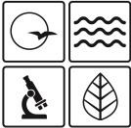
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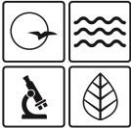
## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Department of Natural Resources (the Department) is committed to providing excellent service to the citizens of the State of Missouri. In many instances, a distributed-teams model allows the Department to improve its performance, retain and recruit the most talented team members, and capitalize on efficiencies—without the traditional constraints of geographic boundaries or availability of state facilities. The Department supports the use of distributed-teams arrangements in situations where the arrangement will maintain or improve our customer service, as detailed in this policy.

Alternative work arrangements may be approved or required based on a business need, a workplace flexibility arrangement, as an accommodation, or during an emergency such as a weather-related disaster or pandemic. Alternative work arrangements are viable options where job duties, team dynamics, and individual circumstances are suited to such an arrangement. Not all positions in the Department will be eligible or suitable for such arrangements. In considering eligibility for and suitability of alternative work arrangements, the Department will ensure adequate on-site staffing at state facilities to maintain public access and operations. All team members must successfully fulfill their responsibilities, regardless of work location.

This policy clarifies the Department’s and team members’ responsibilities relating to distributed teams. The State of Missouri, Office of Administration maintains a [Distributed Teams Playbook](#) the Department utilizes as a framework for our distributed teams. If this policy and the Playbook conflict, this policy controls.

This policy is not intended to capture requests for reasonable accommodation pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), requests for Temporary Modified Duty due to a temporary medical condition, or family and medical leave in accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and is considered separate from such requests. Please refer to the Department’s [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) Policy](#) (1.05), [Temporary Modified Duty Policy](#) (5.10), or [Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\) Policy](#) (5.03) for those procedures and forms.

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**Definitions**

*Alternative work arrangement:* A work arrangement in which a team member routinely spends time working at an alternative work site.

*Alternative work site:* A work location other than a regular work site. The most common alternative work site is a team member’s home. Assigned field-work locations (places where team members are needed to complete field work, such as inspections, site visits, and investigations) and work-related travel locations are not alternative work sites.

*Distributed team:* A team made up of team members who work from different physical locations. Distributed teams can include team members working from multiple state facilities, alternative work sites, or both.

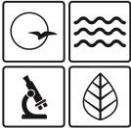
*Official domicile:* The actual working or headquarters location of an employee or official to be determined by the head of the department or their authorized representative, as best serves the interest of the state, and not for the convenience or benefit of the employee.

*Official personnel file:* The file maintained by the Human Resources Program that is the official record concerning employment events or actions for an employee of the Department.

*Onboard:* The method in which a new team member is integrated into the Department, receives technical training, and is acclimated to the Department’s work culture.

*Regular work site:* A state-operated facility or similar location, such as the facility of a partnering federal agency, assigned by the Department as the default work location for a position in the absence of an alternative work arrangement. State facilities include locations such as state offices, state laboratories, state parks, and state historic sites.

*Work rhythm:* The general, daily, weekly, and monthly expectations of a team member, including but not limited to, reporting to the designated work site(s), work assignments and completion, and frequency of communication.

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**Approvals**

Except where specifically reserved to a team member’s supervisor, approvals pursuant to this policy shall be made by the supervising division director or their designee. The following situations require approval from the Department Director or the supervising Deputy Department Director:

- Division directors and members of the Director’s Office who are requesting approvals for themselves; and
- Proposals for alternative work sites located in another state and more than 50 miles away from the Missouri border.

Designated approvers may consult with the supervisor or the team member.

**OBTAINING, MODIFYING, OR TERMINATING AN ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENT**

Categories and examples of eligible positions are contained in the Distributed Teams Playbook on the Office of Administration’s [Show Me Distributed Teams](#) website. In general, full-time and part-time employees in eligible positions who have demonstrated successful work or who have been hired into vacancies advertised as eligible for alternative work arrangements may apply for alternative work arrangements consistent with this policy. A team member, supervisor, or manager also may propose an alternative work arrangement for a team member.

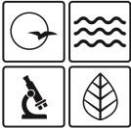
When posting for a vacancy, the job opportunity announcement should specify, if known, whether the position is eligible for an alternative work arrangement

**Considerations for Alternative Work Arrangements**

There are many considerations for alternative work arrangements, and each team member and team have unique circumstances that must be taken into account.

Basic considerations include, but are not limited to:

- Whether the arrangement would maintain or improve performance and customer service.

