





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Best Practices	4
Work Area.....	4
Communications.....	5
Cyber Security Considerations	5
Attire.....	6
Distractions.....	6
Self-assessment.....	7
Practicality of Telecommuting	7



EMPLOYEE WORK FROM HOME GUIDE | INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted many employers, including the University of Idaho, to offer the short-term option of telecommuting more frequently than before. This allows employees to work from home or another alternate location and communicate with their employers electronically.

The University of Idaho recognizes the value and benefits of telecommuting during these uncertain times. Because of all the variables that can affect the success or failure of telecommuting, requests to work from home will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and approval is up to the discretion of the supervisor and unit leadership. If a work from home request is approved, employees can expect daily communication with their supervisor, regular core departmental meetings, and larger group staff meetings to continue. Employees must also request approval from their manager for the specific schedule they will work while teleworking. Please review the following:

- University of Idaho Flexible Work Arrangement Request
- Faculty Staff Handbook 3250 Flextime/Flexplace
- Cyber Security Considerations. For more information please contact your TSP, review ITS Training, and consult Chapter 30 of APM.

This Work From Home Guide provides you with tips and self-evaluation methods to help you remain engaged and stay on track with your work, while you are telecommuting.

For any questions regarding University of Idaho's telecommuting policy, please contact HR at hrbp@uidaho.edu or 208-885-3638. You may also review Faculty Staff Handbook 3250 Flextime/Flexplace.



1. SET A DESIGNATED WORK AREA.

Though this may seem trivial, choosing a spot in your home that is designated for working from home is an important step you can take to set yourself up for success. Choose a spot that you can work from every day that you are working from home. This could be spare bedroom that you've turned into a home office, a desk located in the corner of the living room or even the dining room table. However, you should try to stay away from working in your bed or on the couch, as these areas are associated with relaxation in your brain, which could negatively impact your productivity.

Make sure your workspace functions efficiently for you and your work style. Treat your home-work area as you would an office cubicle. Make your workspace a place you enjoy going to each day, an area where you can focus and do your best work.





2. PLAN AND TEST COMMUNICATIONS.

To ensure that you aren't left out of the loop, make sure you are included in regular meetings and communications with your team, supervisors and managers. It can be easy to feel disconnected with what's going on in the office, so remaining engaged with your co-workers is key. Communications can include the following:



VIRTUAL
MEETINGS



PHONE CALLS



INSTANT
MESSAGING



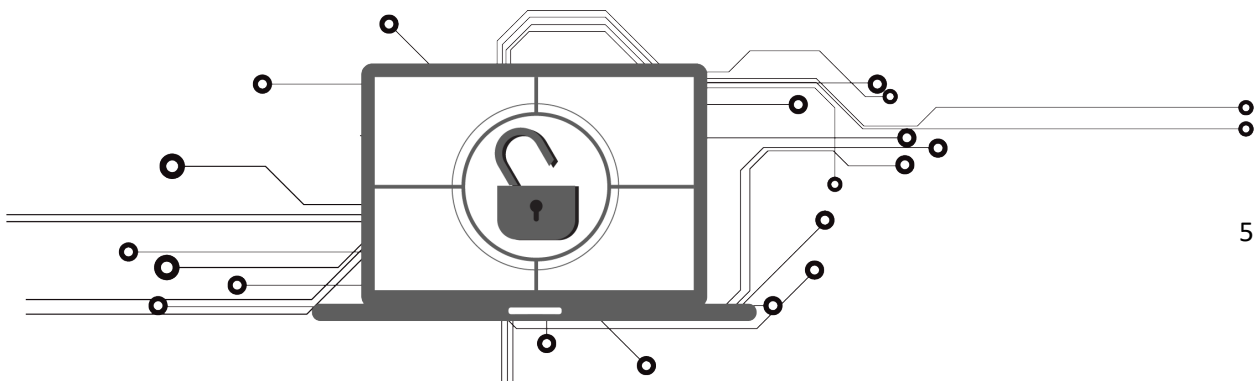
REGULAR
EMAILS

Of course, make sure that your communication method of choice functions properly before you consistently telecommute.

When you are in the office you are normally reachable by your office phone. While telecommuting, continue to make strides to pick-up incoming calls, instead of letting them go to voice mail. Typically, when people call you, they are expecting you to answer the phone if at all possible. If your office phone is forwarded to a personal cell phone or landline, please consider revising your voicemail to a professional, rather than personal, message. Please remember that work calls should be answered only by University of Idaho employees. You are expected to make every effort to avoid letting family members or others within your home answer work phone calls. Please work with your TSP for options on phone forwarding services.

