



# **Employee Remote Work Guidelines**

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## GUIDED BY OUR VISION AND VALUES

Our **Educator Essentials** and **Core Values** guide our decisions on our desired workplace culture, including our remote work plan.

### **Educator Essentials**

- Consistent & Reliable
- Knowledgeable & Committed to Lifelong Learning
- Racial Equity & Social Justice Centered
- Inclusive & Responsive to Differentiated Learners
- Community-minded, Connected & Collaborative
- Innovative, Global & Pragmatic
- Caring, Empathetic & Relational
- Adaptive, Resilient and Open to Change

### **Core Values**

- Students at the Center
- Racial Equity & Social Justice
- Honesty & Integrity
- Excellence
- Respect
- Relationships
- Creativity & Innovation
- Partnerships & Collaboration
- Grounded in the Spirit of Portland
- Joyful Learning & Leadership

## PURPOSE

Our remote work guidelines are an opportunity to create and support a culture open to positive, collaborative and transformational change where employees thrive. The COVID pandemic encouraged us to be adaptive and flexible, demonstrated our ability to be highly productive while working remotely, and reshaped the way we engaged, both virtually and in-person, with one another. We believe that, through thoughtfully applying the lessons from these experiences, we can work together to offer flexibility in how and where we do our work while excelling at delivering on our mission and vision for our students.

Our students have told us repeatedly that what they most value is a reliable and consistent adult presence throughout Portland Public Schools. We also know that in-person contact fosters additional connection and creates opportunities for relationship-building with students and staff in ways that cannot be fully replaced by a video or phone call. So regardless of role, all of us must provide excellent service and support for our students, families, and each other and be able to have regular contact with our teams and our schools.

At the core of our mission, we must deliver exceptional central services to our schools, students, and families. We believe that student achievement can be accelerated when schools are supported by central services that are performed reliably and accurately, convey trust and confidence through knowledge of products and services, communicate caring and individualized attention, and provide help willingly and promptly. As we expand our flexible work opportunities, it is imperative that we develop and adhere to a set of shared customer service expectations that our school-based leaders, staff, and community understand and for which they feel the positive impact.

## PPS Employee Remote Work Guidelines

The purpose of this playbook is to share expectations for PPS' flexible remote work model. This guide provides insight, a community of practice, expectations, and the ins and outs of the flexible remote work model at Portland Public Schools.

## ONGOING FLEXIBLE REMOTE WORK OPTIONS & EXPECTATIONS

### *Flexible remote criteria*

There are both team and individual commitments needed to make remote work options successful. Central Office departments must ensure physical presence of staff and service coverage during regular operating hours. Central office staff must be able to have regular in-person contact with their teams and our school communities as requested by their supervisor or district leadership.

Please note: at this time, PPS is not administratively designed to support employees who reside outside of the Portland-Salem-Vancouver metropolitan area.

### *Flexible remote work eligibility*

To be eligible, employees must:

1. Work in a [position eligible for remote work](#).
2. Discuss and develop a plan with your supervisor.
3. Understand and agree to the remote work requirements outlined in these guidelines and complete this agreement (located in Appendix A).

### *District Customer Service Expectations*

As a central office, we exist to support our schools and community. In order to best do this, we must provide excellent customer service that enables our school communities to focus on their critical work - supporting our students and accelerating student outcomes. As a central office team, we are committing to some foundational, shared service expectations.

*Our foundational customer service expectations ensure that we -*

- Perform reliably and accurately
- Convey trust and confidence through our knowledge of products and services
- Provide services with an equity lens and in alignment with our RESJ beliefs
- Communicate caring and individualized attention
- Provide help willingly and promptly
- Prioritize responding to school-based staff

*Our shared customer service expectations are that -*

- Every central office work space includes business hours contact information
- Respond promptly to communications
- Calendars reflect daily working location
- Calendars are open to teams/supervisors to see the title and invite list

## PPS Employee Remote Work Guidelines

- Office phones are forwarded or voicemails are checked daily when staff is working remotely
- Out of office message is placed on email and voicemail when appropriate and directs staff who to contact during your absence (see guidance and templates [here](#)).

### Flexible Work Options

Senior leaders in each office considered a variety of factors in determining the level of eligibility for flexible work for each role. Each position is unique and requires careful consideration of factors, such as, but not limited to, if the role provided direct support to students, required access to tools, equipment or other requirements that are located on-site, type of job responsibilities, etc. Employees in positions that are eligible for flexible or remote work are not required to work remotely; employees may choose to work from the central office location.

