



Office of Human Resources, Training & Development

Pilot Telecommute Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Human Resources provides guidance below for some of the most common questions that supervisors and employees may have about the Pilot Telecommute Policy (PTP). Please continue to check back often as new FAQ will be added as needed.

GENERAL

1. Who is a good candidate for the PTP?

To be eligible for telecommuting, the employee:

- Must have successfully completed the probationary period.
- Must have a satisfactory performance evaluation. Employees cannot be on a performance improvement plan.
- Must complete Office Ergonomic training issued by Keenan Safe Schools.
- Continuously demonstrate an ability to successfully organize, manage time, and work independently with minimal supervision.
- Must have appropriate resources to independently perform essential functions at employee's off-site PTP location.
- Are able to provide the high level of security necessary to protect District, student and employee data and information as well as protection of any District equipment used at the site.
- Reside and work in the State of California and must to come to the regular workplace at least two workdays per week on the schedule determined by the employee's supervisor and District administration in accordance with the terms of the Pilot Telecommute Program Agreement (PTPA).

2. What positions qualify for the PTP?

Eligibility for telecommuting is based on both the position and the employee. Not every position, or every employee, is well-suited for telecommuting. An employee's position may be suitable for telecommuting when the essential job functions:

- Do not require frequent interaction at the regular worksite with supervisors, colleagues, students, or the public, in person or by phone (e.g. customer service-related positions such as front counter support)
- re not tied to District facilities or location (e.g. Facilities, IT, College Police)
- Are independent in nature
- Lend themselves to measurable deliverables
- Are not essential to the management of on-site workflow.

3. What is the purpose of the Pilot Telecommute Program Agreement (PTPA) form?

The agreement documents details about the PTP arrangement including work location, job duties and work schedule. In addition, it specifies operating parameters and acknowledgments unique to the working arrangement. Finally, it documents approvals and agreement of all parties including the employee, supervisor and other signatories as needed.

4. Who initiates a request or takes primary responsibility for exploring a PTP arrangement?

The employee requests a PTP arrangement. The employee and the supervisor are encouraged to discuss their needs and to work together to develop the best possible arrangements for their situation. Supervisors have the authority to approve or deny a PTPA.

5. Who is responsible for submitting the PTPA form?

Employees are responsible for submitting the PTPA form.

6. I am interested in telecommuting. How do I approach my supervisor about this opportunity?

It is helpful to consider some of the factors that are utilized when evaluating telecommuting opportunities. You may also find it helpful to think about:

- Business need-How might a PTP arrangement enhance operations and productivity?
- Position suitability-Do you require access to equipment, materials or files that can only be accessed at your regular workplace? Do you require frequent interaction with students, other employees or the public in person or by phone?
- Employee suitability-Do you exhibit initiative and organizational skills with a positive performance history? Do you have a strong grasp of your role and expectations of the position?
- Supervisory approach-Do you have a solid communication history with your supervisor?

These are areas which you may find helpful to explore and assist in your framing when approaching your supervisor.

7. I would like to approach my supervisor about telecommuting 100%. Is that possible?

The PTP requires the employee to come to the regular workplace at least two workdays per week. 100% telecommute assignments may only be approved by the Superintendent/ President or designee.

8. Do temporary changes to the remote work location warrant a change in the PTPA?

No. Temporary changes in location such as travel to a conference or a short duration summer trip do not warrant a change in the agreement. Only regular recurring changes will require adjustments to the PTPA.

9. I have an irregular work schedule. Do I need to specify these hours in the remote work agreement?

A PTPA specifies an employee's typical work schedule with an understanding that variations may occur.

10. Do the PTP arrangements expire?

The term of the PTP agreement shall be effective September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, unless an extension is agreed upon through bargaining.

11. Under what circumstances can a supervisor change or terminate a PTPA?

The supervisor can terminate the employee's participation in a PTPA at any time for reasons to include, but not limited to, declining performance, resources, etc. The supervisor will attempt to provide at least 48 hours' advance notice of any changes to PTPA.

12. Can the denial of a request for a PTPA be grieved or appealed?

Denial by the supervisor shall be subject to one appeal with the supervisor's supervisor whose decision shall be binding and not subject to further appeal.

13. Is base compensation impacted by work location for remote employees?

The District has a compensation structure in place for employees. The compensation structure and pay grade assignments are not impacted by work location.

14. What happens if an employee who is telecommuting wants to return to their regular workplace?

The employee may request to terminate participation in a PTPA by submitting a written request. The employee will attempt to provide at least 48 hours' advance notice of any changes to the PTPA.

15. What happens if an employee with a PTPA changes department?

An established PTPA exists between the employee and supervisor within their respective department. An employee who changes departments would need to go through the PTP approval process in their new department. A new PTPA form would need to be completed.

16. Is a request for a disability accommodation determined under the PTP?

No. All requests for disability accommodations are processed through the interactive process discussion involving the employee, supervisor, and the Vice President of Human Resources and Training and Development. For questions regarding the accommodation process, contact Human Resources at HR@napavalley.edu.

