CPCS
Committee for Public Counsel Services
Defending the People of Massachusetts

HYBRID WORKPLACE PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The success of the Committee for Public Counsel Services (CPCS) to zealously protect the fundamental constitutional and human rights of its clients is due to the quality and work of its employees. In return CPCS strives to provide employees with as favorable a work environment as possible. To meet these objectives CPCS supports a Hybrid workplace which is mutually beneficial to employees, our clients and CPCS.

To be successful, a Hybrid Workplace requires a cooperative arrangement between the employee and the manager. Factors considered in adopting an in-office/remote work arrangement include, but are not limited to, the needs of our clients, the Agency, employees' job responsibilities, employee's past and present job performance, available space and CPCS's operating needs. Therefore, it is critical that the CPCS workforce, managers and employees, work collaboratively to meet CPCS's mission and its operational needs. To sustain a Hybrid Workplace Program employees will be required to share office space.

HYBRID WORK

A. Application and Scope

Remote work is a benefit that provides greater flexibility and can increase productivity when successfully implemented. Alternatively, in-office work furthers collegiality, team dynamics and learning opportunities that are important to CPCS's culture. New staff in particular benefit from working in-office with their peers and supervisors to better understand their job duties and the regular work and culture of their office and the Agency.

CPCS's Hybrid Work Program encompasses both in-office and remote work. Deputy Chiefs and Operational Department heads will determine the ratio of number of days in-office and remote work for their department which will be based on operational needs. The ratio of in-office/remote work shall be consistently applied to ensure fair and consistent treatment across the department. [1]. Employees shall be scheduled to work throughout the work week, including Mondays and Fridays, to ensure offices are staffed each day of the week.

Based on operational, space and capacity needs, any employee may be required to share an office with others (see Section C, Shared Office Space below).

Remote work is defined as work from a secure location other than an employee's assigned office. The alternative work location may be an employee's residence, or a secure alternative location, that is approved by the employee's supervisor/manager. Remote work shall be performed for a determined number of days per week on a scheduled basis.

[1] "In-office" means an employee is not working remotely at home or other secure location. While typically it means working at your regular office location, it also includes going to court, meeting with clients and other duties that occur outside your regular office location.

B. Work Expectations and Standards of Conduct

During a remote workday, employees are required to perform all the essential functions of their job. CPCS's mission to provide zealous and effective services to our clients shall be the paramount concern. As such, remote workers must be flexible with their schedule and must be available to attend in-person staff meetings, court appearances, client meetings, jail visits and other necessary meetings as required by their supervisor/manager even if on a scheduled remote workday. All CPCS staff must be available to travel to their assigned office location with as little notice as the same workday should exigent circumstances arise. Likewise, employees on a remote day may be required to report to the office or any other designated work location for required in-person training or meetings to meet client and/or operational needs.

Work Requirements A remote worker must comply with all CPCS policies while performing remote work, including but not limited to, the Personnel Policy Manual, IT policies, standards of conduct and the EEO Policy. CPCS and/or employee's supervisor/manager will retain the discretion to deny a request for a remote work location if the proposed location does not satisfy the confidentiality, data security, and/or other requirements required by this policy.

Employees working remotely must adhere to set standard work hours and be available and responsive by Teams, Zoom, phone and email during these work hours. When participating in virtual meetings, the remote employee should be on camera in professional attire like what they would wear to the office. Employees are expected to give full attention to their work responsibilities while working remotely. Employees working remotely should not be performing caregiving responsibilities for dependents, whether children or adults, during their regularly scheduled work hours.

Supervision Managers are responsible for ensuring in-office days are distributed throughout the work week, Monday through Friday, and that office space is available for those assigned an in-office day. In terms of supervision, clear expectations and measurable tasks are essential components of supporting successful remote work. Managers must supervise employees working remotely by developing a system of distributing work appropriate for remote work and designating tasks with measurable outputs that can ensure appropriate levels of employee accountability.

Managers are responsible for ensuring remote work does not have a negative impact on our core mission to provide zealous and effective services to our clients. If an employee's productivity decreases, other performance/conduct issues arise, or operational needs change the manager, or supervisor may revoke or otherwise modify the employees remote work schedule with review by Human Resources.

IT Requirements The remote worksite must meet all CPCS policies and work standards. The employee must possess the appropriate technology to allow them to perform their work away from the employee's assigned office, including, but not limited to a secure internet connection capable of easily handling a workload (at least 15 Mbps down) and a CPCS laptop and operating system with up-to-date antivirus/antimalware software and remote access tools. The system must be set up with a work user login which is not used or assessable to other individuals. CPCS technology and computers must be used exclusively for CPCS work. CPCS staff working remotely must take the IT Security Training annually or as otherwise required by the Chief Information Officer.

Confidentiality Employees working remotely must take all steps necessary to protect CPCS records and data against unauthorized disclosure, access, destruction, etc. Files and other information that are subject to confidentiality regulations must be secured from unauthorized access while at the alternative worksite. Employees must follow the Commonwealth's document retention policy

requirements for both remote and in-office work.

Remote workers who have client obligations must adhere to all CPCS standards for protecting client information or other confidential data, including avoiding inadvertent disclosure of or unauthorized access to confidential information. Likewise, counsel's core ethical obligations of competence, diligence, confidentiality, and communication remain in effect while working remotely.

C. Shared Office Space

Cost savings are a significant benefit of a Hybrid Workplace, allowing CPCS to reduce office space and allocate those savings to other resources supporting employees, clients and the organization. To adapt to our ever-increasing space limitations, all employees, regardless of position and number of in-office days worked, may be required to share space. CPCS offices across the Commonwealth vary significantly and the workspace arrangements will vary, too. Whenever offices or workspaces are shared, CPCS will provide secured areas for employees to keep their personal items and appropriate, secured locations for confidential documents and work materials. Ongoing assessments will be reviewed periodically to meet changing needs as required

Deputy Chiefs and Operational Department Heads are responsible for communicating and monitoring the in-office/remote work ratio for their department. Managers are responsible for ensuring their employees' in-office days are distributed throughout the work week, Monday through Friday, and that office space is available for those assigned an in-office day. This will ensure our offices are staffed each day of the work week and there is sufficient office space. Managing Directors and Attorneys in Charge are responsible for managing and monitoring the offices' remote/in-office work schedules.

CPCS, and its management, is committed to ensuring the process of assigning employees' in-office/remote schedules and allocating office space is equitable, transparent and fair, and that decisions are made without bias or favoritism.

Additional guidance may be issued from time to time to address specific or changing needs of this program, including but not limited to the management of shared office space, such as the development of a reservation system to reserve an in-office desk.