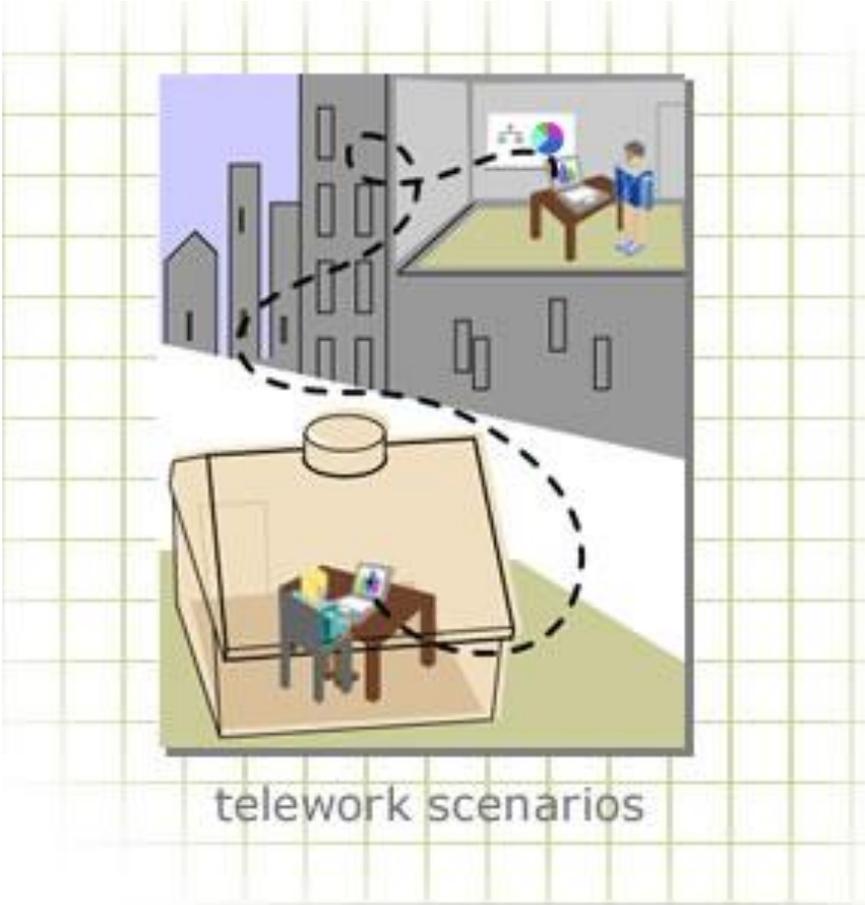


**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
OAK RIDGE OFFICE**

**TELEWORK PROGRAM**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Oak Ridge Office (ORO) is committed to supporting its employees in their accomplishment of the mission of the Agency while recognizing the need to balance professional and personal pressures, health, and family concerns. Aligned with the Department of Energy's (DOE) Telework program, and while continuing to support the DOE mission and commitments to the public at large, the following is ORO's telework program. Employee participation is voluntary, subject to management approval, and applicable provisions of the labor management agreement.

## **TELEWORK PROGRAM**

Telework is a program that covers employees who work at sites other than their official duty station (official worksite). In general, Telework assumes that some office workers who would normally be spending most or all of the regular work week working in a DOE facility will now spend some portion of that work week working from home or elsewhere off site during normal working hours. Employees who participate in a Telework Program are often referred to as "telecommuters" or "teleworkers."

Telework is a management option rather than an employee entitlement and does not change the terms and conditions of an employee's appointment. It is not a substitute for primary child or other dependent care arrangements, nor is anyone who is approved to participate assured that this work option will continue indefinitely.

### **Types of Telework Arrangements**

The Program encompasses three types of Telework arrangements:

- (1) **Routine**; i.e., regular/recurring 1 to 3 days per pay period.

This arrangement allows teleworkers to work a combination of hours at their official worksite and at alternate locations

- (2) **Situational**; i.e., project-oriented and/or short term due to unscheduled and/or emergency closure.