17. While telecommuting, on occasion, I may need to return to my regular workplace to conduct business. Can I be reimbursed for mileage between the off-site location and regular workplace?

No, the District does not reimburse for PTP arrangements.

18. My off-site location is my home. What happens if I have an accident while telecommuting?

The employee's off-site location must be in a safe condition, free of recognized defects and hazards and other dangers to the employee and work equipment. Any work-related incidents or injuries should be reported in the normal manner. The employee agrees to bring to the immediate attention of their supervisor any accident or injury occurring at the regular workplace or at the off-site location. The supervisor will investigate all accident and injury reports immediately following notification.

19. Can confidential employees participate in the PTP?

Yes, confidential employees may participate and submit a PTPA form if they meet the employee and position eligibility requirements.

20. Can supervisors participate in the PTP?

No, supervisors cannot participate in the PTP.

21. Can temporary hourly employees participate in the PTP?

No, temporary hourly employees cannot participate in the PTP.

22. Where do I direct further questions regarding telecommuting?

Additional questions may be directed to the Union of Classified Professionals or Human Resources at HR@napavalley.edu.

MANAGERS

1. How do I know if an employee is a good candidate for remote work?

To be eligible for telecommuting, the employee:

- Must have successfully completed the probationary period.
- Must have a satisfactory performance evaluation. Employees cannot be on a performance improvement plan.
- Must complete Office Ergonomic training issued by Keenan Safe Schools.
- Continuously demonstrate an ability to successfully organize, manage time, and work independently with minimal supervision.
- Must have appropriate resources to independently perform essential functions at employee's off-site PTP location.
- Are able to provide the high level of security necessary to protect District, student and employee data and information as well as protection of any District equipment used at the site.
- Reside and work in the State of California and must to come to the regular workplace at least two workdays per week on the schedule determined by the employee's supervisor and District administration in accordance with the terms of the Pilot Telecommute Program Agreement (PTPA).

2. How do supervisors evaluate multiple PTP arrangement requests?

It is essential that supervisors work with individual employees and consider the whole team objectively when evaluating PTP arrangement requests. When possible, supervisors should consider a group of proposals together which ensures a process that is consistent and transparent. Telecommuting should have either a net-positive or net-neutral effect on business results and the work environment.

3. How should a supervisor handle a situation where it may be appropriate to approve one person's request for telecommuting and deny the request of another?

It is essential that supervisors work with individual employees and consider the whole team objectively when evaluating PTP arrangement requests. When possible, supervisors should consider a group of proposals together which ensures a process that is consistent and transparent. Telecommuting should have either a net-positive or net-neutral effect on business results and the work environment. Supervisors are encouraged to be transparent in their decision-making process and point to business reasons for considering a PTP arrangement.

4. Are supervisors eligible for a PTP arrangement?

No, supervisors are not eligible.

5. Are temporary hourly employees eligible for a PTP arrangement?

No, temporary hourly employees are not eligible.

6. What is the process for a supervisor to advertise for a vacant position which offers the possibility for telecommuting?

The term of the PTP expires June 30, 2024, unless an extension is agreed upon through bargaining. In order for an employee to be eligible for the PTP, they must have successfully completed the probationary period. Therefore, new employees would not be eligible to telecommute. Additional questions may be directed to Human Resources at HR@napavalley.edu.

7. What should I do if position updates are needed as a result of a PTPA?

The essential functions of a position are not expected to change as a result of a PTPA. PTP arrangements should not negatively impact operations or service delivery for a given position/department.

8. How do I modify an existing PTP arrangement?

Modifications to a PTP arrangement should be documented and initialed by the original signatories on the existing form OR captured on a new PTPA form.

9. How do I end a PTPA arrangement early?

The employee may request to terminate participation in a PTPA by submitting a written request. The employee will attempt to provide at least 48 hours' advance notice of any changes to the PTPA. The supervisor may terminate the employee's participation in a PTPA at any time. Employees may be withdrawn for reasons to include, but not limited to, declining performance, resources, or change in the declared emergency. The supervisor will attempt to provide at least 48 hours' advance notice of any changes to PTPA.

COMPUTER AND SOFTWARE

1. What do I do if my internet service is disrupted while I am working at the off-site location?

Employees shall promptly notify their supervisor when unable to perform work assignments due to equipment failure or **other unforeseen circumstances**. The employee may be assigned to another project and/or work location that may necessitate termination of the PTPA.

2. If I am telecommuting, am I expected to use my personal equipment for District business?

The PTP is intended to be cost neutral, at the employee's cost. The District is not required to provide telecommuting employees with materials or supplies needed to establish an alternate worksite (desk, chair, computer, software, cell phone, fax, copier, etc.), and assumes no responsibility for set-up or operating costs at an alternate worksite (telephone or internet services, etc.). The employee may request District supplies via the PTPA, and supplies may be provided based on availability. All District rules regarding the use of computers and the internet apply while an employee is telecommuting, regardless of whether the employee is using District-provided or personal equipment.

3. How can I access my regular workplace desktop from my off-site location?

You may request remote access via the PTPA.