

Flexible Work Schedule Pilot Program

10 May 2021

The City of Highland Park recognizes that offering non-traditional or flexible work arrangements to qualified employees enables the City to meet its operational needs while also providing flexibility to support work-life integration. Non-traditional or flexible work arrangements are only available to certain positions based on the responsibilities of the position, and the operational needs of the Department and the City.

In that regard, the City is offering a flexible working arrangement pilot program for qualifying positions. Flexible work arrangements are not an entitlement, nor a City-wide benefit, and they in no way change the terms and conditions of employment with the City. The pilot program is effective immediately and will be reviewed no later than December 31, 2022. The City may, in its sole discretion, change, cease or extend the pilot program at any time, including prior to December 31, 2022.

To qualify, employees must meet or exceed performance expectations, as evidenced through the City's performance evaluation process and the responsibilities of the position must be compatible with remote work as determined by the Department Director and City Manager. Flexible work arrangements are neither possible nor appropriate for every employee.

The focus of the flexible working arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting business and organizational needs. If an employee's work performance declines, assignments are not completed in a timely manner, and/or the arrangement places an undue burden on other employees the flexible working arrangement may be terminated. The availability of flexible working arrangements can be discontinued at any time at the discretion of the Department Director or City Manager.

Process for Consideration

1. To apply for a flexible work schedule, the employee must complete the Flexible Work Program Application and submit the completed form to their supervisor.
2. The employee and the supervisor will review the request to determine whether the employee's preferred working arrangement meets the City's operational needs. Because the City's foremost priority must be providing service to the community, the City's operational needs will be used to determine whether the employee's preferred working arrangement can be provided. Strong communication between employees, their supervisors and coworkers is important to the success of flexible working arrangements to ensure that work is appropriately coordinated among team members.
3. The completed application, signed by the employee, must be reviewed and approved by the respective department director.
4. The completed application should be provided to the City Manager for final approval.

5. The completed application must be provided to Human Resources for the Employee's file.

Program Details

The City's Flexible Work Program is available to all qualified full and part-time employees. The work arrangement whereby employees are permitted to work remotely are available in cases where individual, job and supervisor characteristics are suited to such an arrangement. This flexibility is not an entitlement, nor is it a City-wide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with the City. Flexible work arrangements are neither possible nor appropriate for every employee.

Either an employee or a supervisor can suggest flexible work as a possible work arrangement. This flexibility can be short term, such as working remotely for a specific project, or on an on-going basis provided the arrangement continues to meet the needs of the City. All flexible work arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business and organizational needs of the City.

Department Directors, in consultation with the Human Resources Manager and City Manager will determine which employees are eligible for a flexible work arrangement, and remote access capability shall be determined by the Information Technology Division in consultation with the respective Department Director and City Manager. Considerations for determining which positions will be approved for flexible work arrangements include, but are not limited to the following:

- The proposed flexible work arrangement supports the current business operations;
- Whether the job responsibilities can reasonably be fulfilled under a flexible work arrangement;
- Whether requests for immediate City assistance can be addressed on days on which employees are under a flexible work arrangement;
- Whether an employee can perform job responsibilities without access to equipment, materials, and files that can only be accessed at City facilities;
- The extent to which an employee's flexible work arrangements will not affect the ability of other City Departments to provide services and/or to conduct business;
- Whether an employee has supervisory or leadership responsibilities that require a City presence for those that remain on-site.
- Whether an employee has emergency management responsibilities that require a City presence; and
- The extent to which security issues require the job responsibilities to be conducted at a City of Highland Park facility.
- The cost associated with the issuance or maintenance of equipment required for flexible work including a laptop and/or cell phone.

In general, an employee will not be eligible for flexible work arrangements if they are required to be at a City of Highland Park facility or working within the community to carry out their responsibilities.

All departments must always have an appropriate level of onsite staff to provide operational support. To maintain operations, employees with an approved flexible work arrangement may have their arrangement altered and/or be called back to the office to help provide short term or rotational support at the Department Director's discretion.

Flexibility is an important element of this work program. Flexible work schedules may need to be limited or staggered in order to provide adequate on-site Departmental coverage. The City shall have the right to limit the number of employees who have a flexible work arrangement or the duration of the arrangement to ensure the needs of the Department and the City are met. As such, employees are not guaranteed the ability to work remotely on desired days or a specific number of days, although efforts will be made to accommodate employee recommendations.

Should the Department determine that an employee needs to be physically present on a day that is typically approved for a flexible work arrangement or at a time outside of their flexible work hours, such as for a meeting with residents, vendors, other staff or an internal Department meeting, the employee may be required to attend in person.

Employees with approved applications are expected to respond and address telephone and email inquiries while working remotely. Employees without a City-issued cell phone would be required to use their personal telephone. Employees may only access City computer files and networks using a City-issued device and virtual private network.

Employees are may be approved for a maximum of one day per week working offsite as part of this flexible work program. The supervisor and director, working in cooperation with the employee, will determine the work schedule and week day that will be available for the flexible work program. The employee agrees to be accessible during the agreed-on work schedule and may be called into the office if needed during an emergency or if the employee's presence is otherwise required in the office.

