

# **SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION**

## **TELEWORKING PRACTICE**

Teleworking for Southampton County Public Schools is a temporary working option for teachers due to the mandated school closure for students, enacted by Governor Northam in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. By understanding the following guidelines governing teleworking, you will have a greater awareness of your obligations and responsibilities when working from an alternate site.

1. Employee salary, benefits, and employer-sponsored insurance coverage will not change as a result of teleworking. Employees eligible for overtime pursuant to Policy GAA-Staff Time Schedules may not telework beyond their weekly contracted hours.
2. More specific conditions relating to the employee's working at home/alternate site are detailed in the Telework Agreement, which must be filled out by the employee.
3. Southampton County Public Schools provides teachers with a laptop computer that can be used to telework. If other equipment is needed to perform the duties of the job, the employee must access the equipment at their home school.
4. Equipment other than the assigned laptop Objectives Left to Teach for Each Content Objectives Left to Teach for Each Content computer may not be removed from the school to use at home/alternate site.
5. Employer-owned software shall not be duplicated. Software and hardware issues or needs should be communicated with the employee's direct supervisor and the Technology Specialist.
6. To ensure hardware and software security, all software used for teleworking must be approved by the Technology Specialist and installed by the Technology staff. Restricted-access materials shall not be taken out of the school or accessed through the computer unless approved in advance by the teleworker's supervisor.
7. Southampton County Public Schools does not assume liability for loss, damage or wear of employee-owned equipment. Employees who do not want to use their personal phone number when teleworking may use Google Voice as an alternate option.
8. Normal school supplies will be provided by the employer and should be obtained during the teleworker's on-site work period. Out-of-pocket expenses for supplies, normally available in the school, will not be reimbursed. The employer will not provide office furniture for the workspace at home/alternate site.
9. Telework is not a substitute for dependent care. When necessary, teleworkers must arrange for dependent care during the agreed upon work hours.
10. All teleworkers and their supervisors will attend a training session on Schoology and/or other virtual programs and must comply with the employer's telework guidelines.
11. All teleworkers and their supervisors will participate in studies to evaluate the telework program.
12. Offering the opportunity to work at home/alternate site is due to the mandated school closure for students enacted by Governor Northam in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; teleworking is not a universal employee benefit.

13. An employee's participation in the telework program is voluntary as the option to work on-site at the employee's home school is also an option. The employee or division superintendent may terminate telework without cause. The teleworker's conditions of employment with the employer remain the same as contracted.
14. While teleworking, the employee should be accessible during the specified designated hours. Teleworkers must notify their supervisor if they leave their telework location, similar to notifying a supervisor when leaving the school during a traditional workday.

### **Telework Safety Guidelines**

Employees should use the following Safety Guidelines and Safety Checklist to ensure a safe and productive home/alternate site work area:

**Smoke Detectors:** The employee's alternative work site should be equipped with the appropriate number of smoke detectors that are properly installed and tested periodically to ensure that they work.

**Storage:** The storing of any item on top of tall furniture or cabinets should be avoided. It is best to limit storage to designated storage rooms/areas. Properly arranged, such rooms/areas will have secured shelves, adequate aisles, and proper lighting.

**Work Site Practices:** If using a filing cabinet, never open more than one file drawer at a time. Close file drawers when leaving the file cabinet -- even for a brief period.

**Heaters:** When using portable heaters, be sure that the heating element is guarded against accidental contact, positioned not too closely to furniture or other combustibles, and has a tip-over cut off switch.

**Coffee Pots or Similar Items:** Use of coffee pots and similar items should be placed out of normal work areas and on a noncombustible surface.

**Radiators:** Some older buildings use radiators for heat instead of the more modern forced air systems. If your work area has radiators, be sure not to place combustible or flammable articles on or near them. Also, check to assure that electrical power cords are not allowed to drape across them.

**Video Background:** While video conferencing with students, staff, or supervisor, ensure that all items visible in the background are appropriate for the audience; neutral in content and classroom appropriate.

**Desk:** The height of the work surface should be comfortable for most uses (computer work, writing, and reading). Conventional desk surfaces are usually 29 inches high, which is adequate for most tasks. The height recommended for a computer surface is 26 inches.

