

A Roadmap to Telework in the Commonwealth of Virginia

*A Product of the Commonwealth's Office of Telework Promotion and
Broadband Assistance*

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Forward:

This document was produced to provide a resource for those in the Commonwealth who are embarking upon or expanding a teleworking program. Based on a similar document produced by the Federal Government¹, the document is intended to provide guidance and set expectations for telework initiatives, but it does not supersede nor serve as a substitute for existing Commonwealth telework and related policies and procedures.

¹ <http://www.opm.gov/pandemic/agency2a-guide.pdf>

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Introduction

The Commonwealth defines telework as “*A work arrangement in which supervisors direct or permit employees to perform their usual job duties away from their central workplace, in accordance with work agreements.*” Simply stated “telework” (or “telecommuting”) is working from a different location. For measurement purposes, the Commonwealth Department of Human Resources Management only “counts” an employee as a “teleworker” if the employee teleworks **at least** one day per week (or 32 hours per month) (<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+coh+2.2-2817.1+500219>). Employees who telework less than this (one day per week) are considered “Casual”² Teleworkers.

There are numerous benefits that can be realized from teleworking when it is integrated into an organization’s culture, operating philosophy and processes.

For Commonwealth agencies, telework is of particular interest for its benefits in the following areas:

- Recruiting and retaining the highest quality workforce
- Improving work/life balance
- Environmental Stewardship (reduced emissions, decreased energy usage)
- Saving taxpayer dollars by maximizing real estate usage and employee efficiency
- Ensuring continuity of essential Government functions in the event of national or local emergencies
- Reduction in traffic congestion in densely populated areas

This document is intended to provide guiding principles for the implementation of telework in the Commonwealth and to help agencies understand how to make telework a routine part of doing business, as well as how to integrate telework into emergency planning.

Telework is not an employee right. Virginia law requires agencies to develop a telework policy, but does not give individual employees a legal right to telework. Telework is one tool that an employer may utilize where appropriate.

² For the purpose of this report the term “casual” refers to an intermittent or occasional use of telework on the part of the employee. It is not intended to imply that the employee has reduced performance or productivity standards while teleworking.

Sustaining a Successful Telework Program – A Manager's Perspective

What's in it for me?

Compliance with the Directive

As described in the Legislative Reference (Appendix One), telework should be implemented to the maximum extent possible.

Human Capital Management Tool

Telework, like other employment flexibilities, can assist managers in attracting, recruiting, and retaining the best possible workforce. In addition, by decreasing employee commute times, other work/life stressors, and improving organizational communications telework can help employees and managers be more effective in their jobs. Telework may also be used as a reasonable accommodation for the disabled.

Continuity of Operations

Integrating a telework policy into an organization's operations and culture can help maintain critical functionality in the event of an emergency. In the case of natural disasters, employees could telework and avoid having to travel to a dangerous, inoperable or inaccessible office. During a pandemic, such as one caused by an influenza virus, employees could continue to work while achieving social distancing goals and caring for loved ones. Using telework as a workforce strategy in these situations can assist in continuing the essential operations of government during these difficult times especially if the telework is consistently practiced prior to the pandemic.

The Basics

Appoint a Telework Coordinator -

It is recommended (not required) that each agency designate a telework coordinator who acts as the key contact for policy and program questions. Managers should maintain frequent contact with their telework coordinator to ensure the agency's policy and procedures are properly applied and to ensure they are aware of the full range of support and resources available to them. The Telework Coordinator may reside in the agency's Human Resources area or other organizational area as appropriate for the agency's business model and organizational structure.

Know Your Policy and Procedures

As detailed in § 2.2-2817.1. of the *Code of Virginia*, all agencies must have a telework policy. Managers should familiarize themselves and their employees with their agency's policy to ensure they are in compliance with its requirements. Most agency policies will include additional procedures for establishing telework agreements, obtaining equipment, etc. A template for the development of a telework policy and related work agreements (policy number 1.61) can be found on the Department of Human Resource Management website at: http://www.dhrm.state.va.us/hrpolicy/web/pol1_61.html (updated 2008)

