**Telework FAQs**

1. **Question**: If my telework day lands on a holiday, does it automatically move to the next day or am I entitled to another day that same week.

**Answer**: Your telework day is not a floating day so if your day lands on a holiday then it does not move to the next day or any other day that week. This would be considered unscheduled telework and must be requested/approved by your supervisor.

1. **Question:** If a meeting is scheduled on my telework day, am I required to come in for the meeting?

**Answer**: It depends. There may be some meetings or other event that cannot be done remotely or is more appropriate to be done in person. If you are unsure whether your attendance should be in person then check with your supervisor.

1. **Question:** If I have been out of the office for various reasons such as training, vacation, sick, or inclement weather and the next day back in the office is my telework day should I assume that it is acceptable to telework?

**Answer**: If for some reason you have been out of the office for an extended time your manager may request for you to come into the office instead of teleworking. Please check with your supervisor.

1. **Question:** I telework but do not like the idea of providing my customers or coworkers my personal home/cell number. Therefore, I do not want to forward my phone or post the number on my calendar or anywhere else that can be viewed by others. What are my options?

**Answer:** You must provide your supervisor with a contact phone number to reach you when you telework or in order to contact you in case of an emergency or urgent work matter. As far as others reaching you on your telework days, your accessibility while you are teleworking is required to be the same as if you are working on-site. Therefore, you are required to either forward your desk phone to your alternate phone number while you are teleworking, or leave a phone number on your voicemail where you can be reached. You should also be checking your voicemail on a frequent basis.

1. **Question:** Tomorrow is my telework day, however, I have a doctor’s appointment during my scheduled work hours, should I request leave as I would if I was reporting to my work site?

**Answer:** Teleworking should be transparent and just like a normal work day in the office, therefore, if you need to attend to personal business during your workday that will require you to be away from your worksite then you need to communicate your plans with your supervisor and take leave, if applicable.

1. **Question:** Do I need to have VPN in order to telework?

**Answer:** Yes. Your remote worksite should allow you to have access to all systems as you would if you were working from your office.

1. **Question:** I am teleworking and my supervisor sends an email giving us 59 minutes. Since I am teleworking can I also shorten my scheduled work day by 59 minutes?

**Answer:** Yes in this case everyone working that day, including teleworkers, can take the 59 minutes.

1. **Question:** On Christmas Eve I am teleworking and the Center Director sends a message out that everyone can leave at 2pm that day. Can I also stop working at 2pm?

**Answer:** In this instance anyone who is working that day including teleworkers can be excused early.

1. **Question:** If I am a Contracting Officer in a team lead position, what type of schedule notifications are required for the Contract Specialists I lead?

**Answer**: Contracting Officers should notify Contract Specialists at least one day in advance via e-mail when their normally scheduled telework day changes. Same notification applies to employees in other lead positions.

1. **Question:** What are some examples of when my approved telework agreement may be revisited or terminated by my supervisor?

**Answer**: Examples of when a telework agreement may be revisited or terminated by a supervisor includes, but is not limited to the following:

* 1. New Supervisor is assigned and needs to assess the customer and/or work requirements as well as the employee work schedules to satisfy these requirements.
  2. Supervisor determines there is a lack of a sufficient employee presence during Center business hours.
  3. Employee’s most recent performance rating was less than fully successful.
  4. Employee now performing onsite activities on a daily basis that cannot be conducted at an alternative worksite.
  5. Added burden on employees who work in the office (e.g., supervisor or employees who often have to fill in for telework employees at impromptu face-to-face meetings with customers and peers).
  6. Assignments not being completed and deadlines not met; decline in work quality.
  7. Employee had problems with equipment or remote access.
  8. Employee not able to create a work environment that is relatively free of distractions.
  9. Problems with reaching the employee. Employee does not return messages in a timely manner.
  10. Employee not able to communicate effectively with coworkers.
  11. Employee conduct has resulted in disciplinary action within the last 12 months.

1. **Question:** Are there special requirements in terms of physical security of alternate worksite locations (ex. home offices)? For example, is it a requirement to secure my work laptop which may have sensitive data after I’ve completed my telework hours?

**Answer:** Employees who use Government-owned computers at telework locations must maintain appropriate physical safeguards to ensure the equipment is protected from theft, loss, or damage. Upon any loss, theft, or damage of Government provided equipment, the employee needs to notify their supervisor immediately.

In addition, employees who possess or access sensitive information from an off-site work location must maintain appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to ensure the security and confidentiality of the records. Any equipment provided will be subject to the same requirements, audits, and policies as required on center.

1. **Question:** How much notice does a supervisor have to provide a teleworker if the supervisor terminates the telework agreement?

**Answer:** Termination of a Telework Agreement can be initiated by either the supervisor or the employee. If the supervisor is initiating the termination, a minimum of two weeks' notice will be provided, unless providing such notice is clearly not feasible, and it will be recorded in WebTADS along with the reason for the termination.

