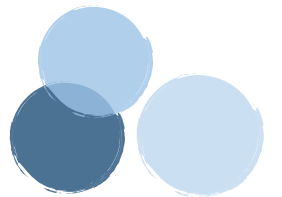# Working from Home:

Implementing New Policies in a Post-Pandemic Workplace

What did we learn from the pandemic?

- More people can work from home more often than we previously thought
- Having some work remotely and some work in-person takes some getting used to
- Some **jobs** are just not suited for telework
- Some **employees** are just not suited for telework
- It's hard to deliver good, consistent levels of service from home
- Employees really liked the flexibility of working from home
- Employees who couldn't work from home felt it was unfair
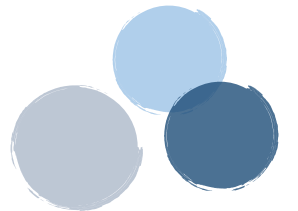
To telecommute, or not to telecommute…

- Rule #1: BE CONSISTENT

- Rule #2: HAVE A POLICY IN PLACE

- Rule #3: See Rules 1 and 2…

- There are many examples of good telecommuting policies
   BUT…

- Your policy is only as good as the consistency with which it is applied
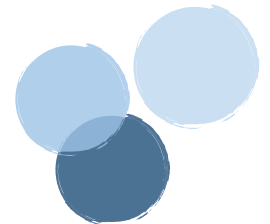
What should a telecommuting policy include?

- Purpose and/or scope of the policy
  - Why telecommuting may be permitted
    - "In response to the COVID-19 pandemic…"
    - "In an effort to protect the health and safety of our employees…"
    - "In order to provide a viable, flexible work option for employees…"
  - Definition of telecommuting
    - "Telecommuting allows employees to work at home or in another remote location…"
    - "Telecommuting can be an informal arrangement, such as working from home occasionally or on the road during business travel, or it can be a more formal arrangement with a set schedule working away from the office on a regular basis…"
    - "Telecommuting is not an entitlement, nor is it a city-wide benefit. Telecommuting does not change the terms and conditions of employment with the City, as outlined in the personnel policy manual…"

What should a telecommuting policy include?

- Eligibility Requirements
  - Job Responsibilities
    - Not every job is suitable to perform remotely
    - Occasionally vs. every day?
  - Employee Suitability
    - Not every employee is suited to work remotely
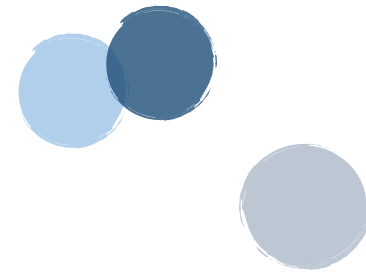   - Performance issues? Work habits?
- Who decides?

What should a telecommuting policy include?

- Expectations for availability / time spent working
- Overtime
- Working environment / Workspace requirements
- Child care
- Equipment / supplies
- Network / information security
- Temporary or permanent? Only in emergency situations?
- Length and/or frequency of telecommuting assignment
- On-the-job injuries and other liability concerns
- Other considerations?
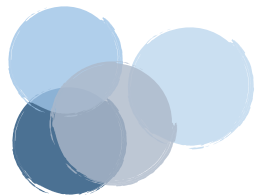
Strategic Flexibility*

- What if we had the luxury to be strategic about this?
  - Think 5 – 10 years from now…
- Will remote work and remote delivery of services be an advantage for your organization and your customers?
  - Attract & retain employees
  - More options for customers to receive service /community to engage
  - More inclusive
- Will your culture support it?
  - Prepare and train leaders to manage and engage a remote workforce more effectively
  - Focus on outcomes & results, empowerment & trust
- What tools can you invest in now to make remote work more efficient in the future?
  - Technology / Online forms and services / Engagement
- What problems might you solve?

*Jessica DeGroot, founder and president of the ThirdPath Institute

Questions??