

HUMAN CAPITAL PLANNING FOR A PANDEMIC FLU EPISODE (3rd Installment)

Information for Departments and Agencies
U.S. Office of Personnel Management
2006

August 3, 2006

Installment Guide

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Foreword

The President's *Implementation Plan for the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza (Implementation Plan)*, issued on May 3, 2006, called on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to provide guidance to Federal departments and agencies on human capital management and continuity of operations planning criteria related to pandemic influenza. In addition, the *Implementation Plan* required OPM to update its Telework Guide to provide guidance to Federal departments and agencies regarding workplace options during a pandemic. OPM's *Human Capital Planning for Pandemic Influenza: Information for Departments and Agencies (Guide)*, issued in three installments beginning in June 2006, is our response to the President's directive.

The Guide was developed in coordination with the Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee of the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, including representatives from the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Labor, State, and Transportation, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. While the Guide has been prepared specifically with the possibility of a pandemic influenza in mind, most of the information is equally applicable in other pandemic health crisis situations as well as in many other emergency situations. A quick glance at the Table of Contents shows the guide has been organized to present policy guidance in a variety of formats, including comprehensive statements of policy guidance; fact sheets and guides intended for various audiences; planning guides for agencies, human resources professionals, and managers; and questions and answers. The Table of Contents identifies the specific audiences for which each kind of guidance may be useful.

Human Capital Planning for Pandemic Influenza: Information for Departments and Agencies also includes a completely revised and updated general guide on telework, a collection of specific examples of "Human Capital Strategies" offered by Federal departments and agencies for use by others in addressing specific issues as they develop or enhance their own approach to planning for a possible pandemic. Also included are numerous links to information and resources related to pandemic influenza. Finally, the Guide establishes a process for collecting workforce data during a pandemic influenza episode.

OPM urges Federal departments and agencies to make creative use of this Guide. For example, some of the fact sheets and guides may lend themselves to widespread distribution to all employees or to managers and supervisors. The checklists contained in some of the "planning guides" should be useful in ensuring each agency and its managers and supervisors are prepared for a possible pandemic health crisis.

The Guide is designed to help Federal departments and agencies achieve two equally important goals—(1) protecting the Federal workforce and (2) ensuring the continuity of operations. These goals are not mutually exclusive. The message to the American people should be that they can have confidence in the ability and determination of the Federal Government to carry out its mission, especially in an emergency. For this reason, the Guide emphasizes the need to carry on the work of the Government wherever possible and through whatever means are available, including voluntary telework arrangements and the designation of an employee's home as a "safe haven" for the purpose of receiving "evacuation payments" and continuing the work of the Government. OPM does not anticipate the need for widespread use of excused absences (i.e., "administrative leave"), which should be regarded as a last resort in dealing with a pandemic health crisis. If and when the need arises, we will work to develop a consistent Governmentwide policy on the use of excused absences.

August 3, 2006

OPM extends its thanks and appreciation to the many individuals in the Federal human resources community who reviewed and contributed to this guide. With few exceptions, the guidance is not intended to be restrictive, but rather to empower agencies to prepare for and respond to the possibility of a pandemic influenza. As agencies continue to plan and, more importantly, test their ideas, we expect additional innovative approaches will evolve and be shared further.

OPM will continue to update and expand the Guide to address emerging issues and strategies, as well as unforeseen circumstances.

Linda M. Springer
Director
U.S. Office of Personnel Management
August 3, 2006

August 3, 2006

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Guidance on Human Capital Management Index and Quick Reference Guide

<http://www.opm.gov/pandemic/>

Hiring Flexibilities — see Section OPM-I-C

Hiring Flexibilities You Can Use Now Without OPM Approval

- Direct Hire Authorities (Governmentwide and Already Approved)
- 30-Day Critical Need Appointments
- 1-Year, 1040 Work Hours per Year Appointments in Remote/Isolated Locations
- Reemploying Former Federal Employees
- Reemploying Annuitants Without Salary Offset Waiver
- Employing Faculty Members
- Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) and Interagency CTAP (ICTAP)
- Agency Reemployment Priority List (RPL)
- 120 Days or Less Appointments
- Using Private Sector Temporaries

Hiring Flexibilities Which Require OPM Approval

- 1-Year Temporary Emergency Need Appointments
- Reemploying Annuitants Without Salary Offset
- Agency-Specific Schedule A and B Appointments
- Agency-Specific Direct Hire Authority
- Reemploying Buyout Recipients
- SES Limited Emergency Appointments

OPM's Federal Hiring Flexibilities Resource Center

Leave Flexibilities — see Section OPM-I-D

- Sick Leave
- Sick Leave for Exposure to Communicable Disease
- Sick Leave for General Family Care and Bereavement
- Sick Leave To Care for a Family Member with a Serious Health Condition
- Annual Leave
- Advance Annual and/or Sick Leave
- Leave Without Pay (LWOP)
- Family and Medical Leave
- Excused Absence (Administrative Leave)
- Donated Leave
 - Voluntary Leave Transfer Program
 - Voluntary Leave Bank Program
 - Emergency Leave Transfer Program
- Other Paid Time Off
 - Compensatory Time Off
 - Compensatory Time Off for Travel
 - Credit Hours

Pay Flexibilities — see Section OPM-I-E

Benefits — see Section OPM-I-F

- Retirement
- Health Insurance
- Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLI)
- Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP)
- Flexible Spending Accounts
- Work/Life Enrichments
- Survivor Benefits

Alternative Work Arrangements — see Section OPM-I-G

- Evacuation Pay
- Alternative Work Schedules

Information Regarding Overseas Employees — see Section OPM-I-H

Miscellaneous — see Section OPM-I-I

- Medical Evaluation Program Guidance
- Workforce Planning Guidance
- Volunteer Activities

Information Regarding Overseas Employees

Preparation and planning for a pandemic health crisis in overseas locations is similar to other emergency planning activities. Whether a Federal employee is employed overseas or is traveling overseas, it is important for the employee to become familiar with the risks and emergency procedures that exist for the area of the stay.

The Department of State emphasizes that, in the event of a pandemic, its ability to assist Americans traveling and residing abroad may be severely limited due to restrictions on local and international movement imposed for public health reasons either by foreign governments and/or the United States. Further, American citizens should take note that the Department of State cannot provide Americans traveling or living abroad with medications or supplies, including supplies needed in the event of a pandemic.

It is likely governments will respond to a pandemic by imposing public health measures that restrict domestic and international movement, further limiting the U.S. Government's ability to assist Americans in these countries. These measures can be implemented very quickly. The Department of State has asked its embassies and consulates to consider preparedness measures that take into consideration the fact that travel into or out of a country may not be possible, safe, or medically advisable during a pandemic. Guidance on how private citizens can prepare for a "stay in place" response, including stockpiling food, water, and medical supplies, is available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Website (www.cdc.gov/flu) and the main Federal Website www.pandemicflu.gov.

- **Overseas employees of the Department of State or of an agency whose mission is attached to an Embassy or Consulate** should become familiar with emergency guidance issued by the Chief of Mission and follow all appropriate procedures.
- **Overseas employees of the Department of Defense, or of an agency whose mission is assigned to an overseas Defense installation**, should become familiar with emergency guidance issued by the employing organization or the appropriate Commander and should follow all appropriate procedures.
- **Overseas employees whose mission is not attached to an Embassy, Consulate, or Defense installation** should stay in regular contact with agency headquarters for guidance on what to do in the event of a pandemic health crisis in their area.
- **Federal employees traveling to overseas locations** should review all advisories and guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the State Department for the area(s) of the visit, and should contact organization or agency headquarters immediately if a warning is issued for the area of travel.

CDC Information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) travel information related to avian influenza, including preventive measures, is available at www.cdc.gov/flu/avian and www.pandemicflu.gov.

Public Inquiries: English (888) 246-2675
 Spanish (888) 246-2857
 TTY (866) 874-2646
 Mon-Fri 8am-11pm EST
 Sat-Sun 10am-8pm EST

Address: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 1600 Clifton Rd.
 Atlanta, GA 30333
 USA (404) 639-3311

WHO Information

World Health Organization (WHO) guidance related to avian influenza is available at http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/.

Contact Information: Telephone: (202) 974-3787
 Facsimile: (202) 974-3789

Address: WHO Liaison Office
 1889 F Street, N.W., Suite 369
 Washington, D.C. 20006 USA

State Department Information

General country information can be obtained from the Department of State's Consular Information Sheets at <http://travel.state.gov> and Embassy and Consulate Websites at http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/embassies/embassies_1214.html.

Toll-free number: 1-888-407-4747
If calling from overseas: 202-501-4444

Miscellaneous

Medical Evaluation Program Guidance – Agencies may establish periodic examination or immunization programs to safeguard the health of employees whose work may subject them or others to significant health or safety risks due to occupational or environmental exposure or demands. The new programs are established through written policies or directives. (5 CFR 339.205) [Link to guidance](#)

Workforce Planning Guidance – Agencies may need to reanalyze their workforce and employment needs in light of a pandemic health crisis. OPM offers a workforce planning model and other resources to help agencies perform a workforce analysis and develop a comprehensive workforce plan. [Link to guidance](#)

Guidance on Scheduling Work and Granting Time Off to Permit Federal Employees to Participate in Volunteer Activities – The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) offers guidance to support the efforts of departments and agencies to encourage employee participation in volunteer activities. Departments and agencies should also review any applicable regulations or policies and collective bargaining agreements before making determinations on these matters. [Link to guidance](#)

Telework Guidance

In recent years, telework has become increasingly widespread and formalized, with legislative mandates as well as new programmatic and policy supports and structures. The information in this section is intended to help Federal managers and employees understand how to make telework a routine part of doing business, as well as how to integrate telework into planning for an emergency, including a pandemic health crisis. OPM will also distribute the document called *A Guide to Telework in the Federal Government* separately as general guidance. We include it here to ensure this material is comprehensive for agency use in preparing for pandemic influenza.

This section contains the following informational materials:

- A. A Guide to Telework in the Federal Government
- B. Fact Sheet: Telework and Emergency Preparedness
- C. Telework Training

A Guide to Telework in the Federal Government

Introduction

Late 20th-century technology revolutionized the workplace, and the 21st-century workplace is evolving even further. Computers, remote connectivity, voice and electronic communications, paperless work processes, and other innovations make information and work increasingly mobile.

Such innovations help the Federal Government, as the Nation's largest employer, serve the needs of the American public more efficiently and effectively. Federal employees have used mobile work technology for a long time. In recent years, telework has become increasingly widespread and formalized, with legislative mandates as well as new programmatic and policy supports and structures.

The Office of Personnel Management defines telework as "work arrangements in which an employee regularly performs officially assigned duties at home or other worksites geographically convenient to the residence of the employee." Telework is simply a way of getting work done from a different location. It can serve multiple purposes – and have multiple benefits – when it is implemented effectively in an organization.

For Federal agencies, telework is of particular interest for its benefits in the following areas:

- Recruiting and retaining the best possible workforce - particularly newer workers who have high expectations of a technologically forward-thinking workplace and any worker who values work/life balance
- Helping employees manage long commutes and other work/life issues that, if not addressed, can have a negative impact on their effectiveness or lead to employees leaving Federal employment
- Reducing traffic congestion, emissions, and infrastructure impact in urban areas, thereby improving the environment
- Saving taxpayer dollars by decreasing Government real estate costs
- Ensuring continuity of essential Government functions in the event of national or local emergencies

This guide is intended to help Federal managers and employees understand how to make telework a routine part of doing business, as well as how to integrate telework into emergency planning.

Legislative Background

For over a decade, laws addressing telework (under various names – "work at home," "flexible work," "telecommuting," etc.) have been in effect for Federal employees. The main legislative mandate for telework was established in 2000 (§ 359 of Public Law 106-346). This law states that "[e]ach executive agency shall establish a policy under which eligible employees of the agency may participate in telecommuting to the maximum extent possible without diminished employee performance." Associated language in the conference report for this legislation expanded on that requirement:

Each agency participating in the program shall develop criteria to be used in implementing such a policy and ensure that managerial, logistical, organizational, or other barriers to full implementation and successful functioning of the policy are removed. Each agency should also provide for adequate administrative, human resources, technical, and logistical support for carrying out the policy.

