Remote Work Guidelines

The Remote Work Guidelines are established in consideration of commitment to safely and effectively meeting the public health challenges presented by COVID-19. This extends to encouraging that university employees can work from home or another remote location whenever

**Eligibility**
Regular, full-time, part-time, administrative and classified staff with the University are eligible to be considered for this type of work arrangement.

**TELEWORKING TIPS FOR EMPLOYEES**
All duties, work obligations, performance expectations and evaluations, responsibilities, and conditions of employment with the University remain the same, when the agreement only entails a change to a remote location.

Salary, benefits, and BGSU sponsored insurance coverage will remain unchanged unless impacted by the number of hours worked.

The following tips will help you get to work while at home. This is not time off, but remote work.

1. **Define your workspace**
   Establish a consistent workspace, to cue that it is time for work. Wearing attire that you may wear to the office even if it is your “Falcon Friday” attire may help cue the brain. You should remain capable of reporting to work if your presence is requested by your supervisor.

2. **Master the basics**
   Set up call forwarding and how to access your voicemail from home.
   Know how to remote into the BGSU network and other online tools you use regularly.
   Use WebEx and/or Cisco Jabber to stay connected to colleagues.
   Plan for video calls/meetings by making sure you know how to turn on your computer’s camera and microphone and being aware that your colleagues may be able to see your background.

3. **Set daily goals, track them and share your progress**
   Start each day of remote work by identifying what you need to achieve and then track your progress. Pay attention to how long tasks take you and start adjusting your daily goals to
match the work schedule. Communicate with your supervisor and/or colleagues if you think your remote work plan needs to be adjusted.

4. **Eliminate distractions**
   Home can mean pets, family, household tasks or a favorite hobby are only a few feet away. Depending on your living arrangement, you may need to clarify “do not disturb” timeframes to reduce or eliminate interruptions. If you need headphones (not supplied by BGSU) to block the noise, act accordingly.

5. **Prioritize privacy**
   Whether you are in your home or a common area, assess the privacy of your workspace. Can someone nearby see or read your computer screen? Are you situated where someone can hear your phone call? What information do you need to secure before grabbing a cup of coffee or heading to the restroom? Your personal privacy matters too, so see if there is anything around you that you would not want visible during a video conference with your boss or colleague.

6. **Continue to employ security best practices**
   Situations like this are prime phishing opportunities. Remain vigilant for security concerns and be sure to report suspicious emails or issues to ITS.
   a. It should be noted that caution needs to be taken when dealing with personal health information (“PHI”) and HIPAA matters while working from home or another off-site location.
   b. VPNs can also allow you to safely connect to a remote network of computers as if you are there.

7. **Stay connected**
   Many people say they do not call or instant message colleagues who are working remotely because they don’t want to bother them. Remember, they are working, not vacationing at home! You should feel confident about calling or messaging an employee who is remote working anytime you would walk to their office or call them if you were working on-site.

**SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**
To establish a foundation for effective teamwork, continued productivity, and service to Bowling Green State University, ensure the following:

1. **Review technology needs and resources**
   Identify work and technology tools needed for staff use in their daily remote work and affirm that the resources are accessible when working from home. Also, ensure employees know how to obtain technical support as needed.
   Confirm that employees know how to use WebEx, Cisco Jabber and/or set up call forwarding and/or how to access their voicemail remotely.
Determine methods of communication with your team, clarify expectations for online availability and confirm everyone has access to the technology tool(s) and support resources. BGSU employees have free access to WebEx, Cisco Jabber, Microsoft Office, and/or VPN. Your department may have additional tools or resources via the Software Center on the ITS website.

2. **Review work schedules**
   Telework can be confused with flex work. Be clear about your expectations with employees for maintaining their current work schedule.

3. **Development of a work plan**
   Identify in conjunction with staff, the expectations and work through details together. Identify the mission critical and routine work responsibilities/tasks that can and cannot be fulfilled while working remotely and how will it impact operations or other people? What are ways to reduce the impacts?

   Identify the mission critical and responsibilities/tasks require regular communication and collaboration with others? Proactively contact each other to confirm how you will communicate while everyone is working remotely.

   Oftentimes employees experience fewer interruptions while Remote working. Therefore, identify and discuss essential trainings and/or special projects or tasks that can advance while working remotely?

   Identify the events or meetings are scheduled during the time in which the temporary Remote work arrangement is in place? Determine what will be postponed or canceled, or will take place using technology? Identify the follow-up needs to occur due to postponements or cancellations?

4. **Make a communication and accountability plan**
   Identify how often staff should send updates on work plan progress and what those updates include. Supervisors should also communicate how quickly they expect the employee to respond while Remote working and the best ways for the employee to contact the supervisor while working remotely. Current performance standards are expected to be maintained by employees.

   If as supervisor, if you normally have daily discussions with employees, you can continue to reach out during this period. Maintain team meetings and one-to-one check-ins, altering the schedule if needed to accommodate any alternate schedules that have been approved.

   Conduct regular check-ins. Start each workday with a phone, video or instant message chat. Your employees will be eager for connection and information during the remote work timeframe and the structure will help everyone create a positive routine. Every other day or
weekly may be fine, so long as you are in contact frequently enough that your employees are in sync with you and/or with one another.

5. **Be positive**
   A positive approach toward Remote working and a willingness to trust employees, while holding them accountable to work effectively is key to making such arrangements successful and productive. Emphasize a focus on measuring results and reaching objectives, not solely hours worked.

6. **Debrief after normal operations resume**
   Employees and supervisors should review work plans when work returns to normal, assess progress on the employee’s work plan and prioritize any unresolved or new work that resulted from temporary operational disruption.