

TELEWORK GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE STATE PERSONNEL SYSTEM

Telework can be an effective and useful tool for supporting an agency's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) during a declared health emergency such as COVID-19.

The purpose of this document is to aid and guide state agencies as telework is being evaluated and considered as part of each agency's response to COVID-19 to ensure required staffing levels are maintained while addressing employee health concerns.

- Telework connected with a declared health emergency must be evaluated on a case by case basis. Not all positions will be eligible for telework nor will all employees be suited for telework due to a variety of reasons. However, telework is a viable option to assist agencies in maintaining continuity of operations during a health emergency.
- If not already determined, agencies should evaluate if the duties of a given position/job or a portion of the work can be effectively performed away from the regular work location.
- If the nature of an employee's work responsibilities can be accomplished away from the regular work location and if any necessary technological/equipment needs can be satisfied, the agency may permit and encourage employees to telework as a way to reduce the face-to-face contacts between employees (social distancing).
- Agencies should identify available equipment (laptops, telephones, etc.) to be assigned to employees for the purpose of teleworking. Consideration should be given to which positions are essential to operations when prioritizing the use of appropriate equipment for telework.
- Agencies should review their telework policies to ensure they are current and consider whether any component of their policies should be modified to allow broader use of telework as appropriate.
- If a position is deemed eligible for telework, the manager and employee will need to complete a written agreement that specifies the terms and conditions of the arrangement and provides for the termination of the telework arrangement upon the agency's determination that it is no longer necessary.
 - Agencies may want to prepare a telework agreement that includes the basic components for short-term telework arrangements associated with the current health emergency. ([See attached document, Agreement for Temporary Telework Arrangement Template](#))
- In evaluating telework eligibility, considerations should include:
 - Is the position essential to the agency's required responsibilities?
 - Although an essential position, can the duties be performed away from the official worksite for a defined, short period of time? If so, how long?
 - Are there significant portions of the job that can be done away from the official worksite?
 - Does the position need continual supervision or input from others that is only available from the official worksite?
 - Is contact with other employees/customers required every day? Can contacts be accomplished through various forms of technology?
 - Are needed reference materials to perform the work available/accessible?
 - Is data security maintained?
 - Is specialized equipment or technology available at the employee's home?
 - Is the home workspace appropriate for telework?

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- Although a position or job class may be identified by the agency as telework eligible, an evaluation of whether a given employee is an appropriate candidate for telework should be conducted. Agencies should consider individual employee factors such as the employee's:
 - Ability to work independently;
 - Comfort level with the required technology;
 - Past performance levels;
 - Dependability and trustworthiness; and
 - Level of self-motivation.
- Employees who are unable to work due to illness or who have sick family members under their care will not be good candidates for telework.
- Employees who are caring for well children due to school or day care closures may be able to perform portions of their work from home, depending on individual circumstances (e.g., the age and level of independence of the child).
- For additional guidance on telework, please refer to the DMS-HRM policy guideline titled [*Identifying Positions Appropriate for Telework and Determining Employee Eligibility*](#).