Further legislation (Public Law 108-199, Division B, § 627 of January 23, 2004, and Public Law 108-447, Division B, § 622 of December 8, 2004) followed this mandate with directives to certain agencies to increase telework participation in the workforce by specified amounts.

As part of this congressional mandate, OPM began to survey Federal agencies about telework in 2000. This survey collects data about agency programs and participation rates.

Joint OPM/GSA Support

OPM and the General Services Administration (GSA) work together to support telework in Federal agencies. The joint OPM/GSA Website www.telework.gov provides information to agencies, managers, and employees about how to effectively implement telework programs and arrangements. OPM and GSA also work directly with telework coordinators in each agency to provide guidance and assistance.

Definitions/Types of Telework

The terms “telework,” “telecommuting,” “flexible workplace,” “remote work,” “virtual work,” and “mobile work” are all used to refer to work done outside of the traditional on-site work environment. These terms are defined in different ways and used in different contexts to refer to anything from jobs that are completely “virtual” or “mobile,” to arrangements that enable employees to work from home a few days per week or per month.

OPM uses the term “telework” for reporting purposes and for all other activities related to policy and legislation. OPM defines telework as “work arrangements in which an employee regularly performs officially assigned duties at home or other work sites geographically convenient to the residence of the employee.”

Telework arrangements in the Federal Government are most often part-time rather than full-time, although full-time telework does exist. Agencies may, at their own discretion, define and use the types of telework that best fit their business needs. However, for purposes of reporting and judging progress towards meeting the legislative mandate, OPM will count employees whose telework frequency is in one of the following categories only:

- Regular/recurring at least 3 days per week
- 1 or 2 days per week
- Less often than once a week, but at least once a month

As defined by OPM, telework is not—

- Work extension: Many employees take work home with them. This is remote work, but it is not considered telework within the scope of the legislation.
- Mobile work: Some agencies have employees who, by the nature of their jobs, are generally off-site, and may even use their home as their “home base.” Because their work requires this setup and they travel much of the time, they are not considered

teleworkers. This is different from “hoteling” arrangements, in which frequent teleworkers use shared space when they are on-site.

Telework is not an employee right. Federal law requires agencies to have telework programs, but does not give individual employees a legal right to telework.

Sustaining a Successful Telework Program – A Manager’s Perspective

What’s in it for me?

Compliance with the Mandate

As described in **Legislative Background**, telework should be implemented to the maximum extent possible.

Human Capital Management Tool

Telework, like other flexibilities, can assist managers in attracting, recruiting, and retaining the best possible workforce. In addition, by decreasing employee commute times and other work/life stressors, telework can help make employees more effective in their jobs. Telework may also be used as a reasonable accommodation for disability.

Emergency Response

Integrating work fully into an organization’s operations and culture can help maintain critical functionality in the event of an emergency.

The Basics

Know Your Telework Coordinator

Each agency should designate a telework coordinator who acts as the key contact for policy and program questions. Managers should maintain frequent contact with their telework coordinator to ensure the agency’s policy and procedures are properly applied and to ensure they are aware of the full range of support and resources available to them.

Know Your Policy and Procedures

As detailed in §359 of Public Law 106-346, all agencies must have a telework policy. Managers should familiarize themselves and their employees with their agency’s policy to ensure they are in compliance with its requirements. Most agency policies will include additional procedures for establishing telework agreements, obtaining equipment, etc.

In addition, all agencies should have policies on information systems and technology security (see **Security**), and managers must ensure their equipment choices and telework agreements comply with this policy. Information security includes protection of sensitive “hard-copy” files and documents.

Participate in Training

OPM offers online telework training for employees and managers, which can be accessed via the joint OPM/GSA Website <http://www.telework.gov/courses>. In addition, many agencies offer telework training, and telework coordinators are available to consult with managers.

Information technology security training, administered at the agency level, is mandatory (see **Security**), and managers must ensure teleworkers complete this training and understand their responsibilities in safeguarding work-related information.

How To Be an Effective Telework Manager

To comply with the legislation, managers must be committed to using telework to the fullest extent possible. Beyond the basic requirements outlined above, managerial skill, participation, and support can make telework a real asset to an organization. To effectively implement a telework program, managers should accomplish the following:

Determine Employee Eligibility

Generally, agencies have discretion to determine telework eligibility criteria for their employees. These criteria should be detailed in agency policy. Individual managers should assess who is and who is not eligible in their workgroup based on these eligibility guidelines and any applicable collective bargaining agreements. Some agencies may provide managers additional discretion in deciding whether to grant or deny a request to telework from an eligible employee, based on additional factors such as staffing or budget.

All employees are considered eligible for telework except the following:

- Employees whose positions require, on a daily basis (i.e., every work day), **direct handling of secure materials** or **on-site activity** that cannot be handled remotely or at an alternative worksite, such as face-to-face personal contact in some medical, counseling, or similar services; hands-on contact with machinery, equipment, vehicles, etc.; or other physical presence/site dependent activity, such as forest ranger or guard duty tasks; and
- Employees whose last performance rating of record (or its equivalent) is below *fully successful* (or the agency's equivalent) or whose conduct has resulted in disciplinary action within the last year. (NOTE: Agencies may require a rating of record higher than *fully successful* for eligibility, but must still report as eligible all employees rated *fully successful* or higher.)

Understand and Assess the Needs of the Workgroup

Telework is often implemented piecemeal, rather than strategically, as individuals request arrangements. This reactive approach carries the risk of raising fairness issues, with decisions about telework arrangements being made on a first-come, first-served basis. Telework should be implemented strategically, taking into account the needs and work of the group, rather than granting or denying telework requests one by one. Employees should participate in the process and may be asked to help formulate possible solutions to issues that may arise.

Create Signed Agreements

The teleworker and his or her manager should enter into a written agreement for every type of telework, whether the employee teleworks regularly or not. The parameters of this agreement are most often laid out by the agency policy and/or collective bargaining agreement, but should include certain key elements (see **How To Be an Effective Teleworker**). Most importantly, the agreement should be signed and dated by the manager. Managers should keep copies of all telework agreements on file.

Telework agreements are living documents and should be revisited by the manager and teleworker and re-signed regularly, preferably at least once a year. At a minimum, new telework agreements should be executed when a new employee/manager relationship is established.

OPM strongly recommends any individuals asked to telework in the case of a Continuity of Operations (COOP) event or a pandemic health crisis have a telework agreement in place that provides for such an occurrence. Such individuals also should practice teleworking on a regular basis as much as possible.

Base Denials on Business Reasons

Telework requests may be denied and telework agreements may be terminated. Telework is not an employee right, even if the employee is considered “eligible” by OPM standards and/or the individual agency standards.

Denial and termination decisions must be based on business needs or performance, not personal reasons. For example, a manager may deny a telework agreement if, due to staffing issues, an employee who otherwise has portable duties must provide on-site office coverage. In this case, and whenever applicable, the denial or termination should include information about when the employee might reapply, and also if applicable, what actions the employee should take to improve his or her chance of approval. Denials should be provided in a timely manner. Managers should also review the agency’s negotiated agreement(s) and telework policy to ensure they meet any applicable requirements.

Managers should provide affected employees (and keep copies of) signed written denials or terminations of telework agreements. These should include information about why the arrangement was denied or terminated. OPM tracks the numbers of agreements denied and/or terminated, as well as the reasons for such an action; therefore, copies should be given to the agency telework coordinator as well.

Bargaining unit employees may file a grievance about the denial or cancellation of a telework agreement through the negotiated grievance procedure.

Use Good Performance Management Practices

Managers often ask, “How do I know what my employees are doing when I can’t see them?” Performance standards for off-site employees are the same as performance standards for on-site employees. Management expectations of a teleworker’s performance should be clearly addressed in the telework agreement. As with on-site employees, teleworkers must, and can, be held accountable for the results they produce. Good performance management techniques practiced by a manager will mean a smooth, easy transition to a telework environment. Resources for performance management are available from OPM at www.opm.gov/perform.

Communicate Expectations

The telework agreement (see **How To Be an Effective Teleworker** for key elements) provides a framework for the discussion that needs to take place between the manager and the employee about expectations. For both routine and emergency telework, this discussion is important to ensure the manager and the employee understand each other's expectations around basic issues such as the following:

- How will the manager know the employee is present? (Signing in, signing off procedures may be needed.)
- How will the manager know the work is being accomplished?
- What technologies will be used to maintain contact?
- What equipment is the agency providing? What equipment is the teleworker providing?
- Who provides technical assistance in the event of equipment disruption?
- What will the weekly/monthly telework schedule be? How will the manager and co-workers be kept updated about the schedule? Do changes need to be pre-approved?
- What will the daily telework schedule be? Will the hours be the same as in the main office, or will they be different?
- What are the physical attributes of the telework office, and do they conform to basic safety standards? (Use a safety checklist.)
- What are the expectations for availability (phone, e-mail, etc.)?
- What is the expectation regarding the amount of notice (if any) given for reporting to the official worksite, and how will such notice be provided?
- How is a telework agreement terminated by management or an employee?

Facilitate Communication With All Members of the Workgroup

Teleworking and non-teleworking employees must understand expectations regarding telework arrangements, including coverage, communication, and responsibilities. Although individual teleworkers must take responsibility for their own availability and information sharing, managers should ensure methods are in place to maintain open communication across the members of a workgroup.

Remain Equitable in Assigning Work and Rewarding Performance

Managers should avoid distributing work based on "availability" as measured by physical presence, and avoid the pitfall of assuming someone who is present and looks busy is actually accomplishing more work than someone who is not on-site. Good performance management practices are essential for telework to work effectively and equitably.

Make Good Decisions About Equipment

In Federal Management Regulation (FMR) Bulletin 2006-B3, Guidelines for Alternative Workplace Arrangements (a link is available at www.telework.gov), GSA provides guidelines for the equipment and support an agency may provide teleworkers. Generally, decisions are made by the agency or by individual managers regarding the ways in which teleworkers should be equipped. Managers should familiarize themselves with these guidelines and also with their agency's policy on equipment. Within those constraints, the challenge for managers is finding the right balance of budget, security, and effectiveness. Factors to consider include technology needs based on the work of the employee, agency security requirements, and budget constraints.

Practice, Practice, Practice

The success of an organization's telework program depends on regular, routine use. Experience is the only way to enable managers, employees, IT support, and other stakeholders to work through any technology, equipment, communications, workflow, and associated issues that may inhibit the transparency of remote work. Individuals expected to telework in an emergency situation should, with some frequency, telework under non-emergency circumstances as well.

The Bottom Line

Managers MUST—

- Implement routine telework in their organization to the fullest extent possible
- Treat employees equitably and fairly in implementing telework in their organization
- Identify eligible and ineligible employees using established agency criteria
- Include telework in COOP and other emergency response planning

Managers MAY NOT—

- Under normal circumstances, require that an employee work from home
- Terminate a telework agreement for reasons other than business or performance reasons

Managers MAY—

- Require an employee to work at an alternative worksite (e.g., a telework center) within the employee's commuting area
- Terminate a telework agreement for business reasons, e.g., an employee's poor performance or a change in the nature of the work

Sustaining a Successful Telework Arrangement – An Employee's Perspective

What's in it for me?

Work/life Balance

Telework gives employees more flexibility in meeting personal and professional responsibilities.

Stress Reduction

Telework can help make life less stressful overall by reducing commuting time and adding to discretionary time, thus reducing commuting stress.

Freedom From Office Distractions

Offices can be busy places, especially in environments where employees work in cubicles. Distractions are plentiful. Many employees find they are able to focus and be more productive when they telework.

Engagement

When employees feel they have greater control over their work, they tend to feel more committed to their organizations.

