



Long Valley Charter School

TELEWORK POLICY

Adopted as Temporary Telework Policy-4/19/2020; Revised as Telework Policy 7/23/20; Revised 5/12/22	Number: 1011
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Purpose

Long Valley Charter School (the “School”) is a nonprofit public benefit corporation and operates two individual charter schools: Long Valley School and Thompson Peak Charter School. This policy applies to both schools equally.

Definition

Teleworking allows employees to work at home or in an approved remote location for all or part of their regular work week. Teleworking is not an entitlement, nor is it a school-wide benefit. Teleworking accommodations are subject to prior approval and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. This permanent or temporary arrangement in no way alters or changes the terms and conditions of employment with the School, and the promulgation of this Policy creates no employee rights in relation to teleworking. Furthermore, the School has the right to refuse to make telework available to an employee and to terminate a telework assignment without cause at any time in its sole and unreviewable discretion.

General Requirements

Employees shall not telework unless they receive advance written approval from the Superintendent. If an employee receives approval to telework, employees shall make arrangements with their supervisor and co-workers to address on-site job demands that arise, including returning to the work site to perform certain job duties as needed or as directed by their supervisor. Employees shall be responsible for following all School policies and procedures when teleworking. Employees shall also be solely responsible for the performance of their telework duties; assistance from third parties is strictly prohibited.

Nonexempt employees will be required to (1) record all hours worked as assigned by the School and (2) take and document applicable meal/rest periods. Nonexempt employees must also receive written approval from a supervisor prior to working additional hours or overtime. Failure to comply with timekeeping and work hours requirements may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment.

Short-Term Telework Requirements

Employees may be permitted to telework on a short-term basis due to illness or injury that prevents them from performing in-person duties. Employees requesting to telework on a short-term basis must receive advance written approval from the Superintendent. If an employee requests to telework for a period of three (3) days or more, the employee will be required to provide a medical certification demonstrating the employee’s need to telework.

If an employee requests to telework due to the employee experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19, the employee will be required to either report to campus to submit to a test for COVID-19 after the third day of teleworking or permit the Business Services Manager or designee to virtually observe the employee administering an at-home test for COVID-19.

The School reserves the right to require employees to either return to campus or utilize available sick leave benefits for telework requests of more than three (3) days.

Eligibility Considerations

Consideration will be given to employees who work in positions adaptable for telework assignments, particularly those who have demonstrated work habits and performance well-suited to successful teleworking. In the sole discretion of the School and its management, the following eligibility factors will be considered:

- The employee has a position where effective communication can be accommodated electronically;
- The employee's telework assignment will not be detrimental to the productivity or work quality of other employees or the effective operation of the School;
- The employee must be able to perform work from home or an approved remote location without distractions or unnecessary risk to the security of School data, records, networks, or confidentiality generally;
- The employee's equipment and software must meet the School's guidelines/standards, and the employee's needs for Information Technology ("IT") support must be minimal;
- The employee must be effective at working independently for extended periods of time;
- The employee has demonstrated or can demonstrate effective time-management skills by completing tasks efficiently and within any required deadlines;
- The employee must maintain connections with work groups or teams from their remote work location; and
- The employee has no recent or pending corrective or disciplinary actions.

Supervisor Responsibilities

Supervisors managing employees who have been permitted to telework must effectively:

- Implement the telework policy/guidelines;
- Conduct remote supervision;
- Understand the technology and tools necessary for successful remote supervision; and
- Establish communication protocols with telework employees, including making continued efforts to involve teleworking employees in office/department events, messages, etc. as applicable to preserve teamwork.

Supervisors will assess each employee's progress on a telework assignment periodically to ensure the employee's compliance with telework requirements, and address any work-related issues, including completing evaluations and other performance management as appropriate.

Communication and Accessibility

Employees and supervisors must determine how communication between the teleworking employee, the worksite, and/or other employees also teleworking will be handled. Employees shall keep their supervisor and as needed, their co-workers or other School stakeholders (e.g., students and/or parents), informed of their availability so these individuals know how and when to reach the employee during the employee's telework assignment. Employees must be accessible by phone and email at all times to their supervisor, co-workers, School stakeholders, and the School generally during assigned work hours. Employees must notify their supervisors if they leave their telework site during agreed upon hours, aside from applicable meal and rest periods. Employees must also remain flexible in their scheduling, and shall be available to attend staff meetings and other meetings as required by their supervisor.

