

Balancing Work and Family Demands Through Telecommuting



United States
Office of
Personnel
Management

Work and
Family
Program
Center

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Telecommuting: Glancing Backward and Moving Forward

More than a century ago, most workers in the United States, like many of us today, began their day before the first hint of sunlight. The business of work took place at home where farmers tended fields, harvested crops, and raised livestock. But as our economy shifted from farming to industry, so too did the workplace. Thousands of workers left farms to work in urban factories and offices. The workplace and home ceased to be synonymous. Yet, as we approach a new century, we are glancing backward at the practices of another time. Working at home, or in some cases at a telecenter, is regaining prominence. We are a society overwhelmed by pollution, traffic jams, and seemingly endless commutes to work. Time with our families is often minimal. And so we look to telecommuting as one solution to these problems.

The Federal Government has taken a lead in promoting telecommuting. President Clinton issued two memoranda on creating a family-friendly workplace, one on July 11, 1994, and another on June 21, 1996, that directed each executive department and agency to support the expansion of flexible family-friendly work arrangements, including greater use of home-based telecommuting and telecenters.

The President's Management Council endorsed a *National Telecommuting Initiative (NTI)* in January 1996. The plan calls for significantly increasing the numbers of Federal employees who telecommute over the next few years.

This guide is intended to help you create a program for your agency.

The President's Support



*President Clinton
to the Heads of Executive Departments
and Agencies*

June 21, 1996

"... today I am directing all executive departments and agencies to review their personnel practices and develop a plan of action to utilize the flexible policies already in place and, to the extent feasible, expand their ability to provide their employees . . . opportunities to telecommute, when possible . . ."

July 11, 1994

"The head of each executive department or agency . . . is hereby directed to establish a program to encourage and support the expansion of flexible family-friendly work arrangements, including . . . telecommuting and satellite work locations . . ."

The full text of these memoranda is available for downloading from *OPM ONLINE* at 202-606-4800 or by contacting the U.S. Office of Personnel Management at 202-606-5520 or workandfamily@opm.gov

National Telecommuting Initiative

President's Management Council

January 1996

Goals:

When?	# Federal Employees	\$ Facility Savings
FY' 98	60,000	\$150 Million
FY' 02	160,000	\$ 2 Billion

For a copy of the plan, contact the U. S. Department of Transportation at 202-366-5403.

Governmentwide Pilot Project

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) developed these guidelines based on a 1992 Governmentwide project in which employees from 14 Federal agencies worked at their homes rather than their regular offices for a 12-month period. In the project evaluation, supervisors reported that individual and organizational performance was as good as or better than before. Employees reported improved motivation and quality of life as well as reduced commuting time, job-related expenses, and sick leave use. Labor-management cooperation contributed to the success of the agency pilot programs.

Since the conclusion of the work-at-home pilot study, the Federal Government has continued its efforts to expand the use of alternate workplace arrangements. Federal telecommuting programs allow employees to fulfill their job responsibilities at a site other than their principal office one or more days of the week.

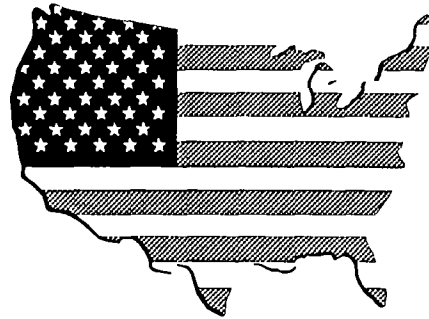
The alternative worksite is typically the employee's home or a telecenter. A telecenter is a multi-agency facility that provides a geographically convenient office setting as an alternative to the employee's main office. A telecenter can also serve as an administrative support center for employees working at home. The guidance provided here was written specifically for agencies with employees who participate in a work-at-home arrangement. However, most of this guidance also applies to telecenter programs.

Reasons For Telecommuting

Employers offer alternative workplace arrangements for many reasons.