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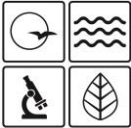
- Whether the team member is capable of, and can demonstrate success working independently with self-motivation to produce results. In general, team members marked “at risk” during quarterly performance evaluations are not eligible for alternative work arrangements. New team members must complete at least two ENGAGE conversations with their supervisor before they may be eligible for an alternative work arrangement. Successful work is determined based on a team member’s ENGAGE sessions and Distributed Teams Assessment Tool, as well as the applicable performance and accountability measures identified in the Department’s dashboards.
- Whether the level of expected distraction would impair the concentration required for the job.

Team members utilizing alternative work arrangements must not provide dependent or elder care during work time. In general, a team member should not be the primary caregiver of a child younger than 12 years old during scheduled work hours.

- The need for in-person interaction with customers or team members, and how to maximize the impact of virtual interactions.

A certain amount of in-person collaboration between team members, customers, and other stakeholders is beneficial in most situations. Accordingly, monthly Engage meetings and professional development conversations must be held in-person and external meetings should be held in-person or with hybrid attendance if stakeholders present reasonable requests for those arrangements. Supervisors and managers will determine at what frequency other meetings—both internal and external—should occur in-person based on what works best for the customer, the Department, the team, and the teammate to maintain or improve citizen service. The Department will ensure adequate on-site coverage to maintain public access and operations. Further, team members that supervise others must attend Department or division leadership and management meetings in-person, as determined by the Department Director.

- Dedicated space available for an appropriate workspace at an alternative work location, and whether the team member handles confidential or sensitive information that would make a private, secure space necessary.
- Whether the alternative work location is in reasonably safe and secure condition.

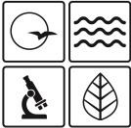
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- The need for team members to access files maintained by the program or others, and how that access will be provided securely.
- Management of typical work communications, such as the requirement for team members to be available by phone, email, or other identified methods during their specified work hours, and the manner in which messages and mail will be communicated to the team member with an alternative work arrangement.
- Whether there is adequate funding, tools, equipment, and supplies available to do the job well from an alternative work site.
- The need for on-site workspace for a team member with an alternative work arrangement.
- Commuting distance to a state facility, and whether that distance will impact the team member’s coordination with their team.

If the alternative work location is more than 50 miles from Missouri’s borders, the proposed arrangement may be considered on a time-limited basis. The Department reserves the right to require team members with these arrangements to report to the regular work site in Missouri, with reasonable notice.

Considerations for approving such arrangement should include:

- The business needs of the team or work unit, the economic impact to the state of Missouri, the other state’s employment laws, and income tax withholding or reporting requirements that may be imposed in the future.
- If the request is made by an existing team member:
  - Whether they have been successful in their current position; and
  - Whether they have a reasonable option to remain at a work site in Missouri or within 50 miles of Missouri’s borders, or whether their personal circumstances reasonably require them to relocate (e.g., team member’s partner is being transferred to another state for work).
- Whether an out-of-state applicant is exceptionally more qualified for a position than any in-state applicants.

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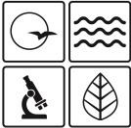
- Any other reason, not prohibited by law, believed to be relevant to the decision by the Department Director at the time the decision is made.

Out-of-country alternative work arrangements are prohibited.

### **Application and Approval Process**

An eligible team member pursuing an alternative work arrangement must obtain an Alternative Work Agreement by following these steps:

1. Review this policy and sign the acknowledgement.
2. Review the Department’s [Workplace Violence Prevention Policy](#) (3.08), [Employee Health and Safety Policy](#) (3.09), [Measures to Prevent Exposure to Pathogens](#) (3.09-01), and [Workers’ Compensation Policy and Procedures](#) (5.09).
3. Review, complete, and sign the [Team Member Self-Certification Safety Acknowledgement form \(Appendix B\)](#). Discuss the Safety form with your supervisor and reasonably resolve any hazards identified.
4. Complete the team-member portions of the [Department’s Alternative Work Agreement form \(Appendix A\)](#). Discuss the Alternative Work Arrangement form with your supervisor. Any requirements or provisions that arise during the discussion of unique circumstances, and any other considerations, must be documented on the form. The team member and supervisor must agree on the section titled AGREED UPON CHECK-IN AND COMMUNICATION METHOD WITH SUPERVISOR. (The supervisor should work with the team member to document the appropriate expectations for this section even if the supervisor ultimately does not recommend the proposed alternative-work arrangement.)
5. Sign the Alternative Work Agreement form and submit it to your supervisor for completion of the supervisor portions and routing to the designated approver for approval, denial, or return for additional information.

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6. If approved, all team members with an alternative work arrangement must complete the below-mentioned **Specific Training for Alternative Work Arrangements**.

Where a proposed alternative work arrangement is approved, the designated approver will return a copy of the executed form to the supervisor, team member, and the Human Resources Program. The Human Resources Program will maintain a copy of the agreement in the team member’s official personnel file.

### **Onboarding and Training**


**General Onboarding:** Supervisors and managers must take into consideration each team member’s work arrangement when developing effective plans for onboarding team members who are new to the Department or their team. In most instances, onboarding for new team members will involve an in-person component to co-locate new team members with teammates who can help develop relationships and transfer institutional knowledge. This may require a team member with an alternative work arrangement to temporarily increase their time working at the regular work site, providing personal contact and support to assist the new team member.

All new team members must start their new role at their regular worksite. Additionally, supervisors that oversee the new team member must remain on site to facilitate the new team member’s onboarding experience. For a new team member that is also a supervisor, their direct reports must be on site to facilitate the new team member’s onboarding experience.

Please contact the Human Resources Program for assistance with onboarding.

**Specific Training for Alternative Work Arrangements:** Upon institution of an alternative work agreement, the team member and their supervisor must complete training on working effectively in distributed teams. Within 14 days, the team member and supervisor must develop a working knowledge of and utilize the [technical tools](#) provided by the Department to facilitate distributed teams and must complete the following trainings:



		
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**Training for managers/leaders who lead team members in an alternative work location**

- Completion of two specific MO Learning courses:
  - A. [Leading at a Distance](#)
  - B. [Managing Virtual Teams](#)
- Completion of a department specific training on department’s distributed team policy and process

**Training for team members who work in an alternative work location**

- Completion of two specific MO Learning courses:
  - A. [Remote Work Foundations](#)
  - B. [Building Relationships While Working from Home](#)
- Completion of a department specific training on department’s distributed team policy and process

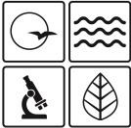
Within 30 days, the team member and supervisor must complete their respective components of the [professional-development learning path](#) for distributed teams. The learning path addresses multiple topics; certain topics have separate components for team leaders (i.e., supervisors) and team members. If you are a team member with an alternative work agreement who also supervises a team member with an alternative work agreement, you must complete all of the components.

**Modification or Termination of Alternative Work Arrangements**

Other than changes in work schedule, which may be approved by the supervisor, modification or termination of an alternative work arrangement must be approved in advance by the designated approver.

The Department may modify or terminate an alternative work arrangement at any time. In most situations the Department will notify the team member in advance, but there may be certain situations such as safety or performance concerns that warrant little or no notice to the team member.

Team members may request to modify or terminate an alternative work arrangement at any time. The Department may not be able to accommodate a termination request immediately if appropriate space at a regular work site is not available at the time of the request.

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### **Exceptions to the Requirement for Alternative Work Agreements**

A team member may occasionally, with a supervisor’s approval, work for a limited time from an alternative work site without first obtaining an alternative work agreement.

Common acceptable situations include:

- Potential severe weather;
- Virtual training; and
- Utilizing leave for a portion of the workday and working at an alternative work site for the remainder of the workday.

This occasional alternative arrangement must be infrequent and consistent with the spirit of this policy.

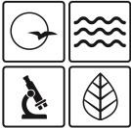
## **ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS: RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Team Member’s Responsibilities**

The Department’s general expectations—including those of availability, dependability, communication, and performance—apply to all team members regardless of whether they work on a traditional team in a traditional setting, on a distributed team, or at an alternative work site. For those who work on distributed teams or at an alternative work site, certain aspects of communication are even more important to ensure customers and the team know when each team member is available, and they are able to contact each team member easily.

**Work Schedules:** Team members who are approved for alternative work arrangements must be available at their agreed-upon, regularly-scheduled work times. All team members are required to be in-office at least 1 day a week. Work-schedule options for team members participating in alternative work arrangements are the same as those for team members working at the regular work site, including compressed or flexible schedules, as approved by the team member’s supervisor. Work schedules may be changed with supervisor approval in accordance with established procedures.

Team members with alternative work arrangements are expected to follow the established work rhythm for their team, based on the specific needs of the section and work. Team members working from an alternate work site must manage personal and dependent-care responsibilities as necessary to keep up their work schedule. A team

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member’s schedule may be modified in consideration of personal or dependent responsibilities. This may include stop/start time, extended breaks, and other adjustments. A team member should not begin a modified schedule without obtaining supervisor approval in advance.

