

Department of the Navy Telework Training for Employees

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Introduction

Welcome to the Department of the Navy Telework Training for Employees. In this course, you will learn about requirements and eligibility for telework.

Learning Objectives

This training will prepare you, as a DON employee, to initiate a telework agreement, and work remotely in accordance with DoD and DON telework policy. Upon completion of this training, you will be able to:

- define telework in accordance with DoD and DON policy;
- identify personal and organizational advantages of telework;
- identify the roles and responsibilities in establishing and maintaining telework agreements; and
- identify best practices in successfully working from an alternative work site.

Telework Policy

The following section will define telework in accordance with Department of Defense and Department of the Navy telework policy.

Telework Enhancement Act 2010, Public Law 111-292

On December 9th, 2010, President Barack Obama signed the Telework Enhancement Act of 2010, requiring all federal agencies to establish telework policies to include the following:

- Improve the Continuity of Operations (COOP) by using telework as a strategy to keep government operational during inclement weather or other emergencies.
- Promote Management Effectiveness by using telework to target reductions in management costs related to employee turnover and absenteeism, and to reduce real estate costs, environmental impact and transit costs.
- Enhance Work-Life Balance by using telework to allow employees to better manage their work and family obligations, retaining a more resilient Federal workforce able to better meet agency goals.

Compliance for Telework Enhancement Act of 2010

In compliance with the Telework Enhancement Act, the Department of Defense and its components, including the DON, established appropriate policy governing the establishment, management, and maintenance of telework for federal employees.

The purpose of this policy is to actively promote and implement teleworking throughout the Department of Defense in support of the DoD's commitment to workforce efficiency, emergency preparedness, and quality of life.

It authorizes the use of telework for the maximum amount of positions without jeopardizing mission readiness. It implements telework on both a regular and ad hoc basis for eligible participants.

It establishes the need for periodic exercising of the telework program to ensure its effectiveness in continuity of operations, and it authorizes the use of telework to help create employment and return-to-work opportunities for veterans, people with disabilities, and spouses of service members.

Telework Defined

The Department of Defense defines telework as a voluntary work arrangement where an employee or service member performs assigned official duties and other authorized activities during any part of regular, paid hours at an approved alternative worksite on a regular and recurring or a situational basis. This includes work where an employee resides and works at a location beyond the local commuting area of the employing organization's worksite. It does not include any part of work done while on official travel or mobile work.

Telework Specifics

DoD and DON policy identify the types of telework as either regular or situational.

Typical locations for telework are either the employee's home or any other approved location. All telework locations must be approved by the supervisor and documented in the telework agreement. Both the position and the employee must be assessed for eligibility for telework. Eligible candidates are identified as those employees that exhibit suitable work performance and conduct, and occupy eligible positions.

All eligible employees occupying an eligible position shall complete a DD Form 2946, the DoD Telework Agreement and complete telework training prior to participating in telework even in cases of unforeseen needs such as inclement weather or emergency situations. Additionally, all hours worked via telework must be documented in the appropriate time management system.

Types of Telework

As stated earlier, there are two general types of telework: regular and situational.

Regular telework is also referred to as recurring telework, because it occurs on a regularly scheduled basis. Regular telework is defined as occurring at least once in each two-week pay period. Regular telework requires a formal agreement.

Situational telework is also referred to as ad hoc telework as it occurs on a non-routine basis. Employees may engage in ad hoc telework for various reasons. Some include special assignments, for example, to work on a large project or tasks that require concentration and uninterrupted blocks of time for successful completion; for supervisor or commander-directed web-based training or distance learning; during emergencies such as matters of national security or inclement weather conditions, or in conjunction with leave.

Locations

The telework location must be approved by the supervisor and recorded in the telework agreement. Most often, telework is conducted from home. If approved to telework from home, employees should take steps to set up their workspace in accordance with the policy and procedures of teleworking.

Employees are responsible for a safe and proper work environment. Agencies assume no responsibility for home utility costs. Employees should contact NMCI to determine the remote access requirements. NMCI remote access information may be found on the NMCI/Homeport website.

Employees should check with their local IT support staff to identify if any needed equipment is available. Some DON commands provide CAC readers and/or laptops. Government laptops are required for all PII, for official use only, and sensitive non-classified information. In order to track work time, employees record telework in a time management system such as SLDCADA.