**Seating:** Choose seating to fit the teleworker's height and work surface.

**Lighting:** The lighting in your work area should be directed toward the side or behind your line of vision, not in front or above it. Prior to video conferencing, test the lighting to ensure the proper display of information.

**Noise:** When video conferencing, ensure that your work area is free from noise and distractions. Children and/or pets should not be visible when video conferencing.

## **Telework Safety Checklist**

- Electrical outlets are grounded.
- Cords and plugs have three wires/prongs.
- Ensure that interconnecting cables are out of the way, tied together, or covered, to minimize the danger of tripping over them and reduce the amount of dust they hold.
- Ensure that plugs are locked or securely inserted into the outlets.
- Use a surge protector or master switch, Do not overload extension cords or outlets.
- Periodically inspect all cords and plugs. Replace immediately when problems are identified.
- Ensure that cords are behind desks and tables so there is no danger of tripping over them.
- Ensure that a phone is easily accessible in the designated work area.
- Heavy items are on secure stands and are childproofed.
- Equipment is placed near the wall and away from walkways and doors.
- Keep liquids away from electronics.
- Keep materials filed or on shelves and out of the way. Store heavier materials in bottom drawers of filing cabinets.
- Desks, tables, and filing cabinets are placed near the walls away from walkways and doors.
- Cabinets and desk drawers are closed when not in use.
- When using your computer, ensure that the desk or table height is approximately 27 to 39 inches from the floor, allowing your forearms to be parallel to the floor and wrists straight.
- Leave space in front of your keyboard for the heels of your hands to rest while you are keying.
- Ensure working surfaces are smooth and free of sharp and jagged edges.
- Inspect desks and tables to ensure that joints and screws are tight.

## **Social Media Policy and Guidelines-Staff**

### *Scope*

This social media policy applies to all SCPS employees, teachers, students, Board Members and auxiliary personnel. This policy covers all social media and media platforms, social networks, blogs, photo sharing, wikis, online forums and video sharing.

### **Faculty and Staff Guidelines**

#### **Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, Digital Images & Video**

##### *Personal Responsibility*

- Southampton County Public Schools employees are personally responsible for the hosted content they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish on social media channels will be public for a long time—protect your privacy.
- When posting online, please remember that you are an employee of the Southampton County Public Schools and representative of your colleagues, students, parents and the school community.
- Your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration that you use face-to-face.
- Do not insult others online or use questionable language. Whether it is your boss, co-worker, a student's parent or your next-door neighbor, do not use your social media sites to vent about

specific people. The use of ethnic slurs, obscenities, innuendos, inappropriate content or other questionable language could find its way to the very audience you would least want to see it.

- While every employee is entitled to their First Amendment rights, you should still carefully consider the ramifications of every post, comment, status update or email. When in doubt, leave it out.
- Blogs, wikis, and podcasts are an extension of your classroom and considered *official content*. What is inappropriate in the traditional brick and mortar classroom, it should be deemed inappropriate online.
- Do not post photos or movies of fellow employees without their permission. Do not use photos or movies taken at school without permission. Do not post photos or movies that contain students without parental consent.
- There are many websites that allow users to share personally created movies. You are responsible for all you do, say and post online including videos. Anything posted online should represent you in a professional manner as others will see you as connected to SCPS. It disrupts learning when teachers, employees and staff post videos with questionable content.
- When posting online be sure not to post confidential student information.
- Cyberbullying is not to be tolerated. Any incidence of cyberbullying should be reported to the school Principal immediately. All cyberbullying incidents are to be taken seriously.

#### **Personal use of social networking site, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram**

- Southampton County Public Schools staff and employees are personally responsible for all comments/information and hosted content they publish online. Be mindful that things such as *Tweets* and *Status Updates* will be visible and public for a long time.
- By posting comments, having online conversations, etc. on social media sites you are broadcasting to the world, be aware that even with the strictest privacy settings, what you ‘say’ online should be within the bounds of professional discretion. Comments expressed via social networking pages under the impression of a ‘private conversation’ may still end up being shared into a more public domain, even with privacy settings on maximum.
- Comments related to SCPS, its employees, staff and/events related to SCPS, should always meet the highest standards of professional discretion. When posting, even on the strictest settings, staff should act on the assumption that all postings are in the public domain.
- Before posting photographs and videos, permission should be sought from the subject where possible. This is especially the case where photographs of professional colleagues are concerned.
- Before posting personal photographs, thought should be given as to whether the images reflect on your professionalism.
- Photographs relating to alcohol or tobacco use may be deemed inappropriate. Remember, your social networking site is an extension of your personality, and an extension of your professional life and classroom. If it would seem inappropriate to put a certain photograph on the wall, then it should be considered inappropriate to post online.
- Microblogging (Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram, etc.) comments made using such media are not protected by privacy settings. Employees should be aware of the public and widespread