Below are the categories of flexible work:

Eligibility Definitions	
Full-Time Remote Work Eligible	Eligible for Full-Time, <b>5 days a week</b> remote work
Hybrid Remote Work	Eligible for a regular remote work schedule, <b>up to 3 days</b> of remote work per week, determine schedule with advanced consultation with supervisor.
Ad-Hoc Remote Work	Eligible for <b>up to 8 hours</b> per work week, on an ad hoc basis, with advance consultation with supervisor; no regular remote work schedule.
Direct School Support	No regular remote work schedule because role is expected to provide direct school-based support while schools are in session; may work remote on days when school is not in session (any remote work is agreed upon in advance and at supervisor discretion)
Not Eligible	Not eligible for remote work

### Remote work expectations

- PPS provides each employee with an on-site work space and tools/equipment. Employees who choose to, and are approved, have a work from home schedule are responsible for their own home equipment. PPS does not supply wi-fi, furniture, monitors, ergonomic reviews, etc., for home offices.
- Delivering on service level commitments from a remote work location means employees are accessible and productively engaged during scheduled work hours.
- While some employees are eligible for full-time remote work, in practice, some managers may be establishing hybrid work schedules with staff to ensure a physical presence in their department Monday through Friday.
- Every PPS staff member must be available for any in-person standing or ad hoc staff meeting called by their manager.

## PPS Employee Remote Work Guidelines

- Comply with all PPS rules, policies, practices and instructions that would apply if you were working onsite at a PPS location.
- Follow your schedule, take required breaks and lunch, and obtain prior approval for any overtime before it's worked.
- Protect confidential information at all times, including student and employee data. **PPS files may not be maintained or stored at home offices or on personal computers or equipment.**
- On approved remote work days, employees who encounter power, internet, or other technical difficulties are expected to make alternate work location arrangements, come on-site to complete their work, or request time off.
- Ensure arrangements are made for regular dependent care during all work hours, understanding that remote work is not a substitute for dependent care. Remaining engaged in work activities is not consistent with simultaneously caring for dependents.
- Remain flexible to adjusting schedules when work and personal needs shift. You may be called in to your work-site on short notice for unplanned or unexpected circumstances.
- Maintain a safe and secure work environment at all times.
- Report work-related injuries to your manager and [Risk Management](#) as soon as practicable.
- Remote work is not a replacement or alternative to taking sick leave or vacation. Being fully engaged in work activities during your work hours is the consistent expectation of the remote work option. If you are too ill to work from home, use your sick time for rest, recovery, and getting medical care. Vacation time is an important opportunity to rest and recharge, and you are encouraged to take your vacation time.

### **[Additional supervisor information](#)**

- Supervisors **may not require** an employee to work from home.
- Should a supervisor believe a position or classification's work from home eligibility level be changed, they must first discuss the proposed eligibility change with their leader and SLT member. The SLT member will discuss with Human Resources to determine if the eligibility level can be changed. Employees may not work under a different eligibility category than initially designated until approved by Human Resources.
- Employees are not permitted to work remotely more than their classification eligibility allows for and supervisors do not have authority to approve these requests or changes. If an employee experiencing a health or medical issue requests remote work more than their classification eligibility allows, supervisors must refer the employee to the ADA process which is available on the [Human Resources website](#).

## PPS Employee Remote Work Guidelines

- From time-to-time, employees **may request to work from home on an ad hoc basis regardless of their standard remote work eligibility** to deal with personal issues that may not be managed at other times, such as letting the furnace repair person in the house. Supervisors are encouraged to use their best judgment when reviewing these requests - they should be made in advance and the employee should still be expected to participate in all required meetings.
- **Encourage vacation.** Flexible remote work allows employees to work from a location they choose - it is not intended to prevent employees from taking vacation time. Employees should be encouraged to take vacation time free of any work expectations.
- **Changes** in an employee's regular remote work schedule may be made by **mutual agreement**. Should situations arise where the employee's work has shifted and the number of days remote work may need to be **reduced**, or if for any other reason a supervisor feels a remote work schedule needs to **stop**, they **must contact their HR Employee & Labor Relations** partner to discuss the situation.

## WORKSPACE + EQUIPMENT + SYSTEMS + TOOLS

### [Remote Work Space and Technology Recommendations](#)

Please refer to [this set of recommendations](#) from OTIS to help plan for your remote work space and technology use.

### [Technology Policies](#)

Employees are expected to follow the [Acceptable Use Policy](#) (8.60.041-AD) when using district equipment and conducting district business. See also [Computer Use Policy](#) (8.60.040-P).

