SUBJECT TELECOMMUTING AND WORK AT HOME PROGRAM	POLICY NUMBER 5.17	A SAFER FLORIDA HIGHWAY SAFETY AND MOTOR VEHICLES
POLICY MAINTENANCE ADMINISTRATOR: Chief, Bureau of Personnel Services		
PURPOSE/SCOPE: To establish department policy and procedures for the implementation and monitoring of a telecommuting and work at home program.		

I. AUTHORITY

Section 110.171, Florida Statutes, Telecommuting Program

II. DEFINITIONS

A. DHSMV Telecommuting Coordinator– The Chief of Personnel Services or designee, Division of Administrative Services.

B. Eligible Member– A Career Service or Selected Exempt Service member whose performance record and work history are exemplary, and whose job duties are appropriate for telecommuting.

C. Telecommuting– A mutually agreed to work arrangement where eligible members are authorized to perform their normal job duties and responsibilities through the use of computers or telecommunications at home or another place apart from the member's usual place of work.

D. Telecommuting Agreement– The agreement between the eligible member approved for telecommuting and their appropriate division management that specifies terms and conditions of the member's participating in telecommuting.

E. Telecommuting Work Plan– A document included as part of the Telecommuting Agreement that includes at a minimum an established work schedule, a description of the specific job duties to be performed, how performance will be monitored and evaluated, and how communication will occur between the eligible member and their supervisor(s).

F. Work at Home– A work arrangement of temporary and short duration that allows eligible members to temporarily perform work at home due to a medical condition or when they are required to serve as a caregiver.

III. POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to allow eligible members to participate in a telecommuting program provided that the member meets eligibility requirements for such participation and the member's normal job duties can be performed at home or another place apart from the member's usual place of work. Members approved for these assignments must meet all established performance and conduct standards while telecommuting or working at home. These assignments must be supportive of department needs and meet specifically identified needs of the appropriate division. Divisions may develop further guidelines for telecommuting assignments within their division based on the requirements of this policy.

IV. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

There are two situations in which a member may be eligible to perform either some or all of their job duties at their home or another place apart from their usual place of work: (1) telecommuting assignment or (2) temporary work at home. The requirements for each are provided below along with member eligibility requirements:

A. Telecommuting Eligibility Requirements
   1. The member's normal job duties and responsibilities must be capable of being performed at their home using a computer or other telecommunications.
   2. Routine, scheduled time in the office occurs each week. Only on rare occasions, and with approval of the division director, would such time in the office be scheduled less than weekly.

B. Work at Home Eligibility Requirements
   1. Work at home is a short-term arrangement of two months or less for situations where the member is able to work but temporarily unable to perform their job duties in the office due to a temporary medical condition or when they are required to serve temporarily as a caregiver.
   2. In caregiver situations, the type of care needed will be assessed along with the ability of the member to separate their assigned job duties from other daily domestic responsibilities.
   3. The supervisor determines specific job duties that can be effectively performed at home by the member.
   4. Work at home schedules must be for a minimum of 4 hours per day.
   5. Members must provide appropriate medical certification to support a work-at-home assignment for themselves or the person for whom they are serving as caregiver.

C. General Eligibility Requirements– In determining a member's eligibility for either a telecommuting assignment or a work at home assignment, the following criteria will be considered:
   1. Performance– The member's performance must be at a consistently high level.
   2. Attendance– The member's attendance record must reflect regular and consistent attendance at work with no counseling or discipline for attendance-related offenses.
   3. Conduct– Members approved for either telecommuting or work at home assignments will have:
      (a) demonstrated the ability to work productively independent of supervision in their work;
      (b) trustworthiness;
      (c) a record of dependability; and
      (d) no disciplinary infractions within the previous 3 years.

