Manager Toolkit: Creating Telecommuting Plans

Considerations When Deciding to Mandate/Suggest Work from Home
A number of considerations may factor into decisions to mandate or suggest work from home including but not limited to:

- Confirmed case(s) of COVID-19 on campus (including regional and extension campuses or other OHIO locations) or within the local community.
- Need to provide services to or on campus community.
- Impact on services typically provided in-person that cannot be done using alternate methods.
- Safety concerns impacting water supply, sewage, HVAC, etc.

Telecommuting Checklist for Managers
The below guide is meant to assist managers create a contingency plan for a situation where all the employees in the university need, or are mandated, to work from home. When considering the below, remember to treat your employees equally and with empathy towards their concerns and specific situation.

In order to assist supervisors managing remote work, below are practical items to consider. For additional guidance and support, please contact your HR Liaison.

Daily Work

- **What are each of my employee’s day to day tasks?**
  - Identify critical/essential employees and make sure they understand that they have been identified as an essential employee who will be required to perform their essential function. Discuss if the essential function can be performed remotely or at the work location.
  - Have each employee create a detailed task list of their duties.
- **How can these tasks be done remotely?**
  - Brainstorm ways the tasks can be completed remotely
- **Are there any tasks that cannot be done remotely?**
  - Review the task lists to indicate which can be done remotely, which can be done remotely with modification, and which tasks cannot be done remotely.
- **Are these tasks essential?**
  - Indicate which of the tasks in each category are essential.
  - If they are essential, brainstorm the safest way to complete them.
  - If they are not essential, consider delaying them until business operations return to normal, limiting who completes them, or adjusting their timeframe.
  - If any of the essential tasks involve non-virtual paperwork that may come in via mail or in person, consider finding an alternative method of receiving the information in a secure manner (review “Security Concerns” for ideas)
- **Is it essential for someone to have a physical presence in the office?**
  - If so, consider limiting the number of people in the office every day.
  - If multiple employees provide coverage for the same area, consider creating a rotation schedule.
  - Consider what precautions or cleaning procedures may need to be implemented or adjusted to protect on-site employees.
- **Do you have a main phone line that multiple employees monitor?**
Consult the phone manual for alternate forwarding options or review OIT’s webpage for campus phone help and resources.

Assist employees in forwarding their telephone to an alternate phone at their remote location. For more information, visit the OIT remote phone access site.

- How will you have your employees account for the work they are doing throughout the day and report it back to you?
  - Non-exempt, hourly employees are still required to track real time worked for state and federal compliance.
  - Therefore, non-exempt employees shall maintain a daily log of work completed, to be submitted to the supervisor. For further details and an example, review the sample work log found on the UHR Managing Flex Arrangements site.

Security Concerns

- For sensitive data that is part of an essential task, how can these non-virtual tasks be completed and/or received remotely in a secure manner?
  - If your employee works with sensitive data, please review the following website: https://www.ohio.edu/oit/security/policy-and-practices/securing-remote-work

- Are there any trainings or policies your employees need to review regarding security and remote handling purposes (e.g. HIPAA, FERPA, etc.)?
  - Make sure you plan ahead and request access to these trainings either prior to working from home or within the first day of working at home so your staff is prepared.

Technology Requirements

- What systems will your employees need access to?
  - You need to ensure that each employee has what they need to work from home and have gained access to each system prior to the need to work from home.
  - Access to certain systems may required such as Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) and/or Campus VPN. Both must be configured prior to working from home.

- Do they have the equipment necessary to perform these functions? (e.g. internet, computer, printer, phone, fax, etc.)
  - Make sure your employees are set up on Microsoft Teams prior to working from home.

- Will your employee need to have any video conference calls?
  - If so, review professional attire requirements and background and lighting considerations.
  - OIT provides free university-wide access to a number of technology services that can assist in the use of remote interviewing including both video and audio conferencing as well as websites for each service that explain the platform, review recommended uses, and provide tips for success:
    - Microsoft Teams Audio Conferencing
    - Microsoft Teams Video Conferencing
    - Adobe Connect Video Conferencing
    - Skype for Business

Communication

- Establish priorities, goals, and expectations at the onset of remote arrangements.
- Check in with your team regularly via 1:1 meetings to make sure critical tasks are on target and they have the resources they need.
• Conduct formal check-ins with employees to discuss any changes in priorities/goals in addition to standard updates/progress reports.
• Emphasize increased communication between team members, supervisors, and the university as a whole.
• Consider holding virtual office hours each day.

Accommodations

• Are there any accommodations that need to be made?
  • Review Office for University Accessibility resources and contact them as needed

Resources

• Suggested SkillSoft trainings:
  o Leading Virtually (for managers)
  o Contributing to a Virtual Team (for staff)
  o Establishing Effective Virtual Teams (for managers)
  o Facing Virtual Team Challenges
  o MS Teams training

• Additional Tools from University Human Resources:
  o Managing Flex Arrangements Website
  o Creating Meaningful Work
  o Quick tips for Supervisors
  o Home Office Safety Guidelines and Agreement

• Additional Tools from OIT:
  o Checklist for Temporary Remote Work
  o Working Remotely FAQ