Telework and Remote Work Suitability Guide
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* Virginia Tech supports the use of appropriate flexible and alternative work options for employees. Remote work and telework are terms used for describing university work occurring at a location other than your central workplace. In compliance with the Code of Virginia, University Policy No. 4325 Alternate Work Site and Telework Policy outlines the requirements for supporting remote and telework arrangements for classified and university staff, and A/P faculty members. This Telework and Remote Work Suitability Guide is designed to assist supervisors and employees with determining how to use the university’s approved Telework Agreement to support employee flexibility and department goals.
Telework/Remote Work for Virginia Tech Employees

As demonstrated through the recent COVID-19 pandemic, flexible and remote work options have proven to be viable work practices for many Virginia Tech employees. Flexible and remote work practices have begun to help the university reduce historic barriers, including geographically remote and rural locations by expanding the size and breadth of our labor market pools. This has also enabled the university to attract and retain a more diverse workforce. Flexible and remote work options also allow for increased productivity and the promotion of healthy employee engagement. Recognizing that some work can only be done on-site, Virginia Tech supports the use of appropriate flexible and alternative work options for employees where remote work or telework is an option.

In order to meet the needs of Virginia Tech employees, while providing comprehensive support for operations, it is recommended that flexible work options (i.e., telework, alternative schedules, etc.) be considered. Supervisors are asked to be flexible with employees while maintaining clear performance expectations. Conversations between supervisors and employees should include:

- **Childcare/eldercare needs**: Telework is not designed to be a substitute for active dependent care; however, exceptions can be granted under exceptional circumstances. Under such conditions, employees are encouraged to work with their supervisor to develop a work schedule to accommodate dependent care needs while remaining productive with work responsibilities.
- **Hours of work/schedule**: If an employee is actively caring for a child or family member, that time is not considered work time. Appropriate leave should be used during those times.
- **Remote or telework/hybrid work schedule**: Employees and supervisors must determine based on type of role and employee work performance whether a role can be done fully remote or in a telework/hybrid schedule. In a telework/hybrid schedule, employees may be in the office 1-4 days a week and in a home office on alternate days.
- **Balance of presence in virtual and on-site meetings**: Supervisors should set clear expectations on how employees should participate in meetings. Video conferencing access, such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc., should continue to be provided for all meetings so that attendees can have flexible options to participate.
- **Expectations for focused, uninterrupted time for completing job responsibilities and attending meetings**: If an employee is unable to set boundaries for work time then the employee is expected to use leave for the time they are not working.
- **Performance management expectations** and metrics of monitoring work performance.
• Additional recommendations and tips for entering into a telework agreement are provided in Step 4 of this guide.

Benefits of Telework and Remote Work*

• Studies show that over 80 percent of U.S. workers want to continue some level of remote work after the pandemic.
• Post-pandemic, as many as 65 percent of employees want to become full-time remote employees.
• Remote work has been shown to increase productivity by up to 40 percent.
• Over 75 percent of employers indicate remote work has significantly improved employee retention.
• Fifty-four percent of employees would change jobs for more flexible work options.
• Millennials and Generation Z will represent 75 percent of the U.S. workforce by 2025; these generations place high value on flexible work.
• Seventy-five percent of employees working remotely report being able to maintain or improve productivity on their individual tasks.
• The university can offer greater benefits in recruitment efforts, seeking alumni and diverse candidates who would be unwilling to consider Virginia Tech employment without a telecommuting option.
• Telework and remote work offer better accommodations for employees with disabilities.
• It can reduce building costs for over-capacity workspaces with shared office space.
• Telework and remote work have been proven to increase employee retention and job satisfaction.
• It increases work-life balance and employee wellness.
• On average, an employer can save $11,000 per half-time telecommuter per year.


Purpose

This guide helps university leadership, managers, and supervisors, in determining which positions and employees are well-suited for regular or occasional telework/remote work while ensuring the continued, successful operations of the department or team.

While the main focus of employees is to support the in-person learning of students, Virginia Tech does support the use of appropriate flexible and alternative work options for employees. Remote work and telework are terms used for describing university work
occurring at a location other than the central workplace.