The Basics

Know Your Telework Coordinator

All agencies must designate a telework coordinator who acts as the key contact for policy and program questions. Employees should maintain contact with their telework coordinator for support and assistance as well as to ensure they follow the agency's policy and procedures.

Know Your Agency's Policy and Procedures

As required by Public Law 106-346, § 359, all agencies must have a telework policy. Employees should familiarize themselves with this policy to ensure they are in compliance with its requirements. Most agency policies will include procedures to be followed for establishing telework arrangements, obtaining equipment, etc.

In addition, employees need to work with their managers and information technology (IT) support to ensure their equipment choices and telework agreements comply with their agency's policy on information systems and technology security (see **Security**). This includes the protection of sensitive files and documents needed for work.

Participate in Training

OPM offers online teleworker training, which can be accessed via the joint OPM/GSA Website <http://www.telework.gov/courses>. In addition, many agencies offer various types of training. Some training may be required for participation in a telework program.

Information technology security training, administered at the agency level, is mandatory (see **Security**). Teleworkers must complete this training and understand their responsibilities in safeguarding work-related information.

How To Be an Effective Teleworker

Conduct an Honest Self-Assessment

A successful telework arrangement starts with a good self-assessment. Employees should consider the following factors in making an honest determination about their telework capabilities:

- Sufficient portable work for the amount of telework being proposed
- Ability to work independently, without close supervision
- Comfort with the technologies, if any, needed to telework
- Good communication with manager, co-workers, and customers that will enable a relatively seamless transition from on-site to off-site
- Telework office space conducive to getting the work done
- Dependent care (i.e., child care, elder care, or care of any other dependent adults) arrangements in place

- Ability to be flexible about the telework arrangement to respond to the needs of the manager, the workgroup, and the workload

Create a Good Telework Agreement

A successful telework arrangement also requires a strong foundation. No matter how frequently or infrequently an employee intends to telework, a written agreement should be executed between the employee and manager. Elements of this agreement should include the following:

- Location of the telework office (e.g., home, telework center, other)
- Equipment inventory – what the employee is supplying, what the agency is providing, and if applicable, what the telework center is providing
- In general, the job tasks to be performed while teleworking
- Telework schedule
- Telework contact information (e.g., the phone number to use on the telework day)
- Safety checklist – certifying the home office meets certain standards (see **Safety**)
- Expectations for emergency telework (specify whether the employee is expected to telework in the case of a COOP event, pandemic health crisis, shutdown of agency operations, etc.)

Telework agreements need to be updated as circumstances change (e.g., if the telework schedule changes). The manager and teleworker should work together to evaluate the arrangement periodically, make changes in the agreement as necessary, and re-sign the document. In the first year this may happen within a few months; thereafter, perhaps annually.

A sample telework agreement is available at www.telework.gov.

Safeguard Information and Data

Employees must take responsibility for the security of the data and other information they handle while teleworking, as described in **Security**. Employees should—

- Be familiar with, understand, and comply with their agency's information security policies;
- Participate in agency information security training; and
- Maintain security of any relevant materials, including files, correspondence, and equipment, in addition to following security protocols for remote connectivity. Depending on the sensitivity of the information being handled, the home office may need to include security measures such as locked file cabinets, similar to what may be used in the worksite

Plan the Work

Employees who telework should assess the portability of their work and the level of technology available at the remote site as they prepare to telework. Employees will need to plan their telework days to be as productive as possible by considering the following questions:

- What files or other documents will I need to take with me when I leave my regular workplace the day before teleworking?
- What equipment will I need to take?
- Who needs to be notified that I will be teleworking?
- What other steps should I take before I leave my office? (e.g., forwarding the phone)

- In the case of emergency telework, what should I have available at all times at my home office or, if applicable, a telework center, to enable me to be functional without coming on-site to retrieve materials?

Manage Expectations and Communication

Managers are ultimately responsible for the effective functioning of the workgroup. Nevertheless, teleworkers should help manage the group's expectations and their own communication in order to avoid any negative impact from their arrangement. Issues that should be addressed include the following:

- Backup: Even with very portable work there are inevitably instances where physical presence is required and a co-worker may need to step in. Co-worker backup should be planned, it should not be onerous, and it should be reciprocal. Cross-training of staff has broad organizational benefits and should be a management priority.
- On-the-spot assistance: Teleworkers may occasionally need someone who is physically in the main office to assist them (e.g., to fax a document or look up information). Again, these arrangements should not be unduly burdensome; a "buddy system" between teleworkers may be the least disruptive solution.
- Communication with manager: The manager must be kept apprised of the teleworker's schedule, how to make contact with the teleworker, and the status of all pending work.
- Communication with co-workers: Co-workers must be informed about the appropriate handling of telephone calls or other communications that are the teleworker's responsibility.

The Bottom Line

Teleworkers MUST—

- Comply with the security and telework policies of their agency
- Take responsibility for ensuring the success of their arrangement
- Notify the manager of any changes in their situation that may affect the arrangement

Teleworkers MAY NOT—

- Assume a telework arrangement is permanent
- Use telework as a substitute for child or other dependent care

Teleworkers MAY—

- Use appropriate grievance procedures if they believe their telework request or agreement was wrongfully denied or terminated. Telework requests or agreements may be denied or terminated only for business reasons, and managers must provide written justification to the affected employee.

Safety

Teleworkers must address issues of their own personal safety to be effective while teleworking from a home office. This is not an issue in telework centers, where appropriate workstations are provided.

Government employees causing or suffering work-related injuries and/or damages at the alternative worksite (home, telework center, or other location) are covered by the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act, the Federal Tort Claims Act, or the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (workers' compensation), as appropriate.

Manager Safety Responsibilities

- Review safety checklist with teleworker (see www.telework.gov for a sample).
- Depending on agency policy, managers may have the authority to visit home offices, with advance notice to the teleworker.

Teleworker Safety Responsibilities (for home-based telework)

- Provide appropriate telework space, with ergonomically correct chair, desk, and computer equipment.
- Complete safety checklist (see www.telework.gov for a sample) certifying the space is free from hazards. This checklist is not legally binding, but details management expectations and, if signed, assumes compliance.
- Immediately report any work-related accident occurring at the telework site and provide the supervisor with all medical documentation related to the accident. It may be necessary for an agency representative to access the home office to investigate the report.

Security

(Note: This guidance is subject to change to incorporate pertinent information from the June 23, 2006, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) memo, "Protection of Sensitive Agency Information" <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/memoranda/fy2006/m06-16.pdf>.)

Federal employees and their managers are responsible for the security of Federal Government property and information, regardless of their work location. Agency security policies do not change and should be enforced at the same rigorous level when employees telework as when they are in the office.

The Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002 (FISMA) defines information security as protecting information and information systems from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, or destruction in order to provide—

- (A) integrity, which means guarding against improper information modification or destruction and includes ensuring information nonrepudiation and authenticity;
- (B) confidentiality, which means preserving authorized restrictions on access and disclosure, including means for protecting personal privacy and proprietary information; and
- (C) availability, which means ensuring timely and reliable access to and use of information.

As in the main office, security measures should cover not only information systems and technology, but all aspects of the information systems used by the employee, including paper files, other media, storage devices, and telecommunications equipment (e.g., laptops, PDAs, and cell phones). Employees who telework from home need to keep Government property and information safe, secure, and separated from their personal property and information.

Agencies managing or operating records systems are required by the Privacy Act of 1974 and other relevant laws and regulations to issue rules for maintaining the security of information contained in those records, whether the information is maintained in electronic or paper form. Managers and employees must follow these rules whenever they are accessing this information, whether they are working from home, at another remote location, or at their regular duty station. For example, OPM regulates access and use of Government personnel records as follows:

Section 293.106(a) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, mandates that “[a]ll persons whose official duties require access to and use of personnel records be responsible and accountable for safeguarding those records and for ensuring that the records are secured whenever they are not in use or under the direct control of authorized persons. Generally, personnel records should be held, processed, or stored only where facilities and conditions are adequate to prevent unauthorized access.”

Under 5 CFR 293.108, “Office and agency employees whose official duties involve personnel records shall be sensitive to individual rights to personal privacy and shall not disclose information from any personnel record unless disclosure is part of their official duties or required by executive order, regulation, or statute (e.g., required by the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552).” Also, “[a]ny Office or agency employee who makes a disclosure of personnel records knowing that such disclosure is unauthorized, or otherwise knowingly violates these regulations, shall be subject to disciplinary action and may also be subject to criminal penalties where the records are subject to the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a).”

Each Executive agency must develop a Federal information systems security awareness and training plan and provide role-specific security training to employees as required by 5 CFR 930.301. The regulations advise agencies to follow the guidance published by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

NIST publications include Special Publication 800-50, “Building an Information Technology Security Awareness and Training Program,” which provides a blueprint for developing agency-specific security awareness and training materials. NIST advises agencies that users of information systems must—

- Understand and comply with agency security policies and procedures;
- Be appropriately trained in the rules of behavior for the systems and applications to which they have access;
- Work with management to meet training needs;
- Keep software/applications updated with security patches; and
- Be aware of actions they can take to better protect their agency’s information. These actions include, but are not limited to, proper password usage, data backup, proper antivirus protection, reporting any suspected incidents or violations of security policy, and following rules established to avoid social engineering attacks and rules to deter the spread of spam or viruses and worms.

Special Publication 800-50 recommends addressing these topics in agency security awareness campaigns. Other topics may include accessing unknown email and attachments, dealing with spam, protecting against “shoulder surfing (i.e., someone reading a document or a computer screen from behind the user),” physical protection of data (e.g., from water, fire, dust or dirt, physical access), inventory and property transfer, personal use of systems at work and home,

use of encryption, transmission of sensitive/confidential information, laptop security, and personally-owned systems and software.

In Special Publication 800-46, "Security for Telecommuting and Broadband Communications," NIST helps Federal agencies address security issues by providing recommendations on securing a variety of applications, protocols, and networking architectures to be used by teleworkers. NIST recommendations encompass the following five security principles:

- All home networks connected to the Internet via a broadband connection should have some firewall device installed.
- Web browsers should be configured to limit vulnerability to intrusion.
- Operating system configuration options should be selected to increase security.
- Selection of wireless and other home networking technologies should be in accordance with security goals.
- Federal agencies should provide teleworking users with guidance on selecting appropriate technologies, software, and tools consistent with the agency network and with agency security policies.

Complete texts of these and other NIST publications are available at <http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/nistpubs/>.

Manager Security Responsibilities

- Thoroughly review all telework agreements to ensure they are in compliance with agency information security policies.
- Ensure employees receive agency information systems security training.
- Work with employees to ensure they fully understand and have the technical expertise to comply with agency requirements.
- Invest in technology and equipment that can support success.
- Work with employees to develop secure systems for potentially sensitive documents and other materials.
- Track removal and return of potentially sensitive materials, such as personnel records.
- Enforce personal privacy requirements for records.

Teleworker Security Responsibilities

- Participate in agency information systems security training.
- Achieve sufficient technical proficiency to implement the required measures.
- Provide a high level of security to any personal or private information accessed at the telework site or transported between locations.
- Remain sensitive to individual rights to personal privacy.
- Comply with agency policies and with any additional requirements spelled out in the telework agreement.

Emergency Response Telework: Continuity of Operations (COOP)

Telework should be part of all agency emergency planning. Management must be committed to implementing remote work arrangements as broadly as possible to take full advantage of the potential of telework for this purpose and ensure that—

- Equipment, technology, and technical support have been tested
- Employees are comfortable with technology and communications methods
- Managers are comfortable managing a distributed workgroup

In addition, agencies and management should consider investing in and using—

- Teleconferencing, videoconferencing, and other technologies that enable multi-channel communication
- Paperless systems

Continuity of Operations (COOP)

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Federal Preparedness Circular (FPC) 65 defines COOP planning as "an effort to ensure that the capability exists to continue essential agency functions across a wide range of hazard emergencies." COOP capability is intended to be short-term; it must be functional within 12 hours and may last up to 30 days.