In addition, all agencies should make certain that their agency telework policy addresses records retention and information security for both electronic and paper information (see Security). Agency policy must prohibit storage of Commonwealth data on non-Commonwealth owned or leased computing devices. The use of Commonwealth assets for teleworking is strongly encouraged but the use of non-Commonwealth assets may be approved by the agency head if in accordance with the COV ITRM IT Security Standard SEC511-00 "Use of Non-Commonwealth Computing Devices for Telework" as well as all applicable COV ITRM IT Security Policies and Standards: <http://www.vita.virginia.gov/library/default.aspx?id=537>

Finally, in 2008, the Department of Accounts published a Telework Expense Payment Policy http://www.doa.virginia.gov/General_DOA/Telework_Expense.cfm outlining what telework expenses are justifiable. All agencies should consult the policy prior to finalizing telework arrangements.

Participate in Training

DHRM offers online telework training for employees and managers, which can be accessed via <https://covkc.virginia.gov/>. The Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), has developed a series of new online training programs free to the public. They are located on the Telework!VA website at: <http://www.teleworkva.org/>. Additionally, the Federal OPM/GSA Website, <http://www.telework.gov/courses>, provides free online training modules. Agencies should provide training on the records retention and information security requirements so that teleworking employees understand their responsibilities for retaining, storing and securing information.

How to Be an Effective Telework Manager

To comply with the legislation, managers must be committed to using telework to the fullest extent possible. Beyond the basic requirements outlined above, managerial skill, participation, and support can make telework a real asset to an

organization. To effectively implement a telework program, managers should accomplish the following:

Determine Employee Eligibility

From a Commonwealth perspective, all employees are generally considered eligible for telework except those employees whose positions require, on a daily basis (i.e., every work day), on-site activity that cannot be handled remotely or at an alternative worksite, such as face-to-face personal contact (medical, counseling, or similar services); hands-on contact with machinery, equipment, vehicles, etc.; or other physical presence/site dependent positions, such as receptionist, forest ranger or guard. In addition to the type of work duties, managers should also consider the employee's performance history, if applicable, when determining individual eligibility.

Agencies have the requirement to develop their own telework policy (based on DHRM template) and the discretion to determine telework eligibility criteria for their employees. These criteria should be detailed in the agency policy. Individual managers should assess who is and who is not eligible in their workgroup based on these eligibility guidelines. Some agencies may provide managers additional discretion in deciding whether to grant or deny a request to telework from an eligible employee, based on additional factors such as length of time with the agency, staffing, budget and/or employee performance.

Understand and Assess the Needs of the Workgroup

Telework is often implemented piecemeal, rather than strategically, as individuals request arrangements. This reactive approach carries the risk of raising fairness issues, with decisions about telework arrangements being made on a first-come, first-served basis. Telework should be implemented strategically, including from a recruiting perspective, taking into account the needs and work of the group, rather than granting or denying telework requests one-by-one. Employees should participate in the process and may be asked to help formulate possible solutions to issues that may arise.

Create Signed Agreements

Every teleworker and his or her manager should complete a written agreement for telework. The parameters of this agreement should be laid out by the agency's telework policy. Most importantly, the agreement should be signed and dated by the employee and the manager. The Telework Coordinator or their designee/equivalent, the employee, and the supervising manager should keep copies of all telework agreements on file. In addition, the Commonwealth's personnel system must be updated to reflect the employee's telework status.

Telework agreements are living documents and should be revisited by the manager and teleworker and re-signed regularly, preferably at least once a year. At a minimum, new telework agreements should be executed when a new employee/manager relationship is established.

The Commonwealth strongly recommends that employees required to telework³ in the case of a Continuity of Operations (COOP) event have a telework agreement in place. Such individuals should practice teleworking as much as possible, but no less than one day per month.

Base Denials on Business Reasons

Telework requests may be denied and existing telework agreements may be terminated. Telework is not an employee right, even if the employee's position is considered "eligible" by Commonwealth standards and/or the individual agency standards. However, denial and telework termination decisions must be based on business needs or employee performance, not arbitrary reasons. Whenever applicable, the denial or termination should include information about when the employee might reapply, and also if applicable, what actions the employee should take to improve his or her chance of approval. Denials should be provided in a timely manner.

