

Telework Instructions for Supervisors

Step 1: Know Your Telework Coordinator

Components have designated Telework Coordinators. Your Component Coordinator is a key contact for DOD supplemental Component telework policy and program questions. Contact your Telework Coordinator or his/her designee for information on policy and procedures and for support and assistance if needed. For a copy of the current Department of Defense Component Telework Coordinators, contact: dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.mbx.dod-worklife@mail.mil

Step 2: Know DOD and Component Policy and Procedures

DOD telework policy can be found in DOD Instruction 1035.01, Telework Policy. DOD Components may also have supplemental telework policy with specific Component requirements. Military and civilian managers and supervisors as well as employees should familiarize themselves with telework policy and other relevant procedures to ensure that they are in compliance with their requirements.

Step 3: Participate in Training

Online telework training for managers is available. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) offers online training for managers can be found at telework.gov. Component Telework Coordinators may also provide training. Information about Component-based training is available from the Component Telework Coordinator. Supervisors should ensure that all teleworkers complete training on information security management and on accessing DOD technology remotely and understand their responsibilities in safeguarding work-related information.

Step 4: Determine Eligibility

Supervisors should allow maximum flexibility for employees to telework to the extent that mission accomplishment is not compromised. Although telework is encouraged, it is not a right and all employees are not eligible to telework nor are all DOD positions eligible for telework. Supervisors should assess employee eligibility based on telework eligibility guidelines in DOD Instruction 1035.01, Telework Policy.

Step 5: Assess Needs

Telework is often implemented on a case-by-case basis, rather than strategically, as individuals request telework arrangements. Telework should be implemented strategically, taking into account mission requirements, office coverage, employee eligibility, and union recognition based upon the entire workgroup rather than granting or denying telework requests one by one on a first-come, first-served basis. Including employees in the process and asking them to help formulate possible solutions to issues that may arise can help to ensure employee accountability and the effective functioning of the entire workgroup.

Step 6: Create Agreements

A written Telework Agreement should be created between an employee who teleworks on a regular and recurring basis and his or her supervisor. Written Telework Agreements are strongly encouraged for employees who telework

on an ad hoc or situational basis. The Department of Defense Telework Agreement, DD Form 2946, can be found on the DOD Issuances website at www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/formsprogram.htm. The parameters of this Agreement should include certain key elements:

- Location of the telework office (e.g., home, telework center, other)
- Telework schedule
- Expectations for emergency telework; specify whether the employee is expected to telework in the case of a COOP event, pandemic, weather shutdown, etc.
- Supplies and equipment issued
- In general, the job tasks that will be performed while the employee is teleworking
- Telework contact information (e.g., what phone number to use on the telework day)
- Safety checklist - certifying that the home office meets certain standards

The Agreement should be signed and dated by the employee and supervisor. Supervisors should keep copies of all Telework Agreements on file. Telework Agreements should be reviewed by the manager and teleworker and re-validated at least every two years with changes made when required. Additional information can be found in DOD Instruction 1035.01, Telework Policy.

Step 7: Communicate Expectations

The Telework Agreement provides structure for the discussion that needs to take place between the supervisor and the employee about expectations for the telework arrangement. This discussion is important to ensure that supervisors and employees understand each other's expectations around issues such as the following:

- How will the supervisor know the teleworking employee is on or off duty?
- How will the supervisor know the work is being accomplished?
- How will contact be maintained? How will the employee communicate with his/her supervisor, customers, and coworkers?
- What type of government furnished equipment will be provided by the Component? What equipment is the teleworker providing?
- Who provides technical assistance in the event of equipment disruption?
- What will the telework schedule be? How are schedule changes required by the supervisor or requested by the employee addressed?
- What will the daily telework schedule be? Will the hours be the same as in the main office, or will they be different?
- Does the telework office conform to safety standards? (Use a safety checklist.)
- How available will the teleworker be—is the telework intended to be seamless, so that phone, email, etc. are dealt with the same as in the office? Or is the employee teleworking to be away from such distractions to accomplish a specific project?
- What is the expectation regarding the amount of notice given for reporting to the official worksite on an employee's scheduled telework day, and how will such notice be provided?
- How is a Telework Agreement terminated by management or an employee?