Telework can play a vital role in helping agencies preserve their essential functionality in this environment.

Manager COOP Responsibilities

- Understand the agency COOP plan and management roles in executing the plan.
- Notify employees designated as essential personnel for COOP.
- Communicate expectations both to COOP and non-COOP employees regarding what steps they need to take in case of an emergency.
- Establish communication processes to notify COOP and non-COOP employees of COOP status in the event of an emergency.
- Integrate COOP expectations into telework agreements as appropriate.
- Allow essential personnel who might telework in case of an emergency to telework regularly to ensure functionality.

Teleworker COOP Responsibilities

- Maintain a current telework agreement detailing any COOP responsibilities, as appropriate.
- Practice telework regularly to ensure effectiveness.
- Be familiar with agency and workgroup COOP plans and individual expectations during COOP events.

Pandemic

The National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan references the benefits of using telework to slow the spread of disease by keeping face-to-face contact to a minimum (often referred to as "social distancing") while maintaining operations as close to normal as

possible. Telework can also help agencies retain functionality as infrastructure issues and other challenges make the main worksite difficult to access.

The key to successful use of telework in the event of a pandemic health crisis is an effective routine telework program. As many employees as possible should have telework capability (i.e., current telework arrangements, connectivity, and equipment commensurate with their work needs and frequent enough opportunities to telework to ensure all systems have been tested and are known to be functional). This may entail creative thinking beyond current implementation of telework, drawing in employees who otherwise might not engage in remote access and ensuring their effectiveness as a distributed workforce.

Manager Pandemic Responsibilities

- Implement telework to the greatest extent possible in the workgroup so systems are in place to support successful remote work in an emergency.
- Communicate expectations to all employees regarding their roles and responsibilities in relation to remote work in the event of a pandemic health crisis.
- Establish communication processes to notify employees of activation of this plan.
- Integrate pandemic health crisis response expectations into telework agreements.
- With the employee, assess requirements for working at home (supplies and equipment needed for an extended telework period).
- Determine how all employees who may telework will communicate with one another and with management to accomplish work.
- Identify how time and attendance will be maintained.

Teleworker Pandemic Responsibilities

- Maintain current telework agreement specifying pandemic health crisis telework responsibilities, as appropriate.
- Perform all duties assigned by management, even if they are outside usual or customary duties.
- Practice telework regularly to ensure effectiveness.
- Be familiar with agency and workgroup pandemic health crisis plans and individual expectations for telework during a pandemic health crisis.

References

Federal Employee's Emergency Guide
Office of Personnel Management
<http://www.opm.gov/emergency/PDF/EmployeesGuide.pdf>

Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA)
<http://csrc.nist.gov/policies/FISMA-final.pdf>

Federal Management Regulation (FMR) Bulletin 2006-B3
Guidelines for Alternative Workplace Arrangements
[Link to FMR Bulletin No. 2006-B3](#)

Federal Manager's/Decision Maker's Emergency Guide
Office of Personnel Management
<http://www.opm.gov/emergency/PDF/ManagersGuide.pdf>

Federal Preparedness Circular (FPC) 65
http://www.fema.gov/txt/government/coop/fpc65_0604.txt

GAO-03-679, July 2003
Report to the Chairman, Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives
Human Capital: Further Guidance, Assistance, and Coordination Can Improve Federal Telework Efforts
<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d03679.pdf>

GAO-06-713, May 2006
Report to the Chairman, Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives
Continuity of Operations: Selected Agencies Could Improve Planning for Use of Alternate Facilities and Telework during Disruptions
<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d06713.pdf>

National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/pandemic-influenza.html>

NIST Special Publication 800-46
Security for Telecommuting and Broadband Communications
<http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/nistpubs/800-46/sp800-46.pdf>

Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) Bulletin No. 98-09
[Link to OWCP FECA Bulletin 98-09](#)

U.S. Office of Personnel Management Fact Sheet



Telework and Emergency Preparedness

- Telework is a voluntary work arrangement in which an employee regularly performs officially assigned duties at home or another worksite geographically convenient to his or her residence.
- All Federal agencies must have a telework policy as required by Public Law 106-346, § 359, and must implement telework to the maximum extent possible for eligible employees.
- Telework should be integrated into planning for Continuity of Operations (COOP), including a pandemic health crisis.
- Agencies must designate a telework coordinator to be responsible for overseeing the implementation and operation of telework programs.
- Agencies may, at their discretion, define and use the types of telework that best fit their business needs.
- The choice of how to equip teleworkers is left to agency discretion. Security concerns should be considered in making equipment choices; agencies may wish to avoid use of employees' personal computers and provide agency PCs or laptops as appropriate. In all cases, however, agencies should follow the provisions contained in the Office of Management and Budget's June 23, 2006, memorandum, "Protection of Sensitive Agency Information."
- Telework can be used as a reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with medical conditions or other disabilities. At the discretion of an agency, telework can also help with employees who, because of physical injury, are temporarily unable to travel to the workplace. Telework provides an opportunity for agencies to hire qualified individuals (especially those who are mobility-impaired) who might otherwise not consider applying for positions.
- All teleworkers and telework managers should receive telework and information security training. Telework training is available via the joint OPM/GSA Website <http://www.telework.gov/courses> or may be provided by the agency. Information security training must be provided to all employees by their agencies.
- All teleworkers should have signed agreements, even for emergency telework arrangements, to provide structure and accountability. Key components of a telework agreement include the following: schedule; communication expectations with the employee's manager, workgroup, and customers; equipment; tasks; information security obligations; expectations for COOP, pandemic, or other emergency situations, including weather closures. Telework agreements should conform to any applicable negotiated agreements.
- Managers may deny a telework request or terminate a telework agreement for business reasons. The denial or termination must be documented in writing and shared with the employee.

- Teleworkers who work from home must provide an appropriate workspace and should certify that it is free from hazards. Government employees causing or suffering work-related injuries and/or damages at the alternative worksite (home, telework center, or other location) are covered by the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act, the Federal Tort Claims Act, or the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (workers' compensation), as appropriate.
- Employees who use computers and other information technology while teleworking need effective support during work hours; remote access presents some unique issues, and agencies should ensure tech support can meet these needs. These needs must also be taken into account in planning for using a distributed workforce during an emergency situation.
- Employees designated to work from home during an emergency event should telework frequently enough to ensure all systems are working smoothly.

Telework Training

Telework is an important and attractive work option for the Federal Government and its employees. Telework arrangements will be of vital importance to supervisors and employees if a pandemic health crisis occurs. To support the new *Guide to Telework in the Federal Government* the Office of Personnel Management has developed training for managers, supervisors, and employees who wish to learn how to make the most of telework arrangements.

The training adds further modules to the existing “Telework 101 for Managers: Making Telework Work for You” and the companion course for employees, “Telework 101 for Employees: Making Telework Work for You.”

The new sections cover:

- (1) What is a Pandemic?
- (2) Recent Government Policy
- (3) How Can Telework Help Prepare Me in the Case of a Pandemic Health Crisis?

Both the manager and employee courses are available via the joint OPM/GSA Website <http://www.telework.gov/courses>.

Pandemic Planning Guides and Agency Strategies

The best way to prepare for a possible pandemic health crisis is to plan carefully. Planning includes—

- **Reviewing** relevant agency and Governmentwide human resources policies and practices
- **Developing** human resources management strategies to deal with circumstances that may arise during a pandemic health crisis
- **Testing** plans of action and telecommunications systems to ensure readiness
- **Communicating** with employees, managers, and other stakeholders prior to, during, and after a pandemic health crisis

The following Pandemic Planning Guides and Agency Strategies are designed to assist agencies as they prepare for a possible pandemic health crisis. Some of the planning guides provide suggestions for general preparations, while others provide information for handling specific situations that may arise. We recommend agencies immediately use the checklist formatted guides to assess their current state of readiness. The checklists can also be used in the future to assess progress and overall preparation for dealing with a potential health emergency.

Because the planning guides are general in nature, readers should also review their agency human resources management policies, practices, and guidance to understand specific actions and flexibilities they have available to them during a pandemic health crisis.

For information on human resources programs and benefits, we recommend you visit the OPM pandemic influenza Website at www.opm.gov/pandemic/. The planning activities in these Planning Guides and Agency Strategies supplement existing all-hazard emergency/business contingency planning guidance that can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov.

We also have distilled the critical roles and responsibilities of agencies, employees, and supervisors in the event of a pandemic health crisis.

Agency Roles and Responsibilities

- Provide resources for training and testing
- Ensure communication systems work
- Develop guidance on protecting sensitive information and providing for contingency hiring

Supervisory Roles and Responsibilities

- Plan for short- and long-term disruptions
- Stay in constant touch with employees and leadership
- Know where to find information and help on human resources issues

Employee Roles and Responsibilities

- Be ready for alternative work arrangements
- Protect sensitive information
- Stay in constant touch with management

The Pandemic Planning Guides:

- A. What Should an Agency Do To Prepare for a Pandemic Health Crisis?**
- B. What Should a Supervisor Do To Prepare for a Pandemic Health Crisis?**
- C. What Can a Supervisor Do To Accomplish Work During a Pandemic Health Crisis?**
- D. What Can an Agency Do To Prepare for Workplace Disruptions During a Pandemic Health Crisis?**
- E. What Pay and Leave Flexibilities and Requirements Should an Agency Prepare To Manage During a Pandemic Health Crisis?**
- F. What Can an Agency Do To Prepare for Labor Relations Issues That May Arise in the Event of a Pandemic Health Crisis?**
- G. What Hiring Strategies Could an Agency or Manager Use During a Pandemic Health Crisis?**
- H. What Can an Agency Do To Prepare for Telework During a Pandemic Health Crisis?**
- I. Human Capital Strategies for a Pandemic Health Crisis**



U.S. Office of Personnel Management Pandemic Planning Guide

What Should an Agency Do To Prepare For a Pandemic Health Crisis?

This Pandemic Planning Guide is designed to assist agencies as they prepare for and respond to a pandemic health crisis. The guide is general in nature. For detailed human resources information, see www.opm.gov/pandemic/. For the latest information on contingency planning for a pandemic influenza, see www.pandemicflu.gov. Readers should also review their agency policies, practices, and guidance prior to taking action.

Has the agency...	Completed	In Progress	Not Started
1. Developed its pandemic influenza plan in accordance with the President's National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan and identified potential human capital issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Determined the potential impact of a pandemic on the agency's workforce and made appropriate modifications in its COOP plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Developed human capital related "what if" scenarios and conducted practice drills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Developed a communications plan for agency managers, employees, and contractors that includes, at a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An internal Website with pandemic related information ▪ Instructions for determining status of agency operations ▪ Distribution of critical agency information ▪ Distribution of information on personal and family protection during a pandemic health crisis 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Identified specific hiring needs (e.g., critical positions, geographic locations) and determined which hiring flexibilities the agency may need to utilize that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do not require OPM approval ▪ Require OPM approval For those requiring OPM approval, have agency officials started to develop documentation and/or compile information that can be used to immediately request approval should an outbreak occur?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Reviewed and familiarized agency hiring officials with Governmentwide and agency specific hiring authorities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Prepared for requesting "buyout" repayment and dual compensation (for returning retired annuitants) waivers, if needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Consulted and bargained (as appropriate) with exclusive representatives of bargaining unit employees over human resources issues that may affect employees or collective bargaining agreements. Such issues may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Telework during a pandemic health crisis ▪ Assignment of work during a pandemic health crisis 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 8. Reviewed the agency's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to ensure it is ready to respond to employee needs during a pandemic health crisis? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Reviewed and revised, as necessary, agency policy and/or guidance on leave, alternative work schedules (flexible and compressed work schedules), and evacuation payments? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Ensured agency telework policy and guidance align with OPM telework guidance, including the protection of sensitive information? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. Ensured agency managers and supervisors are familiar with various leave options for seeking medical attention, the procedures and obligations for requesting and approving leave, and the limited circumstances under which an employee may be directed to take leave? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Ensured agency managers and supervisors are knowledgeable of and use CDC guidance on travel restrictions, quarantines, and dealing with sick employees? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Ensured agency telecommunications infrastructure is capable of handling telework or work-at-home arrangements and securing sensitive information? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. Provided training for employees who will have to deal with specific pandemic health crisis related issues? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Encouraged employees to develop a family emergency preparation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. Ensured lines of communication with Federal Executive Boards (FEB) are established, where appropriate? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. Met with procurement staff and major contractors to discuss the effect of pandemic-related human capital issues on the contract workforce? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. Communicated to all employees: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures the agency has taken or has planned to deal with a pandemic health crisis, including steps to prevent or minimize workplace exposure to contagious disease? • Optional alternative work arrangements available in the case of a pandemic health crisis? | | | |
| 19. Ensured accountability through an independent review of its pandemic influenza plan and preparedness? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



U.S. Office of Personnel Management Pandemic Planning Guide

What Should a Supervisor Do To Prepare For a Pandemic Health Crisis?

