

Union ★
Update

OPEIU
Local



For Local 8 Members at Crisis Connections

February 5, 2024

Remote Work Agreement Update

As Union members, we have the right to negotiate over impacts to our working conditions including employer policies. Crisis Connections' management approached our Union Representatives with proposed changes to the Remote Work Agreement on October 27, 2023. Over the next several months, our Union Representatives met with management to negotiate this policy. We negotiated a comparable, if not improved, policy despite Crisis Connections initially proposing stricter provisions.

Crisis Connections' current practice around remote work requires employees to submit requests for internet costs, and we can be reimbursed up to \$50/month. Many of us forget to submit these reimbursements and miss out on some compensation. With the new Remote Work Agreement, all remote workers with a signed agreement on file will automatically receive the same stipend, \$50 a month, for internet. This is administratively less burdensome to Crisis Connections, and more advantageous to us.

FAQ

I was hired as a fully remote worker. I'm concerned that signing this agreement will enable Crisis Connections to recall me to in-person work.

First, we are not aware of any plans to end remote work and call employees back into the office, nor is there enough space in the Belltown office to call everyone back.

Positions that are hired as full-time remote workers will **not** be subject to the 30-day termination under the 'Scope of Agreement' section. Our Remote Work Agreement

states, “Employee agrees that working as a remote worker is voluntary unless mandated by public safety or **position**.” This is intended to refer to workers hired fully remote.

Under ‘Remote Work Eligibility’ the agreement goes on to state, “However, if an employee is hired as a remote work employee or their position requires remote work and the option to work remotely ceases for a reason other than performance (e.g., due to elimination of the position, loss of a contract, loss of the ability to do business in a state outside of WA) then the employee shall be laid off in accordance with the CBA.”

I’m concerned that Crisis Connections will terminate my remote work. What are my options if they do?

If necessary, we can appeal the Employer’s decision to terminate a remote work arrangement within seven calendar days of their determination. However, such decisions are not subject to our grievance procedure in the CBA.

Our grievance procedure still applies to all provisions of the CBA for all members of the Union, including remote workers.

Do I have to sign this agreement? Should I sign this agreement?

Yes, you must sign this agreement to maintain your remote work status. This agreement is comparable to Crisis Connections’ former policy, and signing is an acknowledgement of receipt. It is important for Crisis Connections’ records that you have read and understood the expectations around remote work, and potential outcomes should you violate the agreement.

Will the internet stipend be taxed?

Yes, applicable taxes will be withheld.

My monthly internet bill is less than \$50 per month (or my monthly internet bill is more than \$50 per month). How much will my stipend be?

All remote workers will receive the same stipend of \$50 per month.

If I am issued Crisis Connections’ computer, do I have to use it or can I use my own computer?

For security and liability reasons, Crisis Connections prefers remote workers to use equipment issued by them, however, by mutual agreement you can use your own.

Can I use my work computer for personal reasons?

Activity on your work computer can be tracked by Crisis Connections. You should only use your work computer for Crisis Connections related business, however, occasional and limited use that doesn't compromise operations or productivity may occur. As a rule, it is best to use your personal phone or computer for this type of usage (e.g., checking personal email, online banking, shopping on the internet, visiting social media, watching videos, etc.).

As always, please contact your Union Representatives

Valarie@opeiu8.org and Phoebe@opeiu8.org with any questions or comments.



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