



AAA MEMO: 21-05

Date: June 1, 2021

Agency Leaders –

We are proud of the efforts you and your teams have made to keep serving Oklahomans during the pandemic. As more and more agencies are returning to the office in the “new normal,” the Governor and his Cabinet have collaborated on some guidance regarding telework. We believe agency directors are best-positioned to make the decision on the right telework strategy for their agencies, but at the same time, we think the principles below may aid you in this decision. Please contact one of us or your Cabinet Secretary if you have any questions.

Agency telework guidance

The purpose of this guidance is to provide information for agency consideration while implementing permanent or partial telework.

Managers should consider the position and role the employee serves within the organization to determine whether a position is suitable for telework. Initially, a particular position may not appear to be compatible with a telework arrangement. However, if the position is broken down into individual tasks, certain tasks may be identified that could be accomplished in a telework setting.

Telework is generally feasible for:

- Work that requires thinking and writing, such as data analysis, reviewing grants or cases, and writing regulations, decisions or reports.
- Telephone-intensive tasks, such as setting up conferences, obtaining information and contacting customers.
- Computer-oriented tasks, such as programming, data entry and work processing.
- Tasks that require traveling around the state with office time devoted to reporting the results of the purpose of travel (for example, inspectors for various regulatory boards).

Positions that are not suitable for teleworking typically require:

- The employee’s physical presence on the job at all times.
- Extensive face-to-face contact with a supervisor, other employees, clients or the public.
- Access to material or equipment that cannot be moved from the office.

- Security that prevents the work from being accomplished at an alternative worksite.

Managing in a telework environment should fundamentally change how a manager supervises employees and maintains a sense of teamwork with a common goal. Before implementing telework, managers may need to initiate the following practices to maximize effectiveness of supervising teleworkers:

- Use technology for staying in touch with teleworkers.
- Rethink and redesign the way certain jobs are performed.
- Plan further in advance for meetings and other team activities.
- Focus objectives and expectations on short-term, project-based goals.
- Adopt location-independent ways of measuring performance and results.
- Transition teamwork toward more electronic-based collaboration.

There is no one telework policy that will work for all agencies. Agencies should adopt the best approach that suits the agency mission. Within each agency, the agency should evaluate employee responsibilities and agency goals to establish performance measures that fit the circumstances.

Because the needs of agencies vary widely and should be determined by agency leadership, the State of Oklahoma will only offer general guidance regarding performance measures, but in most cases, performance measures used for employees in the office will work for teleworkers.

The following are tips to help agencies establish performance metrics:

- With teleworkers, managers should evaluate an employee's performance by results, not by physical presence.
- Managers should clearly define expectations of the employee's performance before the employee begins working remotely.
- Performance plans should include standards that are measurable, verifiable and realistic.
- Quantity, quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness should be considered when establishing performance measures.
- Managers should stay informed of the teleworker's workload and project status by establishing a strong communications process.
- Managers should establish clear quotas and deadlines that can be documented.
- Managers should consider using a daily activity log.

For examples of telework policies within the state, please contact OMES Human Capital Management.

Sincerely,

John Budd
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