1. **Question**: Is it okay for me to routinely alternate my telework days as long as I’m within my approved number of telework days per pay period and I provide advance notification? Example: One pay period, I telework Monday the first week and Monday the second week. The following pay period, I telework Thursday the first week and Thursday the second week.

**Answer**: The telework schedule determined by the employee and supervisor should include fixed telework days. This provides the organization a more consistent personnel schedule to better support mission requirements and helps the supervisor maintain a sufficient employee presence at work. However; employees may request, on an irregular basis, a change to their scheduled telework day in a particular week or biweekly pay period

1. **Question**: The Center is operating under a Code Yellow and has a delayed opening and is not opening until 10am. I am scheduled to telework so does that mean that my workday also starts at 10am?

**Answer:** No. If you are teleworking then you must work regularly scheduled hours and are not granted excused leave. Those that were approved for unscheduled telework are also not eligible for the administrative leave and must record the entire day as telework. This is accordance with Center policy which can be found on the OHCM webpage: <http://ohcm/leave/home.htm>.

1. **Question**: The Center is operating under a Code Orange which means that there will be an early dismissal at an announced time (e.g., excused leave for inclement weather), and I am teleworking. Does that mean I also can stop teleworking at the dismissal time?

**Answer**: No. If you are teleworking then you are required to work your scheduled hours for that day and are not granted excused leave. This is accordance with Center policy which can be found on the OHCM webpage: <http://ohcm/leave/home.htm>.

1. **Question:** When the facility is operating under a “Code Blue” status, and I as a noncritical and nonemergency personnel request unscheduled telework which is approved by my supervisor, do I lose my normal telework day if it occurs later in the week?

**Answer:** The employee’s normal telework day will not be affected unless there is a business meeting, training session, Procurement All-Hands, and other work activity that requires employee presence on Center. This ensures consistency with those employees who had a scheduled telework earlier in the week and a center “Code Blue” status occurred later in the week.

1. **Question**: The Center is operating under a Code Red and employees are denied access to the Center for the entire day. This is my regular telework day so can I also have the day off?

**Answer:** No. Teleworkers are expected to work their regularly scheduled hours unless faced with a personal hardship that prevents you from working at your telework site. This is accordance with Center policy which can be found on the OHCM webpage: <http://ohcm/leave/home.htm>.

1. **Question:**  On my telework day, I plan to fully focus on an important work product which is due in the next couple of days.  Therefore, for a period of timeduring my workday, I was not planning on responding to email or phone messages.  Is this allowable?

**Answer:** In this instance, you are responsible to communicate to your supervisor and assigned mentee (if mentor) or mentor (if mentee) to inform them of your intention.  Communication is key and while you intend not to respond to email or phone messages for a period of time, you are required to remain assessable and available for urgent matters.

1. **Question:** When my alternative worksite experiences an emergency situation (ex. power outage) that affects the alternative worksite and prevents the continuation of work, what are my options?

**Answer:** Employees may be required to report to their official worksite, take approved annual leave or leave without pay, or be granted an excused absence. Employees will need to communicate with their supervisor and discuss any changes that impact working conditions.

1. **Question:** I am trying to schedule a Procurement Strategy Meeting (PSM) and I have checked the calendars of most people and it looks like next Friday is the only date available, otherwise the meeting will have to be delayed by 1-2 weeks. Friday is my standard telework day and I do realize that a PSM is typically attended in person, rather than via telecom. What should I do?

**Answer**: If you are working and available then you should go ahead and schedule the meeting for next Friday. You should attend the meeting in person and either skip your telework day that week, or make arrangements with your supervisor to change your telework day that week if your schedule permits, pending supervisor approval.

1. **Question**: If I am in an academic program such as AIMS and I have requested a telework day to either attend a class or do school work, does that count as one of my 3 days per pay period that I can be out of the office?

**Answer**: Yes, this would count as one of the 3 days that you can be out of the office as part of your regular work schedule. However, if a supervisor grants an occasional telework day for an AIMS employee to study for an exam, that would fall under “situational” or unscheduled, and may be okay as long as it is not part of the regular work schedule.

1. **Question**: If equipment is needed, such as a scanner, for an employee to be able to transmit signed documents, will the Government reimburse the employee?

**Answer**: The Government is not responsible for reimbursing an employee for any equipment needed to telework.   Since telework is not an entitlement and not directed by the supervisor, employees are expected to have whatever resources they need at home to perform effectively.

1. **Question**: If an employee works a schedule in which they work 10 hour days and are already out of the office one day per week (2 days per pay period), does this mean that they are only permitted one day per pay period to telework?

**Answer**: Yes, the combination of flex days and telework days may not exceed a total of 3 days out of the office during the pay period.

1. **Question:** Are flex (AWS) days fixed days or can they be moved regularly?

**Answer**: Flex days should be the same each pay period and any change to your schedule should be coordinated with your supervisor. In the situation in which a holiday falls on your AWS day, an employee should communicate and coordinate with their supervisor on what day they would like to move their flex day for that period.