

GRADY HEALTH SYSTEM

GEORGIA POISON CENTER

TELEWORK PROGRAM POLICY

Subject: Employee Remote Work from Home (Teleworking)

Section: Employment Services

Distribution: All Departments

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POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of teleworking is to allow Grady Health System (GHS) and the Georgia Poison Center (GPC) to offer alternative work arrangements to meet various staffing and work scheduling needs. “Working from home” or “Teleworking” is defined as a mutually beneficial program which allows employees to work at a remote location, typically one’s home, away from the employer’s premises, either on a regularly scheduled or an as-needed basis. Teleworking is not a universal employee benefit. Rather, it is a voluntary and alternative method of meeting departmental and employee needs.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Employees will be selected for telework positions based on the suitability of their position for the program, ability to work independently, history of responsible use of personal leave, exemplary performance evaluations, everyone’s projected success as a teleworker and other qualifying factors. Individual positions are evaluated for telework based on the employee’s ability to provide on-site support for the organization while working from a remote location. Program eligibility will be determined exclusively by the GPC Leadership team (Executive Director, Director, Operations Manager, and Medical Directors). The physical location of the teleworker is expected to be within the State of Georgia, unless specifically approved otherwise.

- **Specialists in Poison Information Practitioner (SPI-Practitioner- Full and Part-Time)**

Participating employees must have successfully completed at least one year of full-time service or the equivalent in an accredited US Poison Center AND be Certified as a Specialist in Poison Information (CSPI) by the America’s Poison Center SPI certification. To be initially considered, Specialists in Poison Information must be in good standing and not have any pending, active, or past disciplinary action(s) issued within the last twelve months.

- **PRN SPIs and Teleworking**

SPI staff who are designated PRN/Pool and who are Certified as a Specialist in Poison Information by the America’s Poison Center may be eligible for available telework shifts, based on the need and availability of shift work. Like other teleworkers, they must be

able to work independently as a PRN/Pool GPC employee, demonstrate exemplary performance, and be in good standing with the department.

- **Other Call Center Staff and Teleworking**

Support staff who have call-center responsibilities may be eligible for available telework shifts, based on the suitability of their position, their ability to work independently as a call center employee, demonstration of exemplary performance and being in good standing with the department.

- **Other administrative Support Staff and Teleworking**

Administrative support staff who do not have call-center responsibilities may also be eligible for available telework shifts, based on the suitability of their position, their ability to work independently, demonstration of exemplary performance, and being in good standing with the department.

- **Out-of-State Teleworking**

Out-of-State Teleworking for any staff member and for the purposes of this policy will be defined and limited to work within the contiguous USA. In other words, the 48 States (excluding Alaska and Hawaii) and the District of Columbia. The Leadership team of the GPC reserves the right to evaluate the need and feasibility of any request to do Out-of-State teleworking shifts. All requests to do out-of-state remote work will be evaluated and decided upon, on a case-by-case basis. Staff who are approved to telework outside the State of Georgia will still have to strictly abide by the following requirements that include but are not limited to: Time and Attendance policies, staff meeting attendance and/or viewing requirements, as well as maintenance of CSPI certification. Employees whose work time is predominantly performed out of state also need to adhere to all mandatory commitments requiring on-site presence, including but not limited to Grady's annual employee health appointments, departmental training classes, and other on-site activities as determined by GHS/GPC. Failure to follow these requirements as an out-of-state remote employee may result in either suspension and/or termination from the teleworking program.

- **Teleworking and Extenuating Circumstances**

In the event unique telework accommodations are being requested, the Leadership team reserves the right to evaluate each request on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with best practices and interests of GPC operations.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Productivity of call center staff will be monitored on a routine basis through tools such as, but not limited to, Call center Productivity Reports, Quality Assurance of records, regular employee performance reviews, and employee attendance.

For all other employees eligible for the teleworking program, other performance standard measures will be developed and monitored for quality assurance purposes.