Managers should provide affected employees (and the agency should keep copies of) signed written denials and terminations of telework agreements. These should include information about why the telework arrangement was denied or terminated.

Use Good Performance Management Practices

Managers often ask, "How do I know what my employees are doing when I can't see them?" Performance standards for off-site employees are the same as performance standards for on-site employees. Management expectations of an employee's performance should be clearly addressed in the employee's work profile. As with on-site employees, teleworkers must, and can, be held accountable for the results they produce. 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 the Virginia Department of Human Resources (DHRM) at http://www.dhrm.state.va.us/hrpolicy/web/pol1_40.html and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at <http://www.opm.gov/perform>.

³ At a minimum, personnel labeled as "essential" and their "back-ups" should be exercising telework on a regular basis.

Communicate Expectations

The telework agreement (see *How to Be an Effective Teleworker* for key elements) provides a framework for the discussion that needs to take place between the manager and the employee about expectations. For routine, casual and emergency telework, this discussion is imperative to ensure the manager and the employees understand each other's expectations about basic issues such as the following:

- How will the manager know the employee is present? (Signing in, signing off procedures may be needed.)
- How will the manager know that the work is being accomplished?
- What are the expectations for availability (phone, e-mail, etc.)?
- How will contact be maintained and at what frequency?
- What equipment is the agency providing? What, if any, equipment is the teleworker providing? Is there a standard list of equipment for casual, permanent and emergency teleworking?
- If equipment is provided, how is technical assistance and maintenance performed and by whom?
- What records and associated information will the teleworker need access to and how will they be accessed? What are the information handling expectations of the employee?
- What will the daily/weekly/monthly telework schedule be? Will the hours be the same as in the main office, will they be different, or is there flexibility? How will the manager and co-workers be kept updated about the schedule? Do changes need to be pre-approved?
- What are the physical attributes of the telework office, and do they conform to basic safety standards? (Use a safety checklist.)
- What is the expectation regarding the amount of notice (if any) given for reporting to the official worksite, and how will such notice be provided?
- How is a telework agreement terminated by management or an employee?

Facilitate Communication with All Members of the Workgroup

Teleworking and non-teleworking employees must understand expectations regarding telework arrangements, including coverage, communication, and responsibilities. Although individual teleworkers must take responsibility for their own availability and information sharing, managers should ensure methods are in place to maintain open communication across all members of a workgroup.

Remain Equitable in Assigning Work and Rewarding Performance

Managers should avoid distributing work based on "availability" as measured by physical presence, and avoid the pitfall of assuming someone who is present and looks busy is actually accomplishing more work than someone who is not on-site.

Good performance management practices are essential for telework to work effectively and equitably.

Make Good Decisions about Equipment

Generally, decisions are made by the agency or by individual managers regarding the ways in which teleworkers should be equipped. What equipment a teleworker needs will often depend on the type of work that the employee does. Some teleworkers may need no Commonwealth equipment as their duties involve only the use of a standalone computer for office applications or internet access for research or access to agency web based applications. Please consult the Commonwealth's Information Technology Resource Management Information Technology Security Standard SEC 511-00 "Information Technology Standard - Use of Non-Commonwealth Computing Devices to Telework" for requirements: <http://www.vita.virginia.gov/uploadedFiles/Library/SEC511-00UseofNonCOVAssetstoTelework.pdf>. Many, but not necessarily all, will need a computer of some type and a phone. Some may require a small printer, fax machine or other office equipment and supplies. Managers should discuss the job requirements with the employee and consult their agency's policy on providing equipment and supplies for teleworkers. Within those constraints, the challenge for managers is finding the right balance of budget, security, and effectiveness.

Managers should give special consideration to the equipment needs (cell phones, laptops, etc.) of the agency in the case of pandemic or other COOP event. To reduce costs, it is recommended that telework equipment needed in a pandemic or other COOP event should be considered as part of the agency's overall technology plan. Strategic decisions such as replacing desktop units with properly outfitted laptops, and/or replacing landline phones with cell phones can provide cost savings (by reducing duplication of equipment) and facilitate the transition to telework during a pandemic or other COOP event.