Equipment that is damaged, lost, or stolen must be reported immediately. Review [Risk Management's website](#) to report damaged, lost, or stolen equipment.

### [Equipment](#)

PPS provides each employee with one workstation. Employees who choose to, and are approved, have a work from home schedule are expected to provide their own home equipment. Visit the [OTIS Purchasing website](#) for details.

Equipment	Use
Computer and docking station (if needed) x1	PPS will provide one computer and docking station for laptops. Employees who are approved for remote work are required to transport their equipment to and from the office.
Monitor (one or two)	PPS will provide up to two monitors. Employees who are approved for remote work must decide if they set up their monitors at their home office or on-site. Employees may choose to transport their monitor(s) regularly or opt to use or purchase their own.

## PPS Employee Remote Work Guidelines

Mouse & Keyboard x1	PPS will provide one mouse and keyboard. Employees who are approved for regular remote work must decide if they set up their mouse and keyboard at their home office or on-site. Employees may choose to transport their mouse and keyboard regularly or opt to use or purchase their own.
Chair x1	PPS will provide one chair for employees. Chairs are for use when on-site only and may not be taken home.
Standing Desk	PPS may provide employees with a standing desk option. Standing desks are for use when on-site only and may not be taken home.
Other	Employees who need additional equipment may make a request of their supervisor. Supervisors will assess the need and determine if the additional equipment is provided for on-site use only or may be used at home.

### [BESC & Rice conference rooms](#)

All Central Office conference rooms have been outfitted with a PolyStudio Camera, TV or Projector, Air Tame.

Facilitator is responsible for bringing their laptop/chromebook for presentation.

Click [here to view an instructional video/flyer](#) on how to use the PolyStudio Camera when having meetings with staff remote and in-person. A flyer on connecting your laptop can be found in each conference room.

## FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS: Building and maintaining relationships is important for collaboration across distance.

*Adapted from "Distributed Work @Google Playbooks"*

### [Get Talking](#)

From having lunch together to saying hello in the hallways, from playing cards in the breakroom to conducting a walking meeting - many people find it easier to connect socially with their peers when working at the office.

In a flexible work environment, connecting with each other and building relationships is more important than ever. A little rapport goes a long way. Create opportunities to get to know your distributed teammates just like you would if they sat in the next cube over.

- Warm Welcome - Start your meetings with an open-ended, personal question. Try "what did you do this weekend?" (You'll get more than asking "how was your weekend").
- Consider creating a group chat that is always "on" for work-related questions or fun, social messages.
- Share a virtual meal over video conferencing.



## PPS Employee Remote Work Guidelines

- Connect with an open-ended, personal question. Try “what did you do this weekend?” (You’ll get more than asking “how was your weekend”).
- Consider creating a group chat that is always “on” for work-related questions or fun, social messages.
- Share a virtual meal over video conferencing.
- Say hi! Check in on a teammate with an encouraging message, project-relevant news article, or funny photo - just because! Pick up the phone, send an email or a Gchat to a colleague and ask about their day, weekend plans, etc.
- Theme days - as a group select a theme and wear something to inspire joy all day
- Show and tell - select a photo taken that week and describe what is special about the photo
- Optimistic closure - round robin style, individuals provide kudos for another employee (may or may not be in the same meeting)

### Appreciate Differences

Cultural differences influence how people like to be visible or receive recognition, the way people act, and how people interpret the actions of others - but we’re not always aware of how culture influences behavior, experiences, or workstyle.

- Reflect: Some behaviors required for flexible work aren’t comfortable for various cultural identities, norms, or personalities.
- Teach a teammate something new about your culture (e.g., words in a new language, holidays/cultural traditions).
- Use meetings to discuss how distributed colleagues can be heard, supported, and included.

### **Be Present**

Some engagement signals are lost when working together virtually, particularly when we mute the microphone or focus intently on our laptops. Be sure to:

- Unmute your microphone and validate contributions from others. A head nod, “mmhmm”, or “yeah, good idea” will do it!
- Ensure you’re clearly visible on the video screen by zooming in, making eye contact, and expressing your reactions noticeably.

**BEST PRACTICES: Having a plan for communication, structures, and norms is critical for virtual & hybrid teams.**

*Adapted from “Distributed Work @Google Playbooks”*

### **Reach Out**

## PPS Employee Remote Work Guidelines

It can be hard for teammates in other locations to be heard, as they often have to overcome barriers to jump in and share. You can help create the space for them to speak up.

- Ask for input from the most isolated meeting participant any time the meeting breaks into a discussion.
- If you see someone trying to enter the conversation, stop and invite their comments.