This arrangement allows teleworkers to work off-site for brief periods of time to complete specific short-term projects. A scheduled situational arrangement may be for more than 1 to 3 days a pay period while completing the specific project, but is not intended to continue for an extended period of time. An unscheduled situational arrangement is also appropriate during unscheduled and/or emergency building closures due to weather, maintenance issues, etc.

- (3) **Medical**

This arrangement is appropriate when an employee's personal medical condition warrants or when the medical condition of a family member creates a need to provide temporary care for the family member during a period of incapacitation, and not on an intermittent or periodic basis. Periodic medical appointments for an employee or family member are regarded as Situational arrangements when an employee is authorized to Telework on a day in which he/she has or will accompany a family member to a medical appointment. A Medical

arrangement is to be used only for a definitive periods of confinement, rehabilitation, and/or recuperation from a serious illness or injury and may be a full-time and/or part-time arrangement depending on the medical situation. A medical arrangement must always be supported by acceptable documentation from the applicable medical service provider. The supervisor may limit the number of hours to be worked based on the medical service provider's statement.

## **Coverage**

All employees are eligible to request participation in any of the Telework arrangements. The supervisor will be responsible for determining whether or not the duties identified lend themselves to be performed on a Telework arrangement.

Any employee may request to participate in the Telework Program. However, the needs of the organization or the nature of the employee's work; e.g., working with classified information, maintaining DOE facilities, needing to be in the office for face-to-face meetings, providing front-line customer service, or utilizing office resources, may limit or be reason for termination of the employee's participation in any type of Telework Program arrangement.

## **IMPLEMENTING DOE-TELEWORK**

### **Responsibilities**

#### **1. Program Coordinator - Human Resources Division**

- A. Initiate and maintain local programs, including program coordination;
- B. Issue local guidance;
- C. Ensure any needed training is provided;
- D. Maintain records on participants; and
- E. Issue Telework eligibility notice.

#### **2. Supervisors/Managers**

- A. Complete the Supervisory Telework training at [www.telework.gov](http://www.telework.gov);
- B. Provide copies of Telework training certificate to the employee requesting telework for attachment to the agreement or provide a copy of the certificate to the Human Resources Division for filing;
- C. Ensure Human Resources Division reviews the Telework Agreement prior to approval;
- D. Identify those positions that contain work assignments that can be accomplished at a telework site;
- E. Approve or recommend approval/disapproval of the employee's participation;
- F. Complete Telework agreements and recertify them annually if for more than one year duration;
- G. Verify that the participant has obtained the resources needed to work at the Telework site;
- H. Communicate specific work assignments and performance expectations;
- I. Maintain records of employee performance, work accomplishments, and quality of work;

- J. Certify the employee's time and attendance at the Telework site, along with spot-checking during agreed-upon hours of work, if there is an indication of abuse of work schedule hours;
- K. Administer leave;
- L. Except for suspected or known security violations, provide reasonable notice to the employee when conducting an inspection at the employee's Telework worksite;
- M. Equitably distribute work at the office and the various Telework sites to ensure that those who do not participate in Telework are not unduly burdened;
- N. Notify the ORO Computer Protection Program Manager, as appropriate, of the sensitivity of information to be processed at the Telework site or transmitted over a network;
- O. Identify with the Telework participant when and how the participant will be accessible; and
- P. Seek assistance from the ORO Human Resources Division when needed.

3. Employees

- A. Complete the Employee Telework training at [www.telework.gov](http://www.telework.gov);
- B. Attach copies of the employee's, supervisor's and approving official's telework training certificates to the Telework Agreement or verify that a copy of each certificate has been provided to the Human Resources Division for filing;
- C. Initiate discussion and application for Telework with supervisors;
- D. Identify appropriate job tasks/assignments (ensuring that no classified information is involved);
- E. Identify accountability/measurement tools, time to complete tasks/assignments, etc;
- F. Identify and ensure resources are available or accessible;
- G. Prepare all Telework paperwork;
- H. Ensure equipment is obtained in order to be accessible;
- I. Be accessible during agreed-upon hours of work;
- J. Report time for agreed upon hours of work;
- K. Ensure that appropriate safeguards exist to protect DOE information;
- L. Comply with applicable government regulations governing information management and electronic security procedures for safeguarding data and databases;
- M. Comply with all required security measures and disclosures provisions so that at no time are security or Privacy Act requirements compromised;
- N. Ensure any DOE-supplies are returned when no longer participating in Telework;
- O. Ensure that the Telework site is free from distractions and hazards;
- P. Notify the supervisor of any accident or injury which occurs at the Telework site during the course of the scheduled work period;
- Q. Provide required documentation from a physician when applying for Medical Telework;
- R. Request and confirm establishment of VPN Account as appropriate;
- S. **Initiate and ensure annual recertification of Routine arrangements;** and
- T. Seek assistance from the ORO Human Resources Division when needed.