Employees may also work from other locations identified and approved in the telework agreement. These may include a naval base closer to the employee or other government facility.

Eligibility

While the DON remains committed to maximizing participation in telework to the extent that mission is not disrupted or jeopardized, it is important to remember that telework is not an employee right.

DON employees are considered eligible to telework if their position duties, performance and conduct meet the criteria required by DON policy and applicable collective bargaining agreements. Portable work that can be completed independently, requiring only a computer and telephone, is the best type of work for telework.

Supervisors determine eligibility for telework for both the position and the employee based on mission requirements, employee performance, and the needs of the work unit. It is important to remember that supervisors must take IT remote access capacity and equipment into consideration when making telework determinations, as these limitations may compromise mission requirements.

A position may not be eligible for telework if the position requires the employee to be on site on a daily basis. This may be because the position requires face to face contact with supervisors, coworkers or customers, or access to material or special equipment available only in the office. A position may also not meet eligibility requirements if the position handles classified information on a daily basis.

An employee may not be eligible for telework if there are any performance or conduct issues. Additionally, the Telework Enhancement Act specifies two categories of employees who may not be deemed eligible to telework under any circumstances: employees who have been officially disciplined for being absent without permission for more than five days in any calendar year, and employees who have been officially disciplined for viewing, downloading, or exchanging pornography, including child pornography, on a Federal Government computer or while performing Federal Government duties.

Documentation

Each employee classified as eligible to telework must complete a telework agreement before telework may begin.

The Telework Agreement is completed by the employee and his or her supervisor. Signatures are required from both. The agreement should outline the specific work arrangement agreed upon and address the logistics of alternative workplace arrangements such as the employee's work schedule, security requirements for DoD information, safety requirements for the alternate workplace, supplies and equipment issued, protection of government-furnished equipment, the supervisor's expectations of the employee's performance, and the employee's emergency response telework responsibilities. All telework agreements should address, at a minimum, the telework location, requirements for when the traditional worksite is closed, and instructions on whether sensitive unclassified or competition sensitive source selection data is authorized for use at the telework location. If authorized, the DD Form 2946 shall include a description of the proper encryption, storage, safeguarding, and return of such information and data.

Telework agreements shall be reviewed by the supervisor and teleworker, revalidated at least every two years, and revised when appropriate. A new DD Form 2946 should be completed when a new supervisor is responsible for the employee.

Progress Check Question 1

Before we continue ahead, let's take a moment to assess your knowledge on telework policy. Review the following questions and select the best answer for each question.

A request for unscheduled telework during a snowstorm is an example of what type of telework?

- a) regular
- b) ad hoc/situational
- c) Both a and b

The correct response is b. Situational telework is also referred to as ad hoc telework as it occurs on a non-routine basis. Teleworking during emergencies such as matters of national security or inclement weather conditions are considered situational telework. All telework agreements will include the employee's eligibility and procedures for both regular and situational telework.

Progress Check Question 2

What type of telework requires an official written agreement, DD Form 2946?

- a) regular
- b) ad hoc/situational
- c) Both a and b

The correct response is c. All types of telework require a DD Form 2946. All employees initially requesting telework must present the supervisor with a completed DD 2946.

Progress Check Question 3

Yes or No. Are all positions eligible for telework?

- a) Yes
- b) No

The correct response is b. Not all positions are eligible for telework. The DoD policy states that positions that require the employee to be on site on a daily basis or require the handling of classified information on a daily basis are not eligible for telework. Additionally, employees in eligible positions must be considered for eligibility as well. Policy considers employees with documented poor conduct, less than successful performance, those disciplined for absence without permission for five days in a calendar year, or for viewing or downloading pornography on a government computer or during government duties not eligible for telework.

Progress Check Question 4

Who determines the telework eligibility and frequency?

- a) the employees
- b) the supervisor
- c) the major command Telework Coordinator

The correct response is b. Supervisors must determine telework eligibility for each position they oversee. They must also determine the eligibility of each employee and are responsible for gauging the extent telework may be practiced to ensure mission readiness and support organizational needs.

Progress Check Question 5

According to DoD telework policy, eligible employees should be allowed to telework:

- a) only during emergencies
- b) a minimum of once per pay period
- c) a minimum of once per week
- d) to the maximum extent possible

The correct response is d. DoD policy states that eligible employees in eligible positions should be allowed to telework to the maximum extent possible without compromising mission readiness.