Telecommuting:

- Improves the quality of worklife and job performance and increases productivity, e.g., reduces office overcrowding and provides a distraction-free environment for reading, thinking, and writing;
- Improves morale and reduces stress by giving employees more options to balance work and family demands;
- Increases customer access to needed services, e.g., taxpayers and veterans in Santa Clarita Valley, California, avoid long commutes into downtown Los Angeles by obtaining assistance from Internal Revenue Service employees and Veterans Affairs benefits counselors at the nearby Valencia Telecommuting Center;
- Provides services when the regular office is closed, e.g., after a natural disaster or during an energy or transportation emergency;
- Extends employment opportunities to people with disabilities, including employees who have partially recovered from work-related injuries who can do the job from an off-site location;
- Accommodates employees who have temporary or continuing health problems or who might otherwise have to retire on disability;
- Potentially enhances recruitment and promotes diversity by expanding the geographic recruitment pool; and
- Decreases traffic and parking congestion, energy consumption, and air pollution.



Facts and Forecasting

- Telecommuting has been used to continue work activities after the 1994 northern California earthquakes and the Oklahoma City bombing, and during the 1996 Olympic games in Atlanta.
- It is estimated that 11 million workers in the United States currently use an alternative workplace (most commonly the home) one or more days a week.
- By the year 2002, it is projected that as many as 15 million people in the United States will work at an alternative worksite on an average of three to four days a week.
- Current trends toward telecommuting are estimated to save approximately 1.5 billion gallons of motor fuel per year by the year 2002.

Resources



The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the General Services Administration (GSA) provide information about Federal telecommuting practices through various means. Information is available on the Internet and via a computer bulletin board. Questions may be directed to OPM and GSA by way of email, fax, or telephone.

OPM operates *OPM ONLINE*, which is a computer bulletin board. It has publications which may be downloaded and a forum which may be used to exchange information between agencies about various personnel issues. To access *OPM ONLINE*, you will need a personal computer, a modem, communications software, and a telephone or Internet connection. Information about telecommuting appears in the *Work and Family/Flexiplace* forum of the bulletin board.

How to reach OPM:

Internet email - workandfamily@opm.gov

OPM ONLINE - 202-606-4800

Telephone - 202-606-5520

Fax - 202-606-2091

How to reach GSA:

Internet homepage -

<http://www.gsa.gov/pbs/owi/telecomm.htm>

Internet email - james.aden@gsa.gov

Telephone - 202-273- 4660

Fax - 202-273-4670

Basic Parameters for Telecommuting in Federal Agencies

When establishing a telecommuting program, agencies should keep in mind the basic guidelines listed below.

- Telecommuting is a management option rather than an employee benefit and does not change the terms and conditions of appointment.
- Employee participation is voluntary and subject to management approval.
- An employee who works a telecommuting schedule (other than for short periods) should sign an agreement with the agency. (Agencies may use or modify the sample agreement on pages 13-15.)
- Canceling the work arrangement is up to either the employee or the supervisor, with notice and in accordance with any procedures the agency establishes.
- Telecommuting should not adversely affect the performance of the employee who is telecommuting or his or her co-workers.
- Supervisors must properly certify time and attendance.
- The employee must have a safe and adequate place to work off-site that is free from interruptions and that provides the necessary level of security and protection for Government property.
- Although telecommuting will give some employees more time for their family

responsibilities, they may not use duty time for providing dependent care or any purpose other than official duties.

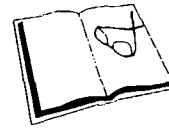
- The Government may place Government-owned computers and telecommunications equipment in employee homes or at other alternative worksites, but the Government retains ownership and control of hardware, software, and data. Such equipment is for official use only, and its repair and maintenance are the responsibility of the agency.
- Agencies may provide employees with telephone credit cards. To the extent permitted by law, agencies may pay for the installation of telephone lines in private residences. Public Law 104-52 allows agencies to use funds to install telephone lines, and necessary equipment, and to pay monthly charges in any private residence or private apartment of an employee who has been authorized to work-at-home.