nature of such media and refrain from any comment and/or #hashtags that could be deemed unprofessional. #(Hashtags) that tag students and provide personal financial gain are prohibited.

- SCPS students are not to be used as promotional audiences.
- SCPS employees are not permitted to solicit or accept “Friend” Requests from enrolled SCPS students on any personal Social Media Account. This includes student’s accounts and SCPS employee personal accounts.
- SCPS employees are not permitted to encourage students (K-12) enrolled at SCPS to create Social Media Accounts of any kind.
- All SCPS employees who choose to utilize Facebook, Twitter or Instagram or any other Social Media Platform to provide classroom information to students and parents must create a "teacher" page. Posts must be exclusively about classroom or school activities. Parents must be provided notice of Social Media Platforms used as part of a classroom. Parents must give permission for students to participate in such media platforms.

### **Staff-Student Relations**

Employees are prohibited from establishing personal relationships with students that are unprofessional and thereby inappropriate. Examples of unprofessional relationships include, but are not limited to: employees fraternizing or communicating with students as if employees and students were peers such as writing personal letters or emails; “texting” students; calling students on cell phones or allowing students to make personal calls to them unrelated to homework or class work; sending inappropriate pictures to students; discussing or revealing to students personal matters about their private lives or inviting students to do the same (other than professional counseling by a school counselor); and engaging in sexualized dialogue, whether in person, by phone, via the Internet or in writing.

Employees who post information on Facebook, Twitter or other similar websites that include inappropriate personal information such as, but not limited to: provocative photographs, sexually explicit messages, use of alcohol, drugs or anything students are prohibited from doing must understand that if students, parents or other employees obtain access to such information, their case will be investigated by school and division officials and if warranted, will be disciplined up to and including termination, depending on the severity of the offense, and may have their case forwarded to the appropriate state department for review and possible further sanctions. If inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the offensive material will be downloaded and promptly brought to the attention of the Superintendent.

### **Telework Agreement**

The Telework Agreement is a written agreement between the employee and the supervisor requiring them to adhere to applicable guidelines and policies. The telework agreement is NOT an employment contract and may not be construed as such. Each employee and supervisor must sign the Telework Agreement. Signed agreements must then be submitted to the Human Resource Department.

This TELEWORK AGREEMENT is made by and between Southampton County Public Schools and \_\_\_\_\_ (hereinafter referred to as “Employee”). Outlined below are the conditions for teleworking agreed upon by the employee and Southampton County Public Schools.

**Employee’s Alternate Work Site**

<b>Address:</b>
<b>Phone Number(s):</b>
<b>Fax Number (if applicable):</b>

**Employee’s Telework Schedule:**

\_\_\_ Fixed (complete schedule below) or  
 \_\_\_ Flexible (submit schedule, in advance, each week)

Please note that all employees who telework, must be available Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., by phone, videoconference, or in person as directed by the division superintendent.

<b>Fixed Schedule</b> <i>(Refer to the attached letter for work schedules for specific groups of employees.)</i>				
<b>Week Day</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Alt Worksite</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Finish</b>
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				

**Examples of Duties During Telework**

---



---



---

**Employee Acknowledgement**

I understand teleworking is a temporary working situation due to the mandated school closure for students, enacted by Governor Northam in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I also understand that this agreement is not a contract for employment.

Furthermore, by signing this telework agreement, I acknowledge I have read and will abide by the Telework Guidelines, including the Telework Safety Guidelines, the Telework Safety Checklist and the SCPS Social Media Policy and Guidelines-Staff.

Employee Signature:	Date:
Supervisor Signature:	Date: