PURPOSE
The following guidelines have been developed to provide management direction and guidance to Northland Community and Technical College administrators, supervisors and employees in the use of telecommuting.

TELECOMMUTING
• Telecommuting is a management tool which allows employees to regularly work at home or at an alternate site instead of traveling to a work location.
• The ultimate goal of telecommuting is to enhance the delivery of services.
• Telecommuting is a long-term or short-term work arrangement based on essential services and customer needs.
• The use of telecommuting provides flexibility to better meet customer needs and business goals.
• Telecommuting work stations are equipped with information technology appropriate to the tasks being performed and the communications network required to accomplish those tasks.

CONDITIONS OF TELECOMMUTING
• Telecommuting is a privilege, not an entitlement.
• Telecommuting is voluntary and may be terminated at any time by either Northland Community and Technical College or the employee with or without cause.
• All state laws and Northland Community and Technical College policies are to be complied with by the telecommuter. Failure to comply may result in the loss of telecommuting privileges and/or disciplinary action.
• Duties, obligations, responsibilities and conditions of employment with Northland Community and Technical College remain unchanged. Eligibility for salary, retirement benefits, state sponsored insurance coverage remain unchanged.
• Provisions of collective bargaining agreements and unrepresented employment plans remain in effect.
• Telecommuting is not to substitute for dependent care or elder care. Telecommutes with pre-school children shall make arrangements for appropriate childcare during work hours.
• Telecommuting must not result in additional work for other staff.
• Telecommuters may not receive any advantage or disadvantage for purposes of position upgrade and/or promotion as a result of telecommuting.
• Telecommuters must be available by telephone during agreed upon work hours. This may require a second phone line if computer equipment is on-line during a major portion of the work day.
• Telecommuters and their supervisors will participate in studies to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy and attend a training session prior to implementing a telecommuting work schedule.
SELECTION CRITERIA
Supervisors will assess each request on a case-by-case basis. Factors to consider include, but are not limited to the following:

a) Needs of the work unit
b) Employee’s personal situation
c) Need for adequate supervision of employee
d) Employee’s current and past job performance
e) Effects on customer service
f) Positive/negative effects on the work unit or division
g) Availability of equipment and appropriate work space at home
h) Ability to measure the work performed
i) Level of work skills, i.e., time management, organizational skills, self-motivation, and ability to work independently

Seniority will not be a factor in approving or denying employee requests to telecommute.

PROCEDURES
1. The employee will complete a Telecommuting Request Form which will be reviewed by the supervisor.
2. The supervisor will recommend approval or denial to the President.
3. Approval or denial of the request will be communicated in writing to the employee.

WORK SCHEDULE
- The work schedule of the telecommuter will depend on the type of work to be performed and the needs of the department as determined by the supervisor.
- Individual schedules for on-site and off-site work hours must be approved by the supervisor. Changes to the schedule must be reviewed and approved by the supervisor in advance.
- Employees are expected to attend all meetings related to the performance of their job. This may include emergency meetings scheduled with short notice to the telecommuter.

EQUIPMENT
- Northland Community and Technical College will permit the use of approved employee-owned equipment. Each employee is responsible for its maintenance and repair.
- When employees use system-owned or state-owned equipment, Northland Community and Technical College is responsible for maintenance and repair of the equipment.
- Employees will be responsible for promptly notifying their supervisor of an equipment malfunction or failure of either state-owned or employee-owned equipment. If the malfunction prevents the telecommuter from performing assigned tasks, the telecommuter must notify the supervisor immediately and may be assigned to perform a different task and/or be required to report to an alternate work location.
- Additional equipment may be purchased at the employer’s discretion and installed at the telecommuter’s remote work location.
SECURITY
- Equipment, software, documents, reports and data created as a result of work activities are owned by Northland Community and Technical College.
- Equipment, software, data, supplies and furniture provided by Northland Community and Technical College for use at the remote work site are for purposes of conducting Northland Community and Technical College business and may not be used for personal use of the employee or individuals who are not employees of Northland Community and Technical College.
- Telecommuters will return state-owned hardware, software, supplies, equipment and documents and other information and property to Northland Community and Technical College prior to termination of employment, at the time of termination of telecommuting agreement, or upon Northland Community and Technical College request.

LIABILITY
- Employees must designate a remote work space subject to the approval of the supervisor.
- Prior to the employee beginning to telecommute, Northland Community and Technical College may perform an ergonomic and safety evaluation of the employee’s remote work station.
- An employee is covered by Minnesota Workers’ Compensation laws while in telecommuting status. Any injury that occurs within the course and scope of employment must be reported according to state and federal reporting requirement. For the purposes of Workers’ Compensation, the employee’s designated home work site is considered an extension of state work site only during scheduled telecommuting working hours.
- The telecommuter’s designated at-home work space is considered an extension of the state agency during the agreed upon work hours and the telecommuter is subject to the same standards of conduct and work place rules required of non-telecommuting employees.
- Northland Community and Technical College does not assume responsibility for third party injuries or property damage that may occur at the home residence or with the designated at-home work space. Business meetings may not be held at home work sites.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND REPORTABILITY
- The telecommuter’s performance will be measured by objectives and results and will not differ from what is expected of individuals who report to work at Northland Community and Technical College.
- Reportability will not differ from what is expected of non-telecommuting employees.

EXPENSES
- Supplies needed for remote work space should be obtained through the normal supply procurement procedures.
- Prior approval must be obtained from the supervisor for expenses that will be incurred. Approved expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with existing policies.

Guidelines developed by Becky Holthusen 6/1/06
Posted to Virtual Office 4/10/07
Northland Community and Technical College
Telecommuting Agreement

I have read the Telecommuting Guidelines for Northland Community and Technical College and agree to abide by the terms as stated.

___________________________________________  ____________________________
Telecommuter Name        Date

___________________________________________  ____________________________
Supervisor Name           Date

(Return original to Northland Community and Technical College Human Resources Office)