Telework
Employee Reference Guide
Table of Contents

**Part One** ................................................................................................................................ 3
  The Basics of Telework...................................................................................................................3
  Telework Guidelines ......................................................................................................................4
  Telework Guidelines(continued) .....................................................................................................5
  Responsibilities ..............................................................................................................................6
  Know Yourself ...............................................................................................................................7

**Part Two** ................................................................................................................................ 8
  Communication .............................................................................................................................8
  Essential Communication Practices .................................................................................................9
    When to say what and how ....................................................................................................................... 10
  Performance Expectations ............................................................................................................ 11
  Telework Communication Tip & Etiquette .................................................................................... 12
  Telework Communication Tip & Etiquette (continued) ............................................................... 14
  Ideas, Thoughts, Planned Actions ................................................................................................. 15
The Basics of Telework

| INTRODUCTION | This document is designed to reinforce your knowledge of the basic tenets of telework and telework best practices for temporary and traditional non-remote roles at FIU. As members of the FIU community participating in telework at FIU, clarity about the expectations and necessary conditions of the program is critical. |
| SECTIONS OVERVIEW | The session briefly covers the guidelines, agreements, and procedures of participating in the telework program. |
| LEARNING OBJECTIVES | • Describe the potential benefits of telework. • Explain telework principles and procedures. • Identify your potential strengths and weaknesses as a teleworker. • Consider various factors for setting up a workspace at home |
# Telework Guidelines

## TELEWORK ADJUSTMENTS

### DURATION

- Telework agreements in response to COVID-19 are temporary, subject to modification, and cancellation once the situation allows it.

## WORK HOURS & TELEWORK ENVIRONMENT

- The work week for all full-time regular employees is 40 hours, divided into five days, Monday through Friday; employees are scheduled to work eight hours per day. Alternate arrangements may be agreed upon to facilitate a 4-day work week with non-traditional workdays.
- For temporary employees the hours may be less than 40 hours and it may be divided into different days during the work week similar to your regular work schedule. Please consult with your direct supervisor for additional guidance on duties and expectations.
- Employees must be available to supervisors and coworkers during the core work hours of 8:30 am through 5:00 pm or during the agreed upon work schedule. Schedules must be arranged and approved by supervisors before the start of the telework arrangement.
- Supervisors may require employees to report to an FIU office as needed for work-related matters. Save for extenuating circumstances, FIU will provide notice for such occurrences.
- Teleworking is not a substitute for the care of dependents. Employees who participate in the telework program are expected to make dependent and/or childcare arrangements during work hours.

> However, under the current circumstances there will be flexibility afforded to our workforce. If your obligations for family care do not allow you to perform your duties, you will need to report sick leave when caring for family members that needs medical supervision/care or vacation leave for healthy family members.

## PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- Employees will carry out the same duties, assignments, and other work obligations while teleworking as they would when working at FIU premises as much as possible given the circumstances. If you are not able to perform your duties, please discuss a modified set of responsibilities with your direct supervisor.

## TRAINING

- Below is a comprehensive training that will provide assistance with the initial learning curve
- Prospective teleworkers are encouraged to complete the following trainings before participating in the telework program. Under exigent circumstances, this training may be done concurrent with telework participation and must be completed within first work of telework engagement.

- Remote Working: Setting Yourself and Your Teams Up for Success
- Managing Virtual Teams
### Telework Guidelines (continued)

| INFORMATION SECURITY | • Teleworkers must comply with all applicable IT, Security, Privacy, and Confidentiality policies and procedures.  
|                       | • Teleworkers must abide by the terms of the telework agreement and the guidelines of the telework policy. |
| EMERGENCY OPERATIONS  | • Teleworkers must notify their immediate supervisor in the event of an emergency and/or cases of a power failure that prevents productivity at the telework site.  
|                       | • In the event of an FIU office closure or emergency that excuses onsite employees from work, supervisors may require teleworkers to continue working at their telework site if necessary, to meet urgent business needs. |
| MODIFICATION OR TERMINATION OF PROGRAM | • Supervisors can modify telework agreements at any time based on their assessment of employee work performance; how the alternative schedule affects the overall productivity; change in the requirements of the job; or any business reason.  
|                                           | • FIU has the right to cancel or suspend employee teleworking privileges of any employee at any time. |
Employee agrees to maintain a safe and secure work environment and to report work-related injuries to employee’s supervisor at the earliest reasonable opportunity. The employee agrees to hold the University harmless for injury to others at the alternate worksite. Regarding space and equipment purchase, set-up, and maintenance for telecommuting purposes:

- The employee is responsible for providing space, telephone, networking and/or internet capabilities at the telecommute location.
- Employee agrees to protect University-owned equipment, records, and materials from unauthorized or accidental access, use, modification, destruction, or disclosure. The precautions described in this agreement apply regardless of the storage media on which information is maintained, the locations where the information is stored, the systems used to process the information, or the process by which the information is stored.
- Employee agrees to report any incidents of loss, damage, or unauthorized access to their supervisor at the earliest reasonable opportunity.
- Employee understands that all equipment, records, and materials provided by the University shall remain the property of the University.