This Pandemic Planning Guide is designed to assist agencies as they prepare for and respond to a pandemic health crisis. The guide is general in nature. For detailed human resources information, see www.opm.gov/pandemic/. For the latest information on contingency planning for a pandemic influenza, see www.pandemicflu.gov. Readers should also review their agency policies, practices, and guidance prior to taking action.

Have you, as a manager or supervisor...	Completed	In Progress	Not Started
1. Familiarized yourself with agency policies and guidance on dealing with a pandemic health crisis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Worked human capital implications of a pandemic health crisis into your COOP plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Identified alternative methods for continuing critical office functions during a pandemic health crisis and discussed them with your employees? This would include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alternative work arrangements, such as telework, working from alternative sites, and flexible or compressed work schedules ▪ Communication plans and procedures ▪ Teleconferencing and/or videoconferencing arrangements 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Reviewed your agency and office telework policies and agreements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Updated employee contact information and developed a plan for keeping the information current?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Established and tested procedures for contacting employees (i.e., telephone trees or comparable procedures)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Developed a contingency plan for accomplishing work during increased employee absenteeism, including cross-training workers to cover for employees who are not able to work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Familiarized yourself with your agency Employee Assistance Program (EAP) procedures and communicated with employees about the EAP?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Identified employees with special needs, such as those with physical impairments, and included their needs in planning activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Familiarized yourself with employee and agency requirements and obligations for requesting and approving leave and other agency-specific policies and procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Familiarized yourself with agency specific guidance on communications and discussed the guidance with employees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Established a procedure for communicating with agency headquarters concerning employee status and deaths during a pandemic health crisis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Developed an office plan for dealing with travel restrictions or quarantines during a pandemic health crisis?





U.S. Office of Personnel Management Pandemic Planning Guide

What Can A Supervisor Do To Accomplish Work During a Pandemic Health Crisis?

This Pandemic Planning Guide is designed to assist agencies as they prepare for and respond to a pandemic health crisis. The guide is general in nature. For detailed human resources information, see www.opm.gov/pandemic/. For the latest information on contingency planning for a pandemic influenza, see www.pandemicflu.gov. Readers should also review their agency policies, practices, and guidance prior to taking action.

Here are some actions you can take in advance of a pandemic health crisis to ensure you can accomplish work if such a crisis occurs:

- Discuss the potential pandemic and the possibility of an outbreak with your employees
 - Explain that should a pandemic health crisis occur, Government operations will continue. Stress need for employees to plan for how they will continue to work (in office, at alternative site, or from home)
- Remind your employees about the availability of information on the opm.gov/pandemic and pandemicflu.gov Websites
- Update office emergency plan, including updating all employee emergency contact information and establishing or updating a telephone tree
- Reassess all positions and employees for potential telework agreements
 - Establish agreements/procedures in accordance with agency's telework plan and offer telework agreements to eligible employees
 - Implement telework arrangements as broadly as possible so systems and employees are fully prepared for remote work
- Review work schedules and work arrangements for all employees
 - If your agency policy permits alternative work schedules (AWS), consider asking employees to work:
 - A [Flexible work schedule](#), which allows an employee to complete the basic 80-hour biweekly work requirement in less than 10 workdays. The employee may vary his or her arrival and departure times and AWS day off.
 - A [Compressed work schedule](#), which also allows an employee to complete the basic 80-hour biweekly work requirement in less than 10 workdays. The employee may **not** vary his or her arrival and departure times or AWS day off under a compressed work schedule.
- Conduct a test of:
 - Telework arrangements with all participating employees
 - Telephone trees or similar employee contact procedures
- Discuss agency plans and processes for
 - Communicating the status of agency operations with employees
 - Communicating the status of employees with supervisors and managers

Here are some actions you can take if a pandemic health crisis occurs:

- Implement your emergency plan.
- Adjust emergency plan, work assignments, and work arrangements as dictated by the crisis and employee availability.
- If your workplace should become unsafe, see Pandemic Planning Guide V-D.



U.S. Office of Personnel Management Pandemic Planning Guide

What Should an Agency Do To Prepare for Workplace Disruptions During a Pandemic Health Crisis?

This Pandemic Planning Guide is designed to assist agencies as they prepare for and respond to a pandemic health crisis. The guide is general in nature. For detailed human resources information, see www.opm.gov/pandemic/. For the latest information on contingency planning for a pandemic influenza, see www.pandemicflu.gov. Readers should also review their agency policies, practices, and guidance prior to taking action.

Has the agency...	Completed	In Progress	Not Started
1. Implemented and expanded the use of telework arrangements, as necessary? <i>[See "Telework Guide," OPM-II-A.]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Implemented and expanded the use of alternative work schedules, as necessary? <i>[See "Alternative Work Arrangements," OPM-I-G.]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Communicated to all employees the various leave options available? <i>[See "Leave Flexibilities," OPM-I-D.]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Familiarized itself with regulations at 5 CFR part 550, subpart D, regarding evacuation pay, developed agency plans to administer such payments during a pandemic health crisis, and provided employees with appropriate work assignments at their "safe haven" locations? <i>[See "Alternative Work Arrangements," OPM-I-G.]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Considered steps to be taken when an employee fails or refuses to perform assigned work as required for evacuation pay? <i>[See "Alternative Work Arrangements," OPM-I-G.]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



U.S. Office of Personnel Management Pandemic Planning Guide

What Pay and Leave Flexibilities and Requirements Should an Agency Prepare To Manage During a Pandemic Health Crisis?

This Pandemic Planning Guide is designed to assist agencies as they prepare for and respond to a pandemic health crisis. The guide is general in nature. For detailed human resources information, see www.opm.gov/pandemic/. For the latest information on contingency planning for a pandemic influenza, see www.pandemicflu.gov. Readers should also review their agency policies, practices, and guidance prior to taking action.

Pay

Agencies are responsible for the proper administration of the laws and regulations governing premium pay and pay flexibilities. The following is a list of specific pay issues that may arise during a pandemic health crisis. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) encourages agencies to use the following checklist to ensure managers and supervisors are familiar with their responsibilities and obligations in preparation for responding to a pandemic health crisis.

NOTE: "FLSA" means the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as revised.

	Yes	No	In progress
Do your managers know your agency's policies on ordering and approving—			
1. Overtime (Note: For information on computing overtime pay under the FLSA, click here)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• FLSA nonexempt employees (covered by the FLSA)?			
• FLSA exempt employees (not covered by the FLSA)?			
2. Compensatory time off in lieu of overtime pay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• FLSA nonexempt employees (covered by the FLSA)?			
• FLSA exempt employees (not covered by the FLSA)?			
Do your managers know when an employee is eligible for, or entitled to—			
3. Holiday premium pay?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Sunday premium pay?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Night pay?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• For General Schedule employees?			
• For Wage Grade employees?			
6. Are your managers aware that if an employee works from home temporarily because of a pandemic health crisis, his or her locality rate or special rate may continue to be determined based on the location of the regular official worksite?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Are your managers familiar with your agency's plan and procedures for providing [evacuation payments](#) during a pandemic health crisis?
- Does your agency's plan address the following:
- Agency official(s) authorized to order employees to evacuate and receive evacuation payments
 - Criteria for ordering employees to evacuate their worksites
 - Time limitations for receiving evacuation payments
 - Criteria for providing advance payments and/or special allowances
 - Criteria for assigning work to an employee during an evacuation
 - Conditions for terminating evacuation payments
 - Reviewing and adjusting payments and employees' accounts, as necessary

Leave

Agencies are responsible for the proper administration of the laws and regulations governing Federal leave programs and policies, including establishing agency policies and procedures for requesting and granting leave. OPM encourages agencies to use the following checklist to ensure managers and supervisors are familiar with their responsibilities and obligations in preparation for responding to a pandemic health crisis.

Do your agency leave policies and procedures include information on the following:

- | | Yes | No | In Progress |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Sick leave? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| For personal medical needs of an employee | | | |
| For general family care and bereavement purposes | | | |
| To provide care for a family member with a serious health condition | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for providing medical certification/evidence to support request for sick leave • Requirements for scheduling sick leave in advance • Requirements for contacting supervisor to request unscheduled sick leave, including call-in and email procedures • Requirements for requesting and/or granting advance sick leave • Denying a request for sick leave | | | |

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <p>2. Annual leave?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for scheduling annual leave in advance • Requirements for contacting supervisor to request unscheduled annual leave, including call-in and email procedures • Scheduling use or lose annual leave • Requesting and/or granting advance annual leave • Denying a request for annual leave • Requirements for rescheduling annual leave | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>3. Leave Without Pay (LWOP)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for scheduling leave without pay in advance • Requirements for contacting supervisor to request unscheduled leave without pay, including call-in and email procedures • Denying a request for leave without pay • Effects of leave without pay on employee entitlements and benefits | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>4. Unpaid Leave Under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entitlement to 12 weeks of leave during any 12-month period • Requirement for notification of need for FMLA leave • Requirement for medical certification • Required medical certification form • Substituting annual and/or sick leave for unpaid leave • Entitlement to unpaid leave under the FMLA in addition to annual and sick leave | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>5. Voluntary Leave Transfer Program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying to become a leave donor • Applying to become a leave recipient • Approving requests to be a leave donor or leave recipient • Limitations on donating annual leave • Limitations on using donated annual leave • Accruing annual and sick leave in set-aside accounts • Termination of a medical emergency • Returning unused donated annual leave to leave donors | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <p>6. Voluntary Leave Bank Program (if available within your agency)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement for membership in agency leave bank • Applying to become a leave bank donor • Applying to become a leave bank recipient • Approving requests to be a leave bank donor or leave bank recipient? • Limitations on using donated annual leave • Donating annual leave to a specific leave bank recipient • Accruing annual and sick leave in set-aside accounts • Termination of a medical emergency • Returning unused donated annual leave to the leave bank | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>7. Emergency Leave Transfer Program (ELTP) (if authorized for a specific emergency)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying to become an emergency leave donor • Applying to become an emergency leave recipient • Approving requests for be an emergency leave donor or emergency leave recipient • Limitations on donating annual leave to the ELTP • Limitations on using donated annual leave • Distributing donated annual leave to emergency leave recipients • Accruing annual and sick leave while using donated annual leave • Governmentwide transfer of leave • Termination of an emergency or disaster • Returning unused donated annual leave to leave donors | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>8. Excused Absence (administrative leave)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency official authorized to grant excused absence • Criteria for granting excused absence • Limitations on granting excused absence | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>9. Other Paid Time Off?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earned compensatory time off • Earned compensatory time off for travel • Earned credit hours | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>10. Leave Forms?</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



U.S. Office of Personnel Management Pandemic Planning Guide

What Can an Agency Do To Prepare for Labor Relations Issues That May Arise in the Event of a Pandemic Health Crisis?

