



Memo

Date: March 11, 2020

To: Agency Heads, Deputy Commissioners, HR Directors, Continuity Coordinators, and Communication Directors

From: Enterprise Human Capital Division

RE: Agencies may Authorize Ad Hoc Telework Related to COVID-19

The State of Minnesota must ensure delivery of services even during times of adverse conditions caused by natural or human-made emergencies. Due to the global outbreak of COVID-19, agencies may consider authorizing employees to telework on an ad hoc, short-term basis as an alternative to working in the office. Ad hoc telework is different from normal telework arrangements in that employees may not have formal telework agreements in place, and do not regularly telework. Agencies should determine if employees with existing telework agreements may still telework as normal, or modify telework schedules to fit the business needs of the agency.

The decision whether to authorize ad hoc telework is at the discretion of the agency. Agencies should review their business needs to determine if ad hoc teleworking is an option for specific units and/or positions.

Employees approved to perform ad hoc telework should review [HR/LR Policy #1422 Telework Policy](#) as many of the items in the policy are applicable to ad hoc telework. Formal telework agreements, however, are not necessary for ad hoc telework. Agency policies regarding confidential and private data, employee performance, work schedules, and other policies continue to apply to ad hoc teleworkers. If ad hoc telework is authorized, the employee should be instructed to telework during their normal work hours. Non-exempt employees should be reminded, in writing, that they must receive pre-approval for overtime work. If an employee is approved to perform ad hoc telework, the employee and supervisor must stay in communication to ensure that teleworking does not disrupt the agency's business.

Considerations for Ad Hoc Telework

Agencies may consider authorizing ad hoc telework if requested by employees in the following situations:

- An employee is ill with cold or flu-like symptoms but is well enough to work
- An employee has recently returned from a [high-risk location](#), as indicated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and must be quarantined

- An employee is staying home because they have been exposed to someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19
- An employee has a confirmed case of COVID-19 but is well enough to work
- Other requests for ad hoc teleworking should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis

Agencies should consider the following factors to determine whether particular work is amenable to ad hoc telework:

- Can the employee's duties and tasks be completed at another location in the same fashion as at the office?
 - What percentage of tasks could be done at another location?
 - Could tasks reasonably be updated so they could be done at another location while meeting the needs of the agency and without changing the duties of the position?
 - Does the employee have the technological capabilities to complete the duties of the job at home, including telephone, computer, and access to necessary files?
- Can the employee telework without creating an increase in work for other employees?
- Can meetings be attended remotely?
 - Would additional conference tools or equipment be required?
 - Can all team members use conferencing technology?
- Does the position access specialized data or private or confidential data? If so, are there systems in place that could ensure the protection of this data in a remote work location?
- Does the employee work directly with customers on the phone, or in person?

Questions

Please send questions to COVID19.mmb@state.mn.us.