



TELEWORK

BEST PRACTICES FOR THE VIRTUAL WORKPLACE

Pros and Cons of Teleworking

The Good:

- No commute
- No dress code
- More flexibility
- Relaxed “office” culture

The Bad:

- Lack of face-to-face contact
- Communication and technical difficulties
- Time management/focus issues
- Feelings of isolation

Tip #1 – Have What You Need to Do Your Job

- Do you have the right equipment and supplies?
 - Computer – personal desktop or laptop or maybe loaner from OIT
 - Printer (maybe)
 - Internet connection
 - VPN access to County network and Remote Desktop
 - Telephone access – call forwarding or email notification of voicemails at the office
 - Office supplies – pens, printer paper, notepads, post-its, etc.

- Do you have contact information for co-workers?

- Do you have documents and other materials you need for your work?

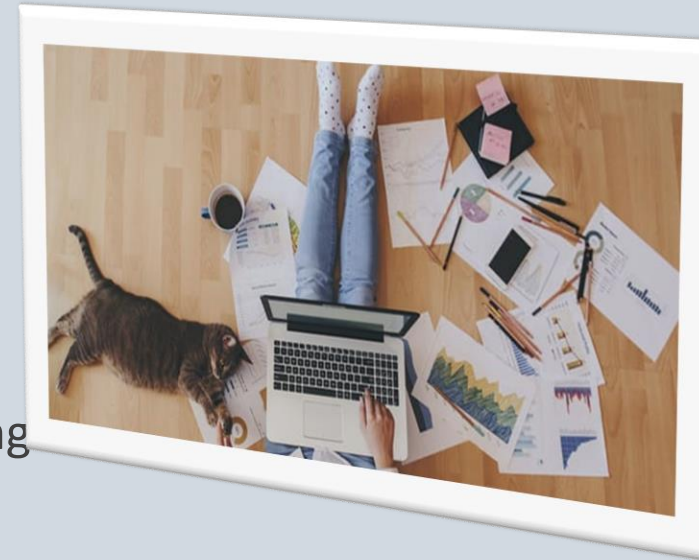
Tip #2 – Create a Functional Workspace

➤ **Set up an established “office” space**

- Can be in an existing office, another room in the house, or the kitchen table
 - but make sure it’s yours while you are working
- Easy access to computer, phone, files, etc.

➤ **Establish ground rules if sharing teleworking space**

- Let family members know when you can’t be interrupted
- Make sure kids have things to do when you have a call or virtual meeting
 - schoolwork, games, crafts, etc.
- Limit shared time to lunch, breaks or after work





Tip #3 – Follow Your Normal Routine

- Stick with your routine as if you were at the office
 - Don't hit the snooze button – get up at regular time, get dressed, eat breakfast, exercise – whatever you normally do to get ready for work
 - Keep regular work hours - your regular work schedule or telework schedule set by your supervisor

- Take your regular breaks – lunch, stretch or snack break
 - If you walk or exercise normally during lunchtime, keep up that routine
 - County policy requires employees to take work-free, 30-minute lunch break

- Look like a professional when you need to
 - No sweatshirts or baseball hats when on a virtual meeting

Tip #4 – Staying on Task

- Create a daily list of what you need to accomplish that day
 - Prioritize tasks
 - Cross off items as you complete them
- Check in with your supervisor regularly
- Keep your work area organized
- Limit distractions as much as possible
 - Have a planned schedule for kids to follow
 - Leave the laundry and other household tasks for later
- Set a timer for breaks if you need to



Tip #5 – Stay in Touch

- Many decisions made and projects completed through in-person collaboration at the office
 - Keeps employees focused on tasks
 - Working towards common goals
- Working remotely – more isolated and need to reach out for information
- Check-in regularly with co-workers as if in the office (via email/IM/phone/zoom)
- Let others know your availability for calls, meetings, etc. – shared calendar on Google
- Working on a group project? Need co-worker input?
 - Schedule virtual meetings for face-to-face discussions
- Create the occasional “virtual watercooler”
 - Social interaction with co-workers decreases feelings of isolation

Tip #6 – Don't Forget About County Policies

- Even when working remotely, County policies still apply
 - Non-Discrimination, Non-Harassment, Workplace Bullying
 - Leave usage
 - Time and attendance
 - Positive time keeping required and accurate tracking and recording of time

- Maintain confidentiality of County records, materials, and other information
 - Be familiar with OIT Administrative Procedures on using County technology, email, etc.
 - No expectation of privacy of telework activities online

- Do not work overtime hours unless a supervisor approves in advance
 - “Off-the-clock” work is not permitted



Tip # 7 - Use Your County Resources

- New employee reference page on aacounty.org website
 - Updated Telework Guidance
 - Employee Face Mask Guidance
 - Updated COVID-19 and Employee Leave Guidance
 - Health and Benefits Information – including EAP

- Other available resources:
 - Employee Relations Manual – can access through AskAnne
 - Departmental Policies/Department Personnel Liaisons
 - Union Contracts – access through Personnel webpage and AskAnne
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
 - Available 24/7
 - Contact Care Coordinator at (800) 765-3277
 - Access to online portal at www.bhsonline.com through AskAnne and employee reference page on County website

Tip # 7 - County Resources, cont'd

➤ Office of Personnel is here to help you!

- General number (410) 222-7595 or personnelannouncements@aacounty.org
- Benefits and Pension (410) 222-7400
- Recruitment/Hiring/Employment Services (410) 222-7595
- Payroll (410) 222-4535
- Employee Relations (410) 222-7595