All employees will be required to adhere to their agreed-upon scheduled for their flexible work arrangements. Employees are required to record all hours worked on their timesheet. For non-exempt employees, no changes to the starting or ending times as approved for flexible work arrangements will be permitted unless the Department Director or designee provides advance authorization. Approval of a flexible work arrangement does not change the requirement for an employee to take a minimum thirty minute unpaid lunch break.

All telephone and internet charges and the expense of obtaining, maintaining or repairing the employee's own electronic devices and other equipment, are the responsibility of the employee and are not reimbursed by the City as the flexible work arrangement is not required by the City. The City's Information Technology Division will not support home computers or personal home or cell telephones. Employees must be technically capable of supporting their own equipment.

The City accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to any employee-owned equipment and will not be responsible for costs associated with initial setup or maintenance of the employee's home office (including but not limited to any optional computer accessories purchased by the employee,

furniture or internet service). Consistent with the City's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, participating employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary City information accessible from their home office, strictly adhering to the City's Information Technology Acceptable Use policy.

The City recognizes that employees may have family responsibilities outside of work that require the employee to be at home to provide family care and flexible work arrangements may be used in limited situations when an employee is able to adequately perform work responsibilities while providing limited or minimal family care, though this program is not intended to be a replacement for or solution to a family care or commute issue. However, the City understands that flexible work arrangements can indirectly entail non-City work considerations as long as they do not compromise the arrangement.

This flexible work program is not a replacement sick leave or another form of paid leave when the employee needs to be absent from work; however, this program may be used by employees who need to stay home while they are experiencing symptoms of potentially-contagious illnesses if the employee feels well enough to perform work, provided the employee has been previously approved for a flexible work arrangement. If the employee does not feel well enough to perform work, the employee should use sick leave benefits. Any use of flexible work arrangements in place of sick leave must be approved by the Employee's Supervisor. The focus of this flexible work program arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting organizational demands. If an employee's work performance declines or assignments are not completed in a timely manner, the flexible work program arrangement may be terminated.

Employees are required to comply with all City policies, including workplace safety, drug free workplace, software licensing, systems security, and other information systems requirements, public and confidential information, telecommunications, remote access (voice and/or data), record retention schedules, and FOIA including e-mail. Any work of a confidential nature may only be completed using a private and secure network.

City accident and/or injury reporting procedures apply to remote work locations. Any employee who has an accident or injury while working under an approved flexible work arrangement which arising out of the course and scope of the assigned flexible work arrangement, is required to report the accident or injury promptly.

Failure to comply with any program requirements can result in the immediate cessation of the flexible work program arrangement for the employee. The availability of flexible work schedules for employees can be discontinued at any time at the discretion of the Department Director or City Manager.

Any arrangement will be reviewed regularly by the supervisor and the employee, and may be discontinued at any time for any reason by the City or at the request of the employee.

For questions, feedback or recommendations, employees should contact their supervisor or Human Resources. Updates to this Program will be made and shared with all employees as new guidelines and protocols are adopted.



Flexible Work Schedule Application & Agreement

Employee Name: _____

Position: _____

Department: _____

Start Date: _____ End Date (if applicable): _____

Flexible work arrangements are considered on a case-by-case basis based on the employee's position responsibilities and their performance. The terms and conditions of the Flexible Work Schedule Agreement are set forth in the Flexible Work Schedule Program.

Please review the program terms, then sign, date and return the form to your supervisor.

Employees working remotely are required to adhere to the following:

1. Work during their regularly scheduled hours including taking a required minimum 30 minute unpaid lunch break, unless written approval has been granted by the department director or designee;
2. Shall not work over-time or outside of regular business hours unless written approval has been granted by the department director or designee;
3. Forward their office phone number to their landline or cell phone so they can receive calls;
4. Continue to use and monitor their City email account;
5. Continue to comply with all City employment policies, procedures and orders;
6. Agree to maintain a safe working environment free from potential hazards;
7. Ensure the protection of confidential information that could be accessible from their home office;
8. Maintain City-provided equipment in proper working order and if equipment is issued for temporary remote work period only, will return it upon completion of the flexible schedule;
9. Purchase of equipment by the employee does not obligate the City to reimburse the expense or require the City to approve a remote work arrangement; reimbursement of equipment is subject to approval by the supervisor and department director; and
10. Continue to perform all functions of their job, as communicated by their supervisor.

I already have a City laptop and/or cell phone for remote use.

I am requesting the City issue me a City laptop and/or cell phone for remote use. I understand that the costs associated with the issuance and maintenance of this equipment will be a factor in considering my application for flexible work arrangements.

The following equipment is requested:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop | For Department Use: Issued | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Phone | For Department Use: Issued | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | For Department Use: Issued | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

I agree to use my own equipment (phone, laptop, mouse and keyboard, etc.), if not supplied by the City, to allow me to work remotely.

I have read, agree to and understand the above.

Employee Signature Employee Name (Print) Date

Approval

The employee recommended for a flexible work arrangement:

Supervisor Signature Supervisor Name (Print) Date

Department Director Signature Department Director Name (Print) Date

City Manager Signature Ghida S. Neukirch
City Manager Name (Print) Date

The fully executed copy of this application should be forwarded to Human Resources for the Employee's file and a copy given to the employee.