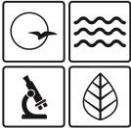
**Communication:** Team members with alternative work arrangements are responsible for communicating as needed with their supervisors to receive assignments and complete work in accordance with the supervisor’s instructions. Team members must maintain communication with the supervisor while working at an alternative work site, and work with the supervisor to overcome problems or obstacles as they occur so the work of the Department is accomplished in an effective and timely manner.

Team members with alternative work arrangements must minimize disruption in the efficiency of their work, and be available to customers, co-workers, and supervisors during their scheduled hours. Team members must be available by telephone each work day, check voicemails regularly, and respond to missed calls within 24 hours. Emails should be acknowledged within 24 hours. Team members are expected to log in and utilize Jabber each work day, and to keep their status updated in that system. Team members are also expected to keep their Outlook calendars up-to-date and shared with applicable team members, OR teams should utilize a shared calendar for awareness regarding in/out of office times.

Team members also are responsible for effectively communicating when they are not available or away from their regular work site(s), such as keeping leave-tracking systems updated, forwarding phones when away from the office, and utilizing out-of-office auto-replies and voicemail greeting messages, as appropriate.

**Meeting Etiquette:** Team members who have access to a web camera are expected to utilize the video option during virtual meetings as often as practicable, and actively participate verbally or through the chat function to promote a cohesive team. All team members are expected to be familiar with the functions of the virtual meeting platform and to follow appropriate meeting etiquette, such as limiting background noise and remaining on mute when not speaking.

During virtual or in-person meetings, team members should participate fully and refrain from any multi-tasking that would detract from their ability to understand or contribute to the meeting. Team members who are meeting in person should implement practices to afford equal participation to team members who are attending the meeting virtually.

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Team members may only host virtual meetings via a platform approved by the Office of Administration, Information Technology Services Division (ITSD).

**Overtime/Compensatory Time:** Team members working at alternative work sites are subject to the same maximum workday limits as they would be if they were performing work at the regular work site. Team members must seek approval from their supervisor prior to working overtime or compensatory time at their alternative work location.

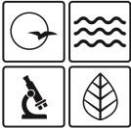
**Adherence to Policy:** Team members with alternative work arrangements must follow all Department policies, including but not limited to the [Conduct and Ethics Policy](#) (1.01), [Hours of Operation and Work Schedules Policy](#) (3.01), [Leave with Pay Policy](#) (5.01), the [Use of State Vehicles Policy](#) (6.01), [State Vehicle Procedures](#) (6.01-01), and other related policies.

**Workplace Safety:** Team members with alternative work arrangements must maintain their workspace in a safe and secure condition, and must allow the Department to inspect that work location upon advanced notice, for the purpose of determining whether safe working conditions exist.

The [Team Member Self-Certification Safety Acknowledgement \(Appendix B\)](#) identifies important workplace safety considerations and potential hazards in a work location. Team members must notify their supervisors of any changes to potential hazards at the alternative work location and update their Team Member Self-Certification Safety Acknowledgement accordingly.

If a team member working at an alternative work site sustains a work-related injury, worker’s compensation laws and rules apply the same as for an injury that occurs at a regular work site. Team members are responsible for following the reporting procedures for such an injury and completing all required forms. If a worker’s compensation claim is filed for an incident occurring at an alternative work location, including a team member’s residence, the team member shall, if requested, make the site of the incident available for inspection or investigation by the State or its authorized representative.

**Tax Requirements:** Team members with alternative work sites outside of Missouri are responsible for determining and complying with all state and local income tax requirements regarding their specific situation and work location; the Department recommends such team members consult their tax advisor. All team members must inform Human Resources of their required Missouri and in-state local tax withholding requirements.

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**Supervisor’s Responsibilities**

**Monitoring Performance:** The supervisor must provide clear job expectations and performance measures; establish the team and team member’s work rhythm; conduct monthly ENGAGE meetings, quarterly evaluations, and annual Reflect meetings; regularly communicate with the team member; and document work performance.

Supervisors must periodically review the alternative work arrangement with the team member to evaluate the effectiveness of the arrangement. At a minimum, this review should take place at the team member’s annual Reflect meeting. The team member’s supervisor and manager are responsible for monitoring compliance with the provisions of all work arrangements.

**Meeting Etiquette:** Supervisors must implement practices to afford equal participation to team members who are attending the meeting virtually and in-person.

**State-owned Equipment:** Supervisors must maintain a log of all state-owned equipment and other state-owned items that are taken to an alternative work location by a team member, and ensure that these items are returned, as appropriate.

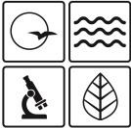
**ADDITIONAL ISSUES AFFECTING ALTERNATIVE WORK ARRANGEMENTS**

**Liability**

The Department assumes no liability related to alternative work arrangements beyond what is imposed by law. The Department assumes no liability for a team member’s personal property.