This Pandemic Planning Guide is designed to assist agencies as they prepare for and respond to a pandemic health crisis. The guide is general in nature. For detailed human resources information, see www.opm.gov/pandemic/. For the latest information on contingency planning for a pandemic influenza, see www.pandemicflu.gov. Readers should also review their agency policies, practices, and guidance prior to taking action.

Has the agency...	Completed	In Progress	Not Started
1. Developed a plan for identifying provisions of a collective bargaining agreement or other labor-management agreement that may need to be addressed to enable the agency to carry out its mission in the event of a pandemic-related emergency? <i>[See “Employee and Labor Relations During a Pandemic Health Crisis,” OPM-III-C.]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Developed a plan for communicating with exclusive representatives at the national and/or local level regarding any determination that will affect compliance with specific terms of a collective bargaining agreement during any such emergency? <i>[See “Employee and Labor Relations During a Pandemic Health Crisis,” OPM-III-C.]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Developed a plan for determining what, if any, post-implementation bargaining may be necessary as the result of management actions taken during an emergency? <i>[See “Employee and Labor Relations During a Pandemic Health Crisis,” OPM-III-C.]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Developed a communication system to inform supervisors and employees of changes in working conditions in the event of a pandemic-related emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Reminded managers and supervisors of their labor-management relations responsibilities in the event of an emergency? <i>[See “Employee and Labor Relations During a Pandemic Health Crisis,” OPM-III-C.]</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



U.S. Office of Personnel Management Pandemic Planning Guide

What Hiring Strategies Could an Agency or Manager Use During a Pandemic Health Crisis?

This Pandemic Planning Guide is designed to assist agencies as they prepare for and respond to a pandemic health crisis. The guide is general in nature. For detailed human resources information, see www.opm.gov/pandemic/. For the latest information on contingency planning for a pandemic influenza, see www.pandemicflu.gov. Readers should also review their agency policies, practices, and guidance prior to taking action.

NOTE: Regulatory procedures, agency policies, and collective bargaining agreements, if any, apply when using the following flexibilities.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) encourages agencies to consider the following five strategies for keeping organizations staffed in the event of a pandemic health crisis:

1. **Utilize your existing workforce.** Detail or temporarily promote current employees into affected positions for up to 120 days. Agency Career Transition Assistant Plan (CTAP) selection priority does not apply to placements for up to 120 days. Agencies should check their internal policies and any collective bargaining agreements.
2. **Use critical need and short-term hiring flexibilities.** Current regulations allow agencies to quickly fill jobs in both the competitive and excepted service for short durations with minimal restrictions. In addition, OPM may authorize agencies to use additional flexibilities in order to meet their needs. These include:

Excepted Service Appointing Authorities

Intermittent or temporary appointments in remote/isolated locations: Under 5 CFR 213.3101(i)(1), an agency may appoint individuals for up to 1 year to work less than 1040 hours per year; appointments may be extended in 1 year increments indefinitely.

30-Day Critical Need: Under 5 CFR 213.3102(i)(2), an agency may make 30-day appointments and may extend them for up to an additional 30 days.

1-year temporary appointment: Under 5 CFR 213.3101(i)(3), OPM may authorize agencies to make appointments on a temporary basis for up to 1 year, which may be extended (without additional OPM approval) for up to another year. OPM will notify agencies immediately upon authorization of this authority.

The following appointing authorities do not require public notice and may be effected without regard to CTAP and ICTAP selection priority. Veterans' preference, however, does apply. Agencies may use these authorities to fill senior-level (SL) positions; however, each senior-level space allocation must be reported to OPM within 10 days after the appointment.

Competitive Temporary Appointments

An agency may make competitive service appointments of 120 days or less without regard to CTAP or ICTAP selection priority. However, soliciting eligibles under these programs for longer appointments may help identify one or more previously unknown, well-qualified, displaced Federal employees available for immediate employment. (See 5 CFR part 316 and part 330, subparts F and G.)

SES Limited Appointments

Under 5 CFR 317.601, agencies may make SES Limited Term or Limited Emergency appointments of career employees, as long as the appointment is within the space allocation limit previously authorized by OPM. Agencies may seek a temporary allocation from OPM if space is not currently available. Agencies may also seek authority from OPM to make Limited Term or Limited Emergency appointments of *non-career* employees using an automated form generated through the Executive and Schedule C System.

3. **Use direct hire authority.** The direct hire authority (DHA) allows agencies to hire quickly to meet mission-critical staffing needs or severe shortages. Agencies may immediately appoint any qualified individual to a covered position after issuing public notice. DHA can drastically reduce hiring timeframes because rating and ranking is not required. Although veterans' preference does not apply under DHA, OPM encourages agencies to appoint qualified veterans' preference eligible candidates whenever possible. OPM has provided DHA for a number of categories Governmentwide:
 - Diagnostic Radiologic Technologist, GS-0647; all grade levels and locations
 - Medical Officer, GS-0602; all grade levels and locations
 - Nurse, GS-0610, GS-0620; all grade levels and locations
 - Pharmacist, GS-0660; all grade levels and locations

In addition, OPM has provided several agency-specific direct hire authorities. OPM encourages managers and supervisors to check with their human resources office to determine whether the agency has DHA for positions they need to fill. Agencies may request additional DHAs from OPM based on a critical hiring need or severe shortage of candidates. OPM will expedite requests for agency-specific DHA.

4. **Use your agency-specific excepted service authority.** OPM has provided some agencies with their own Schedule A or B hiring authority for specific positions when competitive examining was not practical. Supervisors and managers should check with their human resources office to determine whether the agency has a Schedule A or B authority for the positions they need to fill. If so, this authority can be used without public notice or regard to CTAP and ICTAP selection priority. Veterans' preference, however, does apply. Agencies needing a Schedule A or B authority should contact OPM for more details.
5. **Go where the talent is.** During an emergency, a manager or supervisor may need to quickly find people who possess the competencies needed to perform the work of the agency. OPM encourages agencies to consider the following:

Reemploying Annuitants

Agencies may wish to consider rehiring retirees (with salary offset or, with OPM approval, a salary offset waiver if the annuitant refuses reemployment without a waiver) to deal with emergency situations or to supplement your workforce. Upon request, OPM is prepared to give agency heads authority to waive the salary offset otherwise required of reemployed Federal civilian annuitants. We cannot approve waivers retroactively.

Reemploying Buyout Recipients

In conjunction with the above authorities, agencies may also wish to rehire retirees or others who left the Federal Government with buyouts. Depending upon the specific statute under which the individual received the buyout, an agency may request a repayment waiver from OPM in truly unusual circumstances. Persons being considered for waivers must be the only qualified applicants available for the positions or possess expertise and special qualifications necessary to deal with an emergency such as a pandemic health crisis.

Agency Reemployment Priority Lists (RPL)

Current/former employees affected by a reduction in force or recovered from a compensable injury on an agency's RPL are another immediate source of qualified individuals available for temporary, term, or permanent competitive service appointments. Conversely, in some cases, an agency may wish to make an exception to the RPL provisions to appoint someone else under 5 CFR 330.207(d).

Used separately or together, these five strategies will help agencies staff mission-critical positions during an emergency with a minimum of red-tape, while the agency considers longer-term staffing options. For less urgent needs, agencies should continue to use competitive examining or any applicable hiring flexibility the agency would otherwise use.



U.S. Office of Personnel Management Pandemic Planning Guide

What Can an Agency Do To Prepare for Telework During a Pandemic Health Crisis?

This Pandemic Planning Guide is designed to assist agencies as they prepare for and respond to a pandemic health crisis. The guide is general in nature. For detailed human resources information, see www.opm.gov/pandemic/. For the latest information on contingency planning for a pandemic influenza, see www.pandemicflu.gov. Readers should also review their agency policies, practices, and guidance prior to taking action.

Has the agency...	Completed	In Progress	Not Started
1. Broadened its telework policy to include information specific to a pandemic health crisis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Integrated telework into its pandemic health crisis plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Integrated pandemic and other emergency planning into telework agreements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Identified an agency telework coordinator and disseminated contact information agency-wide?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Determined which employees are eligible to telework?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Offered telework arrangements to all eligible employees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Placed all teleworkers on a telework agreement and filed a copy with the telework coordinator? The agreement should include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety checklist • Communication and security plans and procedures • Clear expectations for telework in emergency situations 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Ensured labor-management obligations are met relative to telework planning?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Developed telecommunications infrastructure (teleconferencing, videoconferencing, etc.) to provide the maximum amount of multi-way communication during emergencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Provided appropriate equipment to teleworkers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Ensured agency telecommunications infrastructure is capable of handling telework arrangements and securing sensitive information?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Provided telework training for managers and employees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Ensured all employees receive mandatory security training?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Tested telework at full capacity to determine whether infrastructure can withstand demand?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. Arranged to provide information technology support sufficient to meet telework needs?

Human Capital Strategies for Pandemic Influenza

This section includes examples of specific human capital strategies for pandemic influenza that a number of departments and agencies are sharing for our mutual benefit. These examples address specific issues such as:

- Identification of Critical/Priority Functions and Means To Ensure Continuity
- Guidance on Maintaining Essential Functions
- Back-up Hiring Provisions
- Authorizing More Human Capital Flexibilities
- Component Telework Coordinators
- One-Stop Emergency Preparedness Website
- Employee Education
- Social Distancing Techniques
- Protecting Employees' Health and Providing a Safe Work Environment
- Job Hazard Analysis
- Planning Medical Care in Foreign Locations
- Personal Care/Well Being Resources for Employees Via Work/Life Programs
- Disaster Accountability and Assessment System
- Recovery Assistance – Task Force Navy Family
- 24/7 Emergency Call Center
- Collecting Telework Usage Information via Payroll

As agencies provide additional examples of human capital strategies that address specific issues, the Office of Personnel Management will include them on its Website at www.opm.gov/pandemic.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Strategy: Identification of Critical/Priority Functions and Means To Ensure Continuity

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has identified priority functions it must continue during a pandemic. Depending on the severity and circumstances of a pandemic, the agency may, if practical, continue some lower priority work or gradually shed and resume lower priority work.

In conjunction with Office-specific planning to continue priority functions, each Office or Region will:

- Identify employees with the skills and experience needed to perform Pandemic Priority Functions. Depths of several employees improve the likelihood someone with the requisite skills will be available at any given time. NRC's automated Strategic Workforce Planning system supports these efforts.
- Identify alternative sources of skills if insufficient back-up is available among employees. Such sources might include, for example, employees of other agencies or retired NRC employees.
- Provide cross-training, as appropriate, to prepare employees to perform such functions.

The agency will also communicate to staff and the union (in advance of and during a pandemic) that employees may be asked to perform duties other than those in their position descriptions during a pandemic and that individual employees may be expected to perform specific priority functions.

Contact person for more details:

Nancy Johns
(301) 415-6244
nlj@nrc.gov

Department of Labor

Strategy: Guidance on Maintaining Essential Functions

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The Department of Labor (DOL) is providing guidance for managers at DOL to include:

- Identifying essential work and cross-training employees at least 3-deep to accomplish the work via telework
- Developing standard operating procedures to complete essential work in the event the 3-deep employees are no longer available
- Assessing the ability to devolve work to other locations

Contact person for more details:

Brooke Brewer
(202) 693-7616
Brewer.brooke@dol.gov

Department of Labor

Strategy: Back-up Hiring Provisions

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The Department of Labor (DOL) has established back-up provisions for essential hiring. The provisions include using agency and regional human resources offices capable of hiring for other agencies; identifying critical positions that might need to be back-filled on a short term basis; using contractors as an alternative.

Contact person for more details:

Brooke Brewer
(202) 693-7616
Brewer.brooke@dol.gov

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Strategy: Authorizing More Human Capital Flexibilities

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will authorize greater flexibility during a pandemic episode with regard to assignment of duties, leave, and work scheduling in order to allow NRC to make the fullest possible use of resources available for accomplishing priority functions. In addition to current HR policies and resources, managers will have broader discretion during a pandemic to:

- Authorize employees to work more varied work schedules to the extent the manager deems accomplishment of the work feasible.
- Approve leave based on more liberal policies for reporting and approving absence.
- Approve premium pay as needed and appropriate to continue priority functions.