TELEWORK AGREEMENT

Each employee credentialed for participation in this program will be required to understand, agree to, and sign the required agreements/contracts as outlined by the Teleworking Policy and its terms and expectations.

MODIFICATION/TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT

GHS and the GPC reserve the right to amend, modify, or cancel a teleworking arrangement at any time at its sole discretion. A good-faith effort will be made to provide a 14-day notice prior to implementing such changes, but this may not always be possible.

The Leadership Team of the GPC has sole discretion and is ultimately responsible for decisions to either renew or terminate the Telework Agreement of any employee at any given time, similar to employment at-will.

COMPENSATION/WORK HOURS

The employee's remote site work hours will conform to their normal on-site schedule, or a schedule agreed upon by the employee and his/her supervisor. Work schedules for teleworkers may be modified to facilitate the contractual agreement. Teleworkers are required to perform their regular duties during scheduled working hours as pursuant to the Policy. For non-Specialists in Poison Information, teleworking opportunities will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. For credentialed Specialists in Poison Information, the Telework Program may provide an opportunity for non-night shift employees to work up to eighty percent (80%) of their scheduled hours from the remote site. For employees working the 10 hour "night shift", the Telework Program may provide up to one hundred percent (100%) of their hours to be scheduled from a remote site. However, when special circumstances arise, the employee may be asked to work more remote hours; for example, when an emergency arises requiring additional support, or when a co-worker calls in sick. Conversely, an employee may be asked to work more hours at the primary work site when special circumstances arise; for example, when new employee training is in progress, when students on site require additional supervision, or when upgrades to our infrastructure are required, just to name a few.

A teleworking employee may be called into the primary work site at any time and adjustments may be made to the work schedule to meet business needs. The teleworker will not be reimbursed for travel time should such a necessity arise.

The employee's pay grade and rate of pay do not change as a result of participating in the Telework Program. The employee's compensation benefits, work hours, seniority, and job responsibilities are governed by payroll policies and procedures.

Requests to work overtime, use sick leave, vacation or other paid leave must be approved by the employee's supervisor in the same manner as when working at the regular work site. If an employee is unable to complete their assigned teleworking shift for any reason (e.g. illness, on-the-job-injury), the employee shall immediately report their circumstance to their supervisor and request to use paid time off benefits to cover those hours not worked. In the event of an illness, employees may be required to provide medical documentation to the GPC Leadership Team for review and record keeping purposes.

The employee may not provide primary care for a child, children, or other person(s) during work hours. The employee will ensure that pets, children, or dependent adults are taken care of and placed in a part of the home where the caller speaking with the employee cannot hear them. Failure to follow this specific requirement will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination from the Telework Program.

TELEWORK DAY PROCEDURES

1. It is the teleworkers responsibility to frequently check the internet connection at their remote work site to do their best to minimize any unintended service interruptions during the employee's shift while working from home. **The GPC requires a remote worker to purchase an ISP plan assuring a minimum internet speed of up to 250 megabits per second.**
2. Before each scheduled teleworking shift, the employee will be required to ensure that their equipment and connection on that day is working properly by:
 - a. Logging into the GPC computer and confirming "poison.local" internet connectivity.
 - b. Logging into TEAMS for communication purposes.
 - c. Logging into ToxSentry to ensure EMR functionality.
 - d. Opening the Poisindex database, to ensure functionality.
 - e. Logging into Brightmetrics DASHBOARD
 - f. Logging into the Mitel hard phone long with the Mitel Connect desktop app and the web-based Mitel Contact Center/ ACD
 - g. Logging into the Avaya phone system

Once the user has signed into **the Mitel Contact Center/ ACD**, they should attempt to put themselves into their respective queues and confirm that they are not appearing as "Out of Service (OOS)" within Mitel or Brightmetrics dashboard.

