
Subject: Alternative Workplace Solutions Guidelines



Tennessee Department of Children's Services

Alternative Workplace Solutions Guidelines

Supplemental to: DOHR Policy 14-001 (Rev 08/17), Alternative Workplace Solutions

The Department of Children's Services (DCS), in compliance with DOHR Policy [14-001, Alternative Workplace Solutions \(AWS\)](#), has adopted the following guidelines to govern its participation in AWS. Clarification on definitions and other important information can be found in [DOHR Policy 14-001](#).

DCS utilizes two (2) AWS arrangements:

1. Mobile: and
2. In Office

Mobile Work is not Work From Home. Mobile Work is an alternative workplace arrangement for employees who are required to spend a significant amount of the day "in the field" or away from the office, often traveling to and from various indefinite locations in order to best meet the needs of their position. While Mobile Work is not Work From Home, it does not preclude an employee from working at home with supervisory approval of the AWS agreement. A mobile employee's work schedule will be consistent with the core work day of the Agency unless a variation is approved by the supervisor, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

An employee's AWS arrangement is determined based on specific job responsibilities. An employee whose position involves direct handling of secure or confidential material may not be appropriate for mobile work. Supervisory employees are expected to be available to meet face to face with staff members at all times.

Regardless of the assigned AWS position category, all employees' job performance continues to be measured utilizing the performance management system and employees maintain the same opportunities with regard to: assignments, development opportunities, promotions, and awards/recognition.

Supervisors at all levels have the authority to call staff into the office, as needed, to perform their work duties and responsibilities. Some examples of this are: participating in Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs), signing a petition, attending court, attending mandatory training, attending a mandatory team/office/regional meeting and mentoring/coaching staff.

When an employee is working mobile, it is expected that they perform their necessary job functions and only claim hours spent performing those functions. Employees should not conduct unauthorized personal business, attend educational classes or engage in secondary employment while in official duty status at a mobile work site. An employee is not allowed to mobile

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work in lieu of using sick, annual, or comp leave; however supervisors may still allow an employee to work from home while on leave to address a specific, planned task/need when needed. Employees must claim work time for any time spent working.

During the probationary period, new hires will be expected to report to the office in order to conduct on the job training experiences unless arrangements have been made to meet at Court, an agency location, or an identified meeting place for a home visit.

DCS AWS Acknowledgement Form

Upon employment, or implementation within the county office, the employee electronically signs and completes the DCS AWS Acknowledgement form in Edison which outlines the employee's responsibilities in their assigned position category. In addition to the employee, the supervisor and the Appointing Authority (or designee) approves the DCS AWS Acknowledgement Form in Edison.

This form is revisited as needed or when the employee transfers to a different position within DCS. This form is maintained in Edison.

Modification of AWS Arrangement

In certain instances, it may be necessary for a supervisor to modify an employee's AWS arrangement due to performance issues or staffing needs. If a supervisor needs to modify an employee's AWS arrangement, the supervisor documents the reason or issue in the job performance plan or monthly performance briefing. In addition, if the AWS modification is more than ninety (90) days, a new DCS AWS Acknowledgement Form must be completed outlining the modification.

Using Shared Workspaces

When using shared workspaces, DCS employees clear the workspace of all personal and professional items after use. Such practices assist in providing an accommodating workspace for all users and reduce the threat of confidentiality and data security breaches. All employees maintain compliance with COA standards for confidentiality.

Shared workspaces are utilized on a first come, first serve basis and cannot be reserved. However, the use of

conference, interview, and training rooms may be reserved per local protocols.

Desk Phones

When employees have both desk phones and cell phones, the DCS employee puts a message on their desk phone directing callers to contact them via their cell phone. State cell phone numbers should be available to clients and other members of the public as an additional contact number.

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All desk equipment such as computer monitors, keyboards, tablet docking stations, and the mouse shall remain at the employee's assigned county office in the unassigned workstations for use. These items shall be assigned to work stations in the offices rather than the employee.

Employee Training

All DCS employees complete the online AWS awareness module for employees before engaging in their assigned AWS position category, or if already participating in the AWS position category, within six (6) months of the effective date of these guidelines.

Supervisor Training

All DCS supervisors must complete the online AWS awareness module for supervisors before their employee(s) engage in their assigned AWS position category, or if already participating in the AWS position category, within six (6) months of the effective date of these guidelines. Additional trainings are offered for supervisors including: Change Management and Effective Communication. Supervisors are strongly encouraged to take advantage of these training opportunities.

Timekeeping

Employee's time and attendance will be recorded as AWS time using a special Edison time reporting code (TRC) established for this purpose. The code for in-office time is REGS1 and the code for mobile time is RGAWS.

Inclement Weather

In instances of inclement weather and the office is closed, only the Commissioner or designee will have the discretion to either allow the AWS mobile employees to be excused from work and granted discretionary leave with pay or require the employee to work remotely.

Mobile employees may be expected to work remotely if their assigned office is closed due to inclement weather based on their specific job responsibilities.

In office employees are not required to work if their assigned office is closed due to inclement weather and will be granted discretionary leave with pay as outlined in DOHR Policy [12-037](#).

Please refer to DOHR Policy: [12-037 Employee Absence and State Office Closure Due to Inclement Weather](#) and DOHR Policy: [14-001 Alternative Workplace Solutions](#) for additional information.

DCS AWS Coordinator

All questions and comments regarding AWS may be directed to the DCS AWS Coordinator at the following email address:

DCS.AWS@TN.gov

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