

INSTRUCTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING A COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS REMOTE WORK POLICY

INFRASTRUCTURE

Before implementing this plan, your company will want to identify the roles that are critical to your business operations and determine whether those individuals can carry out their jobs while working remotely. If you can proceed, the next critical component is assessing your technological capabilities. Ensure you have the support in place to assist with the inevitable questions and IT problems that will arise, and the sufficient security and privacy protocols in place to protect your business.

PREPARING FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- *Take an inventory of the types of equipment your workers will need to get their job done and ensure they have access to them. This could include laptops, desktop computers, monitors, phones, printers, chargers, office supplies, and similar materials.*
- *Encourage your employees to prepare for the possibility of an immediate instruction to work at home. They may want to develop a “ready bag” that they take home with them at the end of each day that would allow them to begin working remotely at a moment’s notice. This would obviously include laptops, smartphones, and other related technology, but could also include physical items (such as binders, documents, materials).*
- *Make sure you consider and clearly communicate with your workers about which physical items are acceptable to be taken from the workplace and which need to stay in your location at all times.*
- *Digitize any relevant physical materials to make remote working easier.*
- *Communicate with your workforce about whether they can or should take digital photos of physical calendars, whiteboards, Kanban boards with stickie notes, or similar items, or whether they are prohibited from doing so.*

SUCCESSFUL REMOTE WORK PLANS

There are a number of steps you can take to ensure that the temporary remote work time goes well for your workers and for your organization.

- *From a functionality standpoint, you may want to agree on a single communications platform that all workers will be required to participate in. It could be email, instant messaging, Slack, Skype, Zoom Conferencing, or some other designated tool.*
- *Take an honest approach with yourself about whether any concerns you have regarding reduced productivity among your workers while they are working at home are realistic or overblown. Recognize that you aren’t babysitting your employees while they are performing work at the office, so you shouldn’t begin to micromanage them while they are at home. Keep an eye on the bigger picture and track overall productivity, not moment-by-moment activities. You will want to consider how you will capture and maintain accurate attendance and hours worked records.*
- *In fact, experts say that overwork is more likely for remote workers than a lack of productivity, especially in the first few weeks of a remote work assignment. Keep an eye*

out for employee burnout and overstressed workers and address your concerns as appropriate.

- *Another concern for workers not used to working remotely is that they may feel untethered and disconnected from the organization during this time period. Some tactics to prevent and overcome this problem include:*
 - *Developing and distributing an agenda for all team get-togethers and meetings, as well as meeting minutes and task lists after they are completed, so that those unable to attend can feel part of the action;*
 - *Schedule virtual team lunches and digital social time where workers can interact on a social level;*
 - *Connect workers new to remote work with your experienced remote workers to serve as informal mentors, available to answer questions or give advice about best ways to cope with the change and handle work; and*
 - *Consider other ways to ensure your workers feel connected with each other and with the organization, whether that includes daily meetings, frequent phone calls or texts, or other actions that can go a long way towards ensuring their peace of mind.*
- *Encourage your leaders to clearly communicate with their teams about how they are handling the disruption to their personal routines and ask the team members to share as well. If someone won't be available for meetings during a certain period of time because of childcare arrangements, for example, the team may need to be flexible. Your leaders will need to set this example to allow others to feel comfortable when sharing this information.*

MODEL REMOTE WORK POLICY

The model remote work policy, attached, needs to be adjusted to fit your business needs and your organization's expectations for your workforce, including that you might prefer separate policies for exempt and non-exempt employees. Note that it has been specifically designed for the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak and may not be appropriate for a standard remote work plan that needs to be developed when the crisis is over. Make sure to check with [your Fisher Phillips attorney](#) to ensure you are in compliance with local and state laws (such as wage and hour law).

Emergency Remote Work Policy

Because of the extraordinary situation in the workplace caused by the COVID-19 coronavirus, you will be working remotely for a temporary period of time. We understand that you may not be able to perform all of your job's essential functions during this temporary period, but believe it is for the best to implement this policy to address this emergency situation.

Purpose: We are implementing this policy and asking you to fulfill your job responsibilities from home while helping our organization maintain normal business operations during this period of time to the extent possible.

Duration: This policy allows you temporarily to perform remote work from home subject to our continuing review of its suitability based upon an assessment of our business needs. We are unsure of the duration of this remote work plan but will provide regular updates as events warrant.

Illness: In the event you are unable to continue to work due to illness, please inform your supervisor as soon as possible. Employee leave may be available to you as determined under the company's policies and in accordance with the law.

Working Hours and Expectations: While we understand that you may not be able to fully perform all the essential functions of your job, you and your supervisor will develop a regular schedule of your working hours to ensure availability and coverage, taking into account necessary variations. You must communicate with your supervisor about any personal obligations (childcare, medical appointments, etc.) so that you can develop a regular schedule where possible or adjust on an as-needed basis. If your work requires use of the company's network, you will stay logged into the network during those agreed-upon hours. You will need to keep your business calendar up-to-date, and check emails, voicemails, and other business messages on an ongoing basis during those hours. While we understand that you may be distracted by personal business during this time, we ask you to devote your full time and attention to your employment responsibilities during remote working hours to the extent possible.