Practice, Practice, Practice

The success of an organization's telework program depends on regular, routine use. Experience is the only way to enable managers, employees, IT support, and other stakeholders to work through cultural, technology, equipment, communications, workflow, and associated issues that may inhibit the transparency of remote work. Individuals expected to telework in an emergency situation should telework under non-emergency circumstances at least one day per month.

The Bottom Line

Managers MUST—

- Implement routine telework in their organization to the fullest extent possible
- Treat employees equitably in implementing telework in their organization
- Identify eligible and ineligible employees using established agency criteria
- Include telework in COOP and other emergency response planning
- Require those employees assigned to telework during a COOP event to work at an alternative worksite (e.g., a telework center) or from home at least one day per month

Managers MAY NOT—

- Under normal circumstances, require that an employee work remotely UNLESS the position is defined as a home-based position or fiscal requirements (such as office closure) deems it necessary
- Terminate a telework agreement for reasons other than business or performance reasons

Managers MAY—

- Terminate a telework agreement for business or performance reasons, e.g., an employee's inadequate productivity or a change in the nature of the work

Sustaining a Successful Telework Arrangement – An Employee's Perspective

What's in it for me?

Work/life Balance

Telework gives employees more flexibility in meeting personal and professional responsibilities.

Stress Reduction

Telework can help make life less stressful overall by reducing commuting time and adding to discretionary time, thus reducing stress.

Freedom from Office Distractions

Offices can be busy places where distractions are plentiful. Many employees find they are able to focus and be more productive when they telework.

Engagement

When employees feel they have greater control over their work environment, they tend to feel more dedicated to their organizations.

The Basics

Know Your Telework Coordinator (or his/her equivalent)

All agencies should have a designated individual (telework coordinator) who acts as the key contact for policy and program questions. Employees should maintain contact with both their manager and telework coordinator for support and assistance as well as to ensure they follow the agency's policies and procedures.

Know Your Agency's Policy and Procedures

As required by Virginia Code § 2.2-2817.1., all agencies must have a telework policy. Employees should familiarize themselves with this policy to ensure they are in compliance with its requirements. Agency policies should include procedures to be followed for establishing telework arrangements, obtaining equipment, etc.

In addition, employees need to work with their managers to ensure their records retention processes, equipment choices and telework agreements comply with their agency's policy. This includes the protection and retention of files and documents needed for work that contain sensitive information in electronic or paper format. Every agency's policy must prohibit storage of Commonwealth data on non-Commonwealth owned or leased computing devices.

Participate in Training

DHRM offers online telework training for employees and managers, which can be accessed via <https://covkc.virginia.gov/>. The Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) has developed a series of new online training programs free to the public. They are located on the Telework!VA website at: <http://www.teleworkva.org/>. Additionally, the Federal OPM/GSA Website, <http://www.telework.gov/courses>, provides free online training modules.

In addition, many agencies offer various types of training including training on the records retention and information security requirements so that teleworking employees understand their responsibilities for retaining, storing and securing information. Some training may be required for participation in a telework program.

How to Be an Effective Teleworker

Conduct an Honest Self-Assessment

A successful telework arrangement starts with a good self-assessment. Employees should consider the following factors in making an honest determination about their telework capabilities:

- Sufficient portable work for the amount of telework being proposed
- Discipline and motivation to work independently, without close supervision
- Comfort with the technologies, if any, needed to telework
- Good communication with manager, co-workers, and customers that will enable a seamless transition from on-site to off-site
- Telework office space conducive to getting the work done
- Dependent care (i.e., child care, elder care, or care of any other dependent adults) arrangements in place
- Ability to be flexible about the telework arrangement to respond to the needs of the manager, the workgroup, and the workload

Create a Good Telework Agreement

A successful telework arrangement also requires a strong foundation. No matter how frequently or infrequently an employee intends to telework, a written

agreement must be executed between the employee and manager. Elements of this agreement should include the following:

- Location of the telework office (e.g., home, other)
- Equipment inventory – what the employee is supplying, what the agency is providing, and if applicable, what the telework center is providing
- In general, the job tasks to be performed while teleworking
- If any, reimbursement for teleworking expenses such as broadband
- Telework schedule
- Telework contact method and frequency of information (e.g., the phone number to use on the telework day)
- Safety checklist – certifying the home office meets certain standards (see Safety)
- Expectations for emergency telework (specify whether the employee is expected to telework in the case of a COOP event, pandemic health crisis, shutdown of agency operations, etc.)

