

Coordinator: Thank you for standing by. The conference is now being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time.

Thank you. You may begin.

OPM Presenter: Welcome to the webinar on telework, Office of Work/Life Performance Culture, U.S. Office of Personal Management.

Overview of Telework in the Federal Government

The Telework Enhancement Act of 2010, Public Law 111-292, was signed by President Barack Obama on December 9, 2010. The Act provides a framework for federal agencies to maximize the use of telework. The Act will help agencies recruit and retain top workers, improve the ability of the Federal Government to maintain productivity during emergency situations, and enhance Federal employee work/life.

The Telework Enhancement Act defines telework and teleworking as a flexible work arrangement under which an employee performs the duties and responsibilities of such employee's position and other authorized activities from an approved work site other than the location from which the employee would otherwise work.

The Act set out specific responsibilities for federal agencies, including a requirement to designate a Telework Managing Officer, a requirement for employees and managers to complete interactive telework training, a requirement to establish a policy under which eligible employees can telework.

A requirement for employees and managers to have a written agreement as a condition of participation.

A requirement to determine eligibility and to notify employees of eligibility to telework.

Also, a requirement to incorporate telework into their continuity of operation plans and a requirement to consult with OPM to satisfy mandatory annual reporting requirements.

The Act also set out specific responsibilities for The Office of Personnel Management, including a requirement to provide policy guidance for telework.

To provide guidance to agencies on developing their telework policies, a requirement to assist agencies in establishing measures and goals.

A requirement to consult with FEMA, GSA, and NARA on relevant policies.

A requirement to maintain a central telework website, which is telework.gov.

And, a requirement to collect data on agency programs and to report those findings to Congress.

Limits to OPM's authority. The Telework Enhancement Act does not allow OPM to - or offer OPM regulatory authority for telework, the authority to tell agencies how to implement their programs, the authority to waive requirements that are set by law, or the authority to enforce compliance with the requirements of the law.

Who is eligible to telework? The Telework Enhancement Act limits eligibility to employees at Executive Branch agencies as defined by Section 2105 of Title V United States Code.

The provisions of the Telework Enhancement Act do not cover active duty members of the military, employees of the legislative or judiciary branch of government, or government contractors.

Although these individuals are not covered by the provisions of the Telework Enhancement Act that does not mean these individuals are not allowed to telework. Policies and procedures may be established to permit telework for these individuals that fall outside the prevue of the Act.

Types of telework arrangements.

Routine telework. Routine telework is telework that occurs as part of an ongoing and regular schedule. For example, every Wednesday or every Monday and Wednesday.

Situational telework. Telework that is approved on a case-by-case basis where the hours worked are not part of a previously approved ongoing and regular telework schedule.

Snapshot of a Federal teleworker. A Federal employee who resides within the local commuting area of the employing agencies worksite who performs official duties at an approved alternate worksite, usually at home, on a regular or situational basis.

Less common is a Federal employee who resides outside the local commuting area of the employing agency who performs official duties at an approved

alternate worksite, usually at home, often times on a full-time basis. And this type of telework arrangement may result in a change in the duty location of the employee.

This less common type of telework arrangement may involve changes in the employee's official worksite that can significantly impact pay rates, travel expense and allowances and reductions in force (terminations). As a result, there are increased cost implications for an agency that must be factored into a final decision to approve or disapprove such a request.

Common reasons for an employee to initiate a request for remote work may include: to follow a spouse who has relocated to a different geographical area due to a job transfer; to care for a seriously ill family member; to finalize the estate or affairs of a family member who recently passed; in preparation for a pending retirement where the employee intends to relocate or to move to an area with lower cost of living.

In instances where an employee may need to care for a seriously ill family member, it may be possible to combine the use of telework with other available leave options such as annual, sick leave, or family medical leave.

Common reasons for an agency to initiate a remote work arrangement: expanded recruitment efforts outside the local commuting area to attract specialized talents or to increase the employee pool of qualified applicants; to meet agency admission and operational needs; closure of agency satellite or field locations; or to cover large and diverse geographic areas, for example, for inspectors or Federal investigators.

Telework benefits. Benefits to employees may include balancing multiple responsibilities for work, family, and community, job autonomy, career

flexibility, reduce stress, general improved health, better focus at work, time for personal development, financial savings.

Benefits to employers. Increased employee productivity, improved continuity of operations, decreased employee absenteeism, better retention and recruitment, improved employee commitment, and reduced business costs.

For more information about telework or to look at a guide to telework in the Federal Government or the Telework Enhancement Act, please visit www.telework.gov.

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