**Domicile**

The official domicile of a team member with an alternative work arrangement will be determined on a case-by-case basis and approved by the designated approver, who will follow the provisions of [1 CSR 10-11.010 State of Missouri Travel Regulations](#). While such decisions will take into consideration the needs and best interest of both the Department and the team member, the final decision is within the Department’s sole discretion. No out-of-state work location may be designated as a team member’s official domicile.

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### **Supplies and Equipment**

**Department Obligations:** The Department will provide appropriate, easy-to-use equipment to team members with alternative work arrangements, as outlined in the [Distributed Teams Playbook](#). The Department will strive to make technical support easily accessible to team members with alternative work arrangements. These team members should learn how to solve simple equipment issues to avoid common work disruptions.

Equipment owned by the state may be replaced or repaired as would occur in a typical on-site work arrangement. See the Department’s [Conduct and Ethics Policy](#) (1.01) and individual Alternative Work Agreement Form regarding care of agency-issued equipment.

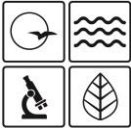
The Department will provide office supplies (e.g., pens, paper, etc.) to team members with alternative work arrangements.

The Department is not responsible for operating costs, maintenance, or other related costs (e.g. utilities, internet service) associated with an alternative work location, unless that location is otherwise owned or leased by the Department.

**Team Member Obligations:** Team members are solely responsible for their personal equipment and property. The Department is not liable for damages to a team member’s personal or real property during the course of the performance of official duties or while using Department equipment at an alternative work site.

Team members should arrange to pick up office supplies (e.g., pens, paper, etc.) when working from a regular work site. If supplies are needed before the team member will be at a regular work site, the team member may purchase the items locally, with prior supervisory approval, and request reimbursement on their expense report, provided the cost is comparable to the cost of such supplies on a state contract. If the local purchase is in excess of the cost of supplies that can be obtained via state contract, the team member may be responsible for the difference in cost. Receipts for such purchases must be attached to the team member’s expense report.

Team members with alternative work arrangements are responsible for providing their own home-office equipment (e.g., chair, desk, internet connection, phone service, etc.). Internet connection speed and reliability must be sufficient to support such work arrangements. (Recommendations for such connectivity are provided within the State of

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Missouri’s Distributed Teams Playbook.) A team member should work with their supervisor and the Human Resources Program to determine responsibility for providing any special equipment that may be needed due to medical reasons.

In the event of technical interruptions that do not allow the team member to perform their duties, the team member must notify their supervisor or designee to receive guidance on how to proceed. If the team member is unable to work at the alternative work site due to technical interruptions, the team member should contact their supervisor; in such instances, the team member may request appropriate leave or identify an appropriate alternative work site such as space at a regular work site, if practicable. Contact shall be made in a timely manner, typically within thirty minutes of such an inability, absent extenuating circumstances.

Team members with alternative work arrangements are subject to the same inventory requirements as team members who work at a regular work site.

In the event of separation from employment, team members with alternative work arrangements must return State-owned equipment within seven business days of separation.

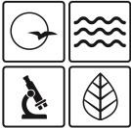
**Reimbursement of Travel and Expenses**

Team members with alternative work arrangements are subject to the statewide and Department-specific policies that set forth eligibility for reimbursement of work-related travel expenses. See the Department’s [Travel Policy](#) (6.04) for more information.

**Proprietary and Sensitive Information**

Team members are required to strictly adhere to State and Department policies addressing document retention and public records. Team members are prohibited from maintaining State or Department information (including duplicates) on personal computing equipment or using a private email account to conduct state business.

Team members shall maintain the confidentiality of sensitive documents, records, or other materials no matter their location. Team members must comply with all applicable legal and Department requirements regarding proper dissemination of information.

 <b>Missouri Department of Natural Resources Administrative Policies and Procedures</b>		
<b>Chapter 3 Work Environment</b>		
<b>Policy: Distributed Teams Policy</b>	<b>Effective date</b> <b>October 1, 2021</b>	<b>Revised</b>
<b>Number: 3.02</b>		

## REFERENCES

State of Missouri [Distributed Teams Playbook](#)

State of Missouri [Show Me Distributed Teams](#) website

State of Missouri [Workers' Compensation Law Chapter 287](#)

[1 CSR 10-11.010 State of Missouri Travel Regulations](#)

[Department Administrative Policies and Procedures](#)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have read and understand the Distributed Teams Policy. I intend to propose an Alternative Work Agreement and agree to abide by this policy.

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Signature of Team Member