### Set Team Norms

Norms set clear expectations for how you work together with your team. But they're often assumed rather than explicitly stated, leaving opportunities for confusion.

- Discuss, establish and document communication and decision making norms with your colleagues (e.g., answering emails/pings off-hours, how often will you stay in touch, information-sharing across time zones).
- Be sure to communicate frequently and openly. When remote team colleagues can count on being able to quickly receive the information that they need to, this improves the trust among team members and can aid in the efficient transfer of key, task-relevant knowledge.

The following are standard recommended meeting norms as well as suggestions to support meetings where participants may be working on-site or from a remote location.

- End meetings 5 minutes early to allow for "passing time"
- Invite appropriate stakeholders - be mindful of everyone's time, if someone is invited in order to "inform" some individuals - think of other methods for informing them.
- Commit to being present and participating. Stay engaged and focused. Avoid reading and responding to emails or multitasking. Participants may need a bio-break, have a pet that unexpectedly jumps on screen, or need a drink of water during a meeting - that's okay, we are all human and have personal needs that need attending briefly!
- Include a Google Hangout or Zoom link for all meetings to accommodate those working remotely. If all participants are expected to attend the meeting in person, ensure this is clearly communicated well in advance.

### Match the Comms Channel to the Need

Video is best for more sensitive or detailed discussions, while a quick message is great for check-ins or clarifying simple matters. Don't default to a message when a richer format is warranted; conversely, don't force a formal video meeting when an email is enough.

### Make the Most of Meetings

Fewer opportunities to connect necessitate good meeting hygiene. Set meeting agendas in advance, kick off meetings by recapping where things left off previously, and be mindful of timing to avoid ending a meeting without getting through key agenda items.

## PPS Employee Remote Work Guidelines

### Don't Wait for a Formal Meeting if you Don't Need to

Physical distance can lead some people to avoid communicating as much as they need to. If something comes up that you'd normally ask an in-person colleague about right away, don't let physical distance stop you; message or call your colleague to keep progress moving. When remote team members can count on being able to quickly receive information they need, trust improves more quickly.

### Prioritize Your Well-being

Focus on your well-being while working from home by setting up a comfortable office space to physically separate your work and home life; setting limits on your workday so that you don't accidentally work more hours than normal; achieving your stand goal by getting up at least every hour. Mindfulness is another useful tool to increase well-being and focus, while relieving stress.

#### Communication between employees & supervisors

Employees – communicate up

- Share your accomplishments
- Ask for help when you hit a roadblock
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- Request clarity when needed
- What do you need to be successful?
- Review goals and project timelines and action items, ensure you are on track
- Ask for feedback

Supervisors – set clear expectations

- Define and communicate team norms and expectations
- Clarify Customer Service Expectations (CSEs), response times and availability
- How to communicate with you - what's the best way to reach you? Chat, call, text, email
- Verify priorities for employees
- Provide a minimum of 48 hours notice if you must request an employee be onsite during their regularly scheduled remote work day

APPENDIX A - Remote Work Agreement and Form



### Portland Public Schools - Human Resources Remote Work Agreement Form

#### Remote Work Options

This form is required for employees who are positions that are eligible for full-time, hybrid, or ad-hoc remote work. Employees and supervisors must review the remote work guidelines, complete this form and return it to Human Resources. View eligibility by position [here](#).

In addition to the being in a position eligible for full-time, hybrid, or ad-hoc remote work, to be eligible, employees must:

1. Discuss and develop a plan with your supervisor.
2. Understand and agree to the remote work requirements outlined in these guidelines and complete this agreement.
3. Once approved by your supervisor, this form must be submitted to HR for inclusion in your personnel file.

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#### Remote Working Agreements

Employees who request a remote work schedule agree to the following:

##### *Shared Customer Service Expectations*

- Every central office work space includes business hours contact information
- Respond promptly to communications
- Calendars reflect daily working location
- Calendars are open to teams/supervisors to see the title and invite list
- Office phones are forwarded or voicemails are checked daily when staff is working remotely
- Out of office message is placed on email and voicemail when appropriate and directs staff who to contact during your absence

##### *Remote Work Expectations*

- PPS provides each employee with an on-site work space and tools/equipment. Employees who choose to, and are approved, have a work-from-home schedule are responsible for your own home equipment. PPS does not supply wi-fi, furniture, monitors, ergonomic reviews, etc., for home offices.
- Delivering on service-level commitments from a remote work location means that employees must remain accessible and productively engaged during scheduled work hours.
- Comply with all PPS rules, policies, practices and instructions that would apply if you were working onsite at a PPS location.
- Follow your schedule, take required breaks and lunch, and obtain prior approval for any overtime before it's worked.
- Protect confidential information at all times, including student and employee data. **PPS files may not be maintained or stored at home offices or on personal computers or equipment.**

