RESOLUTION NO. 075-1998

A Resolution Adopting a Telecommuting Work Policy for Employees of Kitsap County

WHEREAS, the Washington Clean Air Act, chapter 70.94 RCW, requires counties to adopt, and implement plans to reduce single-occupant vehicle commute trips;

WHEREAS, the Washington Clean Air Act requires that commute trip reduction plans adopted by counties must require major employers and employers at major worksites to implement programs to reduce single-occupant vehicle commuting by employees at major worksites;

WHEREAS, Kitsap County adopted Ordinance No. 149-1993 which establishes the Kitsap County Commute Trip Reduction Plan;

WHEREAS, Kitsap County is a "major employer" and maintains a "major worksite" as the Washington Clean Air Act defines those terms;

WHEREAS, the Washington Clean Air Act authorizes programs that permit employees to work part or full time at home or at an alternative worksite closer to their homes as one measure that employers may use to achieve commute trip reduction goals; and

WHEREAS, Kitsap County wants to adopt a policy authorizing supervisors of County employees to consider telecommuting arrangements if the telecommuting arrangement does not have a negative impact upon public service or impede the organizational unit from accomplishing its mission in an efficient and cost effective manner.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE KITSAP COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS adopts the attached Kitsap County Telecommuting Policy.

DATED this 20th day of April, 1998

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITSAP COUNTY, WASHINGTON

/s/Chris Endresen
CHRIS ENDRESEN, Chair

/s/Charlotte Garrido
CHARLOTTE GARRIDO, Commissioner

/s/Phil Best
PHIL BEST, Commissioner

ATTEST:

/s/Holly Anderson
HOLLY ANDERSON
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Clerk of the Board

Kitsap County
Telecommuting Policy Guide
Acknowledgements

During the Fall of 1997, the Kitsap County Board of Commissioners recognized the many new challenges facing our workplace and authorized the formation of a committee to explore the development of this Telecommuting Policy for Kitsap County employees. We greatly acknowledge their action and support.

Commissioner Chris Endresen  
Commissioner Charlotte Garrido  
Commissioner Phil Best

The development of this policy required a commitment in principle, and an investment in time from our Department Heads and employees. We gratefully acknowledge their participation in this process.

Barbara Razey, Kitsap County Risk Manager  
Jacquelyn Auferheide, Prosecuting Attorney's Office  
Karen Flynn, County Auditor  
Randy Casteel, Director of Public Works  
Penny Starkey, Personnel  
Dick Harty, Information Services  
Madelyn Botta, Superior Court  
Marlene Barber, Kitsap County Sheriff's Office  
Vicki Keanu, Assessor's Office  
Bill Zupancic, ETCICTR Administrator  
John Vodopich, Department of Community Development  
Lisa Moses, Public Works Network Administrator  
Gloria Masters, County Clerk's Office  
Ed Orr, Financial Services Manager

Developing this program was made easier with the guidance and assistance of Scott Decker, a Telecommuting Specialist with Washington State University's Cooperative Extension Energy Program
Appendix K

Kitsap County

Telecommuting Policy

A. Introduction

In an effort to reduce automobile-related air pollution, energy consumption and traffic congestion, the Washington State Legislature passed the Commute Trip Reduction Law. The law was made part of the Washington Clean Air Act (RCW 70.94.524-551), and calls for cities and counties to adopt commute trip reduction ordinances detailing requirements for employers. Ordinance No. 149-1993 established the Kitsap County Commute Trip Reduction Plan. As an employer, Kitsap County must implement commute trip reduction programs, consistent with state law and local ordinances to reduce the number of trips and miles employees commute alone to work. RCW 70.94.531 (2) (xiii) lists telecommuting as one of the alternatives that employers have available to achieve the applicable commute trip reduction goals.

Certain requirements for all telecommuting arrangements are set forth in this policy statement, and are intended to ensure that such arrangements comply with all applicable laws, and to prevent losses and claims. Aside from these requirements, and with the caveat that careful consideration must be given to the issues presented in this policy statement, the intent is to allow County departments and their managers discretion in designing their own telecommuting programs.

Employees who will work at least part time at an alternate work place on a regular basis over a period of time must complete and sign a written telecommuting agreement provided by the employee's supervisor regarding the employee's work arrangement away from the regular office. The employee's Department Head and/or Director must also sign the written agreement.

