

The Human Resource Office and Local 1690 have developed the following list of best practices in response to the numerous inquiries each has received due to the call to maximize telework.

Telework Best Practices/Guidance for Employees and Supervisors:

Telework authorizes an employee to work from an approved alternate duty location. It does not authorize an employee to work from any remote location and it does not change an employee's work schedule (hours assigned to work).

Communicate Expectations: For all types of telework, this discussion is important to ensure that managers and employees understand one another's expectations. Here are a few expectations concerning basic issues that managers should consider when entering into a telework agreement with an employee:

- Discuss telework expectations with your manager, including work, tasks, projects, equipment, etc.
- Discuss with your coworkers how telework will affect the dynamics of your team
- Adapt communications to leverage modern information technologies, e.g., setup a group chat on Teams
- Make sure to report work to your supervisor and the entire team
- Be flexible - this is a new situation for all of us, and it may cause changes in management style, communications, tasking, etc.
- Be patient - adapting to the new environment will not happen overnight
- Be willing to listen and learn!
- Maintain your daily routine - get up for work at the regular time; take lunch at the usual time; maintain contact with your team; etc.
- Eliminate distractions - setup a dedicated work space at your telework location
- What duties can and cannot be accomplished at the telework location?
- Identify changes that need to be pre-approved.
- What will the daily telework schedule be; will the hours be the same as in the main office, or will they be different? In most instances, schedules will not change. Keep in mind that telework addresses work location not necessarily hours of work.
- What are the expectations for availability by phone, email. Note: teleworking employees may be momentarily unavailable just as non-teleworkers have brief moments of on unavailability.

Digital Tools:

Employees and their supervisor have some excellent resources available while maximizing telework. The following link provided great information both Zoom (recommend for faculty) and Microsoft Teams (recommended for staff).

Teams brown-bag sessions will take place from 17–20 March, T–F, from 1200–1250 in Reed Hall Rm 102. Access remotely at <https://zoom.us/j/183047677>.

Performance Management: It is important to note that performance standards for teleworking employees must be the same as performance standards for non-teleworking employees.

Like non-teleworking employees, teleworkers are held accountable for the results they produce. Good performance management techniques practiced by everyone will mean a smooth transition to a maximized telework environment. Resources for performance management are available from OPM at www.opm.gov/perform.

Timekeeping: When an employee is teleworking, it is important to capture this through SLDCADA. On days that ad-hoc or situational telework is performed, employees should enter “TS” in the Ehz field in SLDCADA. Employees that perform regular and recurring telework should be utilizing “TW” in the Ehz field in SLDCADA. ***NOTE:** It is a supervisor’s responsibility to review and validate the accuracy of the timecard when certifying timecards in SLDCADA.*

Emergency Operations:

Telework is generally a voluntary agreement between an employee and a supervisor. However; during certain emergency situations, supervisors can mandate telework to ensure continuity of operations whether an employee has a valid telework agreement or not.

Not all employees can work remotely due to the nature of the duties they perform, but traditional exclusions to telework may not always apply during emergency situations. Currently, the prohibition pertaining to telework and dependent care has been waived through 31 Dec 2020. Please contact HRO for assistance or to discuss options if you believe an exclusion may apply.

Both supervisors and employees have an important role to play in an agency’s emergency planning and response. Emergency responsibilities include:

- Understanding the agency's emergency plan (continuity plan, pandemic plan, etc.) and its role in executing the plan;
- Notifying employees designated as emergency personnel for a continuity or pandemic event;
- Communicating expectations to both emergency and non-emergency employees regarding their roles and responsibilities in an emergency;
- Establishing communication processes to notify emergency employees and non-emergency employees of the activation of the agency’s emergency plan and the agency operating status during the emergency;
- Integrating emergency expectations into telework agreements as appropriate;

Conclusion:

Teleworkers should be treated like non-teleworkers to the greatest degree possible. Transitioning from a traditional to a telework environment should be relatively seamless and should not result in a loss of productivity. Teleworkers must attend all assigned meetings, albeit virtually, and meet the same deadlines and other expectations as non-teleworkers. In short, you should be able to reach out to, assign work, and communicate with your teleworking employees to the same degree that you communicate with your non-teleworkers.

Please contact Telework Manager Kenneth Stewart at kastewar@nps.edu or X2007 for questions or concerns not covered in this notice. Bargaining unit employees may also reach to Alex Savattone at jasavatt@nps.edu or X2816.