Advantages of Telework

The following section will discuss the personal and organizational advantages of telework.

Benefits of Telework

Telework holds advantages for employees, commands, and even the local community. Organizational benefits include:

- a reduction in office overcrowding,
- a reduction in the need for extensive office space and parking,
- improved employee retention, and
- support for continuity of operations (COOP) in the event of an emergency.

Employee benefits include:

- accommodation for persons with disabilities,
- improved productivity by providing a quiet, uninterrupted work environment, and
- a reduction in employee stress.

Benefits for both the organization and employee include:

- a recruitment incentive for hard-to-recruit professions,
- support for hiring of Wounded Warriors and military spouses, and
- a reduction in traffic congestion, energy consumption and pollution.

While telework provides benefits for employee work/life balance, it is not a substitute for dependent care.

Benefits of Telework - Example 1

An example of the possible benefits of telework in an emergency situation is the Flu Crisis of 1918, where social distancing made the difference between life and death.

In 1918, the United States was hit with a Spanish Flu pandemic that spread from New England across the West. Two major cities affected by the pandemic were Philadelphia and St. Louis.

In response to the increasing number of casualties, the mayor of St. Louis implemented a social distancing policy and closed down schools, theaters, moving picture shows, pool and billiard halls, churches, cabarets, lodges, public funerals, dance halls, open air meetings and conventions for over a month.

The mayor of Philadelphia did not implement the same policy. As a result, the death toll in St. Louis was significantly less than in Philadelphia, concluding that social distancing during a pandemic flu crisis minimizes the impact.

Benefits of Telework - Example 2

More recently, inclement weather has caused various emergency situations impacting continuity of operations. An example is the snowstorm system that hit the east coast during the 2009-2010 winter season.

The mid-Atlantic and New England states were hit repeatedly by blizzards from December 2009 until the end of February 2010. These storms closed down most of the region, impeding modes of transportation, interrupting utility services, and causing federal offices to close down for many days at a time.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Due to these unexpected events, OPM frequently updates their online homepage with the status of the workforce. If the workforce is recommended to stay home due to inclement weather, pandemic crisis or national security, the webpage will advise the workforce in the Washington DC beltway area of their option to practice unscheduled telework or unscheduled leave.

For those outside the Washington DC beltway area, these decisions are made by the installation commander and announced through the established communication process. It is important to note that to take advantage of any type of telework, including unscheduled telework, employees must have a telework agreement on file signed by their current supervisor and themselves.

Progress Check Question 1

Before we continue ahead, let's take a moment to assess your knowledge on the advantages of telework. Review the following questions and select the best answer for each question.

Telework is beneficial to an organization because it supports:

- a) recruitment and retention of talent
- b) reduced real estate usage and costs
- c) emergency preparedness
- d) all of the above

The correct response is d. There are many possible organizational benefits to the telework program. The benefits include: providing recruitment and retention incentives for talent, reducing real estate usage and cost, and supporting emergency preparedness.

Progress Check Question 2

Telework is beneficial to employees because it supports:

- a) improved productivity by providing a quiet, uninterrupted work environment
- b) long-term dependent care
- c) employees with disabilities
- d) Both a and c

The correct response is d. There are many possible employee benefits to the telework program. The benefits include: providing a quiet, uninterrupted work environment and supporting needs of employee with disabilities. Though telework provides numerous benefits to employees, it is not a substitute for dependent care.

Telework Roles and Responsibilities

The following section will identify roles and responsibilities in establishing and maintaining a telework agreement.

Telework Cycle

Establishing and maintaining a telework agreement entails many responsibilities. Both you and your supervisor have roles throughout the telework cycle. This cycle includes:

- Preparing for telework
- Completing the agreement
- Teleworking
- Maintaining the telework agreement

The following sections will discuss these responsibilities and review the telework cycle.

Employee/Supervisor Responsibilities

Before you even begin to fill out a telework agreement, there are many initial tasks both you and your supervisor must complete. The first is to complete telework training. Telework training is required for employee and supervisors. This training provides both with information needed to enter into a telework agreement and effectively manage or conduct telework.

