



# WESTAR

**Western States Air Resources Council**

**WESTAR Council  
Remote Work Policies  
Policy # P-00-04  
December 6, 2024**

## **Introduction**

Remote work, also referred to as teleworking, or telecommuting, is the concept of staff working from home or another location and in a way that can provide a mutually beneficial option for both WESTAR and its staff. WESTAR's work from home policy establishes the guidelines and requirements to ensure remote work benefits our staff, mission, and members.

## **Purpose**

WESTAR strives to create a supportive remote work environment for WESTAR employees so that the goals of WESTAR and its employees can be achieved. WESTAR is a non-profit organization reliant upon grant funding and member dues. WESTAR's funding is largely constant while the costs of operating WESTAR are increasing with inflation. Employees working from home enable WESTAR to realize cost savings because WESTAR does not incur leasing, utility and moving costs. WESTAR employees have worked from a variety of office settings across the west for decades. Encouraging work from home generally allows WESTAR to attract and retain the best talent, reduce employee stress, improve worker productivity, work-life balance and overall health. It encourages WESTAR to operate in an efficient, effective and economic paperless environment. Finally, a WESTAR work-from-home environment allows WESTAR to be fully prepared for remote work during disasters, pandemics and other emergencies.

## **Eligibility**

All WESTAR employees are encouraged to work from home or remotely if possible. In cases where an employee cannot work from home or remotely, WESTAR will secure a local leased office space at the lowest cost possible, considering the benefits of the space (size, working

conditions and utility costs) and the likelihood of the office remaining available to rent long-term to minimize the costs of moving.

## Policy Guidelines

The ability to work remotely at WESTAR is a formal, universal staff expectation. Remote work is encouraged although it is not designed to replace appropriate childcare or to accommodate other personal needs. All remote relationships are at the discretion of WESTAR, may be terminated by WESTAR at any time for any or no reason, and in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with WESTAR nor the need for WESTAR employees to comply with all WESTAR policies and procedures. The organization has the right to refuse to make remote work status available to a staff member and to terminate a remote work arrangement at any time.

## Remote Work Arrangements

Remote work arrangements at WESTAR are considered to be permanent arrangements. WESTAR work spans 7 time zones (HAST to EDT/EST). While WESTAR employees have the freedom to develop arrangements tailored to their schedules, local time zones and core work hours, the following basic requirements must be met:

- Employees must be able to carry out the same duties, assignments, and other work obligations at their home/remote office as they would when working at an office.
- Because WESTAR work spans 7 time zones, WESTAR employees daily schedule will be different each day. WESTAR employees are expected to make their availability clear through messaging, automated emails, shared calendars and other equally effective methods. Employees will need to ensure that they can be reached through WESTAR's communications tools. WESTAR expects the same level of professionalism and responsiveness from its remote employees as it would from employees working at an office (phone calls and emails returned within a business day unless an employee is on leave).
- WESTAR employees must be available to attend scheduled meetings unless on leave. WESTAR employees are expected to travel from their home office to WESTAR business meetings and other meetings as assigned.
- Employees must arrange for childcare or dependent care during their work hours except in cases of extraordinary extenuating circumstances.
- Employees must document their time away from work for sick, personal and vacation leave as they would if working in an office.

## Productivity

WESTAR expects at least the same level of productivity from employees who work remotely full-time as would be achieved in an office setting.

## Remote Work Terms and Conditions

### 1. Equipment/Tools

WESTAR will provide any necessary technology tools and equipment for remote working staff to perform their current duties. This may include computer hardware, computer software, voice communication, email, voicemail, connectivity to host applications, and other applicable equipment as deemed necessary. The use of equipment, software, and data supplies provided by WESTAR for use at the remote work location is limited to the designated WESTAR staff and for purposes relating to WESTAR business. WESTAR understands that personal and work life can sometimes merge, so occasional non-WESTAR business may be conducted on WESTAR equipment as long as it is not recurring on a daily or weekly basis. The organization will provide for repairs to organizational equipment.

Remote employees may not use their own personally owned computers for WESTAR business except in cases where an employees computer is being repaired or is otherwise unavailable; remote employees shall not create, store, or access WESTAR information or files on personally owned computers unless given express permission by the Executive Director.

