

COVID-19 Telework Guidelines

COVID-19: Who May Work Remotely

Permitted situations where telework may be authorized, assuming the employee is healthy and able to perform duties:

- Employee is healthy but dependent has symptoms or diagnosis related to COVID-19 that have been confirmed by a health care professional. For additional information on COVID-19 symptoms please consult online resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and/or Tompkins County Health Department. For example, if an employee's child has a fever and their doctor recommends that they stay home and monitor their symptoms.
- Employee is healthy, but placed under COVID-19 related quarantine by their health care provider or Health Department.
- Employee is at a higher risk for contracting COVID-19 as defined by the CDC (higher risk groups include being 60 years or older, having an underlying health condition or being immunocompromised).
- Employee needs to provide care to dependents due to COVID-19 related closures.
- Employee has recently traveled to a high-risk area, as defined by the NYS Travel Advisory

Key Considerations:

Priorities & Essential Work

The employee and supervisor will evaluate the responsibilities and priorities of the position, considering customer/collaborator impact and feasibility of completing some or all of it remotely. It is likely that many employees either will not have enough work available remotely to fill their regular work day, or will have demands on their time, for example child care, that will make it impossible to work their full work day. In those cases, the employee should submit regular work hours for time actually worked and take emergency leave if permitted, or other fringe leave for the remaining hours.

Technology

At a minimum, an employee needs a computer, internet, and phone access to work remotely. This may be a County-issued or personal desktop or laptop computer. Tompkins County ITS will not provide technical support for personal devices.

Computer and Internet

Given technology constraints, it is best for employees who receive authorization to work remotely, to coordinate with their supervisor to determine the best approach. For guidance on using OneDrive, please visit the Microsoft Office Support or the County provided Brainstorm training center. On a limited basis, ITS will be setting up Virtual Private Network (VPN) accounts and configurations for employees who require this level of access.

If it is determined that an employee needs a VPN connection, a County-issued laptop is required for technical and security reasons. A VPN connection will allow for completing timecards, as well as accessing files and applications that are located on the County network. To set up a VPN account, please consult with your supervisor, who will consult with ITS.

Please consult with your Supervisor to discuss what computer you will be using, files you plan to access and whether you will be obtaining those files by downloading from the server, uploading to OneDrive, or requesting VPN. Additionally, you should plan with your Supervisor about how you will submit your hours worked remotely. You are responsible for following all County practices and policies to maintain

security and protect confidentiality on your device. Please note that the County has limited ability to pay for any additional fees you may be charged by your internet or phone provider, or any damages you may experience to your personal devices, so please discuss any concerns you may have with your supervisor about those issues.

Phone

To work remotely, an employee may also need to roll phone calls forward from their work phones to either a home phone or cell phone. ITS will provide guidance on how to forward incoming calls. Speak to your phone provider about your plan(s) to ensure that you will not experience any overage fees.

Home Environment

Consider whether your home environment is conducive to remote work. Factors include the demands of other household members, household construction, appropriate lighting, seating, and other basic conditions. Set expectations with others in your home regarding your interactions and availability.

Pay

All employees who work remotely when the County is open will be paid for hours worked at their regular hourly rate of pay. Overtime and comp time accruals must be approved in advance by your supervisor.

Remote Agreements & Expectations

Department Heads or supervisors and employees must sign a written COVID-19 Telework Agreement outlining duration and expectations.

Time & Performance

Discuss with your supervisor how your time and performance will be managed. Communicate regularly with your supervisor regarding your work priorities, deliverables, timelines, etc.