4. Local Union Officials will participate in program development for bargaining unit employees.

## Requirements and Procedures

Telework Application and Agreement: A Telework agreement is to be completed for all Telework situations. Agreements may be for continuous regular and recurring periods, such as one day per pay period; for intermittent situations, such as the completion of a specific project or unscheduled building closure; or for medical situations.

Duration of a Telework Agreement: The duration of a Telework agreement depends on the type of Telework arrangement. Per DOE guidance, all agreements are to be recertified annually. In order to ensure that we meet this DOE requirement, all Routine agreements will be recertified by **January 31** of each year. Participants are encouraged to have Agreements recertified during performance appraisal discussions each year.

**Regular Telework arrangements** may continue until terminated under the procedures of this handbook. When an agreement is the first one for either or both the supervisor and employee, it is advisable to establish the agreement for a trial period of up to 90 days to ensure that the parties are comfortable with the arrangement recognizing it may be terminated at any time by either party.

**Situational Telework arrangements** are, by definition, of a relatively short duration, corresponding to the specific assignment directed by the supervisor. For example, if the employee were directed to work on an assignment over a two-day period, the duration of the situational arrangement would be two days. This type of arrangement is also appropriate for unscheduled building closures due to weather, maintenance issues, etc.

**Medical Telework arrangements** will correspond to the duration of the medical situation, as supported by adequate medical documentation prompting the original request for telework.

Approval/Disapproval of a Telework Agreement: Telework Agreements will be recommended at the lowest supervisory level. However, to ensure effective resource management and operational readiness, agreements are to be approved/disapproved by the employee's Assistant Manager, ORO, or equivalent. Agreements for offices reporting directly to the Manager's office will be approved/disapproved by the Deputy Manager, ORO. All requests are to be reviewed by the Human Resources Division.

### Modifying, Terminating, or Suspending a Telework Agreement

Telework agreements may be modified, suspended, or terminated when:

- The participant is reassigned to a different organization outside of the current Division;
- The participant is reassigned to a different position;
- There is a change in the organization's mission or staffing level;
- The participant's or organization's productivity is diminished in quantity and/or quality;
- Work products are not completed within agreed-upon time frames (assuming that the delays are within the participant's control);

- Assigned tasks change;
- The participant fails to communicate readily with the supervisor or co-workers resulting in ineffective team productivity;
- The participant is repeatedly inaccessible by telephone or e-mail during a mutually agreed-upon work schedule, or for other similar reasons;
- It is determined that sensitive information is not being adequately protected or would be subject to unacceptable risk;
- The participant's performance is evaluated at less than the Meets Expectations (ME) level or equivalent Fully Successful level; or
- The participant is disciplined for any reason

Telework agreements may be temporarily suspended:

- When the participant will be on travel;
- When the participant needs to attend essential meetings, conferences, etc.;
- When a critical or urgent assignment needs to be completed that requires the employee's presence at the official duty station;
- When needed to ensure adequate official coverage during vacation periods, etc.; or
- If the participant is randomly chosen for drug testing.

In cases where there are performance or conduct problems, the supervisor will attempt to find the causes of, and solutions for, the problems, in consultation with the employee, before terminating an agreement. Supervisors will give one week notice that an agreement is being terminated. Participants will be permitted to terminate at any time and are to give one week notice of their desire to terminate the agreement.