Telework agreements need to be updated as circumstances change (e.g., if the telework schedule changes). The manager and teleworker should work together to evaluate the arrangement periodically, make changes in the agreement as necessary, and re-sign the document. In the first year this may happen within a few months; thereafter, perhaps annually.

The Commonwealth's telework policy which includes a telework agreement and safety checklist is available at http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/hrpolicy/policy/telecommute1_61.pdf.

Safeguard Records and Associated Information

Just as in the central workplace, teleworking employees are responsible for the retention and protection of the records and associated information which they handle. Employees should:

- Be familiar with, understand, and comply with their agency's records retention and information security policies, standards and procedures
- Comply with existing acceptable use policies
- Participate in agency information security training
- Never store Commonwealth data on non-Commonwealth owned or leased computing devices
- Maintain security of all Commonwealth information, including files, correspondence, and equipment both in the telework location as well as in transit to and from that location. Depending on the sensitivity of the information being handled, the home office may need to include security measures such as locked file cabinets, similar to what may be used in the worksite

Plan the Work

Employees who telework should assess the portability of their work and the level of availability of any technology needed at the remote site as they prepare to telework.

Employees will need to plan their telework days to be as productive as possible by considering the following questions:

- What files or other documents will I need to take with me when I leave my regular workplace the day before teleworking?
- What equipment will I need to take?
- Who needs to be notified that I will be teleworking?
- What other steps should I take before I leave my office (e.g., forwarding the phone)?
- In the case of emergency telework, what should I have available at all times at my home office or, if applicable, a telework center, to enable me to be functional without coming on-site to retrieve materials?

Manage Expectations and Communication

Managers are ultimately responsible for the effective functioning of the workgroup. Nevertheless, teleworkers should help manage the group's expectations and their own communication in order to avoid any negative impact from their arrangement. Issues that should be addressed include the following:

- Backup: Even with very portable work there are inevitably instances where physical presence is required and a co-worker may need to step in. Co-worker backup should be planned, it should not be onerous, and it should be reciprocal. Cross-training of staff has broad organizational benefits and should be a management priority.
- On-the-spot assistance: Teleworkers may occasionally need someone who is physically in the main office to assist them (e.g., to fax a document or look up information). Again, these arrangements should not be unduly burdensome; a "buddy system" between teleworkers may be the least disruptive solution.
- Communication with manager: The manager must be kept apprised of the teleworker's schedule, how to make contact with the teleworker, and the status of all pending work.
- Communication with co-workers: Co-workers must be informed about the appropriate handling of telephone calls or other communications that are the teleworker's responsibility.

The Bottom Line

Teleworkers MUST—

- Comply with all existing policies and procedures including, but not limited to, records retention, acceptable use, information security and telework policies of their agency
- Take responsibility for ensuring the success of their arrangement
- Notify the manager of any changes in their situation that may affect the arrangement
- Comply with the security and telework policies of their agency

Teleworkers MAY NOT—

- Assume a telework arrangement is permanent
- Use telework as a substitute for child or other dependent care

Teleworkers MAY—

- Use appropriate grievance procedures if they believe their telework request or agreement was wrongfully denied or terminated. Telework requests or agreements may be denied or terminated only for business reasons, and managers should provide written justification to the affected employee.

Safety

Teleworkers must address issues of their own personal safety to be effective while teleworking from a home office or other remote location.

Commonwealth employees causing or suffering work-related injuries and/or damages at the alternative worksite (home, telework center, or other location) are covered by the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act ([Title 65-2 of the Code of Virginia](#)).

Manager Safety Responsibilities

- Review safety checklist with teleworker (see [DHRM Telecommuting Policy 1.61](#) for a sample).
- Depending on agency policy, managers may have the authority to visit home offices, with advance notice to the teleworker.