Safety

The telework space is considered an extension of the School's worksite. Employees will have the same responsibility for safe practices, accident prevention, and accident/injury reporting as in the regular worksite. In case of injury, accident, theft, loss, or tort liability related to telework, the employee must immediately report the event to their supervisor and allow the School or its authorized agent to investigate and/or inspect the telework site as needed.

Employees are responsible for establishing and maintaining a designated, adequate workspace at their telework location. When the telework location is the employee's home, the employee is responsible for ensuring the location is safe (free from hazards and other dangers to the employee or equipment), clean, professional, and free of distractions (e.g., children, pets, electronic devices, etc.).

Supplies, Equipment, and Furniture

The School will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, modems, phone and data lines, facsimile equipment or software, and photocopiers) for each telework assignment on a case-by-case basis. The School will not provide office furniture for the workspace at home.

All necessary technology equipment will be supplied and maintained by the School, subject to availability. Equipment supplied by the School is to be used for work purposes only. Employees must sign an inventory of all School property and agree to protect the items from damage or theft. Employees shall not be entitled to reimbursement for their use of School property. Employees shall be held liable to the School whenever their wrongful or negligent act or omission causes loss, theft, disappearance, damage to, or destruction of School property. Upon cessation of a telework assignment, all School property must be returned to the School.

Reimbursement

The School shall reimburse employees for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the employee carrying out School business when such expenses are expressly authorized and preapproved by the School.

INTERNET/ CELL PHONE REIMBURSEMENT: The School shall reimburse an employee's cost for cell phone/Internet at \$100.00 per month, based upon a reasonable percentage of work-related use. Expenses are limited to the *employee's share* of the plan, taxes, and access fees. (i.e., an employee on a "family plan" may receive reimbursement only for the cost of their phone line).

Employees who believe their expenses exceed the reimbursement the School provides shall be required to submit copies of their internet and/or cell phone bill for review. Such bills may be redacted as needed to remove any private/confidential information.

Alternately, an employee may request a school issued cell phone with Internet access without reimbursement of personal cell phone/ Internet costs.

Information Security and Confidentiality

Employees must never provide any third parties access to the School network or share network access passwords, and must comply with all policies and procedures related to information security and network access.

Consistent with the School's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, teleworking employees must ensure that their telework location is secure and communications provided or sensitive work performed from the telework location remain confidential, away from the presence of family members or guests. Any School materials taken home, such as confidential personnel or pupil records, must be kept in a secure space within the telework location and not be made accessible to any third parties, including the employee's family members or guests. Steps which employees may take to increase security of School materials/information include use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, shielding computer monitors, and any other actions appropriate for the position and the telework location.

Performance Standards

Employees must maintain the same or an improved level of productivity and work quality while teleworking. If productivity and/or work quality begin to decline, the telework assignment will be reevaluated to determine if changes can be made or termination of the telework assignment is warranted. Telework allows a high amount of flexibility for an employee to complete their work in a timely and proper manner, and it is expected that employees will not abuse this opportunity by allowing their productivity or work quality to decline.

Professional Boundaries

Employees must maintain appropriate levels of professionalism when interacting remotely with students and/or student's family members in full compliance with the School's "Professional Boundaries: Staff/Student Interaction" policy and as summarized below:

- Limit communications with students to issues involving School activities or classes only;

- Ensure professional communications with students by avoiding conversations of an overly personal, inappropriate, sexual, offensive, or indecent nature;
- Respect the privacy rights of students by ensuring communications and/or documents involving confidential pupil information are safeguarded appropriately;
- Maintain the same degree of formality as would be appropriate when working on-site, including in manner of speech, tone, method of communication, and appearance and dress, particularly when the employee may be communicating with students via video chat; and
- Continue to comply with any and all School policies, including enforcing appropriate student behavior and student discipline, child abuse and neglect reporting protocols, and prohibitions on harassment or other inappropriate conduct.

For a copy of the School's Policy, please visit:

<https://www.longvalleycs.org/documents/Policies%202019-2020/1007%20Staff-Student%20Interactions-Boundaries%20and%20Social%20Media%2009-18-19.pdf>.

Employees who fail to demonstrate acceptable professional boundaries during a telework assignment may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment.

Evaluation & Duration

Evaluation of employee performance during the teleworking assignment may include daily interaction by video, phone and/or email between the employee and the supervisor, and weekly face-to-face and/or video meetings whenever possible to discuss work progress and problems, as needed.

The School may modify or terminate telework assignments at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. Although not required, the School shall endeavor to provide seven (7) days' notice of the modification or termination of any long-term telework assignment whenever possible.