



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Telework Policy 1.61

Commonwealth Telework Policy *Frequently Asked Questions*

1. Why is this new policy being implemented now?

Given that the data on the pandemic indicates its severity is rapidly subsiding, and the DOLI has instituted new regulations to ensure the safety of all employees, the Administration is incredibly excited to serve Virginians better by being together in the office. [Data](#) supports that employees benefit from interaction with fellow teammates – improved collaboration, teamwork and social well-being, and this new workforce telework policy supports the Governor's desire to deliver a best-in-class Government and a return to normalcy. Governor Youngkin firmly believes that the public is best served when employees are working in the office together.

2. Who is covered by this new policy?

This new workforce policy is for all employees of agencies within the Executive Branch. In addition, Governor Youngkin encourages all branches of government to adopt the same policy requirements as these have proved successful in promoting excellence and productivity.

3. If I already have a telework agreement, will I be allowed to continue teleworking under the existing agreement?

Current telework agreements will be allowed to continue through July 5, 2022. To plan appropriately for the policy's effective date, July 5, 2022, employees must submit their new teleworking agreements to their supervisors by May 20, 2022. Teleworking agreements submitted by May 20, 2022 will be approved by June 3, 2022 so employees can plan appropriately for the policy's effective date. New teleworking arrangements may begin immediately after approval and will be in accordance with the corresponding workplace telework policy. HR staff are required to update both position and employee information related to teleworking in applicable personnel systems used for reporting this data.

4. What is different about this new policy? Is the Standard Telework Agreement (STA) different?

There are some changes to the STA form. Unlike the previous policy, this STA escalates the request to different levels of seniority depending on how many days a week an employee would like to telework. Additionally, it asks agency heads to monitor and evaluate their remote workforce.

5. What support is being offered to working parents who are transitioning back to an office-centric environment?

The Governor and his Administration understand the complexity and expense of raising a family. It is important for employees to discuss candidly with their supervisors and agency heads about how changes in childcare arrangements related to the policy will impact them



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and to submit Standard Telework Agreements that best fit their needs. The Department of Human Resource Management (DRHM) maintains a resource page specifically for employees who are also parents. Please visit [here](#) for further information.

6. How is eligibility for teleworking decided?

Eligibility is determined by the requirements and associated tasks of the position, and their ability to be fulfilled completely and effectively in a remote environment. Teleworking agreements are determined by leadership and their assessment of how work can best be performed.

7. Who is evaluating my telework agreement?

- Agency Head:
 - Where one day a week are requested as a telework day;
 - Temporary telework, no more than two weeks, for temporary circumstances such as family illness, school closing, weather advisories, etc.
- Cabinet Secretary:
 - Where two days a week are requested as telework days.
- Chief of Staff:
 - Where more than two days a week are requested as telework days.

8. Can telework be used as a job accommodation due to an injury, illness or disability?

An Agency can approve temporary telework for two weeks for temporary circumstances such as family illness, injury, illness or disability. Unique work circumstances may be accommodated by telework in individual cases.

9. If the office is closed for an emergency, such as inclement weather, am I required to telework?

If teleworking is required, your supervisor will communicate to you the requirement to telework. If an emergency closing is announced, procedural information will be included in your telework agreement.

10. I have not been in the office in two years. How will I know that my office is work-ready?

If any employee has a concern of this nature, they should talk with their supervisor or an HR representative to ensure their office is work ready.

11. What COVID protections will be in place when I return to the office?

The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry regulations have recently changed. Employees can find the updated changes [here](#).

12. Will Agency heads be able to request blanket approvals for employees to telework two or more days per week for those who are in non-public facing jobs?

If teams need to work together, telework of individuals who are on the team should be coordinated to ensure consistency of telework schedules to meet team objectives. Each employee must have an individual telework agreement that reflects the team telework schedule.