

## **Remote Work Policy**

**Effective July 21, 2025**

**Purpose:** This policy outlines the guidelines for remote work arrangements for Roane County Government employees, ensuring operational effectiveness, accountability, security, and consistency across departments.

### **Guiding Principles:**

- Employees should be equipped to perform their duties effectively regardless of location.
- The purpose of remote work as an option for employees is to ensure government operations can continue without disruption regardless of work location, not to provide optional on-site attendance at the permanent office location.
- Department Directors have discretion over remote work decisions within their departments.
- Clear expectations regarding availability, performance, security, and communication must be established and maintained.

**Definitions:** Remote Work - Performing job duties from a location other than the employee's assigned office.

### **Eligibility:**

Employees may be eligible to work remotely under the following conditions:

- **Situational Needs:** Circumstances such as inclement weather, family emergencies, short-term illness, or office disruptions may necessitate temporary remote work.
- **Job Function Suitability:** The employee's duties must be effectively performable outside the traditional office environment without negatively impacting county operations or service delivery.
- **Management Approval:** Remote work requests require approval from the employee's direct supervisor and Department Director, based on operational needs and the employee's performance.

### **Expectations for Remote Work:**

- **Availability and Communication:** Employees must be available during their normal work hours (or as otherwise agreed upon with their supervisor)

via email, phone, or approved messaging platforms. Prompt responses are expected.

- **Performance:** Productivity and quality of work must remain consistent with established performance standards. Failure to meet performance expectations while working remotely may result in the revocation of remote work privileges.
- **Security:** Employees must adhere to all county security policies and procedures, including:
  - Using county-issued equipment (laptops, etc.) for work-related tasks.
  - Accessing county systems through an approved Virtual Private Network (VPN).
  - Prohibiting the storage of confidential or sensitive county data on personal devices.
- **Work Environment:** Employees are responsible for maintaining a safe and productive work environment in their remote location.

#### **Managerial Discretion and Flexibility:**

- **Prior Approval Required:** A request to work remotely must be approved by the employee's direct supervisor before onsite attendance is expected. Lack of prior authorization will require the employee to use a sick day on their timecard or go unpaid for the time requested.
- **Approval Authority:** Department Directors have the authority to approve, deny, or revoke remote work requests based on departmental needs, employee performance, and adherence to this policy.
- **Director Accountability:** Department Directors who plan to work remotely themselves must receive approval from their direct supervisor. Directors cannot approve their own remote schedules independently. This ensures that department-level leadership remains aligned with broader county operational needs.
- **Situational Remote Work:** Short-term, unplanned remote work may be permitted on a case-by-case basis at the supervisor's discretion (e.g., for a short-term illness).
- **Ongoing Remote Work Agreements:** For ongoing or regular remote work arrangements, a written agreement outlining the terms of the arrangement (schedule, expectations, etc.) must be established between the employee and the Department Director. These agreements will be reviewed periodically (e.g., every six months) or as needed.

- **Documentation:** All remote work approvals, agreements, and reviews must be documented in writing and maintained in the employee's personnel file.
- **Calendar Notification**
  - Once remote work is approved by the Department Director (or in the case of Directors, by their direct supervisor), the remote work schedule must be added to a centralized calendar maintained and supervised by the County Executive's Chief of Staff. This ensures visibility and coordination across departments.
  - Directors must also ensure their own remote work schedules are properly documented on this calendar. The Chief of Staff is responsible for maintaining the accuracy and accessibility of the centralized calendar.

#### **Policy Review and Adjustments:**

- **Emergency Situations:** In the event of a county-wide emergency or other significant disruption, remote work arrangements may be temporarily adjusted or expanded at the discretion of county leadership.
- **Policy Updates:** This policy will be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure it remains aligned with the evolving needs of Roane County Government. Feedback from employees and managers will be considered during policy reviews. The policy may be amended at any time by Roane County Government.