Positions and Employees to be Considered: Work suitable for telework depends on job content, rather than job title or type of appointment. Job duties or tasks that are usually appropriate for Telework include tasks that:

- Can be measured, tracked, or monitored, e.g., data entry or word processing, computer programming, telephone calling;
- Involve casework or research; or
- Are project-oriented; i.e., result in specific work products, e.g., data analysis, proposal reviews, literature reviews, or written reports.

Job duties or tasks that are usually not appropriate for this program are those that:

- Involve classified information;
- Involve extensive unplanned face-to-face contacts in the official duty station;
- Require access to materials that cannot be removed or are difficult to remove; or
- Involve special equipment or working in unique facilities.

Employees whose positions involve classified information should be approved for Telework participation only to the extent that the Telework tasks or activities do not involve the handling of

classified material.

Because the participant will be away from the immediate office for specific periods during the pay period, it is important for the employee to identify tasks and activities, or clusters of tasks and activities, which will continuously occupy all the hours of the Telework arrangement, even if other aspects of the participant's position are not suited to Telework.

Employees who generally should not be considered are those:

- Who are dependent on resources that cannot be accessed from a remote location;
- Who work entirely with classified information;
- Are under a Performance Assistance or Improvement Plan;
- Have had a disciplinary action within the last 12 months;
- Are under leave restrictions; or
- Have been in their current position for less than 3 months.

Change in a Supervisor or Position: A change in supervision is not an automatic basis for terminating an existing agreement. If the new supervisor has not received training on the program, then the training should occur as soon as possible. In the event the new supervisor is not comfortable with the arrangement for reasons consistent with this policy, after a reasonable period of time, the supervisor may terminate the agreement. A new supervisor may re-certify an existing agreement.

A significant change in a participant's duties warrants a review and update of an existing agreement. If there is any other change to the agreement, then an amendment or addendum that is signed by the employee and approving official may be sufficient. Telework participants and/or their supervisors should contact their Human Resources Specialist if they have questions regarding amending or updating current Agreements.

Performance Standards and Ratings: Employees are to develop, subject to the Supervisor's approval, methods for evaluating work performed at the Telework site. This should include progress reporting and/or other procedures to facilitate employee-to-supervisor communication. As provided by Section 4302 (a) (2) of title 5, U.S.C., employee participation in developing performance standards is encouraged. Supervisors and participants are to discuss tasks and expectations and are to ensure tasks and expectations are clearly defined.

Generally, evaluations of job performance for participants should be based on existing standards and expectations. In order to evaluate a participant's job performance and certify time and attendance, clearly defined work assignments and expectations are to be established.

Critical elements and performance standards for participants should generally be the same as standards for similar work performed by non-participants, with adjustments for unique circumstances encountered when working at Telework sites.

Work performance should be evaluated according to:

- Quantity and quality expectations,
- Periodic progress reports, and
- Other appropriate measures.

If the supervisor or the participant sees a deterioration of performance, he/she should not wait until the progress review to address the situation causing the problem. Both the supervisor and the employee have the responsibility for acting immediately.

Work Schedules, Pay, and Travel Issues: Participants are to work locally-approved work schedules. The supervisor and participant will agree on the days and times that the employee will work in the main office and at the alternate worksite. Having the participant work the same hours as he/she would if at the official duty station allows him/her to be in contact more easily with the supervisor, customers, and colleagues.

Telework hours are to be entered into the DOE Automated Time And Attendance Production System (ATAAPS) in order to collect data for reporting purposes to the Office of Personnel Management. The Telework codes used in ATAAPS include:

- TM – Telework Medical,
- TW – Telework Regular, and
- TS – Telework Situational.

The steps for recording Telework in ATAAPS are included below and can also be found on the CHRIS website at:

<http://chris.doe.gov/payroll/ATAAPS%20Recording%20Flexiplace-Telework.pdf>.