Conditions for Successful Telecommuting Arrangements

Experience in the public and private sectors has yielded information about factors that contribute to successful alternative workplace arrangements. Agencies should consider the following suggestions when establishing a telecommuting program.

Develop Formal Policies. Written policies and procedures are needed to ensure understanding and avoid misunderstanding about the terms and conditions of employment. Policies should cover short-term as well as continuing arrangements. As a supplement to written materials,

References



Telecommuting Briefing Kit, Office of Personnel Management, September 1997. (Call OPM at 202-606-5520 or email workandfamily@opm.gov)

Agencies' Policies and Views on Flexiplace in the Federal Government, GAO/GGD-97-116, General Accounting Office, July 1997. (Call GAO at 202-512-6000 or email info@www.gao.gov)

Bibliography on Workplace Practices & Programs, Office of Personnel Management, July 1996. (Call OPM at 202-606-5520 or email workandfamily@opm.gov)

President's Management Council National Telecommuting Initiative Action Plan, President's Management Council Interagency Telecommuting Working Group, January 1996. (Call the Department of Transportation at 202-366-5403 or email ed.weiner@ost.dot.gov)

Interim Report: Federal Interagency Telecommuting Centers, General Services Administration, March 1995. (Call GSA at 202-273-4660 or email james.aden@gsa.gov)

The Federal Flexible Workplace Pilot Project Work-at-Home Component, Final Report, Office of Personnel Management, January 1993. (Call OPM at 202-606-5520 or email workandfamily@opm.gov)

Telecenter Sites

(as of September 1997)

The following is a list of telecenter sites available to Federal employees as of September 1997. The program continues to expand to include additional sites in metropolitan areas across the country. For the most current list of telecenter sites or to obtain additional information about utilizing a telecenter, see <http://www.gsa.gov/pbs/owi/tclist.htm> or call the General Services Administration at 202-273-4660.

Washington, DC Metropolitan Area

- California, MD
- Frederick, MD
- Hagerstown, MD
- Laurel, MD
- Prince Frederick, MD
- Reisterstown, MD
- Silver Spring, MD
- Waldorf, MD
- Fairfax, VA
- Fredericksburg, VA
- Herndon, VA
- Manassas, VA
- Stafford, VA
- Sterling, VA
- Winchester, VA

orientation sessions for telecommuting employees and their supervisors ensure a common understanding of the program requirements.

Suitability of Work. The nature of the work should be suitable for telecommuting. Work suitable for telecommuting depends on job content, rather than job title, type of appointment, or work schedule. For example, telecommuting is feasible for work that requires thinking and writing -- data analysis, reviewing grants or cases, writing decisions or reports; telephone-intensive tasks -- setting up a conference, obtaining information, following up on participants in a study; and for computer-oriented tasks -- programming, data entry, and word processing. Positions in the Government-wide project included writer/editor, scientist, investigator, psychologist, environmental engineer, budget analyst, tax examiner, and computer specialist.

Work may not be suitable for telecommuting if:

- the employee needs to have extensive face-to-face contact with the supervisor, other employees, clients, or the general public;
- the employee needs frequent access to material that cannot be moved from the regular office;
- the agency cannot provide any special facilities or equipment that are necessary; or
- it would be too costly for the agency to duplicate the same level of security at the alternative workplace.

Employees and Supervisors. The characteristics of an employee are particularly impor-

tant. The employee should be an organized, highly disciplined, and conscientious self-starter who requires minimal supervision. His or her performance should be at least "fully successful." In certain situations, however, a supervisor may choose to offer telecommuting as a way to help an employee improve performance.

Telecommuting is not suitable for employees who need to be in the office to learn the organization, who require on-the-job training, who need close supervision, or who thrive on interaction with co-workers and would suffer from the isolation of working alone. The characteristics of the supervisor are also critical. He or she should be willing to try out the new arrangement and take the necessary steps to ensure its success. Most importantly, the supervisor should be comfortable managing by results.

