TEXAS PENSION REVIEW BOARD

Telework Policy

In accordance with state law, the PRB may allow limited use of telework arrangements as a work option when it addresses a lack of available office space or provides reasonable flexibility that enhances the agency's ability to achieve its mission.[1] Telework means a work arrangement that allows an employee of a state agency to conduct, on a regular basis, all or some agency business at a place other than the employee's regular or assigned temporary place of employment during all or a portion of the employee's established work hours.

The ability to telework is a benefit and not an entitlement; it may be withdrawn at any time by the executive director, including for an employee subject to disciplinary action or a supervisor of such an employee.

Employees who are authorized to telework remain subject to all PRB policies, procedures, rules, and disciplinary actions regardless of their work location. Employees who telework are prohibited from conducting in-person business at the employee's personal residence. To be eligible for telework authorization, an employee must have demonstrated the ability to perform the employee's job duties in accordance with their specific job description, and maintained satisfactory performance as determined by the employee's performance evaluations. Employees must also have demonstrated the ability to work independently while still actively communicating with the employee's supervisor or manager, as well as the employee's team, to ensure that tasks are being completed satisfactorily even while the employee is teleworking.

Each employee's supervisor will monitor the productivity of a teleworking employee to ensure that the employee's work remains satisfactory and that the employee's duties remain suitable for telework. Failure to perform the employee's job duties in a satisfactory manner, failure to communicate with the employee's supervisor or manager, failure to follow PRB policies or rules, and/or any disciplinary actions may result in the employee's telework agreement being suspended or revoked.

Teleworking employees must take necessary precautions to secure agency data and information. To ensure physical security, employees must maintain a secure, private workspace free from unauthorized access; properly store and maintain confidential materials; and restrict access to work materials by family members or visitors. To ensure information security, employees must use agency-issued devices and software only; use a secure internet connection; and regularly update software and security patches.

Additionally, employees who work with or have access to the PRB database or other sensitive data must use the appropriate PRB virtual private network (VPN).

[1] Sections 658.011-658.012, Texas Government Code

The executive director has discretion to approve requests for telework, which must be made in writing using the agency's approved telework agreement form. All employees who are authorized to telework must complete a telework agreement annually. The telework agreement must include the specific reasons telework is being authorized and acknowledge that the agreement may be revoked by the PRB at any time and without notice. Changes may be made at other times on an as-needed basis and must be approved by the executive director. Additionally, employees should indicate their approved telework schedule as part of the employee work schedule form.

Telework is intended to enhance the PRB work environment and facilitate several objectives including:

- providing reasonable flexibility that enhances the agency's ability to achieve its mission;
- optimizing use of office space;
- addressing lack of office space;
- improving continuity of operations during emergency situations; and
- maintaining or increasing productivity levels.

The PRB may allow employees to work from an approved alternate work location on a full- or part-time basis as long as the employee verifies that this location is safe and free from hazards. There are three categories of telework arrangements, as described below. All categories are governed by this policy and subject to the approval of the executive director. All employees may be required to report to their regular or assigned temporary place of employment, or another work location on a day which they typically telework for a meeting, special event, or other engagement for which the PRB determines in-person interaction is necessary. These events may include, but are not limited to, agency board or committee meetings; meetings, hearings, or other events during the legislative session; and industry conferences.

- Full-time telework positions allow the employee to telework from a home office on a full-time basis. Although these positions are full-time telework positions, the employee must reside in the state of Texas and may be required to travel to Austin periodically based on agency business needs, as determined by the executive director.
- Hybrid telework arrangements allow an employee to work a portion of their work week at an approved location outside of the headquarters office according to a schedule approved by the executive director. An employee may be eligible for participation in a hybrid telework arrangement if their job can be performed at an alternate site without diminishing the quality of the work or disrupting the productivity of the agency.
- Situational, temporary telework arrangements may be requested by the employee and approved in writing by the employee's supervisor on a case-by-case basis. Such an agreement is customarily used for employees who have a special project due or who have a temporary situation that requires consideration. For example, situational arrangements may be granted due to home repair appointments, medical appointments, a sick child, or when an employee is sick but able to work from home. Telework may also be authorized during inclement weather. Requests for situational or temporary telework should be sent via email to the employee's

supervisor, and if approved, sent to the director of business operations to be saved in the employee's personnel file.