- Insert a line using “RG”
- Input time worked as Telework
- Save
- Click the “NtDiff/Haz/Oth” tab
- Click the “Add” tab
- Chose the appropriate Telework code: TM, TW, TS
- Input time
- Save

Existing rules in Title 5, U.S.C. on premium pay, hours of duty, and scheduling work apply to Teleworking just as they do for nonparticipants. Nonexempt participants are covered by the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Pay and travel entitlements are based on the official duty station of the participant. Normal rules and procedures apply for authorizing, approving, earning, and using leave, overtime, compensatory time, time-off awards, etc. (**Note: employees will not be allowed to earn credit time when Teleworking**).

With respect to leave, dismissals, and emergency closings, the existing policies and procedures for leave administration apply to participants at both the Telework site and the official worksite.

Except for an emergency situation, employee participation in a Telework arrangement is voluntary. During an emergency, essential and nonessential employees are expected to Telework if covered by a Telework agreement, unless there is a good reason for excusing those employees who would otherwise Telework. Employees who are not covered by a Telework agreement must be charged leave or other available category unless all nonessential employees are excused.

For work-related reasons, a participant may need to report to the official worksite for all or part of a Telework workday. When a participant is directed into the official worksite on a day, or part of a day, ordinarily scheduled for Telework, he/she should not expect to be permitted to work another day on Telework.

The participant and supervisor may agree to scheduling an alternate Telework schedule; however, if there is not sufficient flexibility in the remaining days of the pay period (e.g., others are scheduled for Telework, travel, training, or AWS), then the employee must expect to resume his/her Telework schedule the following scheduled Telework day. If possible, the participant should be permitted to return to the Telework site for the remainder of the Telework schedule not affected by the event requiring the participant's presence.

Home Office Issues: The cost of telecommunications equipment, computing equipment, and computing software will normally be the responsibility of the participant.

The opportunity to Telework is offered with the understanding that it is the responsibility of the participant to make necessary arrangements for primary dependent care that is needed during agreed-upon hours of work. Telework is not to be used as a substitute for providing regular, recurring child or other dependent care arrangements.

Employees who work at home should designate a work space in their homes for the specific reason of performing official duties. The area should be free from repetitive distractions that might adversely affect performance. It should accommodate appropriate equipment needed, e.g., desk, chair, computer, answering machine, telephone line, electrical outlets, and lighting. At a minimum, participants are to be able to easily communicate by telephone with their supervisors.

Telework sites should be safe and must be free of hazardous materials. The employee, if declaring that the Telework site is his/her home, agrees to maintain it in a reasonably safe condition, keeping it hazard free and normally free from distractions. Participants are responsible for complying with safety standards, building codes, and security requirements. The following checklist will assist employees in determining if their Telework site meets needed safety requirements.

- Ambient temperature, noise, ventilation, and lighting levels should be appropriate for comfort and normal level of job performance.
- The home (if Telework site) is provided with a fully functioning smoke detector.
- While working, the employee will be in possession of a working telephone by which to summon emergency assistance.
- Unobstructed egress is provided to evacuate to a safe location outside the home in the event of an emergency.

- All electrical equipment should be free of recognized hazards that would cause fire or electrical shock (i.e., frayed and loose wires, exposed and bare conductors, flexible wires running through doorways).
- Telephone lines, electrical, and extension cords should not pose a tripping hazard.
- Grounded (three-prong) electrical outlets should be available for use in work area.
- Power outlet strips should be fused to prevent overloading.
- Chairs should be adjustable to accommodate the employee, have a five-coaster base, be fitted with armrests, have sufficient back support, and the employee's feet should be able to reach the floor or be fully supported by a footrest.
- Work space should be neat, clean, and free of excessive amounts of combustibles.
- Floor and carpet surfaces should be well-secured, clean, dry, level, and free of worn/frayed seams.
- Work station (keyboard, monitor, and chair) should promote neutral posture (i.e., no prolonged or excessive joint or muscle strain should be experienced).
- View of the computer screen should be free from obstruction, noticeable glare or reflection, and positioned immediately in front of the employee at eye level when in use.

The employee assumes full responsibility for any damage to personal or real property that may occur as a result of his/her working at the Telework site, except to the extent that DOE is held liable by the Federal Tort claims Act or the Military Personnel and Civilian employees Claims Act. If the employee is injured during authorized hours of work at the Telework site while performing assignments, the employee may be covered by the Federal Employee Compensation Act (workers compensation program). The employee is to notify his/her supervisor promptly of any accident or injury that occurs while Teleworking and complete any required forms. Officials of DOE may investigate such a report immediately. Additional information regarding liability may be obtained from our legal support staff.

