

Subject:		Issued By:	
<b>TELECOMMUTING GUIDELINES</b>		HUMAN RESOURCES	
		Approved By: Kathleen R. Hurtado President & CEO	
Policy #:	Issue Date:	Revised Date:	Effective Date:
518.1	April 21, 2005	May 30, 2008	June 15, 2008

Reference: Subcategory of USC policy #518 entitled “Work Hours,” original HRA Telecommuting Guidelines Policy dated 4-15-2005 and USC Expenditure Policies and Procedures dated 5-1-08 located here:  
<http://policies.usc.edu/policies/expmanual050108.pdf>.

**PURPOSE**

To create guidelines whereby HRA Staff Members may work from a home office by telecommuting. Working from home on any particular day must be approved, preferably in writing and in advance, by the Staff Member’s Supervisor (see final page of this document).

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION & SUMMARY**

HRA is committed to creating a balanced work environment, whereby the needs of our customers are fulfilled in a manner that does not neglect the needs of our Staff Members and/or their families. While we wish to be flexible in our approach to work styles and location, telecommuting arrangements may only be made on an “as needed basis.” Staff Members must endeavor to work from home in a manner that is consistent with HRA’s “in-office” work style, paying particular attention to accessibility, communication and productivity. Prior approval of all telecommuting arrangements by the Staff Member’s Supervisor and/or HRA’s President & CEO is required.

**POLICY**

1. **ADVANCE APPROVAL REQUIRED:** Staff Members must always request their Supervisor’s advance approval in order to work from home on any particular day. One week’s advance notice is requested. However, if the Staff Member’s Supervisor approves working from home on a particular day, less advance notice may be accommodated. If the Supervisor does not approve the request and the Staff Member does not come into work, a vacation or sick day must be used;
2. **STAFF MEMBER MUST FOCUS ON RESULTS:** A specific work schedule – including a description of the work to be performed and a deadline for deliverables – must be agreed upon by the Staff Member and their Supervisor prior to starting work;



**HEALTH RESEARCH ASSOCIATION**

1640 Marengo Street – 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90033

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3. **LONG-DISTANCE PHONE CALLS REIMBURSABLE:** If a Staff Member’s home landline telephone is used to place a long-distance call for HRA business purposes, reimbursement may be claimed for the cost of the long-distance call if it is itemized on the telephone bill;
4. **MONTHLY FEES FOR HOME INTERNET AND/OR LANDLINE TELEPHONE SERVICE NOT REIMBURSABLE:** Monthly fees to establish or maintain home Internet and/or landline telephone service are not reimbursable, unless such access is dedicated to HRA business and preapproved by HRA’s President and CEO;
5. **USE OF COMPUTERS AND SECURITY OF DATA:** When in the best interest of HRA and preapproved by HRA’s President and CEO, Staff Members may be assigned laptops and computers for use at their home. Staff Members are responsible for safeguarding the laptop and/or their home computer, controlling its use and protecting its data. No data that requires enhanced protection, as defined in HIPAA statutes, may be stored on any laptop or home computer in an unencrypted state;
6. **STAFF MEMBER AND SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE REQUIRED:** Prior to working from home, the Staff Member and their Supervisor must sign and date the last page of this document stating that they have read and understood its contents.

**ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES:**

1. **TELECOMMUTING IS VOLUNTARY:** All telecommuting agreements are voluntary. No Staff Member is required to telecommute. Telecommuting is neither a Staff Member right nor a Staff Member benefit. Telecommuting is a Supervisor's option that may be made available when a mutually beneficial situation exists for HRA and the Staff Member. A telecommuting agreement may be terminated at any time by HRA. Supervisors have no obligation to approve a telecommuting agreement for a Staff Member merely because another Staff Member, similarly situated, has been approved for telecommuting;
2. **MUST BENEFIT AND/OR NOT CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR HRA:** The telecommuting arrangement must be in the best interests of HRA. It should benefit – or at least not cause significant problems for – HRA. In evaluating benefits to HRA, consideration should be given to the nature of the work and whether it lends itself to telecommuting:

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- Jobs that entail working alone or working with equipment that can be kept at the alternate work site are often suitable for telecommuting. Examples: writer, editor, analyst, word processor, programmer;
  - Jobs that require physical presence to perform effectively are normally not suitable for telecommuting. Examples: receptionist, administrative assistant, driver, file clerk, custodian, maintenance worker;
3. **WORK ENVIRONMENT MUST BE SAFE AND SECURE:** A Staff Member who telecommutes must agree to maintain a safe and secure work environment. The Staff Member agrees to allow HRA to assess safety and security, upon reasonable notice. The Staff Member agrees to use HRA-owned equipment, records, and materials for purposes of HRA business only and to protect them against unauthorized or accidental access, use, modification, destruction, or disclosure and the Staff Member agrees to report any instances of these to their Supervisor at the earliest reasonable opportunity;
  4. **WORK-RELATED INJURIES MUST BE REPORTED:** The Staff Member agrees to report work-related injuries to their Supervisor at the earliest reasonable opportunity. The Staff Member agrees to hold HRA harmless for injury to others at any alternate work site;
  5. **HRA-OWNED PROPERTY REMAINS THE PROPERTY OF HRA:** The Staff Member understands that all equipment, records and materials provided by HRA shall remain the property of HRA while in the Staff Member’s home office;
  6. **NO USE OF PRIVATELY-OWNED VEHICLES FOR HRA BUSINESS WITHOUT ADVANCE APPROVAL:** The Staff Member understands that their privately-owned vehicle will not be used for HRA business unless specifically authorized by their Supervisor. For more information, please see HRA’s Driving on HRA Business Policy located here: <http://www.health-research.org/files/Driving.pdf> ;
  7. **NON-EXEMPT STAFF MEMBERS MAY NOT WORK OVERTIME WITHOUT ADVANCE APPROVAL:** A Staff Member in a non-exempt position may not work overtime, or work before 6 a.m. or after 6 p.m., without the advance approval of their Supervisor;
  8. **MUST BE “STAFF MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING” TO TELECOMMUTE:** To be considered for telecommuting a Staff Member must have good work habits and satisfactory performance records. The Supervisor may take a Staff Member's past performance, attendance and other