In compliance with the Code of Virginia, University Policy No. 4325: Alternate Work Site and Telework Policy outlines the requirements for supporting remote and telework arrangements for classified and university staff, and A/P faculty members. Please note, while the university policy states arrangements must be made for childcare, it is understood that exceptional circumstances do arise (i.e., pandemic). In these circumstances, employees are encouraged to work with their supervisors to develop flexible work schedules to accommodate the needs of the employee while ensuring the continued operations of the department.

It is an accepted practice for Teaching and Research faculty (T/R faculty) to carry out their work with varied schedules on campus and at alternate locations, therefore a formal telework agreement will not be required for T/R faculty unless the normal work assignment is consistently at an alternate location (i.e. not the standard assigned office).

Telework is defined as an alternative workplace arrangement beyond the traditional office setting, that provides employees the opportunity to work at a place other than their regularly assigned work location. Remote work is when an employee works full time in an alternate location to the office. Telework can be alternatively used for a hybrid telework arrangement where the employee works some days in the assigned office and some days in an alternate workplace.

Following are five steps to successfully implement a telework/remote work arrangement:

**Step 1: Determine which positions are conducive to telework/remote work**

A position can be considered suitable for telework/remote work if some or most of its responsibilities can be performed away from the regular work location. The change in work location should not impact productivity, customer service, operational efficiency, or team collaboration. The determination should be first based on the type of work, not just on employee performance.

The following chart contains a suggested list of examples; this is not an exhaustive list.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical roles may include, but are not limited to:</th>
<th>Typical tasks may include, but are not limited to:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Accountant or Bookkeeper</td>
<td>▪ Auditing</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Software Developer, Engineer or Computer Programmer</td>
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<td>▪ Data Entry or Database Administrator</td>
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Each position should be considered individually, based on the responsibilities and area in which the role is located, to determine if the work can be done outside of the regular work environment.

Internet speed, sufficient bandwidth, and general IT proficiency play a large part in determining telework and remote work suitability. The department should also have sufficient resources to secure and support the employee in the remote IT environment. The following questions can help identify IT needs and/or barriers to telework:

▪ Does the employee have access to the equipment they need to perform their job function?
▪ Does the employee have access to a reliable internet connection with sufficient bandwidth and data capabilities to be able to complete their tasks and communicate with their supervisor and team?
▪ Does the employee’s core responsibilities require access to equipment, materials, and files that can only be accessed on site?
▪ Is the employee required to be on-site for face-to-face meetings with supervisors, other employees, students, or customers? Or can this contact be done electronically?

See below for information on employee requirements for a telework/remote work office space.
Remote Site Equipment:
Departments may provide remote site equipment and materials needed by employees to effectively perform their duties; however, they are not required to do so. This usually will consist of a laptop computer, a monitor, mouse, keyboard, headset, and university phone number. For an employee who has an accommodation letter from Virginia Tech’s office of ADA and Accessibility Services for qualified employees with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the EEOC regulations governing Title I of the ADA, and University Policy No. 4075: University Accommodations of Persons with Disabilities, the department is responsible for providing specific electronic and/or other equipment or assistive technology that is specified in the accommodation letter. Printers, copiers, scanners, fax machines, shredders, white boards, office chairs, and other traditional office supplies will be located on-site. Telework and remote work employees that wish to have these items at their remote site will need to purchase them with their own resources, unless a special situation is approved by their supervisor or department.

Employees must agree to use equipment provided by the department and supplies for business purposes and to notify the supervisor immediately of equipment malfunction in order to schedule repair or replacement. All university equipment located at an employee's home office is fully insured. Any damage or theft of the equipment should immediately be reported to the supervisor. University-owned equipment used in the normal course of employment will be maintained and repaired by the department. When employees are authorized to use their own equipment, the department will not assume responsibility for costs of repairs, maintenance, or service.

Phone and Internet Access:
High speed internet access and telephone services are required to work remotely for Virginia Tech. The telework or remote employee must provide their own connectivity. All employees are assigned a university phone number. Telework/remote work employees have the option to have their office calls pushed to their personal phone or use the Avaya phone service to ensure calls are received and returned in a timely fashion. For more information on the Avaya phone service, visit http://www.4help.vt.edu and search Unified Communications.