Workplace Schedules. Most telecommuting employees spend part of the workweek in the regular office to improve communication, minimize isolation, and use facilities not available offsite. Agencies should develop flexible procedures that allow supervisors and telecommuters to determine the best balance for individual situations.

Personnel Policies and Procedures

The following personnel issues should be addressed when implementing a plan.

Official Duty Station. It is recommended that agencies designate the telecommuter's main office as the official duty station for such purposes as special salary rates, locality pay adjustments, and travel. This is likely to be the simplest and most economical approach;

Other Telecenter Sites

- Anaheim, CA
- Bishop, CA
- Chula Vista, CA
- Compton, CA
- Diamond Bar, CA
- Grass Valley, CA
- Highland, CA
- Irvine, CA
- Lancaster, CA
- Long Beach, CA
- Los Angeles, CA
- Los Banos, CA
- Nevada City, CA
- Oceanside, CA
- Pomona, CA
- San Francisco, CA
- San Juan Capistrano, CA
- Santa Rosa, CA
- Torrance, CA
- Vacaville, CA
- Valencia, CA
- Ventura, CA
- Victorville, CA
- Fayetteville, GA
- Gainesville, GA
- Kennesaw, GA
- Lithonia, GA
- Chicago, IL
- Downer's Grove, IL
- Cambridge, MN
- Cincinnati, OH
- Oklahoma City, OK
- Mountlake Terrace, WA
- Ranson, WV

however, agencies may make their own determinations.

Hours of Duty. The existing rules on hours of duty apply to telecommuting employees. Management determines the employee's work schedule consistent with the requirements of the work group and provisions of applicable bargaining agreements. Agencies may approve alternative work schedules for telecommuting employees.

Pay and Leave. Existing rules on pay and leave administration apply to telecommuting employees. Special provisions on overtime pay and night pay for employees on alternative work schedules may make it easier for telecommuting employees to work at the times they are most productive.

Overtime. The existing rules on overtime under title 5, United States Code, and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) apply to telecommuting employees. Supervisors should make sure that telecommuting employees work overtime only with advance approval.

Certification and Control of Time and Attendance. Supervisors must report time and attendance to ensure that telecommuting employees are paid for work performed and that absences from scheduled tours of duty are accounted for. The General Accounting Office (GAO) requires agencies with employees working at remote sites to provide reasonable assurance that the employees are working when scheduled, for example, by determining the reasonableness of the work output for the time spent or by having the supervisor make occasional telephone calls or visits during the employee's scheduled work time. (See title 6 of GAO's Policy and Procedures Manual for the Guidance to Federal Agencies.)

Steps for Implementing Telecommuting



- Designate an agency telecommuting coordinator and contact.
- Determine employee interest.
- Involve local union representatives.
- Explore which type(s) of alternative workplace arrangement -- home-based or telecenter -- will be feasible in your agency.
- If applicable, visit telecenters.
- Discuss the feasibility of possible alternative workplace arrangements with interested employees.
- Identify equipment needs and costs.
- Identify specific positions that would be appropriate for telecommuting arrangements.
- Obtain the necessary approval from within your agency.
- Make an official announcement and commitment to the program.
- Train all individuals involved.
- Implement the program and assess its results.

Position Descriptions and Performance Standards. Telecommuting will seldom require major changes in position descriptions but may affect factors such as supervisory controls or work environment. Performance standards for telecommuting employees should be results-oriented and should describe the quantity and quality of expected work products and the method of evaluation. Generally, supervisors will use the same measures for telecommuting employees and employees who perform similar tasks in the regular office.

Home Inspections. Agencies should make sure that the telecommuting employee's worksite meets acceptable standards. Some agencies in the Governmentwide project required employees to complete a self-certification safety inspection form (see sample on pages 17-19). Onsite inspections, with adequate notice to the employee, are another option.

Workers' Compensation. Telecommuting employees are covered by the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) and may qualify for payment for on-the-job injury or occupational illness.

