REMOTE WORK PROGRAM - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General

1. **What is expected of me when I work remotely?**

   The employee must be actively working and be accessible via phone and email during the College's core business hours and/or during their scheduled shift as agreed to with their supervisor. The employee must communicate their schedule and how they may be contacted by other employees, students, or others doing business with the College through appropriate communication methods (e.g., voicemail, automatic email replies, email signatures, etc.).

2. **Will I get reimbursed for travel in between my remote work location and my home college?**

   Travel between the Remote Work Location and the College that would otherwise be considered normal commuting will not count as hours worked or otherwise be reimbursable as travel expenses.

Renewing Remote Work Agreements

3. **I was previously approved for remote work. Will my new Remote Work Program application be automatically approved?**

   No. Having previously been approved for remote work does not guarantee that you will be approved in a subsequent request. Supervisors are responsible for recommending decisions that will ensure the operations and services of their area are not disrupted. Recommendations by supervisor to authorizing managers will be based on a thorough review and consideration of all criteria as outlined in Remote Work procedures.

Remote Work Eligibility

4. **Are probationary employees eligible to participate in the Remote Work Program?**
   In most cases, it is possible but this is dependent on the supervisor's recommendation. It is important to remember that supervisors will make recommendations to authorizing managers based on a thorough review and consideration of all criteria as outlined in the Remote Work Procedures.

5. **Are non-unit employees (i.e. temporary hourly employees, student workers, tutors, interns, etc.) eligible to participate in the Remote Work Program?**
   At this time, non-unit employees are not eligible to apply for the Remote Work Program.

Remote Work Application Process

6. **I'm unsure of what is a reasonable work schedule request on the application. What should I do?**

    Most supervisors will meet with their direct reports to review and discuss the Remote Work Procedures. If this has not happened yet and you are eager to move forward with the application, approach your supervisor and discuss what they consider "reasonable". Alternatively, an employee may submit an application with their "ideal" work schedule, but it is important to remember that this is a fluid, interactive process and both employee and supervisor will need to be flexible when possible. Keep in mind, the information on the application may change from the time it was originally submitted to when the employee and supervisor meet to formalize the document.

7. **On the application, what should I enter as a "Start" and "End" date?**

    The "Start" and "End" dates will be set once the application becomes an agreement. An employee cannot begin the RWP until all the required forms and trainings have been completed and the authorizing manager has signed the application. Employees may temporarily enter "TBD" until such time as they meet with their supervisor and finalize the application. At that time, the employee and supervisor can enter the exact "Start" and "End" dates and forward the completed packet to the authorizing manager for approval. The application is a working document that can be modified throughout this process up until it becomes the formal agreement.

8. **I already have access to collaboration tools and or software (i.e. Adobe Pro, Colleague, etc.) that I typically use as part of my job. Should I still list them on the application?**

    Yes. The application is an acknowledgement and record of the tools you will be using. For those tools that you already have access to, please be sure to indicate "already installed" on the "Additional Information" section next to each tool.

9. **How does an employee and or supervisor document an "unusual" workplan arrangement?**

    There may be situations where a supervisor may need employees to rotate their remote days or a different arrangement altogether.   The employee and supervisor may document this information in two different sections on the application under Part B – Employee Work Plan Proposal: Section III – Other Considerations.

10. **Is there a maximum amount of time an employee can ask to work remotely?**

    The number of days or percent of time for participation in the RWP is dependent on the agreement between you and your supervisor. This is based on the needs of the District.

Typically, RWP will be about 20% as stated in the Remote Work Program procedures. There are a lot of variables that must be considered.

11. **Do remote work arrangements have to be consistent for all employees in the same department or division in the same job classification?**

    Every work arrangement may differ, even between two similarly classified staff due to unit operational differences and individual situations and preferences. Discuss with your supervisor if you have questions about altering your work arrangement.

12. **The RWP application requires that I confirm completion of the required trainings but the Remote Work Program Procedures states an employee must first receive approval from their supervisor before beginning training. What should I do?**

    We acknowledge you may be anxious to complete the training modules immediately. However, we advise that you do not begin the training until you have received communication from your supervisor that your application has been conditionally approved.

    When completing the application, you may "skip" the checkbox about if training is completed. Once you've finished your training and meet with your supervisor next, the application can be updated to reflect completion of training. Keep in mind the Remote Work Program process is fluid and communication with your supervisor will be key. By doing so, you will lessen any confusion and address any questions upfront.