Security of Information:
- Employees must adhere to all applicable security procedures to ensure confidentiality and security of data. Close attention should be paid to University Policy No. 7010: Policy for Securing Technology Resources and Services, University Policy No. 7025: Safeguarding Nonpublic Customer Information for guidance including federal regulations, and University Policy No. 1060: Policy on Social Security
Numbers for guidance on the protection of social security numbers.

- Employees and supervisors must assess the remote environment to ensure compliance with the university’s Minimum Security Standards.
- An employee’s remote work computer shall be procured by Virginia Tech and be in compliance with all Virginia Tech guidelines for uses of hardware and software including, but not limited to, virus protection software, licensing provisions, system security, and passwords.
- The employee will protect all confidential university documents from unauthorized access. The employee will not download secure information to a personal device.
- All products, documents, and records that are used, developed, or revised while teleworking remain the property of Virginia Tech.

Hybrid Telework Roles:
By definition, a hybrid telework role is when an employee completes their job functions/ responsibilities while moving between a home work space and a traditional office space (Harvard Business Review, March - April 2021). A hybrid telework model enables an employee to fulfill their on-site responsibilities while also providing flexibility to perform other functions from a remote location.

When reviewing a position for the hybrid telework option, consideration should be given to how this flexible work opportunity may affect service quality or organizational operations. There should be no disruption in productivity, customer service, operational efficiency or team collaboration.

The following graph identifies relevant questions to consider when assessing the feasibility of telework/remote work and the relevant impact areas that telework/remote work arrangements may have on operations:
Additional questions to consider:

- What routine job duties can/cannot be fulfilled while working remotely and how will it impact operations or other people?
- What routine job duties require regular communication and collaboration with others?
- Oftentimes employees experience fewer interruptions while teleworking. Are there any special projects or tasks that you can prioritize while working remotely?

Example: Shawn is an academic and student support advisor. About 75 percent of Shawn’s job duties include providing comprehensive academic advising to students. The additional time is spent focusing on student recruitment and retention. This includes participating in events focused on recruitment, which includes community colleges, high schools, and other colleges, etc., as well as coordinating resources for design and distribution of recruitment material (i.e., web updates, brochures, posters, displays and/or newsletters, blogs, email blasts, etc.).
Would this position be ideal for a fully remote telework option? No. Due to the student-facing nature of this position, providing excellent service to our students would be impacted if the Academic and Student Support Advisor was fully remote. Next, would this position be ideal for a hybrid telework scenario? Maybe. The majority of this position’s focus is on student advising; therefore, being available for students is critical. However, there still may be an opportunity for a hybrid option. Questions the manager may consider:

- Would students benefit from providing virtual advising hours?
- Could projects like developing recruitment marketing material be done remotely?

If it has been determined that the position is suitable for a hybrid telework option, the supervisor and employee will collaborate on developing a hybrid telework schedule (i.e., days on/off site) that ensures departmental and employee performance will meet or exceed expectations and service to our students, faculty, staff and stakeholders will not be diminished. Remember, an employee’s hybrid telework schedule should not create more work for another employee who is on-site. Employees will be responsible for prioritizing their work to ensure they have the access to the necessary resources to work effectively while teleworking. The hybrid schedule could range from 1-4 days, on-site depending on the needs of the organization and the requirements of the position.

Desk and office sharing options will also be pursued for hybrid telework employees. Preference will be given to employees based on the percentage of time they work on-site. More details on employee requirements for at home office space are available.

**Step 2: Determine the suitability of specific employees who are interested in teleworking/remote working**

Once it has been determined that all or some of the role responsibilities can be performed outside of the regular work environment, it must be identified if the employee in this role is suitable for telework opportunities.

This must be considered on a case-by-case basis for current employees and must be considered when interviewing candidates for a remote or telework position.

The telework/remote work approval or denial determination is made by the employee’s supervisor. This determination should be made from an employee’s individualized request based on their assessment of their suitability for telework.
In accordance with University Policy No. 4075: University Accommodations of Persons with Disabilities, if an employee feels they need a workplace or at-home accommodation for teleworking/remote working due to a medical condition, please have them contact ADA and Accessibility Services at adaaccess@vt.edu.