## PPS Employee Remote Work Guidelines

- On approved remote work days, employees who encounter power, internet, or other technical difficulties are expected to make alternate work location arrangements, come on-site to complete their work, or request time off.
- Ensure arrangements are made for regular dependent care during all work hours, understanding that remote work is not a substitute for dependent care. Remaining engaged in work activities is not consistent with simultaneously caring for dependents.
- Remain flexible to adjusting schedules when work and personal needs shift. You may be called in to your work-site on short notice for unplanned or unexpected circumstances.
- Maintain a safe and secure work environment at all times.
- Report work-related injuries to your manager and [Risk Management](#) as soon as practicable.
- Remote work is not a replacement or alternative to taking sick leave or vacation. Being fully engaged in work activities during your work hours is the consistent expectation of the remote work option. If you are too ill to work from home, please use your sick time for rest, recovery, and getting medical care. Vacation time is an important opportunity to rest and recharge, and you are encouraged to take your vacation time.

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### Employee Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

### Remote Work Schedule & Plan

Please outline your planned initial schedule (N/A for ad-hoc) as agreed upon by you and your supervisor. Upon mutual agreement, the schedule may change and is not required to be re-submitted to HR.

Day	Hours	Location
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		

### Acknowledgement

I have reviewed the remote working agreements, service level commitments, and my remote work schedule or ad-hoc agreement with my supervisor and agree to follow them. I acknowledge that the remote working program or my permission to participate in it may be changed by the District in the future.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

PRINT AND SUBMIT COMPLETED FORMS TO HUMAN RESOURCES VIA PONY OR UPLOAD A PDF COPY TO THIS [GOOGLE FORM](#)

## APPENDIX B - Position Eligibility List

(view the position eligibility list online at [pps.net/Page/17889](https://pps.net/Page/17889))

## APPENDIX C - Templates

[\*Contact Information Signage for Work Spaces\*](#)

[\*Out of Office Message Guidance & Templates\*](#)



## APPENDIX D - Supplemental Supervisor Information

It is important to remember, as we continue to navigate the evolving COVID-19 pandemic/endemic, that employees have had varying experiences over the last few years. Many employees have experienced, and may continue to experience, heightened anxiety, uncertainty, and increased stress during this time.

As leaders, it is our responsibility to have empathy and model a culture that is open to positive, collaborative and transformational change where employees feel supported and thrive.

[Trauma Informed Oregon](#) has developed a number of resources for leaders as they support their employees in returning to the workplace. A few we would like to call your attention to are:

- [Considerations for a Trauma Informed Response for Work Settings](#)
- [The Wellness Society Coronavirus Anxiety Workbook](#) (in multiple languages)
- [A Trauma Informed Workforce: An introduction to workforce wellness](#)
- [Hosting a Meeting Using Principles of Trauma Informed Care](#)
- [Hosting a Virtual Meeting Using Trauma Informed Principles](#)

Employees have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which provides services to help people privately resolve problems that may interfere with work, family, and life. Services include 24-hour crisis help, confidential counseling (up to 5 free sessions per situation, per year), and childcare and eldercare referrals. Visit the [EAP website](#) for additional information.

Additional mental health & safety resources are available. If you are worried about your mental health or someone else's, please know we care about you. A wide variety of resources are available:

- [Call to Safety](#): If you are an adult and worried about your safety at home, 888-235-5333. Interpretation line available.
  - **Projecto Unica**: Spanish version of Call to Safety, 503-232-4448
- [DHS Hotline](#) (Oregon Department of Human Services) If you are worried about the safety of a child, 855-503-7233. Interpretation services available.
- [Multnomah County Crisis Services](#): Call Center/Crisis Line, 503-988-4888 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week). Interpretation services available.
- [Kaiser Crisis Line](#): Available if you have Kaiser insurance, 503-331-6425
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#): English, 800-273-8255; Spanish, 800-628-9454 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week). Interpretation services available.
- [Oregon Youthline](#): For youth to connect with other youth, text "Teen2Teen" to 839863 to instantly text with another person. Interpretation services available.
- [Trevor Project](#): Supporting LGBTQIA+ youth. Text "START" to 678678 or call TrevorLifeLine, 1-866-488-7386
- [Trans Lifeline](#): Supporting trans community members, call 877-565-8860