Teleworker Safety Responsibilities (for home-based telework)

- Provide appropriate telework space, with ergonomically correct chair, desk, and computer equipment.
- Complete safety checklist (see DHRM Telecommuting Policy 1.61 for a sample) certifying the space is free from hazards. This checklist is not legally binding, but details management expectations and, if signed, assumes compliance.
- Immediately report any work-related accident occurring at the telework site and provide the supervisor with all medical documentation related to the accident. It may be necessary for an agency representative to access the home office to investigate the report.

Security

Commonwealth employees and their managers are responsible for the security of State Government property and information, regardless of their work location. Agency security policies do not change and should be enforced at the same rigorous level when employees telework as when they are in the office.

As in the central office, security measures should cover not only information systems and technology, but all aspects of information used by the employee, including paper files, other media, storage devices, and telecommunications equipment (e.g., laptops, PDAs, and cell phones). Employees who telework need to keep Commonwealth property and information safe, secure, and separated from their personal property and information.

Each Commonwealth agency must develop an information systems security awareness and training plan and provide role-specific security training to employees as required by [COV ITRM IT Security Standard SEC 501-01](#).

Manager Security Responsibilities

- Periodically review telework agreements to ensure they are in compliance with agency records retention and information security policies.
- Ensure employees receive agency records retention and information security training.
- Work with employees to ensure they fully understand and have the expertise to comply with agency requirements.
- Invest in technology and equipment that can support success.
- Work with employees to develop secure processes for potentially sensitive documents and other materials.
- Track removal and return of all Commonwealth records.

Teleworker Security Responsibilities

- Never store Commonwealth data on non-Commonwealth owned or leased assets.
- Participate in agency records retention and information security training.
- Achieve sufficient technical proficiency to implement any required measures.
- Secure any hard copy sensitive information accessed at the telework site or transported between locations.
- Remain sensitive to individual rights to personal privacy.
- Comply with agency policies and with any additional requirements spelled out in the telework agreement.

Continuity of Operations (COOP)

Note: *This section is intended to provide guidance for teleworking in the context of COOP. The information contained in this section does not supersede or replace guidelines and policies contained in Agency COOP plans.*

The Governor's Executive Order No. 44 "Establishing Preparedness Initiatives in State Government" requires that agencies create or update Continuity of Operation Plans to conform to the template produced by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. Telework can play a vital role in helping agencies preserve their essential functionality in this environment and should be part of all agencies' planning for continuing operations in the event of an emergency or other COOP defined event. Management must be committed to implementing remote work arrangements as broadly as possible to take full advantage of the potential of telework for this purpose and ensure that—

- Equipment, technology, and technical support have been tested
- Employees are comfortable with technology and communications methods
- Managers are comfortable managing a distributed workgroup

In addition, agencies and management should consider investing in and using—

- Teleconferencing, videoconferencing, and other technologies that enable multi-channel communication
- Web accessible, paperless systems

Manager COOP Responsibilities

- Understand the agency COOP plan and management roles in executing the plan.
- Notify employees classified as "key/essential personnel" in the agency's COOP plan that they could be required to telework.
- Communicate expectations both to key and supportive employees regarding what steps they need to take in case of an emergency.
- Integrate COOP expectations into telework agreements as appropriate.
- Require key/essential personnel who might telework in case of a COOP event to telework regularly (at least one day per month) to ensure functionality.
- Insure that adequate equipment is available to support remote employees.

Teleworker COOP Responsibilities

- Maintain a current telework agreement detailing any COOP responsibilities, as appropriate.

- Practice telework regularly to ensure effectiveness.
- Be familiar with agency and workgroup COOP plans and individual expectations during COOP events.

Pandemic

The National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan references the benefits of using telework during the initial phase of a public health emergency to slow the spread of disease by keeping face-to-face contact to a minimum (often referred to as “social distancing”) while maintaining operations as close to normal as possible. Telework can also help agencies retain functionality as infrastructure issues and other challenges make the main worksite difficult to access.

The key to successful use of telework in the event of a pandemic health crisis is an effective routine telework program. As many employees as possible should have telework capability that has been utilized at least monthly (i.e., current telework arrangements, connectivity, and equipment commensurate with their work needs and frequent enough opportunities to telework to ensure all systems have been tested and are known to be functional.) This may entail creative thinking beyond current implementation of telework, drawing in employees who otherwise might not engage in remote access and ensuring their effectiveness as a distributed workforce.