V. PROCEDURES

A. Application and Approval Procedures
   1. Telecommuting
      (a) Members will complete the Telecommuting Application and submit it to their supervisor.
      (b) Supervisors will review the application and, in conjunction with their bureau chief and other appropriate division manager, assess the member's eligibility for the telecommuting assignment based on the criteria described in the previous section.
      (c) Division directors will approve or disapprove the member's request in writing. Applications must clearly indicate how the telecommuting assignment benefits the Department.
      (d) If the division director approves the request, division management will prepare a Telecommuting Agreement with the member and arrange for installation of any necessary equipment.
      (e) Telecommuting assignments will be subject to annual review and approval.
   2. Work at Home
      (a) Members will submit a completed Request to Work at Home form to their immediate supervisor describing the reasons for their request to perform specified job duties at home and the duration of the request.
      (b) The request will be accompanied by appropriate medical certification indicating that the member is able to work but is temporarily unable to perform their job duties at their office location due to a temporary medical condition or that of the person they are serving as caregiver.
      (c) Supervisors will review the member's request and, in conjunction with their bureau chief or other appropriate division management, make an initial assessment of the member's eligibility for the assignment and whether the job duties can be performed effectively at home by the member.

(d) Division directors may approve a member's request to work at home for a short duration. Any requests beyond 2 months require the approval of the Executive Director or designee.
(e) A copy of the approved request form will be provided to the Bureau of Personnel Services, Office of Employee Relations, and a copy will be attached to the monthly timesheets during which the work at home is performed.

B. Responsibilities
1. Supervisor responsibilities include:
(a) Ensuring that a member's participation in telecommuting or work at home complies with the requirements of this policy at all times.
(b) Ensuring that a member's participation will not adversely affect eligibility for advancement or other employment rights or benefits.
(c) Establishing reasonable conditions to ensure the appropriate use, installation, and maintenance of equipment or items for official purposes only.
(d) Establishing a work plan with the member that describes job duties to be performed, the level of performance expected, and how performance will be monitored and evaluated.
(e) Maintaining ongoing, consistent contact and communication with the member.
(f) Signing of the Telecommuting Agreement.
2. Member responsibilities include:
(a) Meeting all performance standards and work requirements, and following established policies and procedures.
(b) Protecting department-owned equipment, software and documents against damage and unauthorized use.
(c) Refraining from conducting face-to-face state business at the home site.
(d) Signing an agreement that provides verification that the home office provides workspace that is safe and free from fire hazards. The agreement will also hold the state harmless against any and all claims, excluding Workers' Compensation claims, resulting from the member working in the home office.
(e) Complying with all state laws and rules.

C. Attendance, Leave, Pay, Travel and Workers' Compensation
1. All pay and leave will be based on the member's official work location and not the telecommuting or home office location. The member's time and attendance will be recorded as if performing duties at the official work location.
2. Travel reimbursements will be based on the member's official work location.
3. Members must obtain supervisory approval before taking leave in accordance with established office procedures. The member will follow established approval procedures for leaves and overtime.
4. The member is covered by Workers' Compensation under Chapter 440, F.S., when performing official duties at their home location while in telecommuting or work at home status.

D. Work Assignments and Evaluation
   1. Supervisors will communicate at least on a weekly basis with members on telecommuting assignments regarding work performance and assignments.
   2. Evaluation of the member's work will be based on established standards. Performance must continue to meet standards during telecommuting and work at home assignments for the member to remain in that status.

E. Use of Equipment and Liability
   1. To effectively perform assigned job duties, a member may use their personal equipment during the telecommuting assignment with the approval of the supervisor. However, the Department will not be liable for maintenance or any damages to the member's personal equipment or property resulting from participation in the telecommuting or work at home program.
   2. If department-owned equipment is used, it will be serviced and maintained by the Department. Members will be liable for any damage caused by their failure to properly use or care for state equipment.
   3. The Department will be responsible for installation, software, and maintenance of equipment and supplies owned or leased by the Department. At the conclusion of telecommuting, all equipment and software will be returned to the Department.
   4. The Department will not be responsible for home maintenance, utility expenses, or other incidental costs associated with telecommuting and the use of the member's residence as a home office.

F. Duration
   Member participation in a telecommuting assignment is voluntary and the member may choose to cease participation at any time after discussion with appropriate division management. Management has the right to remove the member from the program at any time if participation fails to benefit department needs.