Managers will discuss with employees alternatives regarding work, leave, and scheduling that may be applicable during a pandemic. Similarly, employees will be asked to work with managers to identify, in advance to the extent possible, any flexibilities related to work scheduling, location (such as telework), leave needs, or other working conditions employees believe will help managers plan or help employees continue working while meeting family responsibilities or other personal needs during a pandemic.

Contact person for more details:

Nancy Johns
(301) 415-6244
nlj@nrc.gov

Department of Labor

Strategy: Component Telework Coordinators

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

Each agency within the Department of Labor has its own telework coordinator who will ensure all employees and agency heads have access to accurate information and guidance. Additionally, working with the telework coordinators, DOL is implementing a telework exercise that includes a workshop to train agency exercise points of contact on what agencies need to do to make certain employees who perform essential functions are prepared to telework and that all agencies test this capability. DOL also will prepare an after-action report identifying shortfalls and establish a corrective action plan to address those shortfalls. DOL plans to conduct multiple exercises over several months to test the IT support capacity and ensure DOL is ready to serve its customers during a pandemic.

A variety of materials are available to all employees on the DOL internal Website. These materials can be used to prepare employees and managers to make certain telework is successful at the Department.

Contact person for more details:

Brooke Brewer
(202) 693-7616
Brewer.brooke@dol.gov

Department of Defense

Strategy: One-Stop Emergency Preparedness Website

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The Department of Defense has developed a One-Stop Emergency Preparedness Website for use by employees, managers, and human resources practitioners in a national/regional emergency situation. The Website provides a central place where managers and employees can obtain information on strategies available for dealing with an emergency.

The Department of Defense has also developed a comprehensive emergency guide for use in any national disaster.

Contact person for more details:

Sherry Smith
(703) 696-6301, ext 211
Sherry.Smith@CPMS.OSD.MIL

Department of Labor

Strategy: Employee Education

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The Department of Labor (DOL) has established an employee education plan and invited guest speakers for various employee events, including Dr. John Howard, Director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and Dr. Don Wright, Director of Occupational Medicine for OSHA.

DOL communicates with employees via emails, internal employee bulletins, and a pandemic flu page on the DOL intranet that includes telework information.

Contact person for more details:

Brooke Brewer
(202) 693-7616
Brewer.brooke@dol.gov

Department of the Treasury United States Mint

Strategy: Social Distancing Techniques

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The United States Mint will publicize and use the following strategies to achieve social distancing:

- Split teams into different work locations to build back-up and avoid cross-infection.
- Stagger shift changes so worksite can be thoroughly ventilated and to minimize contact and congestion in locker rooms, security areas, etc.
- Avoid meeting face-to-face by using telephone, video conferencing, and the Internet to conduct business as much as possible. If face-to-face meeting is required, minimize meeting time, choose large conference room, and sit at least 3 or 4 feet away from others if possible.
- Avoid all unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone nonessential meetings, gatherings, workshops, and training sessions.
- Advise employees to avoid public transportation, drive a car, or come and go early or late to avoid rush hour crowding on public transport.
- Introduce staggered lunchtimes to minimize numbers of employees in lunch rooms. Encourage employees to bring lunch and eat at their desks or away from others and to avoid eating in the cafeteria, lunchrooms, and crowded restaurants.
- Advise employees not to congregate in break rooms or smoke break areas where people socialize.
- Advise employees to avoid shaking hands or hugging.

Contact person for more details:

Chris Grubach
(202) 354-7413

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Strategy: Protecting Employees' Health and Providing a Safe Work Environment

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will need to protect employees' health and provide a safe work environment through infection prevention, sanitation, communication/training, and, if practical, screening measures.

The agency has purchased hand sanitizer for employees and is developing a communication plan and training for employees on characteristics of avian influenza, infection prevention, sanitation, respiratory hygiene, and social distancing guidelines. This will include emphasizing the importance of employees' taking leave when they feel at all ill rather than reporting for work.

As guidelines are developed by other Federal departments and agencies, NRC will continue to address medical, operational, technical, and human issues. Additionally, NRC will make informed decisions about the best ways to establish and function from a clean and secure workspace, establish screening centers as techniques become available, maintain clean space, and establish clearance procedures for returning employees as the influenza emergency abates.

Contact person for more details:

Nancy Johns
(301) 415-6244
nlj@nrc.gov

Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Protection

Strategy: Job Hazard Analysis

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Patrol, has created a Job Hazard Analysis that describes the actions to be implemented to reduce the risk of CBP employee exposure to avian influenza as a result of their official duties. It describes the training and work procedures put in place to prevent the transmission of disease.

Contact person for more details:

Gary McMahan, Director
Occupational Safety and Health
(317) 298-1055
gary.mcmahan@dhs.gov

Department of State

Strategy: Planning Medical Care in Foreign Locations

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The Department of State is working to provide extensive health information to employees. It will also pre-position medicine (Tamiflu) at embassies and consulates for Federal employees of all agencies working overseas whose mission is attached to an Embassy or Consulate.

Contact person for more details:

Mr. Teddy Taylor, Deputy Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Human Resources
Department of State
(202) 647-5152
Teddytb2@state.gov

Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service

Strategy: Personal Care/Well Being Resources for Employees Via Work/Life Programs

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The IRS will disseminate resources for the personal care and well being of employees through the use of Work/Life programs such as:

- Health information and services including:
 - Prevention tips, symptoms, etc. from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Federal Occupational Health (FOH), and local FOH Health Centers
 - On-site assessment of symptoms at local FOH Health Centers
- Pre- and post-crisis EAP services, including:
 - Training for dealing with anxiety, crisis management, etc.
 - Availability of individual counseling
- Leave Sharing program to assist employees without sick leave to have access to leave for medical reasons
- Flexiplace and Telework programs to provide employees with the option of an alternative worksite to avoid the spread of disease

EAP/Telework Program: Earline Hill
(202) 283-1493
Earline.B.Hill@irs.gov

Health Services Program: Pamela Carter-Coleman
(202) 283-1499
Pamela.A.Carter@irs.gov

Leave Sharing Program: Rhonda Alderman
(202) 283-7343
Rhonda.Alderman@irs.gov

Department of Defense – Navy

Strategy: Disaster Accountability and Assessment System

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The Navy has developed an automated system called Navy Disaster Accountability and Assessment System (DAAS). The DAAS provides the Navy a standardized method to account for, assess needs of, and manage recovery assistance for service members, employees and their families affected by a widespread catastrophic event. DAAS is Web-based and is Government-owned.

Contact person for more details:

Mary Beth Lepore
Office of Civilian Human Resources
(202) 685-6242
MaryBeth.Lepore@Navy.Mil

Department of Defense – Navy

Strategy: Recovery Assistance – Task Force Navy Family

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

Task Force Navy Family (TFNF) was established to assist Navy families with recovery after major emergencies. The TFNF identifies and assesses personnel and family needs (including severity levels) and determines resource and policy requirements to support those needs. The task force provides services through several key conduits to support both family recovery and mission readiness such as:

- **Local outreach (community support centers and family case managers)**
- **Central support (policy experts)**
- **Communication (liaison officers between headquarters and impacted areas; dedicated Website; weekly newsletters; conference calls).**

Contact person for more details:

Mary Beth Lepore
Office of Civilian Human Resources
(202) 685-6242
MaryBeth.Lepore@Navy.Mil

Department of Defense – Navy

Strategy: 24/7 Emergency Call Center

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

The Navy established a world-wide, toll-free, 24/7 Emergency Call Center (ECC) that employees and family members can call to report their status and location during/after a catastrophic event. The call center has a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) and language translation services. The ECC will utilize the Navy's new Web-based DAAS system to record contact information and assess personnel needs when employees call in. Commands can also access this data.

The Navy is publicizing the ECC contact number to all Navy personnel and employees on wallet cards, refrigerator magnets, official Websites, and via emergency preparedness training. Commands have acquired satellite and cell phones for all key staff.

Contact person for more details:

Mary Beth Lepore
Office of Civilian Human Resources
(202) 685-6242
MaryBeth.Lepore@Navy.Mil

Department of Labor

Strategy: Collecting Telework Usage Information via Payroll

Brief description of human capital strategy for pandemic influenza:

Employees electronically input the number of hours they telework each pay period through the Department of Labor (DOL) time and attendance system. This strategy will permit DOL to provide data in an easy and timely manner upon request during a pandemic influenza.

Contact person for more details:

Brooke Brewer
(202) 693-7616
Brewer.brooke@dol.gov

**U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Fact Sheet**



**Information for Employees About Leave Flexibilities
During a Pandemic Health Crisis**

1. If you are sick during a pandemic health crisis, you may request:

- a. [Sick leave](#)
- b. [Annual leave](#)
- c. [Unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#)
- d. Earned [compensatory time off](#)
- e. Earned [compensatory time off for travel](#)
- f. Earned [credit hours](#)

If you do not have annual or sick leave or other earned paid time off, you may apply for:

- g. [Advance sick leave](#)
- h. [Advance annual leave](#)
- i. [Voluntary Leave Transfer Program](#)
- j. [Voluntary Leave Bank Program](#) (if available in your agency)
- k. [Emergency Leave Transfer Program](#) (if authorized for a specific emergency)

2. If one or more of your family members is affected by a pandemic health crisis, you may request:

- a. [Sick leave \(up to 13 days for general medical needs\)](#)
- b. [Sick leave for a serious health condition \(up to 12 weeks\)](#)
- c. [Annual leave](#)
- d. Earned [compensatory time off](#)
- e. Earned [compensatory time off for travel](#)
- f. Earned [credit hours](#)

If you do not have annual or sick leave or other earned paid time off, you may apply for:

- g. [Advance sick leave](#)
- h. [Advance annual leave](#)
- i. [Voluntary Leave Transfer Program](#)
- j. [Voluntary Leave Bank Program](#) (if available in your agency)
- k. [Emergency Leave Transfer Program](#) (if authorized for a specific emergency)

3. [If your spouse, son or daughter, or parent is affected by a serious health condition, you may request unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\).](#)

4. If you are told to stay home because you have been exposed to a contagious disease, you may request:

- a. [Sick leave](#)
- b. [Annual leave](#)
- c. Earned [compensatory time off](#)
- d. Earned [compensatory time off for travel](#)
- e. Earned [credit hours](#)

If you do not have annual or sick leave or other earned paid time off, you may apply for:

- f. [Advance sick leave](#)
- g. [Advance annual leave](#)

5. If your child's day care center or school is closed, and your child is not sick, you may request:

- a. Annual leave
- b. Compensatory time off
- c. Compensatory time off for travel
- d. Credit hours

If you do not have annual leave or other earned paid time off, you may apply for:

- e. [Advance annual leave](#)
- f. [Emergency Leave Transfer Program](#) (if authorized for a specific emergency)

6. If one of your family members dies, you may request:

- a. Sick leave (up to 13 days)
- b. Annual leave
- c. [Compensatory time off](#)
- d. [Compensatory time off for travel](#)
- e. [Credit hours](#)

7. If you are healthy, but are afraid to go to work because of a pandemic health crisis, you may request:

- a. [Annual leave](#)
- b. Earned [Compensatory time off](#)
- c. Earned [Compensatory time off for travel](#)
- d. Earned [Credit hours](#)

[NOTE: Because the Federal Government must continue to operate, if you are able to work and told to do so by your supervisor, you must comply. Employee welfare will always be a concern of your organization. If your worksite is unsafe, alternative work arrangements will be made.]