Using the Employee Telework Suitability Checklist, employees should complete the self-assessment and present it to their manager when requesting a telework option.

Factors for this determination should include but are not limited to:

- Employee’s most recent performance history, including any disciplinary action.
- Employee’s time management, organizational, and communication skills.
- Does the employee understand their role and expectations, and require little supervision to complete their tasks?
- Is the employee a self-starter and consistently meets deadlines?

A few things to keep in mind:

- Employees in their probationary period should not be approved for new telework/remote work unless deemed necessary by the supervisor or university official.
  - This may be waived for employees who are hired with a remote work option in place or if the entire area is working remote.
- If the employee is not well-suited for telework/remote work or is denied based on a previously documented performance issue, it is best practice to communicate that reasoning with the employee.
  - In this instance, a discussion about job performance and growth opportunities should be completed between the employee and their supervisor before the option for telework can be re-assessed in the future.
  - Supervisors should keep documentation of telework agreement approvals and denials for each employee.
  - As a supervisor, if you are unsure of how to approach this conversation with your employee, please contact your Human Resources representative or Employee Relations for guidance.
- The employee is in charge of setting up their workspace in a telework environment. This includes adequate access to the internet and a quiet place for calls or video meetings.
  - Employees should work with supervisors to establish work hours. For those working alternate business hours, consider adding those hours to the employee’s email signature for transparency across the university.
• Employees should designate “office” space and get IT support for their setup if needed.
• Employees should try to minimize distractions in this area.
• Employees should be cognizant of how their environment appears during video meetings.
• Employees should be aware of what is considered proper use of university equipment and the policies relating to the use of university equipment to ensure confidentiality and security of data.
• Employees are responsible for establishing a work environment free of interruptions and distractions that would affect performance, productivity, and professional workplace conduct.

Step 3: Manager Responsibility to Ensure Telework and Remote Work Success

A manager should also consider their own management and supervision style, as well as their level of trust in the employee to perform their assigned job duties in a telework/remote work environment.

Use the Manager Telework Suitability Checklist to gauge how telework/remote work cumulatively is appropriate for the employee, manager, and the role. Also, discuss with the employee if they have any childcare or eldercare needs that might affect performance.

Work Performance:
As much of a responsibility as it is for an employee to be a successful remote worker, it is equally as important for a manager, supervising a remote worker, to be a responsible and engaging manager. Following are important aspects of a manager’s role to successfully manage a remote worker:

• Open communication between the employee and manager is a necessity when either one is remote. Since “water cooler discussions” and informal office drop-ins cannot happen when one or both are remote, communication between employee and manager has to become more intentional. Regular touch point meetings, weekly at minimum, are encouraged. This allows for managers to connect with their employees and check in on their work product and overall engagement.
• One of the most difficult aspects of managing remote/telework employees is being able to gauge employees on work product when you cannot see them physically. This requires the manager to have to set measurable work goals/metrics for the employee to meet or exceed in relation to their long-term performance plan. In addition, it is
the manager's job to be sure that enough work is provided for the employee to stay busy. Productivity is more about the quality of work, not where the work is being performed.

Given this emphasis on work performance, remote/telework requires the manager to have open communication with the employee about the work expectations. Resources to help guide these conversations can be found in Talent Development as well as by working with Employee Relations. Having candid conversations and setting work expectations is an important part of being a manager for employees working in any scenario. Managers must assess their own need for professional growth when handling these expectations and work performance issues to be successful in this remote/telework environment.

Equity:
While flexible and remote work will be grounded in the nature of roles and operational needs, we are committed to equity, fairness, and consistency in the implementation of telework. This means recognizing that there are different work circumstances so there will need to be differentiation, as appropriate. This does not mean that all arrangements will be treated the same or equally. Decisions will be based on the role AND a commitment to fairness providing each employee a work arrangement that is free from bias or favoritism. Following are some illustrative examples:

Example 1

- **Administrative Assistant A**: Works in a college, provides direct student support, and serves as a resource for students that come into the office for assistance.

- **Administrative Assistant B**: Works in an administrative department, most of the team works remotely. In-person support is not required for students or customers.

