

**Supervisor's Toolkit:
Supporting Staff to Telework
March 17, 2020**

Overview: Under the rapidly changing COVID-19 situation, Brookhaven Science Associates is expanding the use of its flexible work arrangement options, specifically focused on telework. Integrating telework into planning for an emergency—including a pandemic health crisis—is a best practice and assures continuity of the Laboratory's science and support missions. One goal is to begin reducing the density of staff coming to the Lab site each day. Another goal is for supervisors to establish written telework agreements with any employees whose job responsibilities are conducive to telework and to communicate expectations for telework.

As such, we are implementing an expanded use of telework for **both exempt and non-exempt staff**.

Expanding the use of telework will allow a larger number of staff to be productive during this disruptive period. We anticipate this will help slow the spread of disease by reducing face-to-face contact (known as social distancing) as we work to maintain daily operations as close to normal as possible. Ensuring staff are "telework-ready" is necessary for this to be successful, and we need to work together to reduce any barriers.

Applicability: In general, this applies to all exempt and non-union non-exempt staff who only perform office-type work.

Purpose: This brief toolkit will support your responsibility as a Brookhaven Lab supervisor to work with your staff to complete the *TeleWork Agreement During the COVID-19 Pandemic* form.

The work to be performed off site includes the duties and responsibilities of the employee's position, or other authorized activities, either using a Lab-issued computer (with property pass), employee-owned computer, or by doing manual desk work.

IMPORTANT: Existing active telework agreements for exempt staff will need to be updated, as there will be more staff than usual working remotely during this time. Coordination of assignments and resources is essential to the success of this effort.

Getting Started:

1. Decide who among your staff can telework
2. Collaborate with other Brookhaven Lab supervisors, if that is helpful
3. Discuss questions or concerns with your Human Resources manager
4. Meet with your employee(s) on their work schedule to discuss clear deliverables during remote work
5. In DocuSign, employee completes the Telework Agreement During the COVID-19 Pandemic form
6. Supervisors approves the agreement in DocuSign
7. Employee begins to telework

Remote Work Resources page - <https://www.bnl.gov/COVID19/remote-work.php>

Key Considerations:

- Now is the time to consider solutions and creatively solve problems around the expansion of telework. Do not delay discussing concerns with your staff and working on solutions. There will be lessons learned over time, but this effort must start immediately.
- As a Brookhaven Lab supervisor, you are crucial to the success of this effort. Teleworking is going to have significant positive impacts on the health and well-being of the Lab's employees and their families during this period of emergency and uncertainty.
- Balance the needs of all staff as you set a schedule for your staff and work area.
- Communication will be different from usual with staff working remotely, so you will need to ensure you can connect with them.
- Experiencing telework first-hand is the best way to enable supervisors and staff to work through any technology, equipment, communications, workflow, and associated issues that may inhibit the success of telework.
- Consider if you can also be a teleworker.
- Expect challenges. Acknowledge the challenges openly. Recognize successes, too. Don't be daunted. Press on. You can do this. You need to be directly involved with the IT resources assessment for staff you have identified for telework.
- Supervisors are reminded that they need to stay in close contact with their staff while on telework to ensure issues that may arise are addressed to ensure productivity and integration of work among the team.

Opportunities to Support Your Team:

1. Besides routine responsibilities/tasks, are there any special projects or alternate tasks that can be advanced while my staff is working remotely?
2. Consider new ways to collaborate and communicate with staff who are teleworking. This may include starting each workday with a phone call, video call, or Microsoft Teams chat. Your staff will be eager to connect during this disruptive time. Structure and teamwork will be important.
3. Remind the teleworking staff member to let you know when they need more work, are feeling burdened, or feeling disconnected from you and the team.

This is a live document and more content will be added as it develops.