Yolo County Superintendent of Schools
Temporary COVID-19 Telecommuting Policy

The Yolo County Superintendent of Schools has adopted this Temporary COVID-19 Telecommuting Policy to ensure the highest level possible of continuity of operations in light of the current COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic while addressing health and safety concerns for employees. Specifically, on March 5, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a California State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 outbreak and on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization officially declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic.

This policy will allow Department Heads full discretion to determine if unrepresented management and/or confidential employees are eligible to be placed in a temporary telecommuting assignment and to determine the length of the telecommuting assignment. Department Heads will also be guided by this policy, and the collective bargaining agreements and/or related COVID-19 MOU’s with represented certificated and classified employees, in their decision-making regarding job duties that may be conducive to working remotely and implementing distance learning and/or essential operations.

Since the Yolo County Office of Education (“YCOE”) provides essential services to members of the community, there are positions at YCOE that require the employee to be physically present in the workplace. These employees are expected to report to work as scheduled unless otherwise notified by their direct supervisor.

All employees will benefit from the impacts of this policy by way of the increased opportunities to achieve social distancing parameters recommended as a precaution against the spread of COVID-19. The temporary telecommuting assignments initiated by this policy are expected to be short-term. YCOE will continue to monitor guidance from health officials and may make alterations to or terminate this policy at any time at the direction of the Superintendent. The Superintendent or designee may meet and confer with bargaining unit representatives to discuss the effects and impacts of alterations to this policy, if any, on represented employees.

Employees should not assume eligibility for a telecommuting assignment. Nor should they assume any specified period of time for telecommuting if so assigned. Employees assigned to a temporary telecommuting assignment will receive specific written instructions and are expected to abide by the following guidelines, and/or the understanding reached with their bargaining unit representatives.

Job Responsibilities & Regular Communication
While telecommuting, to the extent possible, employees should be performing the full range of their normal job duties to the extent possible under this emergency, or as determined by their
supervisors. Employees and supervisors should maintain communication throughout the workday, through email, by phone, video chat, or other means. Managers and supervisors will be expected to establish and communicate work expectations of employees working remotely, including setting work priorities, deadlines, and reviewing work assignments as applicable to the individual groups of employees, i.e., Management/Confidential, Certificated and Classified.

**Work Schedules and Time Worked**
Telecommuting employees working remotely should coordinate with their supervisor the set hours that will be devoted to performing their work. Start and end times for telecommuting employees should be communicated in advance and should be consistent from day-to-day, as much as possible under the circumstances. In coordination with the employee’s supervisor, an employee’s start time and end time may be permitted to be different from the employee’s normal hours when working on-site.

While it is anticipated the majority of work performed by the employee will be remotely (not on-site), there may circumstances in which the employee is needed to return to their normal work site. In the event such on-site attendance is required, supervisors will notify the employee, in advance, when on-site attendance is necessary.

**Equipment and Tech Support**
Electronic equipment needed for employees to telecommute will be supplied by YCOE to the extent resources are available. In certain circumstances and/or if sufficient resources are not available, employees may be asked to use their personal phones, computers, or other equipment, and will be reimbursed for such personal use in accordance with YCOE policies. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the organization, will be maintained by the employee. YCOE accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment and reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by YCOE is to be used for business purposes only. The employee must review and sign the Temporary COVID-19 Telecommuting Agreement (Attachment A) with an inventory of YCOE property authorized for telecommuting use and thereby agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. All YCOE-owned equipment issued to an employee must be returned immediately at the conclusion of the telecommuting arrangement. YCOE will provide employees with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary and may reimburse the employee for pre-approved business-related expenses that are necessary and reasonably incurred to carry out the employee’s job.

Telecommuting employees may establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes and provide the necessary workspace, such as desk, tabletop, or other location that provides optimal work productivity. Given the temporary nature of this program, employees are not expected to purchase furniture or equipment to arrange a home workspace. Employees should seek advice from a tax advisor if they have questions concerning tax implications of working from home. YCOE is not responsible for substantiating any employee’s claim of tax deductions for operation of a home office used to perform work.
Security
Consistent with the YCOE’s expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees are expected to ensure the protection of YCOE information accessible from their home office. Necessary security steps include appropriate network security measures, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

Safety
Employees should maintain their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Injuries sustained by the employee in a home office location and in conjunction with his or her regular work duties may be covered by Workers’ Compensation. Telecommuting employees are responsible for notifying their supervisor of such injuries as soon as practicable. YCOE assumes no liability for injuries that occur outside the performance of the employee’s duties and/or outside the employee’s scheduled telecommuting hours. Employees are prohibited from having face-to-face meetings regarding YCOE business in their homes. Rather, employees shall opt to use video or phone conferencing to maintain social distancing guidelines and personal protection. YCOE will not be liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to an employee’s home worksite.

YCOE Policies and Employee Conduct
Working from home inherently changes the workplace dynamic for employees. However, employees are expected to continue to adhere to all YCOE Personnel Rules and Regulations department policies, and relevant collective bargaining agreements and/or MOU’s. Employees with questions about the application of a policy or procedure should contact their supervisor for additional information.

Adopted: May 18, 2020