



**LOWER
SUSQUEHANNA
SYNOD**
WHERE THE HUNGRY ARE FED
AS WE HAVE BEEN FED BY CHRIST.

1959 Market Street • Camp Hill, PA 17011 • 717.652.1852 • www.lss-elca.org

Remote Work Agreement

Objective

Remote work allows employees to work for all or part of their work week from home or remote offices while meeting the minimum standards for connectivity, security, and physical arrangements. The Lower Susquehanna Synod considers remote work to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the position are suited to such an arrangement. Remote work may be appropriate for some employees and positions but not for others. Remote work is not an entitlement, it is not a synod employee-wide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with this synod.

Requirements

- The employee must obtain approval from the personnel officer to work remotely.
- All meetings are attended, deadlines met, and work completed as if the employee were in the office. Meetings do not need to be cancelled/moved because employee is working remotely.
- Advance notice should be given, whenever possible.
- Employees who work from home *sporadically* should keep the synod office electronic calendar updated and accurate, with an all-day event denoting WFH status.
- The ability to work remotely is a privilege granted to employees in recognition of their individual needs. Like any privilege, it can be revoked and/or limited when necessary (business need and/or performance issue).
- An employee working remote hours for a day should be accessible within this synod's core hours of operation.
- Employees must understand that the ability to work remotely is not a substitute for childcare, eldercare, and other homebased personal activities.
- The employee's supervisor will address any performance concerns directly and promptly with the employee.
- Employees working remotely must sign and agree to comply with all terms in the attached Remote Work Agreement before obtaining the personnel officer's approval to work remotely.
- Employees are responsible for maintaining their own internet connection for remote work. This synod will not supply "hot-spots" or reimburse employees for their remote internet connections. The synod IT contractor is not available to upgrade home internet connections or support non-synod hardware.

Procedures

Remote work can be informal, such as remote work for a short-term project or on the road during business travel, or a formal, set schedule of working away from the office as described below. An

employee, a supervisor, or the personnel officer may suggest remote work as a possible work arrangement.

This synod through the bishop and/or personnel officer, or by Synod Council action, may discontinue any remote work arrangement at will and at any time. Every effort will be made to provide 30 days' notice of such change to accommodate commuting, childcare, and other issues that may arise from the termination of a remote work arrangement. There may be instances, however, when shorter notice or no notice is possible.

Remote work is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate childcare, eldercare, and other homebased personal activities. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified, by mutual agreement, to accommodate an occasional exception for these activities, the focus of the arrangement must remain on performance and meeting business demands.

Prospective remote workers are encouraged to discuss expectations of privacy, security, and respect of dedicated workspace during remote work with any others that may be sharing the remote space, including family members or visitors.

Eligibility

Individuals with remote work arrangements must have a satisfactory performance record.

During a declared business continuity event, such as a natural disaster, pandemic, or other such situation, the expectation for all employees is that they will attempt to work remotely when possible if directed by the synod. This agreement will cover such occasional remote work, as well as longer-term, regularly scheduled remote work.

Before entering into any scheduled remote work agreement, the employee and personnel officer, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

- Employee suitability. The employee and personnel officer will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, compared to traits customarily recognized as appropriate for successful remote workers.
- Job responsibilities. The employee and the personnel officer will discuss the position responsibilities and determine if the position is appropriate for a remote work arrangement.
- Equipment needs, workspace design considerations and scheduling issues. The employee and personnel officer will review the physical workspace needs and the appropriate location for the telework.
- Tax and other legal implications. The employee must determine any tax or legal implications under IRS, state and local government laws, and/or restrictions of working out of a home-based office. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee. Please consult a tax professional if you have questions.

If the employee and personnel officer agree, a trial period of regular scheduled remote work will commence.

Evaluation of remote worker performance during remote work will be included as a topic in the annual review at minimum, and more regularly if required. The employee and supervisor will each complete an evaluation of the arrangement and make recommendations for continuance or modifications. Evaluation of remote worker performance will be consistent with that received by all employees.

An appropriate level of communication between the remote worker and supervisor will be agreed to as part of the discussion process and will be more formal and deliberately scheduled. The supervisor and remote worker will communicate at a level consistent with employees working at the office or in a manner and frequency that is appropriate for the position and the individuals involved.

Equipment

On a case-by-case basis, the synod will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the personnel officer, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, modems, phone and data lines and other equipment) for each remote work arrangement.

- Equipment supplied by the synod will be owned and maintained by the synod.
- Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the synod, will be maintained by the employee.

The employee must maintain sufficient internet services to consistently maintain video conference links. Sub-standard or intermittent internet service at any remote location will disqualify that location as a remote work location. The synod accepts no responsibility for access, damage, or repairs to employee-owned equipment. The synod reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the synod is to be used for business purposes only and no additional software will be loaded on the equipment. The remote worker must sign an inventory of all the synod property received and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment, all synod property will be returned to the synod, unless other arrangements have been made.

The synod will also reimburse the employee for pre-approved business-related expenses, such as shipping costs to send or receive replacement equipment, that are reasonably incurred in carrying out the employee's responsibilities.

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within their home for work purposes, including any necessary ergonomically correct equipment consistent with the OSHA guidance. Below is a link to OSHA's Remote Work Office Physical Guidelines. The synod will share costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as furniture or lighting, but not for repairs or modifications to the home office space. This applies only to employees that do not have a dedicated desk in the synod office. This reimbursement is limited to \$500, and receipts are required. This equipment will be the property of the employee.

https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/checklist_purchasing_guide.html

Security

Consistent with this synod's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, remote work employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary synod information accessible from their home office, including compliance with policies related to the protection of rostered leader information. Working in a public location without sufficient privacy is not allowed. Steps to ensure security include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, proper shredding/disposal of documents, safeguarding confidentiality and making sure that conversations are not overheard, and any other measures appropriate for the position and the environment. Employees working remotely must also ensure the safe destruction of confidential information.

Policies

The synod personnel policies apply to all employees, including those who work remotely. These policies are written in the Personnel Policies Manual.

Safety

Employees are expected to maintain a safe and secure remote workspace, free from safety hazards. Employees are expected to maintain adequate insurance and may be required to provide a certificate of insurance upon request. Injuries sustained by the employee in a remote office location and in conjunction with their regular work duties must be reported, as soon as practical, to the personnel officer. The employee and/or remote location owner are liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to the remote worksite.

[For non-exempt only] Time Worked

Remote work employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all hours worked. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval of the remote worker's supervisor. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the termination of the remote work agreement.

ADOPTED BY LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD COUNCIL

SC21.11.66

November 20, 2021

Beth A. Schlegel, synod secretary

I have read and understand this Remote Work Agreement.

Name (please print)

Signature

Date