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Remote Work Policies

Clearly State Your Policy

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Each person or group involved with a remote work arrangement should know exactly what is expected of them and how they will be held accountable. Remote work policies should include the responsibilities of the company, employee, employer and HR dept.

An effective policy should clearly state the following:

1. **Worker's Compensation** - Worker's Compensation does apply provided the employee is doing their job and not doing home repairs during the time they should be working. Worker's compensation also is only applicable in the designated workspace. It does not cover the remote worker's entire home.
2. **All Standard Work Rules Apply** - Overtime, time off etc. Following the rules makes it easier for onsite staff and supervisors to know when the remote worker is available. There is no sense working overtime that is not pre-approved. You wouldn't do it onsite, so why do it when working remotely?
3. **Who Provides Equipment & Insurance Coverage** - The remote work policy should clearly state who is providing the equipment. The company may provide specific equipment which is required for mobile employees to complete their job functions. The company is responsible for making sure there is insurance in place on these items. Items that remote workers purchase on their own should be covered by their own home insurance.
4. **Reimbursable Work Expenses** - Define which expenses are being reimbursed such as second telephone line or [monthly ISP charges](#). Specific forms should be required in order to receive reimbursement and will be completed on a weekly or monthly basis.
5. **Non-reimbursable Expenses** - This includes costs to changes made to the home to provide a designated workspace. A company should not pay for this type of

expense.

6. **Remote Work Program Is Strictly Voluntary** - An employee can not be forced into a [remote work arrangement](#). This is important for employees to be clear on; they should never feel pressured to work remotely unless a job description clearly states that the position involves remote work – such as outside sales.
7. **Hours of Work** You should not work more or fewer hours than if you were onsite. As a remote worker, if you are slacking off and not working the same hours you would onsite, that would only defeat the purpose of the remote work arrangement and cause you to lose the privilege of working remotely. You could even lose your job for failure to do your job in an acceptable manner.
8. **Termination of the Remote Work Agreement** - Explain how the agreement can be terminated, what must be done - written or verbal notice and reasons why an agreement may be terminated.
9. **State/Provincial Tax Implications** - If working in another state/province from employer what are the implications? - Always consult a tax professional for more clarification. If you have taxes withheld from your pay for state/province specific reasons, you need to learn the implications of working in a different state/province from where your employer is located. A tax professional can help.
10. **Home Office Tax Issues** - The remote worker is responsible for any home office tax issues and for paying their appropriate taxes. Consult with a tax professional for more information.
11. **Remote Work Determination** - Stating who is eligible for remote work can eliminate a lot of frustration for people who may wish to telecommute but due to the nature of their position or duties can not. Creating a list of job functions suited to remote work and characteristics that make successful remote workers eliminate any question of picking favorites.
12. **Benefits & Compensation** - All other benefits and compensation remain the same. Remote work can not be used as a reason for changing these. You can not pay someone less for doing their job because they are no longer working onsite.
13. **Information Security** - Define how remote workers will be responsible for keeping documents and other work-related materials secure in the home office location. Specify that a file cabinet with lock is required is one method.

Smart companies will have their [Remote Work](#) Policy reviewed by their legal counsel before making it available to all employees. Companies that uses an ad hoc remote work program and does not create a Policy can leave themselves open to disputes regarding any of the above issues. It is worth the time and expense to create a Policy with involvement from legal personnel to ensure that there are no question marks or gray areas within the Policy.

Remote work Policies should be posted where all employees can have access to it, on a Company Intranet and on physical bulletin boards. There should be no restrictions on who can have access to the information.