3. Shift Supervisor (SS) duties- One of the responsibilities of a SS is to ensure that a shift runs at maximum efficiency. To this end, the SS must be aware of who is teleworking on their watch and to make sure that work is distributed equitably by routinely checking available dashboards to verify that a teleworker is appropriately logged into the ACD. If it is recognized that a teleworker is no longer on the dashboard, is currently OOS, or has used excessive times for charting or breaks without properly communicating to the team, the SS is required to attempt communication to the teleworker immediately by either the TEAMS app or by contacting them directly by phone. If this is not possible, then the SS must appropriately notify a member of the IT team or the GPC Leadership team as soon as possible so that appropriate changes and actions be taken

If equipment or system failure prevents a teleworker from performing their duties, it shall be understood that the teleworker will immediately notify the SS (via TEAMS or by way of a direct phone call) followed by the predetermined IT specialist by calling the IT Support Line (404-856 6250). Should the initial call not be answered within 10 rings, the system will automatically roll over to the secondary IT agent on call. If there is no response by the “second call” IT specialist within 5 mins after leaving a message and multiple attempts to call the line have been made, the employee is then to immediately contact any member of the GPC Leadership team.

If a teleworker experiences any form of technical failure with their equipment, or any other IT related function that prevents the user from performing their intended job function, the IT agent and teleworker will have 30 minutes **FROM THE TIME THE PROBLEM(S) ARE IDENTIFIED** to correct the issue. If the issue cannot be corrected and the employee started their shift **4.5 hours** ago or less, and where applicable, the teleworker will be instructed to drive into the office. If the same employee has less than **3.5 hours** to work when a failure occurs, the decision to report to the office site to complete their shift or take PTO for the remaining time can be made by the employee. For those employees granted 100% telework privileges, the employee will be clocked out by their direct report. Compensation for time missed may require use of the employee’s PTO bank, if applicable. For this reason, it is a company-wide **SUGGESTION** to all telework users to provide ample time in your schedule to discover potential issues within the telework equipment, this will allow for ample repair time resulting in fewer instances of on-site shifts.

Teleworkers NOT assigned 100% remote work schedules:

In the event a teleworker is unable to work a scheduled assigned shift in the office (e.g. sick calls, car maintenance problems, or other similar issues), a make-up workday in the office will be scheduled and assigned as the discretion of the GPC Leadership team

PROFESSIONAL DRESS

The employee is required to be dressed in work-appropriate attire while working remotely from home, the same as if they are reporting to the office site. This is necessary to ensure that the employee can report to the office site immediately due to equipment failure, in emergency situations, or when required by the supervisor.

CELL PHONES

The GPC recognizes that the teleworker may need to have their cell phones or other home phones in proximity while they are teleworking, in the event of family or work emergency. Cell phone ringers are allowed to be kept on the VIBRATE volume setting, to prevent distracting the caller or the teleworker.

Employees wishing to use their cell phone are required to leave the teleworking area completely. Furthermore, specialists are not allowed to take personal calls while in the middle of a telephone consultation; no matter who is calling; *the GPC call takes precedence.*

Employees found consistently using their cell phones/ home phones inappropriately while teleworking will be subject to progressive discipline, which may include suspension from teleworking and/or termination of employment.

EQUIPMENT/ TOOLS

The use of equipment, software, data supplies, and furniture when provided by the GPC for use at the remote work location, is limited to authorized persons and for purposes related only to GPC business. All GPC equipment must be set-up and utilized in a manner that is approved by the IT team; this will include actions such as: how to wire your machine and network equipment, which ports are allowed to be in use for networking equipment, and any other configuration that may be necessary to perform job function.

Equipment that will be provided for the purposes of teleworking is as follows:

- Computer, monitors, network equipment, telephones, headset, and surge protector(s).
- Selected books, references, and other essential literature will also be provided to teleworking employees.