Employees and supervisors should familiarize themselves with their command telework coordinator. This individual is the source for all telework policy and procedures. They will be able to answer questions and concerns relating to telework policy and may be able to assist you with obtaining any equipment that your command might provide.

Determine Eligibility

Before you can initiate your telework agreement, your supervisor must first determine eligibility for each position and employee they supervise. Once they have made these determinations, your supervisor will inform you and document your eligibility status. If you and your position are eligible, you may then consider initiating a telework agreement.

Best Practice - Determine Telework

Another important task to complete before initiating a telework agreement, employees should conduct a self-assessment to determine whether they are a good candidate for telework.

As a best practice, consider the following factors in making an honest determination about your telework capabilities:

- Do you have sufficient portable work for the amount of telework being proposed?
- Do you have the ability to work independently, without close supervision?
- Are you comfortable with the technologies, if any, which will be needed to telework?
- Do you communicate well enough with your supervisor, co-workers, so that transition from onsite to offsite is relatively seamless?
- Do you have telework office space that is conducive to getting the work done?
- Do you have established dependent care (for example, child care, elder care, or care of any other dependent adults) arrangements?
- Do you have the ability to be flexible about the telework agreement, to respond to the needs of your supervisor, the workgroup, and the work?

Realistically answering these questions will help you evaluate the likely success of teleworking.

Telework Agreement

As the employee, you are responsible for initiating the DD Form 2946 Telework Agreement. This form may be found on the DON HR public portal website at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/MRA/DONHR/Worklife/Pages/default.aspx>

You expand the Work Life Topic: Telework list and select the PDF file titled DD Form 2946. This form is mandated for all DoD components. The agreement consists of six parts:

- Instructions on how to complete the form
- Component-specific Terms and Conditions. This section provides component-specific guidance and requirements for telework.
- The Agreement Details. This section includes the employee's name, title, and grade level, as well as information about the telework location, schedule, and the type of telework that is being approved or denied.
- The Safety Checklist. This section is for the employee to self-certify that the telework office meets the safety and security requirements.
- The Technology/Equipment Checklist. This section identifies any equipment that may be necessary for telework and who is responsible for providing it. It also identifies remote access capabilities required for the agreement.
- The Telework Cancellation Section. This section is used to detail why the agreement is being canceled.

Once you have initiated the agreement, you will discuss and review the agreement with your supervisor. Together, you will finalize the guidelines and expectations of the agreement. Your supervisor has the final approval over the telework agreement. The agreement is official once you and your supervisor have signed the document. Together, you will also periodically evaluate the arrangement, make changes as necessary, and re-sign the document.

Communication

A key to successful telework is communication. Employees and supervisors are responsible for facilitating and maintaining lines of communication with your coworkers, customers, and each other.

Your supervisor must inform staff of any changes in duties in support of your telework and also be available for any duties they are responsible for in support of your assignments while you are offsite.

It is your responsibility to frequently check the voicemail and email accounts you have identified as your modes of communication. Also, return calls and emails in a timely manner.

Performance Standards

You, as an employee, must maintain the same performance standards established in your performance plan and meet any specific requirements in your telework agreement. Performance expectations do not change due to location. Telework is not a right, and poor performance may result in termination of the telework agreement.

Portability of Work

You, as an employee, must evaluate the portability of your work and prepare for telework. You should assess the level of technology available at the remote site as you prepare for telework. In many cases, employees will need to plan for their telework days in order to be as effective as possible. Consider 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 (for example, forwarding the phone)?
- In the case of emergency telework, what should I have available at all times at my home office that would enable me to be functional without coming onsite to retrieve materials?

You are also required to update your telework hours in the appropriate time management system.

Safeguard GFE

You must safeguard government-furnished equipment, data and other information while teleworking. Be familiar with DoD and DON information security requirements and complete required information security training.

Adhere to any additional security measures if handling sensitive or classified material as defined in the Telework Agreement. Set up your telework workspace in accordance to the policy standards established by NMCI.

Maintaining the Telework Agreement

Employees and supervisors should continue maintenance of the telework agreement when necessary. You and your supervisor will re-evaluate the agreement at least every two years, but there may be reason to do so more frequently.

If changes to your location, work schedule, or eligibility occur they should be annotated in the telework agreement. If there is a change in your position, responsibilities, or organizational needs, your supervisor may need to alter your telework agreement.