Even though the roles have the same title, Administrative Assistant A’s role may not be conducive to remote work while Administrative Assistant B’s role may be able to be fully or partially remote based on operational needs.

Example 2

- Two employees have the same position, both in title and duties and are supervised by the same manager. Both roles are telework eligible and the employees have been working in a remote/telework environment.

- Employee A has been successful and productive while working remotely. Employee B has not been punctual when working remotely and has not met productivity expectations in a telework environment.

Even though the roles are the same, Employee A has been successful and therefore would be able to continue working in a remote/telework environment. The manager must have a developmental conversation with Employee B to reinforce performance expectations. This could include more days in the office, more touchpoints with the manager or scheduled progress checks. While equality is important, employees meeting
performance metrics should take precedence so that bias does not occur.

Additionally, one of the greatest concerns of remote workers is missing out on growth opportunities given to those who are in the office, as they often feel “forgotten” by colleagues and managers. Employees’ success and opportunities afforded them should be based on the end product of their work. Managers must supervise the performance of remote/telework employees and those in the office equitably, and act as an advocate for remote/telework employees consistent as they would for employees who are on-site. When looking at promoting eligible employees, those who are working successfully in a remote/telework scenario as well as on-site should always be considered equally.

Research shows that some managers can exhibit unconscious bias against employees who are working remotely. As a society we have been taught to place a high value on “face time” with each other. That can also equate to viewing “reliable” workers as those most often at their desks versus those who are remote. The results of this can lead to workers who are “in the office” receiving more opportunities than those who aren’t. It is critical for a manager to always consider the employee working remotely before making any decisions. This includes creating an environment where equity is paramount when considering communications amongst employees, promotions, organizational change, etc. (e.g. Making sure meetings have a video conferencing component for those who are not in the office is available; designating a facilitator in larger meetings to be sure the remote/telework employees are heard).

One of the keys to mitigating unconscious biases is to understand that we all have them in one shape or another. Once there is acceptance, a manager can take an objective approach to correcting any actions that might result in unconscious bias. To help prevent this when making decisions, be candid with yourself and ask the following questions while considering ALL members, remote and on-site, of your team (Cleveland, April 2020):

- Am I providing more guidance and coaching to some employees than others?
- Am I assigning challenging work equally?
- Am I providing more clarity on assignments to some employees than others?
- Am I “staying on top of” and micromanaging some employees more than others?
- Am I giving some employees the benefit of the doubt more than others?
- Am I offering to help some employees more than others?
- Am I addressing issues directly with some employees but complaining about others?

**Hiring for Remote/Telework:**
The availability of technology and remote work has employers competing for talented employees nationally and globally. In many cases, employees are no longer bound to one
geographic area to be employed by certain employers. To maintain a competitive advantage in recruitment and retention, we recommend managers be open to considering remote/telework working arrangements for employees. In addition to the hiring benefits, remote/telework is also shown to increase productivity and promote employee engagement through the flexibility that comes with remote work. This also helps serve as a retention tool for employees and a way for Virginia Tech to stay competitive in the job market.

When recruiting candidates to fill positions for which remote employees can be considered, Virginia Tech hiring managers have the ability to post positions specifically for this audience of job seekers. Positions that might be remote/telework eligible can be advertised as such in PageUp. Using the guidance from the PageUp user manual Quick Guide-Telework Eligible, you can select a role to be completely remote or have telework options by selecting the appropriate option when posting the positions in PageUp.

**Identifying telework eligible roles in PageUp:**

- If a role is completely remote, choose Telework-Remote Position as the work location in the PD and Job Card. Also choose “yes” in the Telework Eligible radio button on the PD and Job Card.
  - When sourcing for the role, check the location box that says “Telework Eligible.”
- If a job can have remote flexibility but still has an assigned work location, choose the assigned work location in the PD and Job Card. Then choose “yes” in the Telework Eligible radio button on the PD and Job Card.
  - When sourcing for the role, check the location box of the assigned work location AND the checkbox that says “Telework Eligible.”

**Step 4: Tips for entering into a Telework Agreement**

**Be Specific:**
After determining that both the role and employee are suitable for telework/remote work, it is time to create a telework agreement that establishes the specifics of the arrangement.

