EFFECTIVE: 4/1/2020
This policy revokes and replaces all previous policies on this topic and will expire on 12/31/2020

Remote Work & Telecommuting Policy

During the Coronavirus Emergency 2020

I. Purpose

This policy aims to dictate the terms by which East Bridgewater ("Town") employees may temporarily work remotely/telecommute when approved by the Town. The Town, and the United States of America generally, are experiencing an unprecedented public health emergency related to the novel coronavirus and its related disease, COVID-19. As such, the Town may grant certain employees or those employees who hold certain positions the option to work remotely on a temporary basis. This privilege shall be evaluated frequently as the public health emergency evolves over time.

II. Definition

Telecommuting is a work arrangement in which some or all of the work is performed off-site at a remote work site such as the home or in office space near home. Communication may be by one of several means, such as phone or laptop computer. The equipment utilized while working remotely may be owned and maintained by the employee or by the Town.

III. Authority

The Town Administrator will work with Department Heads and/or other supervisors to determine the feasibility of a specific employee or position's ability to work from home, as well as the scope of their work during the temporary remote work arrangement. The ultimate authority to allow an employee to work remotely is held by the Town Administrator or his/her designee.

Please note that the utilization of sick, vacation, personal or other paid leave are subject to all normal procedures. Employees who wish to use said paid leave should request it according to existing Town policies or controlling collective bargaining agreements.

IV. Conditions of Remote Work

The Employee's duties, obligations, responsibilities, conditions of employment and essential functions remain unchanged while working remotely. Management retains all rights to assign work, and exercise any other managerial prerogative, during any remote work arrangement.

In addition to the regular working conditions, the Employee must adhere to the additional conditions during the temporary remote work arrangement:

a. The Employee's work schedule shall be the normal hours of work prescribed by the positions' job description or collective bargaining agreement. Any temporary changes to the normal hours of work must be approved by the Employee's supervisor.

b. The Employee shall provide their supervisor and the Town Administrator or his/her designee the address and telephone number where they may be reached while working remotely.

c. The Employee understands that if Management determines that the remote working arrangement is not functioning as envisioned or desired, Management may alter the terms of this policy with notice to the employee and Union.

d. While working remotely the Employee will:

i. Remain accessible during the remote work schedule;

ii. Check in with their supervisor to discuss status and open issues as frequently as deemed necessary;

iii. Be available for video/teleconferences, scheduled on an as-needed basis;

iv. Be available to physically attend scheduled work meetings as requested or required by the Department;

v. Request supervisor approval in advance of working any overtime hours (if employee is non-exempt);

vi. Take rest and meal breaks while working remotely in full compliance with all applicable Town policies or collective bargaining agreements; and

vii. Request supervisor approval to use vacation, sick, or other leave in the same manner as when working at the employee's regular work location.

V. Safety and Equipment

The Employee must maintain a safe, secure, and ergonomic work environment and to report work-related injuries to their supervisor at the earliest reasonable opportunity. The Employee shall hold the Town harmless for injury to others at the remote work site.

Regarding space and equipment purchase, set-up, and maintenance for telecommuting purposes:

a. The Employee is responsible for providing space, telephone, printing, networking and/or Internet capabilities at the telecommute location and shall not be reimbursed by the employer for these or related expenses;

b. The Employee shall protect Town-owned equipment, records, and materials from unauthorized or accidental access, use, modification, destruction or disclosure. The precautions described in this policy apply regardless of the storage media on which information is maintained, the locations where the information is stored, the systems used to process the information, or the process by which the information is stored;

c. The Employee shall report to their supervisor any incidents of loss, damage, or unauthorized access at the earliest reasonable opportunity;

d. The Employee understands that all equipment, records, and materials provided by the Town shall remain the property of the Town.