Telecommuting - The use of telephones, computers, or similar technology to permit an employee to work from home, or alternative work location. Telecommuting means working arrangements in which the workplace is located at least part time at an alternate location, such as the employee's home, or a satellite office located closer than the regular office to the employees' residence. A telephone may be the only equipment needed; however, in some cases employees may use special telecommunications equipment such as telephone answering devices, computers, and modems.

B. Policy Statement

To reduce traffic congestion, conserve petroleum resources, protect air quality, increase the availability of public parking around the Courthouse Campus, and reasonably meet the needs of Kitsap County employees, Kitsap County will give consideration to telecommuting work arrangements. These arrangements will be considered providing they do not have a negative impact upon public service nor impede the organizational unit from accomplishing its mission in an efficient and cost effective manner.
C. Statement of Philosophy

In Kitsap County Offices, telecommuting may be used:

◆ To reduce office operation costs, and reduce travel costs for employees who work in the field.

◆ To reduce courthouse parking space requirements and enhance opportunities for 'shared' office space.

◆ To enhance employee productivity, creativity and satisfaction.

◆ As a mutually agreed upon work alternative between supervisor and employee, rather than a reward or a job requirement.

◆ If clear communication exists between supervisor and employee, and between telecommuter and the rest of the office.

◆ If the practice is transparent to the public.

◆ If standard business practices are maintained.

◆ If consistent criteria for participant selection is employed.

◆ If structured time policies are used to ensure attendance at meetings, agency events, etc.

D. Management Responsibilities and Considerations

Elected Officials and Department Heads who choose to allow telecommuting in their departments shall take the following steps before implementing a telecommuting program.

◆ Formulate and communicate a comprehensive department specific telecommuting policy for employees.

◆ Develop fair performance evaluation criteria before implementing telecommuting.

◆ Ensure that department policy provides for fair and equitable treatment of employees regardless of telecommuting status.

◆ Establish individual employee agreements for arrangements based upon the comprehensive policy.

◆ Establish a procedure for the periodic review of individual employee telecommuting agreements and arrangements.

◆ Arrange for filing and maintenance of telecommuting agreements within the department.
Jobs which lend themselves to telecommuting are positions in which:

- Clear work objectives can be set.
- Work flow can be controlled.
- Tasks on telecommuting days can be clearly defined.
- Projects where quiet or uninterrupted time would increase employee productivity.

A determination whether to allow an employee to telecommute should be based on an employee’s past performance. Only employees who meet the following criteria should be considered as candidates for telecommuting:

- Self-motivated.
- Results oriented.
- Able to work independently.
- Familiar and comfortable with their job requirements.
- Knowledgeable about necessary procedures.
- Successful in current position.
- Effective communicator who is adaptable.

E. **Telecommuting Rules**

1. Telecommuting is not a universal employee benefit, and an employee's participation in a telecommuting program is entirely voluntary. Telecommuting is strictly within the discretion of the Elected Official or Department Head and may be revoked at any time.

2. Telecommuting arrangements for employees represented by a union must be approved by the union. Unions may provide approval for represented employees in general, rather than separate approval for each employee.

3. Employee salary, benefits, workers' compensation, sick leave, annual leave, and other employee insurance shall not change due to telecommuting. Likewise, the duties, obligations, and responsibilities of telecommuting employees remain unchanged.

4. Performance evaluation requirements for telecommuting shall not differ from those of non-telecommuters.
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5. Total hours worked on a telecommuting day must cover the department’s established core hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., including specific core hours of phone accessibility. The specific day(s) and work hours will be identified in a separate Telecommuting Agreement.

6. Each incidence of overtime must be expressly approved by the Elected Official or Department Head.

7. Telecommuting is not a substitute for dependent care. Telecommuters must make and maintain dependent care arrangements.

8. It is the telecommuter’s responsibility to ensure that time sheets and other periodic reporting forms are turned in by the required deadlines.

9. In the event circumstances such as illness, power failure or equipment failure prohibit the telecommuter from performing his/her duties while working at the alternative worksite, the telecommuter shall immediately contact his/her supervisor for further instructions. These instructions may include requiring the employee to report to the courthouse Campus or other worksite.

10. Kitsap County makes no representation as to whether a telecommuter’s alternative work station is a tax deduction for the telecommute. Telecommuters should contact a tax expert for independent advice on this issue.

11. A telecommuter is responsible for conforming to Kitsap County Resolution 009-1997. This resolution establishes the County’s policy regarding electronic communications.

F. Communications

Effective communication is key to the success of telecommuting. From the perspective of professionalism and productivity, telecommuters must strive to ensure that telecommuting has no negative impacts, especially on anyone outside the Department offices.

