

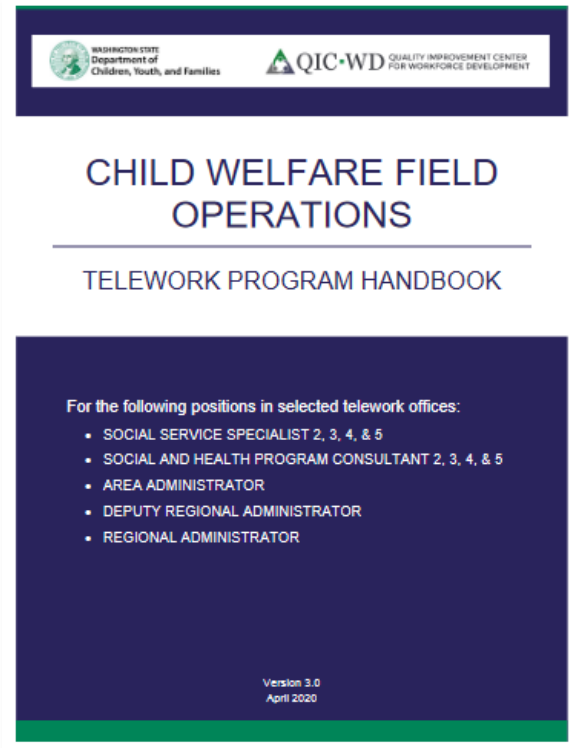
Telework

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

The Washington Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) Child Welfare Field Operations (CWYO) telework program was developed by reviewing policies, practices, experiences and research distilled from materials produced by numerous federal and state agencies (for example, www.telework.gov). (At the time of intervention development, the QIC-WD was unable to identify child welfare agencies with formal telework policies and protocols.) In addition, the experiences of approximately 30 Field Operations Intake workers who participated in a DCYF 2018 telework pilot also contributed to developing the telework program. Lastly, the project's Implementation Team informed the feasibility of a telework program for DCYF Field Operations staff (see Implementation Overview). They met regularly for approximately one year to discuss the detailed policy and implementation components of the telework program.

Telework is an authorized working arrangement where employees perform part of their regular work activities at their home or at an alternate DCYF office, rather than at their official duty station. For this project, the [Child Welfare Field Operations Telework Trial Program Handbook](#) was developed to guide the consistent implementation of telework across all [DCYF regions and offices](#).

Eligibility. CWFO leadership determined the following job classifications eligible for the telework program: Social Service Specialist 2, 3, 4 and 5; Social and Health Program Consultant 2, 3, and 4 (except for those that have meeting facilitation responsibilities); Area Administrator; Deputy Regional Administrator; and Regional Administrator. Other positions were determined on a case-by-case basis. Additional eligibility criteria included having worked at DCYF for the past 18 months and in their existing position for the last three



months. Tenure specifications were recommended to ensure staff had adequate training to conduct job duties independently.

Right to Telework. Teleworking was made available only to eligible employees, at the agency's sole discretion. As such, no employee was entitled to, or guaranteed the opportunity to, telework.

Telework Frequency. CWFO employees could telework a maximum of two days per week.

Fixed Days. Both telework days and in-office days must be fixed days each week and cannot vary across time (e.g., Monday, Wednesday, Friday—in office; Tuesday and Thursday—at home or at an alternate DCYF office). If there was any need to come in to the office on a telework day, the employee would not be able to substitute or make up the telework day on an alternate day.

Work Schedule. Employees were expected to work their approved work schedule (e.g., 8 a.m. –5 p.m. or 7 a.m. – 4 p.m.) while teleworking, in accordance with the conditions outlined in the collective bargaining agreement and position description.

Telework Location. Telework could be performed at an employee’s home in Washington State or a neighboring state, and/or an employee could request to telework (exclusively or in addition to teleworking from home) from an alternate DCYF office that was more convenient to their home (e.g., based on travel distance or availability of public transportation).

Workspace Requirements. At-home workspaces needed to ensure safety, sufficient space, reliable connectivity, information security, and freedom from personal disruptions. The location needed to meet the same health and safety standards as the employee’s official duty station. A dedicated workspace was not required, but sufficient workspace was needed to accommodate all equipment needed. A dedicated high-speed internet connection to the home was required.

Computer Equipment and Software. The employee and supervisor determined the minimum equipment and software necessary for the employee to complete assignments from the remote location in a timely, efficient, and professional manner. Any equipment provided by the agency had to be properly inventoried and listed in the telework agreement, and the agreement had to be kept updated if equipment was returned or if new equipment was assigned. Teleworkers have access to all the same software and systems as they do at their official duty station. A standard set of programs are available to all teleworkers.

Additional Expenses. The employee was responsible for ongoing operating costs, such as telephone service fees, internet fees, utility costs, homeowner’s or renter’s insurance, and furniture or equipment rental fees, unless negotiated otherwise.

Telework Tasks. The type of work that could be done while teleworking varied by position and was decided through consultation between the employee and supervisor. In general, the best tasks for teleworking were those that could be done independently and did not require face-to-face communication with others.

Application and Agreement Process. DCYF CWFO deployed an automated web-based application and agreement system, a product developed by Autocene. This paperless system allowed applicants to submit and route the necessary forms for approval. The application process required interested employees to complete an [Employee Self-Assessment](#), which helped them decide whether telework was right for them. The telework applicant and agreement form noted the employee’s requests (i.e., number of telework days, preferred telework days, locate and start date), as well as the type of work the employee intended to complete during telework days. The supervisor considered the employee’s work habits and skills, requested telework days, and any performance or attendance issues that could affect telework. Taking into consideration those factors and considering the agency’s business needs, the supervisor would approve or deny telework requests. The supervisor’s decision was then routed to the Area Administrator for final approval. More specifics about the application and agreement process are in the [handbook](#).