Manager Pandemic Responsibilities

- Implement telework to the greatest extent possible in the workgroup so systems are in place to support successful remote work in an emergency.
- Communicate expectations to all employees regarding their roles and responsibilities in relation to remote work in the event of a pandemic health crisis.
- Integrate pandemic health crisis response expectations into telework agreements.
- With the employee, assess requirements for working at home (supplies and equipment needed for an extended telework period.)
- Determine how all employees who may telework will communicate with one another and with management to accomplish work.
- Identify how time and attendance will be maintained.

Teleworker Pandemic Responsibilities

- Maintain current telework agreement specifying pandemic health crisis telework responsibilities, as appropriate.
- Perform all duties assigned by management, even if they are outside usual or customary duties.
- Practice telework regularly to ensure effectiveness.

- Be familiar with agency and workgroup pandemic health crisis plans and individual expectations for telework during a pandemic health crisis.

Recommended Policy Changes

- Each agency must be required to appoint a telework coordinator.
- Individuals designated as “key/essential personnel” within their agency’s COOP plan must have a signed telework agreement and be registered as such with DHRM and exercise the plan at least one day per month. However, for statistical purposes, they should not be “counted” unless they routinely telework at least one day per week.
- DHRM should develop and implement measurement criteria to document cost savings resulting from teleworking initiatives⁴ (mileage, real estate costs, etc.).
- The Commonwealth’s telework policy should be updated to reflect telecommuting in the case of pandemic or other COOP event.
- Require that employees, supervisors and telework coordinators or HR agency representatives keep signed work agreements on file.

⁴ Cost saving measures include, but are not limited to: reduction in vehicle miles travelled (VMT), congestion mitigation, impact emissions reduction, real estate savings (reduction and/or avoidance), productivity gains, and reduction in HR costs (attracting/hiring/retaining employees).

Appendix One - Legislative Reference

2008

HB 1017 Telework Promotion and Broadband Assistance, Office of; established, report (2008)
Patron – Timothy Hugo

Summary:

Office of Telework Promotion and Broadband Assistance; codified; sunset. Codifies Executive Order 35 (2006) creating the Office of Telework Promotion and Broadband Assistance under the Secretary of Technology. The goals of the Office are to encourage telework as a family-friendly, business-friendly public policy that promotes workplace efficiency and reduces strain on transportation infrastructure. In conjunction with efforts to promote telework, the Office shall work with public and private entities to develop widespread access to broadband services. The provisions of this act expire on July 1, 2018.

HB 1018 Telecommuting; Definition (2008)
Patron – Timothy Hugo

Summary:

Definition of telecommuting. Defines telecommuting as a work arrangement in which supervisors direct or permit employees to perform their usual job duties away from their central workplace at least one day per week and in accordance with work agreements.

HB 1021 Telecommuting; establishes goal for state agencies (2008)
Patron – Timothy Hugo

Summary:

State employee telecommuting goal. Establishes a goal for state agencies, except for the Department of State Police, to have 20 percent of their eligible workforce telecommuting by January 1, 2010.

2007

SB 845 State agencies; Chief Information Officer to develop policies, etc. relating to security data. (2007)

Patron – Jeannemarie D. Davis

Summary:

Security of confidential state data. Requires the Chief Information Officer of the Commonwealth to develop policies, procedures, and standards relating to the security data maintained and used by state agencies. The policies, procedures, and standards must include requirements that a user be required to provide a password or other means of authentication to access a computer and to access a state-owned or operated computer network or database through the computer, and that a digital rights management system be used to control access to electronic records containing confidential information.

SB 1004 Telecommuting; use of personal computers. (2007)

Patron – Jeannemarie D. Davis

Summary:

Telecommuting; use of personal computers. Authorizes a state agency to allow eligible employees to use computer equipment not owned or leased by the Commonwealth to telecommute, if such use is technically and economically practical, and so long as such use meets information security standards as established by the Virginia Information Technologies Agency, or the employee receives an exception from such standards approved by the CIO of the Commonwealth or his designee.

2006

HB 1161 State employees; telecom. connectivity adds budget items heads of state agencies must include.