13. **Once the application is submitted, is there a timeline for when to expect a response if the application was approved or not?**

    There is no set timeline that supervisors and or authorizing managers must adhere to however, it is understood that a timeline is important for employees and departments to be able to plan ahead. We've encouraged all supervisors to meet with their teams as a group to go over the RWP process and discuss general parameters. If the team meeting has yet to take place, then we recommend that you have a discussion with your supervisor about the timeline. Keep in mind, your supervisor may be receiving multiple applications and needs time to review all requests to determine how best to meet the needs of employees as well as ensure the operations and services of their area are not disrupted.

14. **Who can I talk to if my immediate supervisor and or authoring manager deny my request to participate in the Remote Work Program?**

    At this time, there is not appeal process for reconsideration of an employee's Remote Work application. The supervisor or authorizing manager will provide a brief explanation for the

denial. It is important to note that an initial denial does not mean that there could be a change at some time in the future.

Remote Work Required Training

15. When can I begin completing the required RWP training modules?

We acknowledge you may be anxious to complete the training modules immediately. However, we advise that you do not begin the training until you have received communication from your supervisor that your application has been conditionally approved.

You may, however, begin to complete the required Information Security Awareness training. Completion of this particular training is mandatory for all employees regardless of their participation in the Remote Work Program.

16. Am I able to complete the required training during work hours?

Employees must work with their supervisor and mutually agree on a schedule for training during the work day. The training should not impede the employee from performing their normal duties and responsibilities.

Work Schedules, Leaves, and Pay

17. Do I need to complete a new remote work application or agreement if my schedule changes?

No, however, any change to an employee's work schedule must be agreed upon by the supervisor and approved by the authorized manager. When established, the change to a work schedule must be documented and appended to the current Remote Work Application/Agreement.

18. Am I able to "flex" my hours during my remote work day(s)?

Employees are required to work during their regularly scheduled hours and accurately record all hours worked and time off as they would if working at their regular worksite.

19. Can I work remotely in place of using leaves?

The employee may not use remote work in place of other leave. Employees unable to work due to illness or personal obligations should use their allotted time off as appropriate. Remote work may not serve as a replacement for dependent care or any other obligations that may negatively affect the employee's ability to perform work remotely. The employee

must obtain care for any dependents during their remote work hours in the same manner as during their on-campus hours.

20. What if I go out of town for the remote portion of my workweek?

Remote work should be conducted in a place that allows the employee to return to the employee's assigned worksite within 24 hours.

21. Will my pay be affected when I work remotely?

An employee's compensation, benefits, work status, and work responsibilities will not change due to working remotely. The amount of time an employee is expected to work per day or pay period will not change as a result of working remotely. If an employee is unsure of what hours they are expected to work while working remotely, they should consult with their supervisor.

Setting up and Equipping a Home Office

22. Will I be provided with equipment to be able to perform my duties while working remotely?

As a standard practice, the District will provide computer equipment required to conduct work at the Remote Work Location. When submitting a request for equipment for remote work, it is important to practice good judgement and common sense. The following information serves as a guide to consider when submitting requests.

- **Laptops:** If the employee has not already been issued a District-owned laptop, the employee may request one to conduct work at the Remote Work Location. **The District will not issue an additional laptop for use at the Remote Work Location.** Priority will be given to employees who have been approved for remote work.

- **Monitors:** The employee may request a District-owned monitor however supply is limited. Priority will be given to employees whose essential job duties requires them to review large amounts of data and or are working remotely more than 50% of their time as part of the Remote Work Program. If an employee currently has dual monitors installed at their worksite and is interested in using one at home, they need to identify the equipment on the SJECCD. **No District-owned equipment shall be removed from their worksite without the proper authorization.**

- **Auxiliary Equipment:** The District will issue equipment such as an external mouse and external keyboard upon an employee's request. However, at this time, the District is unable to provide docking stations for use in a remote work environment.

- **External Cameras and Headsets:** The employee should discuss this type of equipment requests with their supervisors. If deemed necessary, the department may provide the employee with the equipment at their department's expense.

- **Software Applications:** If an employee requires a particular software to be installed on their District-owned laptop to conduct work remotely, a request can be initiated to your local IT Technical Support. Once the request has been submitted, the employee and supervisor will work with their IT team to complete the installation.

- **Printers, fax machines, and Other Office Equipment:** The District, as a standard, will not purchase office equipment for remote work.

23. Will I be reimbursed for office supplies needed to conduct work at the remote work location?

The College will supply office supplies required to work at the remote work location. The employee should submit office supply requests to their supervisor, or, if authorized by their supervisor, order office supplies required for remote work via the College's remote office supply service. Employees may be reimbursed for the purchase of office supplies only if such purchase was pre-approved in writing by their supervisor.