Employee agrees to return University-owned equipment, records, and materials within two days of termination of this agreement. Within two days of written notice, Employee must return University-owned equipment for inspection, repair, replacement, or repossession.
Know Yourself

A successful telework arrangement starts with knowing your strengths and areas for growth, then developing suitable action items. Take some time and consider the following factors. Make an honest determination about how you might need to adjust your current work habits. In the right-hand column, write down any areas you may need to address in order to become a successful teleworker and discuss with your supervisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF-ASSESSMENT</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **GENERAL** | - Do you have sufficient portable work for the amount of telework proposed?  
- Are you comfortable working alone for the amount of days you have been asked to telework?  
- Will you miss the social interaction?  
- How will your teleworking affect your coworkers?  
  Do they need you in the office to complete work?  
  Will they be doing extra work because you are teleworking?  
- Are you willing to be flexible about the telework arrangement to respond to the needs of the supervisor, the workgroup, and the work?  |
| **SELF-MANAGEMENT** | - Do you have the ability to work with minimal direct supervision?  
- Do you have organized work practices?  
- Do you have good planning skills?  
- Do you have effective time management skills?  
  Are you able to meet schedules and deadlines?  |
| **TECHNOLOGY** | - Do you feel comfortable with the technologies needed to telework?  
- Are you willing to learn any new technologies required to telework?  |
| **COMMUNICATION** | - Do you have the ability to ensure good communication with your supervisor, co-workers, and faculty?  
- Will you return emails, calls, and other messages in a timely manner?  |
| **SPACE** | - Is the telework office space conducive to getting your work done?  
- Is the telework office space safe?  
- Are you able to make arrangements to ensure dependent care (i.e., childcare, elder care, or care of any other dependent adults)?  
- Will you be distracted in the telework office space (e.g., by children, friends, television, or other responsibilities)?  
- Do you have the necessary equipment at your telework site to complete work?  |
# Part Two
## Communication

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>Communication is equally critical for the success of a telework program. In Part Two, we establish communication and performance expectations and norms. In this section we discuss what appropriate communication looks like; performance expectations; and the need to establish and maintain trust with your colleagues and supervisors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SESSION OVERVIEW</strong></td>
<td>The session explains and demonstrates FIU standards of communication when participating in the telework program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **LEARNING OBJECTIVES** | - Describe the communication norms when communicating with stakeholders.  
- Demonstrate use of proper language use when communicating your telework status.  
- Recognize the importance of establishing and maintaining trust. Select appropriate communication tools based on audience and situation. |
## Essential Communication Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERAL PRINCIPLES</th>
<th>The key to succeeding as a teleworker comes down to clear and frequent communication with your supervisor, coworkers, and faculty. Some supervisors may prefer that you check in daily to review your progress, line up new tasks, and discuss any problems you may be experiencing. Some supervisors may be comfortable with you checking in less frequently. Your team members may be in constant contact or may meet once or twice a week, then work independently. It is important to agree on a communication plan that works best for you, your supervisor, and your colleagues. When you speak with your supervisor, discuss expectations as to the frequency of communication and plan suitable procedures.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNDERSTANDING YOUR AUDIENCE</td>
<td>As a teleworker, you'll need to communicate with different audiences. These are the Six Essential Audiences: 1. Faculty 2. Students 3. External Community 4. Managers/Supervisors 5. Direct reports 6. FIU colleagues Tailor your messaging to suit the exact audience with whom you are communicating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARTICIPATING IN MEETINGS</td>
<td>As an employee new to telework, there are a number of important aspects of communication that require consideration. For one, as a teleworker, you may not be able to attend many meetings in person. It is important to ensure that you set up conference lines or video chats ahead of time. For those who are in the office, it is important that those on the phone lines have the opportunity to fully contribute to the meetings. Ensure that everyone—regardless of work location—has the same opportunity to speak and be heard. Giving everyone an equal opportunity to contribute will avoid a great deal of frustration on the part of all meeting participants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When to say what and how

Here is a list of helpful technologies that facilitate a successful telework program. Consider context and the audience with whom you are communicating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNICATION MODALITY</th>
<th>TOOL</th>
<th>AUDIENCE</th>
<th>APPROPRIATE USAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text-Based</td>
<td>WhatsApp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e-mail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skype</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video</td>
<td>Zoom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Performance Expectations

| RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT | A results-oriented performance culture focuses on having a diverse and high-performing workforce, as well as a performance management system that effectively plans, monitors, develops, rates, and rewards employee performance.