Note: Computers provided by the GPC are intended ONLY for business-related work. Any alterations made to company computers such as, but not limited to, unauthorized downloads of programs, applications, files, data and/or images, removal of programs or software, and any other unapproved uses are prohibited. Furthermore, activities including, but not limited to, downloading/ uploading large media files, improper modem and internet configuration at remote site, streaming live audio or video, file-sharing in peer-to-peer networks, etc., impair the functionality of GPC systems and hinder productivity through delays in data transfer; therefore, these activities are prohibited while the specialist is working from ANY location. Any violations of the above-mentioned policies while using GPC equipment/tools during working hours, in addition to all other GHS policies, will result in the following consequences:

1. First offense— 45-day suspension from the Telework Program.
2. Second offense—twelve-month suspension from Telework Program.

The employee is expected to take reasonable care of GPC equipment and monitor the equipment for any necessary maintenance or repairs. The employee is responsible for notifying the GPC of any concerns about equipment function. The GPC will, in turn, provide repairs for company equipment.

The teleworker must act reasonably in protecting equipment provided by the employer from damage or theft. If damage or loss is incurred in excess of normal wear and tear of GPC equipment/tools (including, but not limited to references, computers, headsets, telephones, surge protectors, etc.), the employee will be responsible for the **complete cost** of either an exact or comparable replacement. The employee is not allowed, under any circumstances, to replace damaged equipment. GPC management, with the assistance of the IT Department if applicable, will determine what equipment/tools would be comparable or equivalent replacements for damaged or lost equipment/tools. If, however damage or loss is incurred secondary to an uncontrollable event, such as tornadoes, floods, tsunamis, lightning strikes, fire, etc., then it may be possible to eventually get replacement equipment through insurance claims. Since claims will take a great bit of time to process, the replacement of such damaged equipment will need to be done in an expeditious manner by our IT staff.

If a teleworker is suspended, terminated or voluntarily resigns, GPC equipment must be returned in good condition and in a timely manner once the Teleworking Agreement is terminated. If the employee is within the state, the expectation is for the teleworker to return the equipment in person and to IT personnel. In the event the equipment is to be shipped back to the center, reasonable costs associated with shipment will be reimbursed back to the employee once the equipment is received.

MONTHLY RECURRING COSTS

The GPC will not be responsible for any on-going or monthly costs of telephone lines, broadband or cable lines, or utility expenses associated with teleworking. It is the teleworking employee's responsibility to provide a reliable source of cable, broadband, or some other form of high-speed internet to conduct daily business - which GPC defines as any internet speed higher than 250mbps.

Also, one phone line for exclusive connection to the MiTel Automatic Call Distribution System (ACD) is required. This line may be a Land Line or VOIP line. A cell phone is not acceptable for this purpose. The employee will be provided with equipment that will qualify them for the program, this includes a Mitel and Avaya desk phone as of 7/1/23. The teleworker agrees to keep all work-related call appearances within these company managed devices for both their own, and the company's security.

These phone standards are minimum standards for entry into or continued participation in the teleworking program. Failure to follow these standards of telephone service and accessibility pose a high risk of preventing the worker's ability to meet the GPC's standards of customer service. Should any breach of the GPC's standards of service happen at any time for any reason while utilizing a phone line which is known (or should have been known) to the employee to be in violation of the above standards, due to fault or no fault of the employee, **this will be generally construed as dereliction of duty, and subject to immediate termination for cause.** Dereliction of duty is not subject to progressive discipline.

Should a temporary circumstance arise which prevents the employee's phone service from meeting these minimum standards, the employee is expected to behave in the same manner as if their home office connectivity is impaired, as described above.

"Knowledge" of the service attached to this exclusive line is the responsibility of the employee. For example (but not the only circumstance applicable), if the employee or a member of the employee's household pays a phone bill which lists one or more of these restricted features as being present on the line, the employee is considered to know the features of this line. Also, if the employee or a member of the employee's household selects a bundled phone package, the employee is presumed to know the features available in that package of services.

