



TELEWORK

BEST PRACTICES FOR MANAGING EMPLOYEES IN 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

Get Your Team Off to a Good Start



- Make sure they have the right equipment and supplies
 - Computer – personal computer or maybe loaner from OIT
 - Internet connection – enough bandwidth to connect effectively
 - 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.

- Share employee contact information with team members

- Give access to other County resources or materials if appropriate for their job duties

- Have employees complete a Telework Agreement

- Confirm they have a safe workspace

Set Expectations

Establish deadlines and goals

- Consider a task or project worksheet to submit weekly
- Regularly work with employees to prioritize tasks

Electronic etiquette

Clearly define roles

Evaluate progress on a regular basis

- Focus on work product or results

Rules for communicating

- Establish frequency, method, and ideal timing for communicating with your team
- Let your employees know the best time and best way to reach you

Communicate with Staff

- Establish regular check-in's with employees
- Use technology to keep the group in touch with you and each other
 - Shared calendar on Google
 - Google hangouts for instant messaging
 - Email, Zoom video conferencing, and the old-fashioned telephone
- Schedule regular staff meetings – preferably through video conference
- Be responsive to employees – try to have a virtual “open door”
- Create a support system for employees – designate mentors or coaches
- Talk with your peers – what has worked and what hasn't for their teleworking group

Foster a Team Environment

- Find ways to keep employees engaged with each other
- Create a virtual watercooler through Zoom
 - Social interaction may help employees through the pandemic environment
 - Improves employee morale
- Provide encouragement and support for employees



Don't Forget About County Policies

- Even when working remotely, County policies still apply
 - Non-Discrimination, Non-Harassment, Workplace Bullying (ERM K-01, K-02, K-03)
 - Leave usage
 - Time and attendance
 - Positive time keeping required and accurate tracking and recording of time
- 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
- A supervisor must approve any overtime work hours in advance
 - “Off-the-clock” work is not permitted

Don't Forget About Workplace Laws

These laws still apply to the remote workplace:

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act
- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA): wage and hour compliance
- Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act): workplace safety
- Workers' compensation (WC)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

New leave laws related to COVID-19:

- Emergency Paid Sick Leave – up to two weeks of paid leave for COVID-19 related reasons
- Emergency FMLA – up to 12 weeks of paid leave for lack of childcare due to COVID-19

Use Your County Resources

New employee reference page on aaccounty.org website

- Updated Telework Guidance and Telework Agreement
- Updated 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

Office of Personnel Contacts

The 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

