

Telecommuting Policy and Procedure

Objective

Telecommuting allows employees to work at home, on the road or in a satellite location for all or part of their workweek. Total Action for Progress (TAP) considers telecommuting to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some employees and jobs but not for others. Telecommuting is not an entitlement, it is not a companywide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with TAP

Procedures

Telecommuting can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term project or on the road during business travel, or a formal, set schedule of working away from the office as described below, or as a response to an unforeseen event that affects the conduct of normal business at a specific agency location or at the agency as a whole (a fire, flood, pandemic, or other act of God, for example). Either an employee or a supervisor can suggest telecommuting as a possible work arrangement, and a supervisor can mandate it in extraordinary circumstances. Please see the Ad Hoc section of this policy.

Any telecommuting arrangement made will be on a trial basis and may be discontinued at will and at any time at the request of either the telecommuter or the organization. Every effort will be made to provide 30 days' notice of such change to accommodate commuting, child care and other issues that may arise from the termination of a telecommuting arrangement. There may be instances, however, when no notice is possible. In the event of extraordinary circumstances, the trial basis may be waived by an employee's direct supervisor with the approval of the component director.

Eligibility

Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and manager, with the assistance of the human resource department, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

- Employee suitability. The employee and manager will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, compared to traits customarily recognized as appropriate for successful telecommuters.
- Job responsibilities. The employee and manager will discuss the job responsibilities and determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement.
- Equipment needs, workspace design considerations and scheduling issues. The employee and manager will review the physical workspace needs and the appropriate location for the telework.
- Tax and other legal implications. The employee must determine any tax or legal implications under IRS, state and local government laws, and/or restrictions of working out of a home-based office. Responsibility for fulfilling all obligations in this area rests solely with the employee.

If the employee and manager agree, and the human resource department concurs, a trial period will commence. In the event of extraordinary circumstances, the trial basis may be waived by an employee's direct supervisor with the approval of the component director.

Evaluation of telecommuter performance during the trial period will include regular interaction by a method agreed upon by the employee and manager. At the end of the trial period, the employee and manager will each complete an evaluation of the arrangement and make recommendations for continuance or modifications. Evaluation of telecommuter performance beyond the trial period will be consistent with that received by employees working at the office in both content and frequency but will focus on work output and completion of objectives rather than on time-based performance.

An appropriate level of communication between the telecommuter and supervisor will be agreed to as part of the discussion process and will be more formal during the trial period. After conclusion of the trial period, the manager and telecommuter will communicate at a level consistent with employees working at the office or in a manner and frequency that is appropriate for the job and the individuals involved.

Equipment

On a case-by-case basis, TAP will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs (including hardware, software, modems, phone and data lines and other office equipment) for each telecommuting arrangement. The human resource and information system departments will serve as resources in this matter. Equipment supplied by the organization will be maintained by the organization. Equipment supplied by the employee, if deemed appropriate by the organization, will be maintained by the employee. TAP accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. TAP reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the organization is to be used for business purposes only. The telecommuter must sign an inventory of all TAP property received and agree to take appropriate action to protect the items from damage or theft. Upon termination of employment, all company property will be returned to the company, unless other arrangements have been made.

TAP will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary. TAP will also reimburse the employee for business-related expenses, such as phone calls and shipping costs, that are reasonably incurred in carrying out the employee's job.

The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within his or her home for work purposes. TAP will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.

Security

Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary company and customer information accessible from their home office. Steps include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment.

Safety

Employees are expected to maintain their home workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. The employee is liable for any injuries sustained by visitors to his or her home worksite.

Telecommuting is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate child care. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate child care needs, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting business demands. Prospective telecommuters are encouraged to discuss expectations of telecommuting with family members prior to entering a trial period.

Time Worked

Telecommuting employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all hours worked using TAP's time-keeping system of bi-weekly timesheets. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval of the telecommuter's supervisor using the procedures already in place for the approval of overtime. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the immediate termination of the telecommuting agreement.

Ad Hoc Arrangements

Temporary telecommuting arrangements may be approved for circumstances such as inclement weather, special projects, business travel, or extraordinary circumstances necessitating flexibility and adaptability (such as a fire, flood, pandemic, or other act of God that affects the conduct of normal business at an agency location or the agency as a whole). These arrangements are approved by the employee's supervisor and component director on an as-needed basis only, with no expectation of ongoing continuance.

Other informal, short-term arrangements may be made for employees on family or medical leave to the extent practical for the employee and the organization and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if appropriate. All such arrangements must be approved by an employee's supervisor and component director..

All informal telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis, focusing first on the business needs of the organization.

**TAP Telecommuting Policy and Procedure
Acknowledgment Form**

I, _____ acknowledge that I have received, read and
Employee Print Name

understand TAP's Telecommuting Policy and Procedure. If I have any further questions, I will seek guidance from my manager or director. I understand that this form must be signed and returned back to Human Resources to be placed in my personnel file.

Employee Signature

Date