This should include, but is not limited to:

- Days of the week that the employee can telework/remote work.
- Expectations of the level of communication and responsiveness expected on telework/remote workdays. This should be from both the employee and the manager.
- Expectations of attendance for meetings and other interactions across the university and with customers.
- Any other expectations of work to be done and metrics on how this work will be recorded.
• Understanding where the employee’s remote work location will be. This is critical for ensuring Virginia Tech remains compliant with states where its employees are working outside of the Commonwealth of Virginia. (See “Develop the Telework Agreement” below for further details on this process.)

Additionally, expectations for communication between both the employee and manager should be identified and discussed ahead of time. These topics should include:

• Balance of presence in virtual and on-site meetings.
• Performance management expectations and metrics of monitoring work performance.
• Physical space arrangement and accommodations including what technology is necessary to perform work functions outside of the office.
• Managing various work styles including communication expectations from both manager and employee.
  • Mediums to be considered in maintaining communication include video conferencing, email, phone, instant messengers such as Skype or Microsoft Teams, etc.
• Balance of employee childcare or eldercare needs. Telework/remote work is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate childcare and/or eldercare.
  • Although an individual employee’s schedule may be modified to accommodate childcare and/or eldercare needs, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting business demands. Prospective telecommuters/remote workers are encouraged to discuss expectations of telework/remote work with family members prior to entering a trial period.
  • It should be the employee’s priority, regardless of role, to focus on the completion of job duties and assignments while teleworking. We understand that many remote workers can balance personal responsibilities (running errands, taking care of children, eldercare, etc.) while completing their work duties and assignments. However, we require that remote employees mitigate opportunities for distractions while they are working and communicating virtually with colleagues and stakeholders. This equates to employees making arrangements so that care and personal matters can be performed by someone else, or at an alternate time, and time teleworking can be focused and dedicated to work responsibilities, just as it would when the employee is on-site in an office environment.
  • Managing other distractions at home and setting expectations for professionalism.

Develop the Telework Agreement:
From there, complete the telework agreement form on the Flexible Work Arrangements site on the Virginia Tech website.

If a telework and remote work engagement is agreed upon, and the employee will be based out of state (i.e. their residence will be outside of Virginia), the HR representative is required to approve or deny the agreement and must contact the HR Service Center to request guidance for employment considerations for that state.

**Conditions of Employment:**

- Performance expectations and evaluations will not change as a result of telework. Conditions of employment will remain the same, and expectations should be clear and measurable. The manager will evaluate employee’s job performance in accordance with applicable performance planning and evaluation, and probationary policies.
- Salary and benefits will not be affected by telework or remote work.
- Arrangements that assure adequate communication between employee, co-workers, manager, and customers must be established. For example:
  - Establish regular check-in times or plans to email when workday begins and ends.
  - Use shared calendars to post schedules of teleworkers, on-site colleagues, and managers.
  - Use basic communication tools such as phone, email, and/or instant messaging, and consider collaborative tools such as audio and video conferencing.
  - Coordinate staff meetings and telework schedules to promote team cohesion and social interaction; it may be necessary for the teleworker to come to the workplace for such events.
- The telework agreement does not automatically go with an employee in a new position or apply when a position previously done via remote/telework is assumed by a new employee. A new telework agreement should be requested and reviewed when the above situations occur.
- Telework is not designed to be a substitute for active dependent care; however, exceptions can be granted under exceptional circumstances. Under such conditions, employees are encouraged to work with their supervisor to develop a work schedule to accommodate dependent care needs.

