



TELEWORKING POLICY & PROCEDURE

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PURPOSE: To set forth VITA's philosophy and administrative guidelines for telework. Its intent is to promote telework as a means of achieving administrative efficiencies, reducing traffic congestion and transportation costs, supporting Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP), and sustaining the hiring and retention of a highly qualified workforce by enhancing work/life balance.

ACRONYM:

- COOP: Continuity of Operations Plans
- DHRM: Department of Human Resources Management
- DOA: Department of Accounts
- IM: Instant Messaging
- IRS: Internal Revenue Services
- PC cams: Personal Computer Cameras
- VITA: Virginia Information Technologies Agency
- VSDP: Virginia Sickness and Disability Program

SCOPE: All Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) classified and wage employees.

DEFINITIONS: The following definitions apply to this policy and procedure:

Alternate Work Location – Approved work sites other than the employee's central workplace where official state business is performed. Such locations may include, but not necessarily be limited to, employees' homes and satellite offices.

Central Workplace – An employer's place of work where employees normally are located.

Intermittent (casual) Teleworker - An employee who performs his/her usual job duties in an alternative work location, e.g., from home, other agencies, etc., without a specific telework schedule.

Telework – A work arrangement in which supervisors direct or permit employees to perform their usual job duties away from their central workplace.

Teleworker – An employee who, under formal agreement with his/her agency, performs his/her usual job duties in an approved alternate work location at least one day per week or at least 32 hours per month.

Work Agreement – The required, written agreement between the employer and employee that details the terms and conditions of an employee's work away from his or her central workplace.

Work Schedule – The employee's hours of work in the central workplace or in alternate work locations (See Department of Human Resource Management/DHRM [Policy 1.25, Hours of Work](#)).

STATEMENT OF
POLICY:

VITA will follow the teleworking policies and procedures set for in the Department of Human Resource Management's (DHRM) [Policy 1.61, Teleworking](#), and the Department of Accounts' Policy entitled "[DOA Telework Expense Payment Policy](#)."

1. Consistent with VITA's expectation of information asset security, teleworkers must protect all official state records, files and documents from unauthorized disclosure or damage and return them safely to the office. Currently, VITA's e-mail is NOT encrypted and therefore should not be used to send data that is sensitive relative to confidentiality and integrity in either the e-mail or an attachment unless individual encryption is used appropriately.
2. Policies and procedures that normally apply to the workplace remain the same while teleworking. Teleworking assignments do not change the conditions of employment or required compliance with policies.
3. Tax or other legal implications for the business use of the employee's home or property, including compliance with local zoning regulations, are the sole responsibility of the employee.
4. Teleworking is not an employee benefit. As such, no employee is entitled to, or guaranteed, the opportunity to telework.
5. Employees are expected to use VITA-provided equipment while teleworking, except in unusual circumstances. Availability of equipment may exclude participation by an otherwise eligible teleworker. Upon cessation of teleworking, termination of employment, or at the request of VITA, employees must immediately return all agency-owned or agency-issued property.
6. Teleworkers are responsible for the expenses of teleworking unless expressly approved by the Teleworking Coordinator. Agency-paid expenses may be reported to the Internal Revenue Services (IRS) as ordinary income to the teleworker.
7. Teleworkers using VITA-provided equipment are required to:
 - a. Protect the equipment from damage and unauthorized use.
 - b. Transport and install equipment and return it to VITA for repairs, service, or updates/patches.
8. Teleworkers' other equipment needs (such as modems, phone and data lines, printers, facsimile equipment and PC cams) will be determined by the supervisor on a case-by-case basis and be subject to the availability of funds.
 - a. When certain expenses are necessary to perform the requirements of the employee's position from an alternate location, agencies may pay for allowable telework expenses either through a direct bill to the agency or reimbursement to the employee, in accordance with Department of Accounts Telework Expense Payment Policy.
 - b. Teleworking is viewed primarily as a personal convenience; and the savings in employee commuting time and costs generally render financial reimbursement unnecessary.