Non-Exempt Employees: If you are not exempt from both the minimum wage and overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act, and any or applicable state law, you will be required to record or report all hours worked in a manner designated by the company. Hours worked outside of the anticipated times or in excess of those scheduled per day require the advanced written approval of your supervisor. If you work without receiving such advance approval, you will be paid for the time worked, but you may also be subject to disciplinary action. Failure to record all hours or fraudulently completing such records may result in discipline up to and including termination. You will not engage in personal errands or other non-work activities while on the clock except during paid off-duty rest breaks. To the extent you must engage in personal activities during agreed-upon working hours other than during paid

rest breaks, you should notify your direct supervisor to ensure an accurate recording of your time so the company can determine your hours worked.

Meal/Rest Periods: You must take required meal and rest periods as required by the law of the state where you are working, just as you did before the remote work policy went into effect. You are relieved of all duty during such meal breaks and rest breaks and must not answer phone calls, emails, or text messages, or perform any company work, while on meal or rest breaks. If a required meal/rest period is interrupted, notify your direct supervisor.

Prohibitions: During this temporary remote work period, you are prohibited from coming to the workplace at all, unless you receive express authorization from your direct supervisor. If you need a physical item from work, please contact your supervisor so you can receive guidance on whether there is a best time to enter the office so we can maintain appropriate social distancing protocols. Some essential personnel may receive a blanket authorization to remain or come to the workplace as needed.

OPTION: In order to maintain social distancing protocols, you are prohibited from meeting in person with other company personnel during this remote work period unless expressly authorized by your supervisor.

OPTION: You are prohibited from meeting in person with any third parties on company business during this remote work period unless expressly authorized by your supervisor.

Safety: You must maintain your home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Immediately report any injuries you sustain while at your home and in conjunction with your regular work duties in accordance with the company's injury reporting and workers' compensation procedures. You will be liable for any non-business-related visitors to your home office location.

Equipment and Materials: We will determine and provide the appropriate equipment (including laptops, headsets, software, etc.) and materials needed to perform your duties, and will service and repair equipment as needed. In the event of equipment failure or malfunction, immediately notify your supervisor in order to obtain repair or replacement. You must notify your supervisor if your internet or network access is limited or unavailable immediately upon becoming aware of it. You may use company-owned equipment only for legitimate company purposes but will not allow anyone else to use company-owned equipment or software. You are responsible for protecting company-owned equipment from theft, damage and unauthorized use. Your supervisor will instruct you about which physical items can be taken from the workplace and which need to stay at the worksite at all times, and whether it is acceptable to take digital photos of company materials. In the event of theft or loss of any device used for company-related purposes, you must immediately notify your supervisor.

Security and Data Protection: Consistent with our expectations of information security and confidentiality, you will ensure the protection of the company's confidential or proprietary information, including but not limited to customer information accessible from your remote office. This includes, for example, a secure internet connection with a complex password,

regular password maintenance, and any other steps appropriate for the particular job responsibilities and work environment. You will not share Remote Access addresses, logins and passwords with anyone, even if you believe the individual requesting the information has already been approved for Remote Access. It is your responsibility to safeguard the security of your Remote Access login and password information.

Expense Reimbursement: You will be reimbursed for business expenses necessarily and reasonably incurred in connection with your remote activities. This includes expense reimbursement if you are required to use your personal cell phone or printer, or access internet service at home, for work purposes. We anticipate that you will have expenses of \$ [REDACTED] per week. If you believe you have incurred reasonable business expenses of a different amount, contact your supervisor and submit supporting documentation. The company will not be responsible for costs associated with setup of your home office such as remodeling, furniture, or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.

Compliance with Policies: During this temporary remote work period, you must comply with all the company's rules, policies, practices, and instructions as outlined in our company policies. This includes all policies regarding the internet, telephones, email, information systems, confidential information, solicitation and distribution, non-harassment, non-discrimination, etc., as well as with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the use of cell phones and electronic devices. Just as always, violations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Legal Implications: You will be solely responsible for reporting the business use of your designated work area based on Internal Revenue Service and state and local government laws, rules, and regulations. The company assumes no liability for damages to your real or personal property resulting from this remote work period.

At-Will Employment: This policy in no way guarantees continued employment for any period of time or otherwise alters your at-will status.

Return of Equipment: If your employment ends for any reason before this remote work period ends, you must return any hardware or proprietary software furnished by the company.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Emergency Remote Work Policy and that I must abide by it at all times. I understand that the Emergency Remote Work Policy represents current company policy, that it does not create a contract of employment, and that the company retains the right to change the Emergency Remote Work Policy at any time as it deems appropriate.

Print Name

Date

Employee Signature

Company Signature