**Hours of Work:**

- The required number of work hours will not change, and employees are responsible for reporting time worked, leave used, and for adhering to university and state attendance policies.
- Overtime worked during remote/telework schedules will be treated no differently than regular work hours. Supervisors must pre-approve any overtime. Failure to do so may result in termination of the telework agreement and/or disciplinary action. See

- For non-exempt employees, hours worked must be recorded just as they would be during normal working hours at the central location.
  - Sick/annual leave is recorded based on the number of hours an employee is scheduled to work on the day he/she uses the leave, whether he/she is at the central or alternate work location.
  - Paid holidays will count as eight (8) hours if falling on a day scheduled for telework.
  - A meal break of at least 30 minutes must be provided to employees working more than six (6) consecutive hours. It is not included in hours worked and must be recorded.
  - Days worked at the alternate location must be approved by the supervisor.
- Per University Policy No. 4305 Authorized Closings Leave and Compensation Policy, remote/telework employees on authorized telework arrangements will be required to work their normal work schedule. Such employees are not eligible for the authorized closing. Emergency personnel are the exception and will receive compensatory leave for hours worked.
- Supervisors may require employees to report to a central workplace for work-related events, if needed. It is recommended that the supervisor provide as much notice as possible for any remote worker to be on campus.
- Remote/Telework is not to be used in place of sick or annual leave; however, in consultation with Human Resources, a department may choose to offer telework arrangements as an opportunity for partial or full return to work based on university policy and the criteria normally applied to decisions regarding the approval of telework.
- For the period of time that the university is considering flexible work options for those positions that are conducive to telework or remote work, the following policy requirements may be subject to further consideration and flexibility: The opportunity to telework is not intended to be used in place of leave, nor is telework designed as a substitute for child or adult care. If children or adults in need of care are in the home during the employee's at-home working hours, another individual should be present to provide the primary care.
- Telework is not designed to be a substitute for active dependent care (exceptions may be granted for exceptional circumstances, such as a pandemic). Work schedules may be developed as appropriate in coordination with the supervisor, to accommodate dependent care needs.

Safety:

- Virginia Tech does not assume responsibility for injury to any persons other than the teleworker arising out of duties at the telework site during the set work hours.
Employees are covered by the Commonwealth’s Workers’ Compensation Program if injured while performing official duties at the central workplace or an alternate work location and must immediately notify the supervisor of an injury sustained at a telework site and complete an Employer’s Accident Report. Once an employee reports a job-related injury, the supervisor or department personnel must immediately file the Employer’s Accident Report Form. Visit this website for more information.

Supervisors may wish to include additional conditions in their work agreements that require employees to confirm that the alternate work location is, to the best of their knowledge, free of recognized hazards that could cause physical harm. Employees should agree to practice the same safety habits they would use while at the university and to maintain safe conditions in their alternate work locations.

Step 5: Ensure Telework and Remote Work Success - Employee and Supervisor Training

Once you have determined that both the role and the employee are suitable for telework and remote work, there is recommended training available for supervisors and employees, found in the table below, which can aid in establishing a successful remote work or hybrid work environment. These courses are in the PageUp Learning Management System (LMS), and completion of these courses will be noted in individual development plans on the LMS. Check out the PageUp LMS as well as Talent Development’s Virtual Learning Center for other virtual professional development opportunities curated for the Virginia Tech Community.

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<tr>
<th>Recommended Training for Managers</th>
<th>Recommended Training for Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning for Your Hybrid Organization (25m)</td>
<td>How to be an Adaptable Employee during Change and Uncertainty (35m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leveraging Virtual and Hybrid Teams for Improved Effectiveness (29m)</td>
<td>Remote Work Foundations (60m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Skills for Remote Leaders (72m)</td>
<td>Enhance Productivity in a Hybrid Work Environment (17m)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virtual Performance Reviews and Feedback (48m)</td>
<td>Building Relationships While Working from Home (22m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Challenging Conversations (90m)</td>
<td>Managing Projects as Offices Reopen (16m)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Telework/Remote Work Suitability Checklist**
- Employee Telework Suitability Checklist
- Manager Telework Suitability Checklist

**Additional Resources**

**Virginia Tech’s Telework Policy and Agreement Form:**
- Flexible Work Arrangements resources site
- University Policy No. 4305 Authorized Closings Leave and Compensation Policy
- University Policy No. 4325 Alternate Work Site and Telework Policy
- Virginia Tech Flexible Work Agreement site (includes telework agreements) **New site available late July 2021**

**Official Department of Human Resource Management Telework Policy:**
- DHRM Policy 1.61 Teleworking
- DHRM Quick Guide: Managing Teleworkers

**Telework flow chart**

**Feedback:**
- Provide feedback on the Telework Suitability Guide
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