Group Dismissal. A telecommuting employee may sometimes be affected by an emergency and may be excused from work. For example, on a "snow closing day," the agency may excuse a telecommuting employee if he or she cannot perform work because the regular office is closed and/or the alternative worksite is affected by the emergency. The agency should grant the telecommuting employee excused absence as appropriate. When an emergency affects only the alternative worksite for a major portion of the workday, the agency can require the telecommuting employee to report to the regular office, approve annual leave or leave-without-pay, or authorize an excused absence.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Who is responsible for approving an employee's request to telecommute?

A. Each Federal agency sets up its own approval process, but generally the immediate supervisor must agree to a specific employee's request.

Q. What role do unions play?

A. Agencies are strongly encouraged to develop their telecommuting programs in partnership with their unions and other stakeholders. Telecommuting affects conditions of employment and agencies must consult and negotiate with unions, as appropriate, regarding telecommuting programs.

Q. Does an employee have a right to telecommute? Could an employee be forced to work at home?

A. No, to both questions. Subject to any applicable union agreement, management decides whether the employee can work off-site, depending on the nature of the position and the characteristics of the employee. Management has the right to end an employee's use of the telecommuting option if, for example, the employee's performance declines or if the arrangement no longer meets the organization's needs.

Q. Can telecommuting help an employee with child or other dependent care needs?

A. Telecommuting can provide valuable assistance with dependent care. Time saved commuting to work can be spent with family members. For example, a parent may need less

after-school care for a school-age child, or an adult child may have time to take an aging parent to the doctor. However, employees should not be caring for children when they are working at home.

Q. Won't the employee's work suffer without direct, on-site supervision?

A. The opposite is more often the case, partly because the employee working at home has fewer interruptions and distractions and partly because the individual has a strong incentive to demonstrate the value of working at home.

Q. How can the supervisor monitor work performance when the employee is not physically present?

A. Managers can measure what the employee produces by examining the product or results of the employee's efforts. It is also helpful to use project schedules, key milestones, regular status reports, and team reviews. Supervisors may call employees who are working at home.

Q. Can telecommuters follow an alternative work schedule?

A. Yes. In fact, telecommuting work schedules should be sufficiently flexible to permit periodic work schedule adjustments. Initial telecommuting schedules may require trial and error adjustments to determine the optimal schedule to meet the needs of the employee and the organization.

Q. What about the impact on the office when some employees are working at an alternative worksite?

A. Certain guidelines must be established to minimize adverse impact on other staff members before employees begin to work at alternative worksites. The overall interests of the office must take precedence over working at alternative sites. A supervisor may require an employee to work at the main worksite on a day scheduled for an alternative worksite if the needs of the office so require. Telecommuting should not put a burden on staff remaining in the office. An equitable distribution of workload should be maintained, and methods should be instituted to ensure that main office employees are not saddled with the telecommuter's responsibilities.

Q. What equipment will the employee need at the home-based worksite and who will provide it?

A. The needed equipment and who will provide it will vary by situation. Generally speaking, organizations are not required to provide equipment at home-based worksites. Each agency must establish its own policies on the provision and installation of equipment.

Q. Do all telecommuters work with high-tech equipment?

A. No. While technology can be very helpful to most telecommuters, a simple telephone may suffice for many.

Q. Who is responsible for maintaining and servicing Government or privately-owned equipment used at the alternative worksite?

A. Generally, the Government will be responsible for the service and maintenance of Government-owned equipment. Telecommuters using

their own equipment are responsible for its service and maintenance.

Q. Who pays for any increase in home utility expenses incurred by employees as a result of telecommuting?

A. Work-at-home arrangements may increase an employee's home utility costs. Balanced against these increases are potential savings to the employee resulting from reduced commuting, child care (during the period the employee would otherwise be commuting to and from work), meals, and clothing expenses. Potential cost and savings to the employee and the Government cannot be viewed in isolation from each other. An agency may not use appropriated funds to pay for items of personal expenses unless there is specific statutory authority.

Q. Are business phone calls made from the home reimbursable?

A. An employee may be reimbursed for business-related long distance phone calls over the employee's personal phone. GSA regulations (41 CFR 101.7) provide for reimbursement on SF 1164 for telephone calls approved by the supervisor. Agencies may also provide employees with Government telephone credit cards.