Although the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) at this time does **not** require employers to conduct safety inspections in homes, participants are required to permit home inspections by their organizations during the participant's normal working hours, when given 24 hours prior notification and when there is indication that DOE property is at risk. The inspections are designed to ensure proper use, maintenance, and accountability of DOE-owned property and that information is being protected. When an employee is suspected of a security infraction\violation, an inspection may be unannounced during the employee's scheduled hours of work. If the employee is involved in a security incident, security staff to perform mitigating activities must be provided access to the Telework site at any time and without prior notice to perform these activities.

Records Produced at a Telework Site: All records that pertain to DOE business that are created or received by the participant at the Telework site belong to DOE and will be managed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The records should not be removed from the Telework site and should not be disposed of except in accordance with applicable DOE records disposition directives. Classified material shall not be handled at any Telework site nor shall it be removed from the participant's official worksite to any Telework site.

Property and Security Issues: Any DOE installed equipment and/or software are to be treated as if it were in the official worksite in accordance with the Federal CIO Council’s guidance titled “Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment Including Information Technology,” and applicable Departmental guidance. If provided, DOE-owned equipment must be returned within 3 workdays at the conclusion of the Telework Arrangement.

DOE equipment and records must be protected from access by unauthorized individuals and destruction of records by viruses. Personal identification, passwords, access codes, etc., are to be accounted for and maintained properly. Physical security measures, such as installing approved anti-virus software, denying children access to the work area, or securing it when not in use, also are to be taken. Participants should notify their supervisors immediately following a malfunction of any DOE-owned equipment. The Department is responsible for the maintenance, repair, and replacement of any DOE equipment; however, if DOE equipment is unsecured and consequently damaged by non-participants; e.g., dependents of the participant, participants may be held liable for equipment repair or replacement. Disciplinary action on the basis of conduct may also be warranted under extreme circumstances. Participants may be required to report to the official worksite if work-dependent equipment repairs are extensive and adversely affect their ability to accomplish work assignments. Once an arrangement is terminated, the employee is responsible for returning any DOE equipment and office supplies within 3 workdays.

Computer Accounts: Participants are responsible for requesting computer account access prior to beginning a Telework arrangement. If appropriate, VPN accounts should be established to enable access to online files and records. Participants should not establish a reliance on coworkers to provide electronic documents that would otherwise be accessible if the participant were working from the official worksite.

Software: Participants must maintain ORO-approved anti-virus software on any computer equipment used at the Telework site. If ORO does not maintain the requisite license for such software, the participant may be required to bear the associated cost.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Additional information regarding telework can be found at the following sites.

### **Teleworking Information:**

U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Telework Frequently Asked Questions:  
<http://www.opm.gov/FAQS/topic/telework>

U.S. Office of Personnel Management and U.S. General Services Administration Telework training and information: [www.telework.gov](http://www.telework.gov)

DOE Notice, DOE N 314.1, dated July 5, 2011:  
<https://www.directives.doe.gov/directives/0314.1-CNotice/view>

DOE, Desk Reference on DOE-FLEX, July 2011:  
<http://humancapital.doe.gov/resources/Desk%20Reference%20on%20DOE-Flex%207-11.pdf>

**Leave and Absence:**

DOE Order, DOE O 322.1C, Pay and Leave Administration and Hours of Duty, dated January 19, 2011: <https://www.directives.doe.gov/directives/0322.1-BOrder-c/view>

DOE Handbook on Leave and Absences:

<http://humancapital.doe.gov/resources/2004-handbook-overtime-v2.pdf>

DOE Oak Ridge Office (SC-OR) Alternative Work Schedule Program Policy:

[http://scms.sc.doe.gov/orbitsearch/SubjArea/BQW/BQW\\_Exh1-02.pdf](http://scms.sc.doe.gov/orbitsearch/SubjArea/BQW/BQW_Exh1-02.pdf)