3. MAKE SURE YOUR NETWORK AND WORK PROGRAMS ARE PROTECTED.

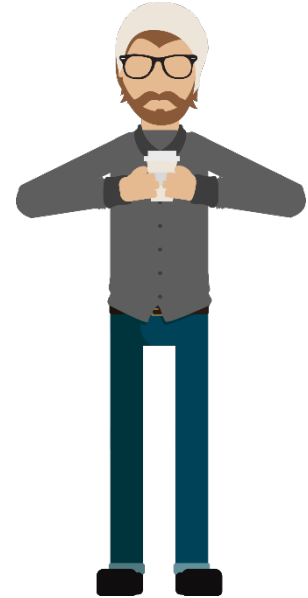
Telecommuting introduces another set of potential cyber security risks. Make sure you speak with your manager about cyber security and strategies you can use for mitigating the risk of a cyber-attack while you are working from your home. For more information, please contact your Technology Solutions Partner (TSP) <https://www.uidaho.edu/its/tsp>.





4. DRESS LIKE YOU'RE GOING TO WORK IN THE OFFICE.

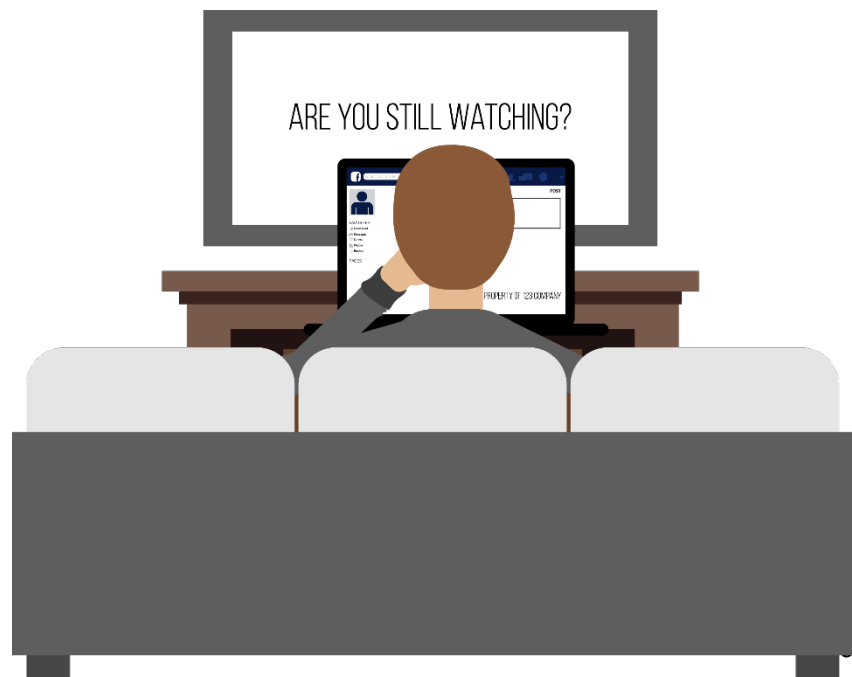
The way you dress has been proven to affect you psychologically. This means that although it may sound like a great idea to work from home in your pajamas, in reality, it isn't. While you may not need to dress up in business formal attire if you are working from home, you should take the time to shower, brush your teeth and get ready for the day. Aim to dress in at least business casual attire. Remember that you will likely be required to attend virtual meetings throughout the day, sometimes without prior notice. Although you may be dressed comfortably, it must be professional.



5. AVOID DISTRACTIONS AND STAY ON TASK.

One big challenge of telecommuting is accountability. Without co-workers or managers nearby, it's easy to become distracted and fall behind on work. Remember that working from home is a privilege, and that it will become apparent if you are not putting in the same effort into your work at home as you did in the office.

Stay focused on work throughout the day to maintain consistent productivity. Avoid online distractions as well. If possible, aim to work in a quiet space where distractions are limited. Your remote work environment should match your regular work environment as much as possible.





6. EVALUATE YOURSELF PERIODICALLY.

To ensure that telecommuting is working for you, be sure to conduct self-assessments periodically. Things to include in your assessment could include the following:

- Are you working the same schedule that has been approved by your manager?
- Do you arrive at your home-work area ready to work on time?
- Do you have everything you need to do your entire job from home?
- What are you accomplishing in the office versus out of the office?
- Are you meeting all of your deadlines and the expectations of your supervisor?
- Are you feeling connected with your co-workers?



Discuss your self-assessment with your supervisor periodically. Ask your supervisor for assistance and guidance if you have questions or concerns.

7. BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF.

Telecommuting is not a viable option for every employee. If you find that working from home is negatively impacting your productivity or making you feel disconnected from your team and your work, speak to your supervisor.