9. Teleworkers are reminded that per the "[VITA CSRM Personal Computer and Local Area Network Policy](#)", all agency employees have the responsibility for safeguarding PC resources from unauthorized use, intrusion, destruction or theft. This policy not only includes data, but also the personal computer systems, software, and hardware resources used to process the electronic information. Teleworkers should store all data files and other critical information on a network share drive, such as their "X:\\" or "F:\\" drive. These drives are backed up nightly and backups are sent off-site for disaster recovery purposes. In the event the teleworker does not have direct access to the network, appropriate local backup and recovery procedures must be employed to protect data assets.
10. The work schedule for participants is established the same as it would be if the employee worked in his/her primary office and is documented in the Teleworking Work Agreement. See [DHRM policy 1.25](#), Hours of Work, for additional information.
11. If an emergency closing occurs at the teleworker's Central Workplace (as identified in the Telework Agreement), the employee does not have to "report to work", unless the teleworker is identified as "designated" in accordance with VITA's [Emergency Closing Policy](#).
12. Employees entering into a teleworking agreement may be required to forfeit the use of a private office or dedicated work space in favor of a shared arrangement (i.e. "hotelling") in order to maximize the use of office space.
13. Teleworkers may elect to cease their participation in the program at any time, unless teleworking was made a condition of employment. The agreement may be cancelled by management at any time when it is determined that continuation would not be productive, efficient, or otherwise not in the best interest of the agency. Two weeks notice will be given, if possible. Teleworkers acknowledge that it may not be feasible to provide private work space to those whom it was previously assigned in these cases.
14. Teleworkers are compensated as if duties were being performed at the official work location. Non-exempt employees may not work overtime unless authorized in writing in advance by the supervisor in accordance with the Overtime Policy. Failure to comply with this requirement can result in the immediate cessation of the teleworking agreement, and further subject the employee to disciplinary action.
15. Teleworkers must apply themselves to their work during work hours. Teleworking is not intended to serve as a substitute for child or adult care. If children or adults in need of primary care are in the alternate work location during the employee's work hours, some other individual must be present to provide the care. In addition, teleworking is not intended to be used in place of sick leave, family medical leave, or Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP) leave.
16. Employees engaging in teleworking are not allowed to meet with customers, contractors or vendors at their home office. This provision

does not preclude inspection of the home work site to assure conformity with policy or meeting with supervisors to discuss work-related matters.

17. Teleworkers will provide the weekly status of their work performed while teleworking to their supervisor as part of normal weekly reporting procedures.
18. Participants must be available via telephone at their alternate work location on the days they are teleworking. They may have their VITA phone forwarded to their alternate work location landline or cell phone; they may use a VITA cell phone exclusively; or if these options are not practical, e.g., when calls frequently arrive after work hours, the teleworker may elect to have all calls transferred to voice mail. In this case, the teleworker should check his/her voice mail frequently, e.g., every one to two hours and include in the greeting an alternate number the caller may dial should it be urgent.
19. Teleworkers are required to update their Outlook Calendars to indicated the days they are teleworking by creating an event as follows:
 - a. Subject: "Teleworking"
 - b. Location: "Home" (or name of alternate work location),
 - c. All day event checked,
 - d. Label: "None" and
 - e. Show time as: "Free"
 - f. Provide a phone contact number if their VITA phone is not forwarded to their alternative work location landline or cell phone.
20. As when in the office, the Teleworkers Outlook Calendar should be maintained to indicate times the participant is away from his/her desk, in teleconferences, etc.
21. Teleworkers are encouraged to request the VITA Instant Messaging (IM) client (e.g. Omnipod) be installed on their agency computers. Likewise all team members of the teleworkers are encouraged to request the IM client as well. Using IM while teleworking is an industry best practice to promote presence awareness, work efficiency, and team connectivity. As with all correspondence, regardless of the media, it is the responsibility of employees to know and understand the Records Retention and Disposition Schedule for their correspondence. (See http://www.lva.virginia.gov/whatwedo/records/sched_state/gs-101.pdf. for additional information). Should an employee determine that his/her IM conversation needs to be retained per the appropriate series in GS-101, it is incumbent upon the employee to save it in an appropriate file location.
22. There may be times when participants will be requested to come into the office on a teleworking day. VITA will try to minimize these unplanned requests, but employees must recognize the need for them and agree to come in when requested.
23. VITA management may amend, suspend, or rescind this policy as it deems appropriate. Exceptions to regular application of this policy

may be made by management to facilitate the business process; promote culture of conservation within VITA to combat rising fuel prices, the escalating cost of commuting to work, worsening traffic congestion, and reduced air quality; or other business reason.

24. Requests for an exception to any provision of this policy may be submitted in writing (email accepted) to the Director of Human Resource Management (Telework Coordinator) for consideration and action.

