

Subject: Remote Work Policy

Application: Employees, trustees, customers, consultants, contractors, vendors and visitors

“Remote Work” is work performed in furtherance of routine duties at places other than the Westchester Library System (WLS)’s business address.

WLS uses three types of Remote Work:

1. When determined per American with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations to be a reasonable accommodation.
2. Remote Work during an emergency as described in Section I below.
3. Remote Work as part of a routine “Remote Work Program” as described in Section II below.

Remote Work as a reasonable accommodation is governed by the ADA and New York State Laws.

SECTION I: REMOTE WORK DURING AN EMERGENCY

For purposes of this Policy, an “emergency” is determined solely by WLS.

Remote Work during an emergency is a temporary way to continue essential WLS operations and sustained service to member libraries. During an emergency, WLS may require employees to work remotely.

To the greatest extent possible during the emergency, WLS will use the guidelines in Section II to arrange Remote Work accommodations with employees. However, it will be understood that many employees may not have the ability to meet the requirements regarding a professional work environment in their home, and that factor will not be considered for performance evaluation purposes when the employee is required to work from home during an emergency. Further, typical eligibility requirements may be waived.

If a technical concern prohibits productive access to working remotely during scheduled worktime during an emergency, an affected employee must notify the Executive Director by telephone as soon as possible. An employee who has been required to work remotely should not report to the WLS site, even if there are technical concerns, unless directed to do so.

SECTION II: REMOTE WORK PROGRAM

Working remotely can be beneficial for employees for a number of reasons. It can help employees balance their work/home life if they have long commutes, pre- or post-work activities, and can also enable employees to work from home when it is of benefit to WLS.

This program will be most successful for those employees who are self-disciplined and have a remote work environment free from distractions.

All remote work schedule/hours must be pre-approved by the Executive Director.

Working remotely is not a replacement for appropriate child or dependent care or for otherwise attending to personal needs or obligations. The focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance, meeting business demands or dates set by the Executive Director. Errands, home maintenance, and all other non-work-related activities are prohibited during the employee's work hours unless approved by a supervisor and accounted for appropriately on the employee's timesheet.

Eligibility

The Executive Director will determine which roles within the organization are eligible for remote work. Recognizing that some roles require an employee to be present at WLS either at all times or on occasion, eligibility for remote work is not inherent to all positions.

Equipment and Tools

WLS will provide the necessary tools/equipment for the employee to perform their duties. This may include computer hardware, computer software, email, voicemail, and other equipment. The employee must have access to high-speed Internet [i.e., minimum speed requirement is 10 MBPS (megabits per second) download speed and 5 MBPS upload speed].

Office supplies may be obtained at the WLS Business Office. Out-of-pocket expenses for office supplies will not be reimbursed unless approved by the Executive Director in advance and in writing. The use of equipment and software provided by WLS for use at the remote work location is limited to the employee for purposes relating to WLS business. All WLS provided equipment, data, information, and resources remain the property of WLS.

If the employee is unable to log into computer system or otherwise connect to required software within one hour during the scheduled work time, the employee must inform their supervisor and return to the office, except in the case of an Emergency as described in Section I of this policy. Failure to do so will result in an absence.

Requirements

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within their home for work purposes that is free from distractions. The employee shall maintain this workspace in a safe condition, free from hazards and other dangers to the employee and equipment.

Employees must ensure that service provided to member libraries, vendors and partners is not adversely affected. Remote work productivity and performance must be effective, and this policy should not create inequity for other employees. If performance standards are not being met by the individual or department, as observed by the Executive Director, the necessary

changes to an individual or department schedule will be made, including but not limited to returning the individual to a schedule and work location that best serves the business needs of WLS.

Consistent with WLS's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, employees working from home will be expected to ensure the protection of WLS and member libraries and vendor information accessible from their home office. Steps may include use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other steps appropriate for the environment.

Employees are expected to work their entire schedule and are required to record all hours worked and major tasks accomplished on a daily basis on the WLS timesheet.

Maintaining a Professional Work Environment

Employees who participate in the Remote Work Program are expected to create a positive and professional experience for the member libraries. It is each employee's responsibility to ensure they have established a work area in the home that is free from domestic noise and interruptions during the full length of their assigned work day to be able to deliver exceptional customer service and a high-quality interaction.

During the course of verbal or video communication with member libraries, vendors, partners or other professional/business related entities, domestic noise and interruptions include, but are not limited to: TV, radio and other electronic noise emitting devices; audible household member conversations or activities; pet noise.

Program Provisions

WLS reserves full discretion to amend, terminate, or suspend any and all provisions of the Remote Work Program.

Performance Expectations & Evaluations

Employees participating in the Remote Work Program are to complete all assigned work according to procedures and expectations mutually agreed upon by the employee, the employee's supervisor and the Executive Director, and according to the job expectation and description.

A decline in performance may be grounds for removal from the Remote Work Program participation, and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination. Participating employees will be required to meet in the office as necessary, appropriate or requested. This includes, but is not limited to, attending training sessions, participating in meetings, reviewing work products and performance, and receiving assignments.

Liability and Worker's Compensation

The employee's home workspace will be considered an extension of the WLS's workspace. Therefore, WLS will continue to be liable for job-related accidents that occur in the employee's home workspace during the employee's working hours.

During work hours and while performing work functions in the designated work area of the home, employees are covered by worker's compensation. WLS assumes no liability for injuries occurring in the employee's home workspace outside the agreed-upon work hours.

WLS is not liable for loss, destruction or injury that may occur in or to the employee's home. This includes family members, visitors or others that may become injured within or around the employee's home.

In the event a job-related injury occurs during working hours at the employee's home, the employee shall notify WLS as soon as possible, and in no event no later than 48 hours after the event occurred.

Income Tax

It will be the employee's responsibility to determine any tax implications of maintaining a home office area for a not-for-profit employer. WLS will not provide tax guidance nor will WLS assume any additional tax liabilities. Employees are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to discuss tax implications.

Approved: March 30, 2021