Q. Who is liable for work-related injuries and/or damages at the alternative worksite?

A. The Federal Government. Government employees suffering from work-related injuries and/or damages at the alternative worksite are covered under the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act, the Federal Tort Claims Act, or the Federal Employees Compensation Act (workers' compensation).

Sample Agreement

Between Agency and Employee Approved for Telecommuting on a Continuing Basis

The supervisor and the employee should each keep a copy of the agreement for reference.

Voluntary Participation

Employee voluntarily agrees to work at the agency-approved alternative workplace indicated below and to follow all applicable policies and procedures. Employee recognizes that the telecommuting arrangement is not an employee entitlement but an additional method the agency may approve to accomplish work.

Trial Period

Employee and agency agree to try out the arrangement for at least (specify number) months unless unforeseeable difficulties require earlier cancellation.

Salary and Benefits

Agency agrees that a telecommuting arrangement is not a basis for changing the employee's salary or benefits.

Duty Station and Alternative Workplace

Agency and employee agree that the employee's official duty station is (*indicate duty station for regular office*) and that the employee's approved alternative workplace is: (*specify street and number, city, and state*).

Note: All pay, leave, and travel entitlement are based on the official duty station.

Official Duties

Unless otherwise instructed, employee agrees to perform official duties only at the regular office or agency-approved alternative workplace. Employee agrees not to conduct personal business while in official duty status at the alternative workplace, for example, caring for dependents or making home repairs.

Work Schedule and Tour of Duty

Agency and employee agree the employee's official tour of duty will be: (*specify days, hours, and location, i.e., the regular office or the alternative workplace. For flexible work schedules, specify core hours and the limits within which flexible hours may be worked*).

Time and Attendance

Agency agrees to make sure the telecommuting employee's timekeeper has a copy of the employee's work schedule. The supervisor agrees to certify biweekly the time and attendance for

hours worked at the regular office and the alternative workplace. (Note: Agency may require employee to complete self-certification form.)

Leave

Employee agrees to follow established office procedures for requesting and obtaining approval of leave.

Overtime

Employee agrees to work overtime only when ordered and approved by the supervisor in advance and understands that overtime work without such approval is not compensated and may result in termination of the telecommuting privilege and/or other appropriate action.

Equipment/Supplies

Employee agrees to protect any Government-owned equipment and to use the equipment only for official purposes. The agency agrees to install, service, and maintain any Government-owned equipment issued to the telecommuting employee. The employee agrees to install, service, and maintain any personal equipment used. The agency agrees to provide the employee with all necessary office supplies and also reimburse the employee for business-related long distance telephone calls.

Security

If the Government provides computer equipment for the alternative workplace, employee agrees to the following security provisions: (*insert agency-specific language*).

Liability

The employee understands that the Government will not be liable for damages to an employee's personal or real property while the employee is working at the approved alternative workplace, except to the extent the Government is held liable by the Federal Tort Claims Act or the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act.

Work Area

The employee agrees to provide a work area adequate for performance of official duties.

Worksite Inspection

The employee agrees to permit the Government to inspect the alternative workplace during the employee's normal working hours to ensure proper maintenance of Government-owned property and conformance with safety standards. (Agencies may require employees to complete a self-certification safety checklist.)

Alternative Workplace Costs

The employee understands that the Government will not be responsible for any operating costs that are associated with the employee using his or her home as an alternative worksite, for example, home maintenance, insurance, or utilities. The employee understands he or she does not

relinquish any entitlement to reimbursement for authorized expenses incurred while conducting business for the Government, as provided for by statute and regulations.

Injury Compensation

Employee understands he or she is covered under the Federal Employee's Compensation Act if injured in the course of actually performing official duties at the regular office or the alternative duty station. The employee agrees to notify the supervisor immediately of any accident or injury that occurs at the alternative workplace and to complete any required forms. The supervisor agrees to investigate such a report immediately.