Remote Work Arrangements

24. Do I need to check in with my supervisor when I work remotely?

The employee must check in regularly with their supervisor, at intervals determined by their supervisor, while working remotely. A supervisor may also require an employee to maintain active status via various software/technology tools to ensure productivity and responsiveness.

25. Are there times when I will not be able to work remotely?

An employee's supervisor, a Cabinet member, or the College may designate certain times of the year when remote work is unavailable for various reasons. During these times and as otherwise requested by the employee's supervisor, the employee must come to campus even if during their scheduled remote work hours. Supervisors are not required to offer a "make-up" remote workday for any employee required to come to campus on a remote workday. The college presidents may announce any "Black Out Periods" when remote work is not available at least two weeks in advance. However, supervisors may also call an employee into campus for special circumstances when needed with reasonable notice of at least 24 hours.

26. Could I have in-person work-related meetings at my remote work location?

No. The employee may not conduct in-person meetings at the Remote Work Location.

27. **What happens if my family member or visitor at my remote work location is injured?**

The District is not liable for any injuries to family members, visitors, or other third parties at the Remote Work Location, nor does the District accept responsibility for the safety, security, or suitability of any Remote Work Location. The District accepts no responsibility or liability for damages to the employee's personal or real property at the Remote Work Location.

28. **Do the same work policies and procedures apply to me when I am working remotely?**

The employee must comply with all District policies and procedures while working remotely, including but not limited to all policies governing the use of the District's technology or equipment.

29. **What happens to my remote work arrangement if I transfer to another department?**

If you transfer to another department, you will need to submit a new remote work application/agreement for consideration.

30. **What happens if I am injured at my remote work location?**

The District's worker's compensation policy and procedures may apply to work-related injuries sustained by the employee at the Remote Work Location. The employee must report work- related injuries occurring at the Remote Work Location to their supervisor and Human Resources as soon as possible. The District's worker's compensation policy does not apply to injuries to third parties or family members of the employee at the Remote Work Location, or to injuries to the employee that do not arise out of and in the course of employment. To assess whether an injury arose out of and in the course of employment, the employee agrees to allow the College and/or its representative(s) to access the Remote Work Location to investigate any injury that occurs while an employee is working at the Remote Work Location.

Troubleshooting While Working Remotely

31. **What should I do if my District-owned equipment malfunctions?**

The District will be responsible for repairing District-owned equipment that is provided to the employee. The employee will be required to bring any equipment in need of repair back to the worksite for such repairs. The employee will be responsible for any intentional damage to any District equipment. All District equipment provided to the employee will remain the property of the SJECCD and must be returned when the remote work arrangement or the employee's relationship with the SJECCD ends.

32. **What should I do if I have connection issues while working?**

If you experience internet, phone, or power outages, you should immediately notify your supervisor. Your supervisor will work with you to determine what work can still be performed during the outage or if you will be required to return to work on-site. If the problem persists, the supervisor will revisit the remote work arrangement to determine if your authorized remote work location is suitable for continued remote work.

Supervisor Tips

33. What is the advice to supervisors when considering requests from their direct reports about participation in the Remote Work Program?

Supervisors should meet with their direct reports as a group first. Review and discuss the Remote Work MOU and Procedures with your employees as a department or division and give them a general overview of the process. Discuss the general parameters: level of services, expectations for percent of in-person coverage you require for your department. Recognize that each situation may be unique, and the percentage of remote work may vary in your department. Supervisors may want to receive and consider all RWP applications before allowing employees to begin remote work. If so, communicate that to them. Setting a deadline to receive all applications may be helpful. Supervisors should let their employees know that the days(s) they request to work remotely may change once you consider the needs of the department, staffing levels, etc. It is important for supervisors to remember that participation in the RWP is voluntary and there should not be the assumption that all employees will want to participate. Be flexible where possible.

34. Can a supervisor approve one employee's remote work arrangement and deny another?

Yes. Since every job, employee, and situation is different, it cannot be assumed that the same decision is appropriate and or applicable to every employee. Supervisors know the operations of their department or division best and are responsible for recommending decisions that will ensure the operations and services of their area are not disrupted. Recommendations by supervisors to authorizing managers will be based on the thorough review and consideration of all criteria as outlined in Remote Work Program Procedures.

The frequently asked questions is a work in progress. If you have particular questions that you would like to see, please send it to HR Dept. Tina Xiao at Yi.Xiao@sjeccd.edu.