To ensure that their home workspace is arranged so that it is comfortable and ergonomically sound;

- Take regular breaks (as per the Township of Brock Policy);
- Ensure that the workspace is kept clear and free from obstacles or tripping and other hazards, and is well lit;
- All work-related information and data is kept secure;
- Keep in regular communication with their managers and proactively discuss any problems that arise from working from home; and
- If a risk of harm to the employee's physical and/or mental health and safety arises, the employee agrees to consult with their manager about ways this harm can be eliminated or minimized.

If the workspace is unsafe and cannot be made safe, the Township of Brock may refuse or revoke the employee's work from home arrangement.

Employees working from home will be covered by WSIB for job-related injuries that occur in the course and scope of employment while working from home. Employees agree to allow the CAO, or designate, to inspect their home if an injury were to occur in their home, requiring a full investigation of the incident. Employees may be required to grant access to their premises to such authorities as the Ministry of Labour and/or the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). If the employee does not permit access to their home for investigation, they realize any claim may be disallowed.

### **Directors and CAO**

Ensure sign off by IT prior to signing off on the Telecommuting Agreement.

Agreements must be agreed upon by both the Director and the CAO before valid approval has been given.

Monitor productively and maintain communication with the Telecommuting employee regardless of the Workplace location. Should performance issues become a problem, deal with those as you would with any other employee with a performance problem.

In the event that the employee has a safety incident in their designated workspace, follow the standard process for reporting safety incidents at work.

### **Compliance:**

Abuse of the Telecommuting policy may result in immediate termination of this privilege and will result in appropriate disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal.

### **End of Agreement**

At the end of a work from home agreement, employees must promptly return all Township property used for working at home. An employee, current or former, may

receive notices from the Township of Brock to return company property. Failure to do so may result in discipline for current employees or legal action if the employee no longer works for the company. If an agreement is being revoked, employees will receive reasonable notice to make any arrangements necessary to return the company property to the worksite.

### **Acknowledgement and Agreement**

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Working from Home Agreement of the Township of Brock. Further, I agree to adhere to this agreement and, if applicable, will ensure that employees working under my direction adhere to this agreement. I understand that if I violate the rules or procedures outlined in this agreement, I may face disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.