RECORDS

The employee will abide by security and confidentiality guidelines according to GHS and HIPAA standards. Work done at the teleworking location is considered GPC business; furthermore, all documents and files created are the sole property of the GPC. All records, papers, computer files, and correspondence must be safeguarded for return to the primary business location. papers, files, and correspondence characterized as private health information or safeguarded under applicable HIPAA Policy are to be shredded on-site at 50 Hurt Plaza SE.

EMPLOYEE ACCESS AND AVAILABILITY

Teleworkers will be required to be available by telephone, IM, video conferencing, and email during their regular business hours, except for their scheduled lunch period (if applicable). Teleworkers are required to have a working telephone in addition to and separate from the line being used to connect to Mitel to ensure availability to directors and/or supervisors. The number associated with the separate line will then be entered into the When To Work database by a member of the Leadership Team for record-keeping purposes.

WORKSPACE

Teleworkers will be expected to set up and maintain the designated workspace in a safe, unobstructed and clean fashion and maintain the designated work area in compliance with all laws and best practices (as defined by the Center) regulating work areas. This includes, but is not limited to, the following basic safety precautions: avoid obstructions in the work area, eliminate trip and fall hazards, ensure proper lighting, ventilation and appropriate furniture, and avoid using a single power outlet for computer and other electrical extension cords. The telework employee should also keep their computer tower off the floor in the case of pets and high-pile carpet to provide the maximum amount of ventilation and in turn prevent the machine from overheating or accelerated decay.

In compliance with HIPAA Regulations, the workspace requires a door which can be closed during working hours in order to protect patient information and confidentiality. Furthermore, the area must be free of any noise, such as pets and children, in order to maintain a professional and productive work environment. Food is permitted in the workspace given that the employee takes reasonable care in ensuring no damage occurs to company property. The employee may be held liable for costs in repairing or replacing damaged company property due to food or drink spillage onto materials provided by the GPC. Beverages are permissible with a covered lid only.

INSPECTIONS

To ensure the suitability of the workspace, it will be necessary for the GPC IT team to make on-site visits. Before an employee is authorized to perform telework from their home, they will be provided with a comprehensive checklist to evaluate the safety of the workspace. This evaluation should be performed by the employee prior to the initial inspection which will be made by the Leadership Team to ensure that the workspace meets basic requirements such as sufficient lighting, seating, free of safety hazards, etc. (See Telework Home Office Safety Checklist)

Furthermore, management retains the right to make on-site visits (with 24 hours notice) to the remote work location to evaluate the conditions of the workspace and to maintain, repair, inspect, or retrieve company-owned equipment, software, data or supplies.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Employees who telework will be covered by the Workers Compensation benefit for all job-related injuries occurring in the designated workspace. These injuries are defined as those which arise out of and in the course of employment. The employee is responsible for maintaining a safe and ergonomic working environment, including the workspace, bathroom, and other areas that may be necessary for business during the teleworking arrangement. Workers' compensation will not apply to non-job-related injuries that occur in the home. The employee is solely responsible for injuries to third parties and/or members of the employee's family on the employee's premises. GPC will not be responsible for injuries to third parties or members of the employee's family that occur on the employee's premises. (See GHS guidelines)

RESIGNATIONS

When a teleworking employee decides to end their employment with the GPC, and assuming they are providing a 14-day notice, they will be required to turn in their teleworking equipment within 48 hours following submission of their letter of resignation. For employees failing to give a proper 14-day notice, they will be required to turn in their teleworking equipment within 24 hours of submitting their resignation. Failure to return ALL equipment and materials (including texts) related to teleworking will result in the holding of the employee's final paycheck and severance pay.

Any violations of the above-mentioned teleworking policies (in addition to all other GHS policies) will result in the following consequences, unless a different consequence of violation is specified regarding a specific section of this policy:

1. **First offense** — 45-day suspension from the Telework Program.
2. **Second offense** — subject to further suspension or termination from the Telework Program.