If you are assigned a different supervisor, you and your new supervisor may need to prepare a new telework agreement. Remember that telework is not a right. There may be reason to cancel your telework agreement, whether poor performance or a change in organizational needs, among other things. If a cancellation of telework occurs, this must be documented on the DD Form 2946 as well.

Progress Check Question 1

Before we continue ahead, let's take a moment to assess your knowledge on telework roles and responsibilities. Review the following questions and select the best answer for each question.

Performance management for telework employees is:

- a) very different for employees located in the office due to an increased necessity to assure work assignments are complete in a timely manner
- b) different from in the office workers because a manager cannot visually see the employee performing the assigned work
- c) the same for both in the office and teleworking employees requiring the completion of performance based objectives
- d) different based on the criteria of DoD Performance Management policy

The correct response is c. Performance management does not change due to the employee's location. Employees teleworking must adhere to the performance standards established in their performance plan.

Progress Check Question 2

True or False. Leave may be taken in conjunction with telework.

- a) True
- b) False

The correct response is a. Personnel may take leave in conjunction with telework.

Progress Check Question 3

True or False. If an employee is injured during work hours while teleworking, he or she may still be covered by Workers' Compensation.

- a) True
- b) False

The correct response is a. Teleworkers are covered under the appropriate injured workers' compensation benefit program while at their approved alternative worksite for any injuries incurred during work hours.

Best Practices

The following section will identify best practices in successful telework.

Best Practices for Successful Telework

While performance standards are the same for teleworking and working onsite, there are considerations to keep in mind in order for telework to be successful. Consider the following:

- Maintain lines of communication. Identify and communicate your email, phone, and fax contact information to stay in contact with customers, peers, and your supervisor. Check your email and voicemail frequently and promptly respond to any missed communications. Maintaining clear communication is the key to successful telework. This will ensure your accessibility regardless of location.
- Complete your assignments. Adhere to guidelines established in the agreement and maintain performance standards. This creates a positive telework experience for both you and your supervisor.
- Be prepared when conducting unscheduled telework. Be sure to follow procedures established by your supervisor for notification of unscheduled telework. This may include ensuring receipt of notification such as a returned call, email, or text to verify that the telework is approved. Ensure you have necessary information, equipment, and documents when teleworking. Be prepared by obtaining copies or access to information needed for current assignments, and inform any staff, that you may be working on projects with, of your contact information.
- When teleworking, you are responsible for the safety of government-furnished equipment and information. Be sure to keep government equipment and information safe and secured in accordance with DON telework policy and the safety checklist found in the DD Form 2946 from the DON HR portal. Consider securing papers in a lockable file cabinet and electronic files with sensitive or PII information by password-protecting the file. Equipment can also be stored in secured cabinets. Only use government-furnished equipment in the authorized telework location that meets the safety checklist standards. Food and beverage should be kept away from electronic equipment, and your remote office should be located in a safe, dry ventilated area.

Progress Check Question 1

Before we conclude this training, let's take a moment to assess your knowledge on best practices for successful telework. Review the following questions and select the best answer for each question.

True or False. Supervisors should manage teleworking personnel much more closely than on-site personnel, requiring additional verification of time management and assignment completion.

- a) True
- b) False

The correct response is b. Performance management is the same for on-site and teleworking personnel. Establish clear performance and communication expectations to facilitate productivity.

Progress Check Question 2

True or False. Since the Department of the Navy's remote access IT capacity is unlimited, the supervisor does not necessarily have to check with the IT department prior to authorizing telework for employees.

- a) True
- b) False

The correct response is b. Remote access capacity and equipment are limited. Supervisors should check with the IT department to determine available resources when making telework determinations.

Course Summary

In this lesson, we:

- defined telework in accordance with DoD and DON policy;
- identified personal and organizational advantages of telework;
- identified the roles and responsibilities in establishing and maintaining telework agreements; and
- identified best practices for successful telework.

Reference

This learning product was developed by the Department of the Navy's Office of Civilian Human Resources.

Course Completion

Congratulations! You have just completed Telework Training for Employees.



Certificate of Completion

Presented to

for completing the
Telework Training for Employees

Kimberly J. Lane

Director, Civilian Workforce
Development Division

Date