Clarifying expectations before the employee begins to telework will help to ensure the success of the arrangement.

Step 8: Base Denials on Business Reasons

Telework requests may be denied and Telework Agreements may be terminated. Telework is not an employee right, even if the employee is considered "eligible" by DOD and Component standards. Denial and termination decisions must be based on business needs or performance, not personal reasons. Denials should be provided in a timely manner. Supervisors should also review negotiated union agreement(s) and telework policy to ensure they meet any applicable requirements. Supervisors should provide affected employees (and keep copies of) signed

written denials or terminations of Telework Agreements. These should include information about why the arrangement was denied or terminated. Employees may submit a grievance using the Component administrative or negotiated grievance procedure, as appropriate when a Telework Agreement is denied or cancelled.

Step 9: Use Good Performance Management

It is worth noting that performance standards for off-site employees are the same as performance standards for on-site employees. Effectively negotiating the process of communicating expectations described in Step 7 sets the stage for good performance management practices. Supervisor expectations of a teleworker's performance should be clearly addressed in the Telework Agreement and work assignments should be agreed to, and understood, in advance of the telework event. As with on-site employees, teleworkers must, and can, be held accountable for the results they produce. Other factors to keep in mind include the following:

- Remain equitable in assigning work and rewarding performance
- Avoid distributing work based on "availability" as measured by employee presence in the office
- Avoid the pitfall of assuming that employees who are present are actually accomplishing more work than employees who are not on-site

Good performance management techniques practiced by a manager will mean a smooth, easy transition to a telework environment. Resources for performance management are available from OPM at www.opm.gov/perform. DOD Instruction 1035.01, Telework Policy, also addresses performance management issues.

Step 10: Make Good Decisions about Equipment

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) provides guidelines for the equipment and support that an agency may provide teleworkers working in alternate workplaces that can be found at:

www.telework.gov/guidance_and_legislation/fmr_bulletins/index.aspx.

Components should determine equipment required by teleworkers based upon available funding and the nature and type of work performed by the teleworker. Supervisors should familiarize themselves with the DOD Instruction 1035.01, Telework Policy, and equipment guidelines, as well as the GSA guidelines on equipment and support that may be provided to teleworkers. In compliance with policy and based on mission requirements, supervisors should determine the right balance of budget, security, and effectiveness in making equipment decisions.

Step 11: Address Security Responsibilities

Although teleworkers are responsible for ensuring all official information is safeguarded and government furnished equipment and property is protected, supervisors should work with teleworkers to ensure they fully understand relevant DOD and Component policies and procedures. A thorough Telework Agreement in compliance with DOD and Component information security policies, clear communication of expectations for the telework arrangement, and good performance management practices will help to ensure that teleworkers keep DOD property and information safe and secure. Review DOD Instruction 1035.01, Telework Policy, for details regarding telework security requirements.

Step 12: Plan for Emergencies

Telework can be an important part of DOD Continuity of Operations (COOP) and pandemic influenza planning.

- Implement telework to the greatest extent possible in the workgroup so systems are in place to support successful remote work in an emergency
- Understand contingency plans and management roles in executing those plans
- Communicate expectations to all employees regarding their roles and responsibilities in relation to remote work in the event of an emergency
- Integrate COOP and pandemic influenza expectations into Telework Agreements as appropriate
- Assess requirements with the employee for working at home for an extended period
- Determine how all employees who telework will communicate with one another and with management

Review DOD Instruction 1035.01, *Telework Policy*, for details regarding telework during emergency situations (e.g., weather-related emergencies) or pandemic influenza.

Step 13: Practice, Practice, Practice

Telework should be considered a normal working condition and authorized to the extent that mission readiness is not jeopardized. The success of the DOD telework program depends on regular, routine use. Experience is the most effective way to enable supervisors, employees, IT support, and other stakeholders to work through technology, equipment, communications, workflow, and other issues that may hamper the effectiveness of a telework program. Employees expected to telework in an emergency situation should telework periodically, under non-emergency circumstances to ensure its effectiveness in continuing operations in the event of a crisis or emergency.