WESTAR will not reimburse any home furnishing–related office expenses such as construction, renovations, cleaning costs, heating/air conditioning, lighting or electricity. WESTAR employees may acquire ergonomic office equipment (desks and chairs) at WESTAR’s expense for WESTAR business only at the discretion of the Executive Director. This equipment is the property of WESTAR and must be relinquished to WESTAR upon the employee’s resignation or termination from WESTAR. WESTAR furniture should only be used for WESTAR purposes, with non-WESTAR purpose use minimized. Employees are responsible for furnishing, equipping, cleaning and maintaining their home workspace and furnishings so that they have a safe, secure, healthful, and comfortable work environment and can accomplish their work in an efficient and expeditious manner as follows:

1. Walking surfaces of the workspace will be dry and clear of clutter to reduce slips, trips and falls.

2. Employee must maintain their designated workspace in a safe condition, free from hazards, noise, and other dangers to the employee and equipment.
3. WESTAR employees will strive to conduct work at their desk in an ergonomic fashion as illustrated in Exhibit A. If a standing desk is employed, workers will strive to achieve appropriate ergonomic conditions.
4. WESTAR may review the site chosen as the employee's remote workspace.
5. Materials, files, etc., taken home should be kept in the designated work area at home and should not be subject to spills, leaks, wind, dust and other elements that could damage or destroy materials and files.
6. No power strips shall be placed across any workspace walkways.
7. Flammable materials such as meeting notes will be kept away from hot surfaces.
8. WESTAR employees will not daisy chain equipment; WESTAR will provide WESTAR surge protectors as needed.
9. Proper lighting of the workspace is expected.
10. WESTAR employees will practice proper self-care, including the use of breaks, stretching and posture-enhancing practices and aids during the workday.

Any equipment, software, data supplies, and furniture provided by WESTAR to staff for remote work must be returned upon request at WESTAR's expense. It is the employee's responsibility to protect WESTAR's equipment while in the employee's care. Items stolen from vehicles or cafés where inadequate theft prevention measures were taken must be paid for at the employee's expense.

WESTAR employee workspaces must have stable internet access. The WESTAR employee will be reimbursed for 80% of the cost of internet access to their remote workspace/home or the national average cost of internet access on a monthly basis, whichever is less, as determined annually by the Executive Director. WESTAR employees must submit an expense claim form with their internet bills on a quarterly basis to receive reimbursement.

## 2. Data Safety

The employee has an obligation to protect the data of WESTAR. WESTAR employees must comply with WESTAR's cybersecurity policies.

## 3. Office Supplies

Office supplies will be provided by WESTAR as needed; the employee's WESTAR credit card shall be used for these purchases.

#### 4. Business-Related Meetings and Visitors

WESTAR employees may not conduct in-person business meetings of any nature or host visitors for WESTAR purposes at their homes or remote spaces. All in-person business meetings, must take place at WESTAR business meetings, other WESTAR meetings, third party venues or client spaces.

#### 5. Tax Implications

The employee must establish a home office or workspace as a base for the majority of their WESTAR work so that WESTAR can pay proper employment taxes and conform to the laws of the jurisdiction where the employee resides as well as report the address for WESTAR's insurance coverage. It is the employee's responsibility to determine any income tax implication of maintaining a home office. WESTAR will not provide tax guidance nor will it assume any additional tax liabilities. The employee is encouraged to consult with a tax professional to discuss any income tax implications of working remotely/from home.

#### 6. Health and Safety

Remote employees should ensure that their home or remote offices comply with WESTAR's injury and illness prevention plan, including a properly set up ergonomic workstation.

Remote employees must immediately report all work-related injuries they sustain to the Executive Director. Under no circumstance should an employee delay more than 24 hours in reporting a work-related injury, regardless of the injury's severity.

#### 7. Worker's Compensation

During work hours and while performing work functions in the designated work area of the home, remote working staff are covered by WESTAR's worker compensation insurance.

#### 8. Liability

The employee's home workspace will be considered an extension of WESTAR's workspace, therefore, WESTAR will continue to be liable for job-related accidents that occur in the employee's home workspace during the employee's working hours.

The organization will be liable for injuries or illnesses that occur during the employee's agreed-upon work hours. The employee's at-home work hours will conform to a schedule agreed upon by the employee and his or her supervisor.

WESTAR assumes no liability for injuries occurring in the employee's home workspace outside the agreed-upon work hours, and is not liable for loss, destruction, or injury that may occur in or to the employee's home. This includes family members, visitors, or others that may become injured within or around the employee's home.

9. Dependent or Child Care

Working remote is not a substitute for dependent or child care since remote workers will not be available during organizational core work hours to provide the type of quality of attention required in caretaker scenarios.