Work Assignments/Performance

Employee agrees to complete all assigned work according to procedures mutually agreed upon by the employee and the supervisor and according to guidelines and standards in the employee performance plan. The employee agrees to provide regular reports if required by the supervisor to help judge performance. The employee understands that a decline in performance may be grounds for canceling the alternative workplace arrangement.

Disclosure

Employee agrees to protect Government/agency records from unauthorized disclosure or damage and will comply with requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a.

Standards of Conduct

Employee agrees he or she is bound by agency standards of conduct while working at the alternative worksite.

Cancellation

Agency agrees to let the employee resume his or her regular schedule at the regular office after notice to the supervisor. Employee understands that the agency may cancel the telecommuting arrangement and instruct the employee to resume working at the regular office. The agency agrees to follow any applicable administrative or negotiated procedures.

Other Action

Nothing in this agreement precludes the agency from taking any appropriate disciplinary or adverse action against an employee who fails to comply with the provisions of this agreement.

Employee's Signature and Date _____

Supervisor's Signature and Date _____

Sample Self-certification Safety Checklist*

For Home-based Telecommuters

The following checklist is designed to assess the overall safety of your alternative worksite. Please read and complete the self-certification safety checklist. Upon completion, you and your supervisor should sign and date the checklist in the spaces provided.

Name:

Organization:

Address:

City/State:

Business Telephone:

Telecommuting Coordinator:

Alternative Worksite Location:

(Describe the designated work area in the alternative worksite.)

A. Workplace Environment

1. Are temperature, noise, ventilation and lighting levels adequate for maintaining your normal level of job performance? Yes [☐] No [☐]
2. Are all stairs with four or more steps equipped with handrails? Yes [☐] No [☐]
3. Are all circuit breakers and/or fuses in the electrical panel labeled as to intended service? Yes [☐] No [☐]
4. Do circuit breakers clearly indicate if they are in the open or closed position? Yes [☐] No [☐]
5. Is all electrical equipment free of recognized hazards that would cause physical harm (frayed wires, bare conductors, loose wires, flexible wires running through walls, exposed wires to the ceiling)? Yes [☐] No [☐]
6. Will the building's electrical system permit the grounding of electrical equipment? Yes [☐] No [☐]

7. Are aisles, doorways, and corners free of obstructions to permit visibility and movement?
Yes [] No []
8. Are file cabinets and storage closets arranged so drawers and doors do not open into walkways? Yes [] No []
9. Do chairs have any loose casters (wheels) and are the rungs and legs of the chairs sturdy?
Yes [] No []
10. Are the phone lines, electrical cords, and extension wires secured under a desk or alongside a baseboard? Yes [] No []
11. Is the office space neat, clean, and free of excessive amounts of combustibles?
Yes [] No []
12. Are floor surfaces clean, dry, level, and free of worn or frayed seams? Yes [] No []
13. Are carpets well secured to the floor and free of frayed or worn seams? Yes [] No []
14. Is there enough light for reading? Yes [] No []

B. Computer Workstation (if applicable)

15. Is your chair adjustable? Yes [] No []
16. Do you know how to adjust your chair? Yes [] No []
17. Is your back adequately supported by a backrest? Yes [] No []
18. Are your feet on the floor or fully supported by a footrest? Yes [] No []
19. Are you satisfied with the placement of your monitor and keyboard? Yes [] No []
20. Is it easy to read the text on your screen? Yes [] No []
21. Do you need a document holder? Yes [] No []
22. Do you have enough leg room at your desk? Yes [] No []
23. Is the screen free from noticeable glare? Yes [] No []
24. Is the top of the screen eye level? Yes [] No []
25. Is there space to rest the arms while not keying? Yes [] No []

26. When keying, are your forearms close to parallel with the floor? Yes [] No []

27. Are your wrists fairly straight when keying? Yes [] No []

Employee's Signature and Date

Immediate Supervisor's Signature and Date

Approved [] Disapproved []

Please return a copy of this form to your telecommuting program coordinator.

** This checklist was developed by the General Services Administration.*