1. Telecommuters are responsible for maintaining effective communication and work flow with their supervisor and co-workers.

2. Each telecommuter must devise an appropriate strategy for communication which is approved by their supervisor. This must include clear, consistent communication with their immediate supervisor about telecommuting days. The telecommuter’s alternative work station telephone number must be known so that he/she can be reached by co-workers or supervisors.

G. Alternate Work Locations

1. The Elected Official and/or Department Head shall have the discretion to inspect and approve an employee’s home as an alternate work location for telecommuting. When the employee’s home workplace is considered an extension of the office...
workplace, the employee may be covered by workers’ compensation laws and regulations for accidents that occur while performing work on behalf of the County and during the understood and approved work schedule. Workers’ compensation shall NOT apply to non-job related injuries that occur in the home.

2. All approved work locations must be maintained by the telecommuter in a clean, professional, and safe condition.

3. At mutually agreed-upon times, the County shall have the right to make on-site inspection of the work area and County-owned equipment, to ensure that safe working conditions exist.

4. Except for local calls, the County will reimburse the employee on a case-by-case basis for job-related telephone expenses incurred by the employee at home. The employee must present an itemized copy of the telephone bill for reimbursement. The County will not be responsible for any basic phone service.

5. The public will not be given a telecommuter’s home phone number.

6. Any hardware or software purchased by the County remains the property of the County and will be returned to the County when the telecommuting agreement is terminated.

7. For security purposes, only Kitsap County software may be installed on County-owned equipment.

8. Restricted-access materials (such as payroll and personnel files) may not be removed from County offices or accessed through computers from a remote location without the written permission of the Elected Official or Department Head.

9. County equipment located at an alternate worksite may not be used for personal purposes.

10. Supplies required to complete assigned work at the alternate work location should be obtained during one of the telecommuter’s in-office work periods. Out-of-pocket expenses for materials and supplies normally available through the County, such as computer paper, floppy disks, etc., will not be reimbursed.

11. Kitsap County shall not be liable for loss, damage, or wear and tear of employee-owned equipment or supplies used in telecommuting.

H. **Software** - The programs, routines, and symbolic languages that control the functioning of the hardware and direct its operation.

1. While working at home performing County functions, employees must conform to software standards established by the County Department of Information Services. Under most circumstances employees will be allowed to run a copy of County standard software on the PC they have at home based on the various
manufacturer’s licensing agreements. It will be the telecommuter’s responsibility to contact Information Services to ensure that the software they plan to use conforms to this agreement.

2. No County software is to be copied and used off-site without the written approval of the Department Head and/or Information Services.

3. Telecommuters using County software must adhere to the manufacturer’s licensing agreement.

I. Hardware

1. With some minor departmental exceptions, employees who desire to telecommute on a continuing basis must utilize their own equipment. A minimum configuration standard will be established by Information Services.

2. Employees using County equipment at an alternate work place are responsible for taking care of the equipment to protect it from damage or theft. Employees must take reasonable measures to protect against computer viruses.

3. Incidents of damage or theft will be examined to determine whether loss resulted from employee gross negligence, intentional misuse, or violation of rules and procedures employee has agreed to follow.
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TELECOMMUTING AGREEMENT

I have read and understand the attached Telecommuting Policy, and agree to the duties, obligations, responsibilities and conditions for telecommuters expressed in that document, in addition to my normal duties, obligations and responsibilities as a Kitsap County employee.

I agree to participate in evaluation activities undertaken as part of the telecommuting arrangement.

I agree that, among other things I am responsible for establishing specific scheduled telecommuting work hours, furnishing and maintaining my designated work space in a safe manner, employing appropriate telecommuting security measures and protecting Kitsap County assets, information, and information systems.

I agree to keep my supervisor informed of my progress on assignments worked on at home. I also agree to keep my supervisor informed of any problems which I may experience while telecommuting.

I understand telecommuting is a mutually agreed upon work alternative between myself and my supervisor subject to approval by my Department Head and/or Director. I understand that I, my supervisor or Department Head may end my telecommuting arrangement at any time. I also understand that Kitsap County may at will, at any time, change any or all of the conditions under which I am permitted to telecommute.

I understand and accept the special responsibility I have as a telecommuter to facilitate communication to ensure that telecommuting has no negative impacts, especially on anyone outside the Department offices.

Employee Signature ___________________________ Date __________

Department Head/Director ___________________________ Date __________