Patron – Albert C. Eisenberg

Summary:

State employees; alternative work schedules. Adds telecommunications connectivity (i.e., broadband Internet access, additional telephone lines, and online collaborative tools) to the list of specific budget items that the heads of state agencies must include in their report to the Secretary of Administration on telecommuting and participation in alternative work schedules by state employees.

HJ 144 State employees; joint subcommittee to study ways to enhance telework opportunities.

Patron – Timothy D. Hugo

Summary:

Study; telework; report. Establishes a joint subcommittee to conduct a two-year study of the ways in which telework opportunities for state and private sector employees can be enhanced and increased. In its deliberations, the joint subcommittee will: (i) identify state agencies whose operations are most conducive to telework or alternative work schedules, (ii) recommend fiscal and other incentives necessary to increase telework, and (iii) examine the impact of increased telework opportunities on the continuity of government operations in the event of natural or manmade disasters.

2005

HB 2612 State employees; establishment of alternative work schedules and telecommuting.

Patron – Timothy D. Hugo

Summary:

State employees; telecommuting and alternative work schedules. Requires the Secretary of Administration, in developing a telecommuting policy for state employees, to include identification of broad categories of positions determined to be ineligible to participate in telecommuting and the justification for that determination. The bill also requires each agency head in his annual report to the Secretary of Administration to include specific budget requests for information technology, software, or other equipment needed to increase opportunities for telecommuting and participation in alternate work locations.

HJ 553 Commending the members of the Northern Virginia Congressional delegation.

Patron – Jeffrey M. Frederick

Summary:

Commending the members of the Northern Virginia Congressional delegation for their efforts to promote increased use of telecommuting, telework centers, and satellite offices.

2004

SB 468 State agencies; establishment of alternative work schedule and telecommuting policy.

Patron – Mary Margaret Whipple

Summary:

State employees; establishment of agency alternative work schedule and telecommuting policy. Requires the head of each state agency to establish a telecommuting and alternative work policy under which eligible employees of such agency may telecommute, participate in alternative work schedules, or both. The bill also requires each agency head to set target goals for the number of positions eligible for alternative work schedules by July 1, 2009. This bill is identical to HB 1094.

HB 1094 State agencies; establishment of alternative work schedule and telecommuting policy.

Patron – Brian J. Moran

Summary:

State employees; establishment of agency alternative work schedule and telecommuting policy. Requires the head of each state agency to establish a telecommuting and alternative work policy under which eligible employees of such agency may telecommute, participate in alternative work schedules, or both. The bill also requires each agency head to set target goals for the number of positions eligible for alternative work schedules by July 1, 2009. This bill is identical to SB 468.

2001

HB 1713 Telecommuting policy; Secretary of Administration to report.

Patron – James M. Scott

Summary:

Creates Telecommuting Incentive Act. Directs the Secretary of Administration to direct the formulation and promulgation of policies, standards, specifications, and guidelines for information technology concerning telecommuting by the employees of state agencies. The head of each state agency is directed to develop a telecommuting policy, which shall be in accordance with the statewide policy to be developed by the Secretary of Administration, to maximize telecommuting without diminished employee work performance or service delivery. The Secretary of Administration is also directed to advise and assist state agencies in developing the state agencies' telecommuting policies, and the Secretary may provide advice and assistance to a local government or a private

sector employer upon the local government or the private sector employer's request. This incorporates HB 1943.

1995

HJ 447 Study; Science and Technology Task Force.
Patron – Robert B. Ball, Sr.

Summary:

Study; Science and Technology Task Force. Continues the Science and Technology Task Force to consider, among other things, the recommendations of various organizations focusing on science and technology issues, including, but not limited to, the Governor's Telework/Telecommuting Advisory Task Force (HJR 68, 1994), "Opportunity Virginia," the State Library Board, the Department of Information Technology (HJR 76, 1994), and the Center for Innovative Technology; the strategic planning process for the economic development of Virginia; and other related issues as it deems appropriate.

1994

HJ 68 Governor's Telework/Telecommuting Advisory Task Force.
Patron – William J. Howell

Summary:

Governor's Telework/Telecommuting Advisory Task Force. Requests the Governor to continue this Advisory Task Force and its work in order to derive further benefits from telecommunication and its technologies.