STATEMENT OF
PROCEDURE:

The Application/Approval Process

1. All potential participants must develop a teleworking proposal using the [Telework Agreement](#).
2. The supervisor and director (or designee) must approve the agreement. Requests will be considered on an individual basis to determine if the employee and the position held are suitable for teleworking. Generally, employees with the following characteristics will be successful teleworkers:
 - a. Self disciplined and able to work independently with limited need for feedback/supervision;
 - b. Proven performers with job performance evaluation rating (meets expectations or above) and success in their current position;
 - c. Highly organized and proficient at time management;
 - d. Good communications skills (oral and written);
 - e. Good decision makers with strong problem-solving skills
3. The [Telework Agreement](#) must be sent to VITA's Telework Coordinator in Human Resource Management for approval via the link provided on the form prior to participation.
4. All approved agreements will be held by the Human Resource Management Division for record-keeping purposes.
5. Copies of all completed forms must be maintained by the supervisor and the employee.

AUTHORITY
REFERENCE:

[Code of Virginia, Sec 2.2-2817.1](#)

(State agencies to establish telecommuting policy; reporting requirement)

RESOURCES:

Teleworking Guide to Best Practices and related resources

<http://www.otpba.vi.virginia.gov/telework.shtml>

[Telework Assistance and Guidance for Agencies](#)

DOA Telework Expense Payment Policy,

http://www.doa.virginia.gov/General_DOA/Telework_Expense.cfm

[A Roadmap to Telework in the Commonwealth of Virginia](#)

OTHER

- REFERENCES:
1. Department of Human Resource Management [Policy 1.61, Teleworking.](#)
 2. Department of Human Resource Management [Policy 1.25, Hours of Work.](#)
 3. VITA [Emergency Closing Policy](#)
 4. Department of Human Resource Management [Policy 1.35, Emergency Closings](#)
 5. [Work Schedule](#) Form
 6. [VITA CSRM Personal Computer and Local Area Network Policy](#)

FORMS: [Telework Agreement](#)

Version History		
Version	Date	Change Summary
	10/15/2001	Original – DIT 1.32
V1	07/01/2003	Original under VITA formatting and standardization.
V2	07/01/2003	Addition of Telecommuting definition as well as substantive administrative changes. Addition of Authority Reference and Attachments such as the Application of Agreement for Telecommuting; and, the Safety Checklist.
V3	07/01/2003	Complete deletion of employees using personally owned equipment to telecommute.
V4	07/24/2006	Major re-write in complete change from Telecommuting to Teleworking throughout document. Addition to Statement of Policy: 8. In the event of an emergency and employees are required to work from home for an extended period, this requirement may be relaxed to allow employees to utilize personal computing equipment. Change to Statement of Policy: 9. & 10. Consolidation and re-write to include, "The work schedule for participants is established the same as it would be if the employee worked in their primary office and is documented in the Teleworking Work Agreement. Link added for DHRM Policy 1.25. Hours of Work. More formalized Application/Approval process and link to Forms added for: 1. Teleworking Application; 2. Teleworking Work Agreement; and, 3. Teleworking Safety Checklist and Employee Certification as well as additional links for Other References.
V5	12/04/2006	Change in purpose for employees to telework when doing so is consistent with achieving the objectives of the employee's job duties and goals of the agency. Statement of Policy: 8. Teleworkers must use VITA-approved equipment. Statement of Policy: 9. Addition of stringent guidelines to remind teleworkers that per the VITA CSS Personal Computer Local Area Network Policy, all agency employees have the responsibility for safeguarding PC resources from unauthorized use, intrusion, destruction or theft. Statement of Policy: 17. 18. 19. 20. More detailed guidelines on business practices outlined for Teleworker. Statement of Policy: 22. Safety checklist for all teleworking participants (this insertion deleted the need for the attached link to Teleworking Safety Checklist and Employee Certification.
V6	04/23/2007	Addition under Statement of Policy: 11. If an emergency closing occurs at the Teleworker's Central Workplace (as identified in the Telework Agreement), the employee does not have to "report to work," unless the teleworker is identified as "designated" in accordance with VITA's Emergency Closing Policy. Added links for VITA's Emergency Closing Policy and DHRM's Policy 1.35, Emergency Closings.0
V7	05/01/2007	Minor change in Statement of Procedure-The Application/Approval Process, Item #4 with the deletion of "(approved and disapproved) should" after agreements... and insertion of "shall."
V8	02/05/2009	Incorporates new policy updates from legislation, DHRM and DOA. AG suggestions made under Statement of Policy-deletion Item #1, subsequent renumbering, rephrasing new Item #5 and #13; as well as change in titling of Telework Agreement.