In a telework environment, it becomes even more critical to manage by results and not by physical presence. Supervisors should establish a clear definition of objectives and performance indicators, and ensure those indicators are closely monitored. |
| --- | --- |
| MANAGE EXPECTATIONS AND COMMUNICATION | Although supervisors are ultimately responsible for the healthy functioning of the workgroup, teleworkers must help manage the group’s expectations and their own communication. This would help avoid any negative impact on the morale or productivity of non-teleworkers. Issues that may be addressed include:

- **Coverage**: Even with very portable work, instances in which your physical presence is required are inevitable. In such cases, a coworker needs to step in. Coworker coverage should be planned and reciprocated. Coverage should not be burdensome.

- **On-the-spot assistance**: Teleworkers may occasionally need the assistance of someone physically present at the main office to greet an instructor, for instance, or escort an instructor to the multi-media area. Again, these arrangements should not be unexpected or burdensome, and they should be reciprocal.

- **Communication**: Supervisors and coworkers need to be kept abreast of the teleworker’s schedule; how they can be reached; how to handle telephone calls or other communications directed to the teleworker; and how to work with their instructors. |
| TELEWORK REQUIRES TRUST | The key difference between the telework relationship and the in-office relationship is that your supervisor cannot see what you are doing when you are working from home.

You earn your supervisor’s trust by:

- Doing your best work.
- Completing assignments on time and meeting deliverables.
- Pitching in to help when the pressure is on.
- Offering new ideas.
- Volunteering for projects.
- Working independently without the need for close supervision.
- Keeping your supervisors informed about what you are working on and what you have accomplished. |
### MEETING ETIQUETTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN-OFFICE TEAM MEMBERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• When scheduling a meeting, set up a Zoom meeting link so that coworkers always have the option to participate remotely if necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• When sharing documents during the meeting, plan ahead by sending files to all attendees, including teleworkers, or setup a virtual collaboration room using FIU approved technology like Zoom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If there are more than two or three people in the physical meeting space, make a habit of stating your name when you speak to help avoid confusion about who is talking. Encourage meeting participants to do the same.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage teleworkers to participate. Remember that remote team members on the other end of a phone line are unable to signal to the group their wish to speak.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As above, you can help manage meeting engagement by prompting teleworkers to contribute to conversations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If there are several teleworkers on the line, make sure they are given opportunity to introduce themselves during the beginning of the call. Subsequent to introductions, ask them to mute their phone lines when not speaking in order to minimize background noise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TELEWORKERS

| • When participating in meetings, find a quiet space and join the meeting from a place free of loud background noise. When not speaking, remember to mute your phone to minimize background noise. |
| • Request team members in a physical meeting space to speak close to the phone so as to ensure that you are able to hear clearly. |
| • Be an active listener on conference calls by verbally acknowledging that you are listening. Try using short statements to paraphrase the main takeaways and request permission to ask questions. |
| • Regularly give and receive feedback. When giving feedback to your colleagues, ensure it is specific, constructive, and empathetic. Use your feedback to discuss outcomes and actions. |
| • Be fully engaged and give the meeting your full attention. Avoid multitasking or reading emails. |
| • If you have something to contribute or missed something that someone said, be sure to jump in rather than waiting to be asked. Remember that meeting facilitators cannot read your body language and may not recognize the need to pause and invite your participation. |
| • Participating in meetings via webcam is the default participation method for internal FIU team members. It is important to dress professionally. Remember, getting dressed for work will put you in a professional mindset. |
| • Keep your calendar up to date to avoid confusion and breakdown in communication. |
## Telework Communication Tip & Etiquette (continued)

| WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED | • Let colleagues, supervisors, and customers know where and when you are working. It is important that others know how to reach you, and when you are available for meetings.  
• Share your calendar with your team members.  
• Use email effectively. Use the subject line to alert the reader to the email topic, the level of urgency, and the action required.  
• Stay connected to your workplace and team members by staying available and responsive (e.g., answer calls and respond to emails promptly).  
• Agree to communication guidelines with your supervisor and team members in order to establish shared expectations for responding to queries and emails. |
| --- | --- |
| ADDITIONAL TIPS | • Maintain relationships with team members and supervisors by means of FIU-approved tools. Share calendars with team members. Be mindful of different time zones and work times. Respect free and busy times, even if you are working when others are not.  
• Choose the most effective communication channels based on the context. For a complex or potentially difficult conversation consider meeting in person or by webcam.  
• Establish communication guidelines with your supervisors and team to establish a common expectation for responding to queries and emails. |