Norms & Best Practices for Working Remotely

We believe that effective remote work comes down to three rules for success: get your work done while taking care of yourself, be available, and overcommunicate.

Instructions to access IT resources remotely are available [here](#).

Get your work done while taking care of yourself

We've all got a lot on our plates as individuals and as a collective, and transitioning from the office to working remotely can be jarring.

We advise:

- **Having clarity on weekly priorities.** Come to an agreement with your manager on your priorities and outputs for the week or day, and reflect each week on what did and didn't happen.
- **Finding a dedicated work space.** Many of us live with partners, children, or roommates that will likely also be home given the impact of the coronavirus. Having a dedicated space for work that frees you from the distraction of others can be very helpful.
- **Setting a specific time for breaks/lunch.** It's helpful to set aside dedicated time on your calendar to take care of yourself, including breaks to step outdoors. Communicate proactively with your manager and colleagues about these times.
- **If you're sick or need to care for someone who is, take time off.** Rather than attempting to work through sickness or distractions, we encourage employees to take a sick day just as you would if you were in the office. Please work directly with your manager as you normally would when taking a sick day.

Be available

Without physical proximity, it's essential and expected that staff members will remain available during working hours so that work can be driven forward.

We encourage you to:

- **Be reachable by email and phone during working hours.** All employees should work from a location where you have power, internet, and the ability to participate in phone calls and video meetings. If a portion of your day is going to be spent in an area where this isn't the case, you should inform and get approval from your manager.

- **Be patient.** While a colleague may be accessible via email, they may be participating in other meetings, dealing with a time-sensitive work project, or on a break. If you're making a request or need a response, recognize it may take some time for your colleague to get back to you.
- **Indicate urgency when needed.** When contacting your colleagues with a request, try to communicate the urgency of the request or when it would be ideal for you to have a response by. Otherwise, the urgency or non-urgency around requests might be unclear.
- **Remind once.** If a colleague hasn't gotten back to you in a requested time frame, give them the courtesy of bringing something to their attention 24 hours later.
- **Stay focused when in meetings.** When participating in video meetings remotely, avoid the temptation of multitasking on other work and give your full attention to the topic at hand.

Overcommunicate

When working remotely, there aren't the same number of opportunities to casually pop-in and update each other on our work. Luckily, that can be solved through overcommunication.

We suggest you overcommunicate by:

- **Sending proactive updates.** Update your manager and colleagues on the status of work projects throughout the day via email, rather than waiting for a designated time like a check-in or team meeting.
- **Prioritizing video.** Use video for meetings whenever possible.
- **Providing a heads-up when you're away from communication tools.** If you're stepping out to grab lunch or a cup of coffee, have a sick family member that requires attention, or need to be on the road, let your manager know. If you're out sick, have your out-of-office message available with contact information listed for a person who can assist in case of something urgent.