10. Communication

Staff member must be available by phone, email, Skype, Zoom, etc., or any other designated communication portals during working hours. Employees must continue to be available for staff meetings and other meetings deemed necessary by management. WESTAR provides and pays for work-related voice and data communication charges.

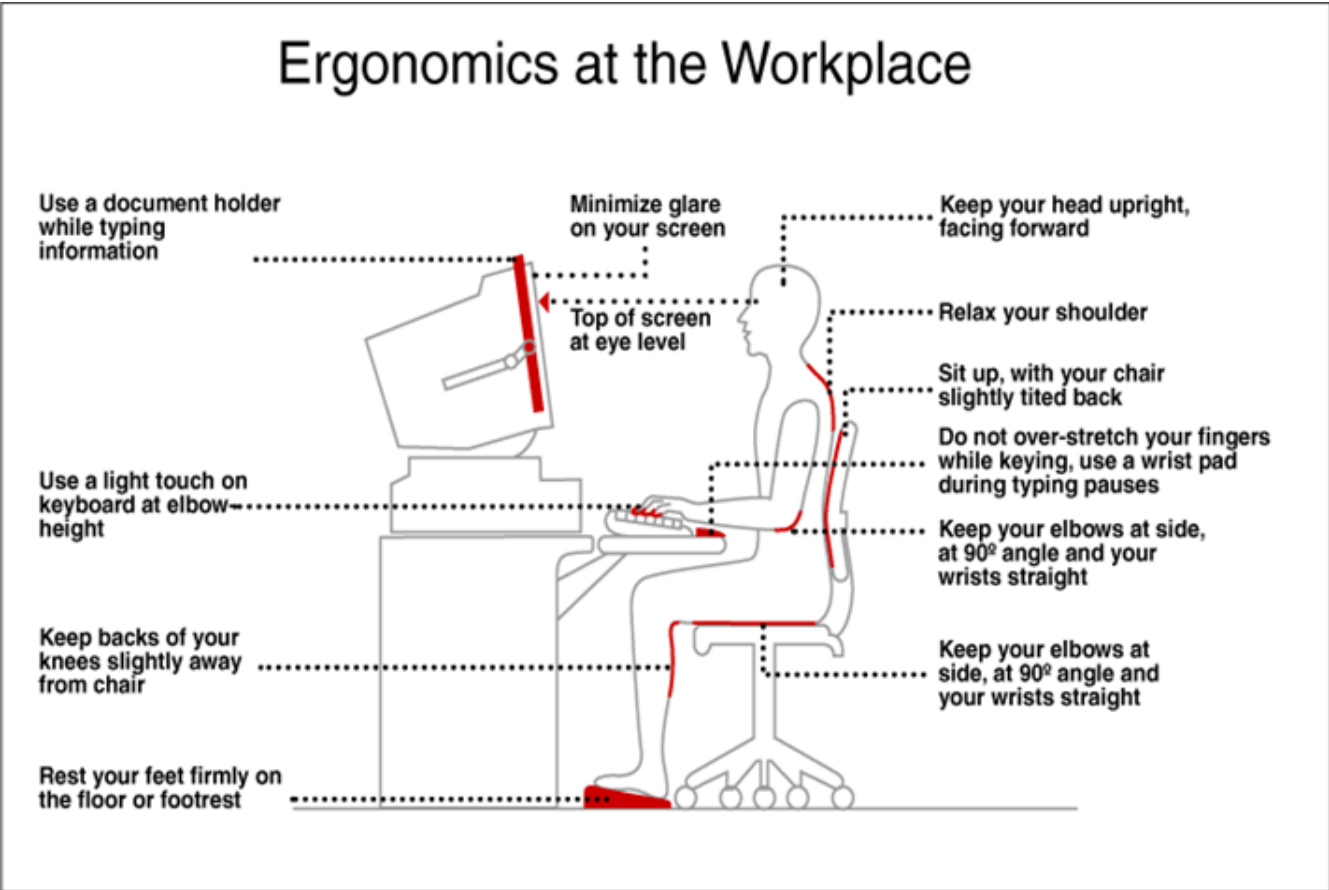
11. Evaluation

The employee agrees to participate in all studies, inquiries, reports, and analyses relating to his or her remote work experience, as well as remain obligated to comply with all WESTAR rules, practices, and instructions.

**Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Kathy Taylor, WESTAR President

# Exhibit A



September 2001

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