U.S. Office of Personnel Management Fact Sheet



Information for Employees About Pay Flexibilities During a Pandemic Health Crisis

1. Generally, if you are required to work overtime, you may receive:
 - a. [Overtime pay](#) – For information on computing overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), [click here](#).
 - b. [Compensatory time off](#)
2. If you are required to work on a holiday during your regularly scheduled tour of duty, you are entitled to receive [Holiday pay](#).
3. If you perform regularly scheduled work on Sundays, you are entitled to receive [Sunday premium pay](#).
4. If you are regularly scheduled to work the night shift, you are entitled to receive [Night pay](#). (Prevailing rate (wage) employees are covered by a separate night shift differential authority. See Subchapter S-8., Pay Administration, at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/wage/appfund/>.)
5. If you are required to work /telework from home temporarily because of a pandemic health crisis, your [locality rate or special rate may continue to be determined based on the location of your regular official worksite](#).
6. If you are ordered to evacuate from your worksite because of a pandemic health crisis, you may be instructed to perform work at home and receive [Evacuation Pay](#).

Questions and Answers for Employees

During a pandemic health crisis, an agency may wish to employ alternative work arrangements in order to achieve its mission or accomplish its performance goals, while promoting the “social distancing” of its employees to ensure their safety and well-being. In addition, the Federal Government offers numerous leave benefits and other paid–time-off flexibilities to assist employees who are adversely affected by a pandemic health crisis.

The following questions and answers address issues such as telework; other alternative work arrangements; leave flexibilities; evacuation payments; health and safety issues; overtime; security clearances; and miscellaneous issues. Some of the questions posed and answered here are hypothetical in nature and do not reflect actual events or circumstances that have occurred (such questions are clearly marked as “[*hypothetical*]”).

Employees should consult with their agency human resources offices, since the administration of these programs and policies is addressed in agency internal policies and/or collective bargaining agreements. In addition, agencies will provide guidance and specific direction to their employees on the agency’s operating status, including whether employees should work from an alternative worksite for a period of time.

As circumstances warrant, the Office of Personnel Management will issue additional and updated guidance regarding the use of alternative work arrangements and pay and leave flexibilities to address issues that may arise during a pandemic health crisis.

Frequently Asked Questions on Telework

1. *What is telework?*

Telework is voluntarily working from home or another site, such as the home of a relative, official Federal telework site, etc. convenient to the residence of the employee.

2. *Do all Federal agencies have a telework policy?*

Most Federal agencies have a telework policy and are responsible for ensuring such policies meet Federal laws and regulations.

3. *How do employees request telework arrangements?*

You may request telework by writing or speaking with your supervisor, who will make a decision based on your agency's telework policy and his or her assessment of your eligibility to telework. You are eligible for telework if you are performing well and responsible for work that could be performed outside the office at least 1 day a week.

4. *Can management be forced to implement telework arrangements?*

No. There currently is no authority for agency heads or OPM to order management to implement telework arrangements. Telework arrangements are voluntary. OPM is committed to providing agencies, managers, supervisors, and employees with current guidance and support to facilitate the use of telework in the Federal sector, including guidance on teleworking during an emergency as part of agency contingency planning.

5. *Can my supervisor prevent me from teleworking?*

Your agency has the option of declining a telework request or terminating a telework agreement. Use of telework must meet the organization's needs. Subject to any applicable collection bargaining agreement, management decides whether the employee can work off-site, depending on the nature of the position and the level of the employee's performance.

6. *May Federal agencies cover additional costs incurred by employees as a result of telework?*

In accordance with the authorizing law, an agency may pay for some expenses incurred while an employee is conducting business for the Government at a telework site, such as a DSL line and an additional phone line.

7. ***[hypothetical] Due to the pandemic, an employee teleworks from home and may not be able to report to their official worksite. Will locality pay be affected?***

During a pandemic health crisis, your regular office may be considered your official worksite, even if your telework arrangement requires you to report there once a week and you are unable to do so. In this emergency situation, you will be entitled to the locality rate of your official worksite.

8. ***[hypothetical] While teleworking, an employee is injured at home. Is this a line-of-duty injury?***

Teleworkers who work from home must provide an appropriate workspace and should certify that it is free from hazards. Government employees causing or suffering work-related injuries and/or damages at the alternative worksite (home, telework center, or other location) are covered by the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claims Act, the Federal Tort Claims Act, or the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (workers' compensation), as appropriate.

Frequently Asked Questions on Alternative Work Schedules

1. ***[hypothetical] I am on a flexible work schedule. I am teleworking from home during the pandemic. May I choose to work extra hours each day so I can earn credit hours?***

You must comply with your agency's policies for earning credit hours. Credit hours are any hours within a flexible work schedule which are more than your basic work requirement and which you choose to work to vary the length of a workweek or a workday. Your agency's plans should address any policies on limiting or restricting the earning and use of credit hours. The law prohibits carrying over more than 24 credit hours from one pay period to the next. For additional information, visit:

<http://www.opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTML/awsfws.asp>.

2. ***Will I be able to continue working a flexible work schedule if a pandemic influenza reaches my area?***

If you work a flexible work schedule already, your agency may let you keep doing so during a pandemic health crisis. However, your agency may decide to have you work another schedule. Changes in your work schedule are within the discretion of your agency, as long they are consistent with law, regulations, and any applicable collective bargaining agreement. For additional information, visit:

<http://www.opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTML/awsfws.asp>.

3. *Can my agency mandate an alternative work schedule (i.e., a flexible or compressed work schedule)?*

Different rules apply depending on whether you are a bargaining unit or non-bargaining unit employee and whether your agency has a flexible or compressed work schedule. Bargaining unit employees may participate in an alternative work schedule program only under the terms provided in a collective bargaining agreement. Therefore, an agency that wishes to establish a flexible or compressed work schedule program for bargaining unit employees must negotiate the establishment and terms of the program with the exclusive representative of the bargaining unit.

A majority of affected employees in a non-bargaining unit must vote to be included in a compressed work schedule program when participation in the program is mandatory. For purposes of this vote, a majority is obtained when the number of affirmative votes exceeds 50 percent of the number of employees and supervisors in the organization proposed for inclusion in a compressed work schedule. (If participation in the compressed work program is voluntary for each employee, a vote is unnecessary because employees who elect not to participate are not included and are unaffected.) For additional information, see <http://www.opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTML/AWScws.asp>

Agencies may unilaterally install flexible work schedule (FWS) programs in units staffed by non-bargaining employees. For additional information, see <http://www.opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTML/awsfws.asp>.

4. *Must agencies request approval from OPM prior to establishing a flexible or compressed work schedule to deal with a pandemic influenza?*

Agencies do not need OPM approval to establish flexible or compressed work schedules. We encourage agencies to prepare for all emergency situations and address the use of flexible or compressed work schedules in their contingency plans. For additional information, see <http://www.opm.gov/oca/worksch/HTML/awsfws.asp>.

Frequently Asked Questions on Evacuation Payments

1. *If my agency orders me not to report during a pandemic influenza, will I continue to be paid? Will I be required to use my annual leave?*

There are a number of alternative work arrangements agencies may offer you to ensure work continues during a pandemic health crisis. For example, an agency may direct employees who are under an approved telework agreement to telework from home. Or an agency may order employees to evacuate their worksites, direct them to work from home, and pay them evacuation payments. Evacuation payments reflect the regular pay you would have received for the time period you would have been expected to work (but for the evacuation). An agency may require you to perform any work considered necessary during the period of the evacuation without regard to your rank or grade level.

If you refuse to work from home, you may lose your evacuation payments, and you may be required to use your accrued annual leave (i.e., “enforced leave”), you may be furloughed, or you may be disciplined, as appropriate. In addition, if you have a telework arrangement with your agency, you may be required to work from home.

In some circumstances, however, an agency may order a furlough, in which case an employee may be placed in a temporary nonduty, nonpay status.

2. *[hypothetical] My office is open, but the schools are closed and I cannot find child care. May I receive evacuation payments so I may work at home while caring for my children?*

You may receive evacuation payments only if your agency authorizes them. During a pandemic health crisis, your agency may order you to evacuate your worksite, authorize evacuation payments, and require you to work from home. You should arrange for child care during your work hours from home. If you are ordered to work from home, you may not care for your child while performing work. However, you may request a change in your work schedule so you can arrange to work during the time you are not responsible for child care.

Frequently Asked Questions on Leave Flexibilities

1. *What are my leave options if I have been diagnosed with the flu?*

If you've been diagnosed with the flu, you may use accrued sick leave or annual leave, request advance sick leave or annual leave, request donated leave under your agency's voluntary leave transfer or leave bank programs or an established emergency leave transfer program, or use any earned compensatory time off, earned compensatory time off for travel, or earned credit hours. In addition, if the flu develops into a serious health condition you may use your entitlement to unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and take a total of up to 12 weeks of leave without pay. An employee may substitute his or her accrued annual leave and sick leave, as appropriate, for unpaid leave under the FMLA.

2. *May I take sick leave if I have been exposed to the flu?*

You may use accrued sick leave if you've been exposed, but only if your doctor or health authorities feel your exposure would put others at risk. You also have the option of using accrued annual leave or other paid time off if you've been exposed.

3. *May I request donated leave from my co-workers before using all of my annual and sick leave?*

Yes. You may request to become a leave recipient before you use up your annual and sick leave. However, your agency must confirm that your anticipated absence without paid leave will be at least 24 hours. (For part-time employees or employees on uncommon tours of duty, the period of absence without paid leave is prorated.) You may not use donated leave until you have exhausted your annual and sick leave.

If OPM has established an emergency leave transfer program, you are not required to exhaust your available paid leave before receiving donated annual leave.

- 4. *[hypothetical] I have “use or lose” annual leave, which I scheduled to use before the end of the leave year. My agency has cancelled all scheduled annual leave until further notice because employees must be at work due to a pandemic influenza. It looks like this situation will continue through the beginning of the new leave year. Will I be forced to forfeit my “use or lose” annual leave?***

If you schedule “use or lose” annual leave in writing before the third biweekly pay period prior to the end of the leave year, and the leave is cancelled because you are required to work during a pandemic influenza, you may request restoration of the forfeited annual leave. See the fact sheet on *Restoration of Annual Leave* at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/leave/HTML/RESTORE.asp>.

- 5. *If I take sick leave to care for my wife, will my “use or lose” annual leave be restored?***

No, only “use or lose” annual leave forfeited because of a period of absence due to your own sickness or injury may be restored. If you are using sick leave, donated leave, or other paid time off during a pandemic health crisis, you must be diligent about scheduling and using any excess annual leave (“use or lose” annual leave) by the end of the leave year. There is no statutory or regulatory authority to restore forfeited “use or lose” annual leave in this situation.

- 6. *[hypothetical] A family member has the flu, or complications from the flu, and I must care for him or her. What are my leave options?***

You may use a total of up to 104 hours (13 days) of sick leave each leave year to provide general medical care to a family member and up to 12 weeks of sick leave to care for a family member who develops a serious health condition. If you have already used any portion of the 13 days of sick leave for general medical care of a family member, subsequent sick leave must be subtracted from the 12 weeks. If you have used up to 13 days of sick leave to care for a family member with a serious health condition, the already used sick leave must be subtracted from the 13 days of sick leave for general medical care of a family member. You may also choose to use annual leave, accrued compensatory time off, compensatory time off for travel, or credit hours; request to receive donated annual leave; or take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave under the FMLA to care for a spouse, son or daughter, or parent with a serious health condition. You may substitute your accrued annual leave and sick leave, as appropriate, for unpaid leave under the FMLA.

- 7. *If I exhaust all of my annual and sick leave, what are my options?***

If you have used up all annual and sick leave, you may request advance annual and/or sick leave. Annual leave requests cannot exceed the amount you'd normally accrue during the remainder of the leave year.

A maximum of 30 days of sick leave may be advanced if you have a serious disability or ailment. You may also request donated leave under your agency's leave transfer or leave bank programs or the emergency leave transfer program (if established by OPM.)

8. *[hypothetical] My child's school has been closed because of the flu pandemic. My child is not sick, but I cannot find a babysitter. What are my leave options?*

If you need to be at home because of a school closure, you may request annual leave for the duration of the closure. You may also request to use other paid time off, such as earned compensatory time off, earned compensatory time off for travel, or earned credit hours. You may not use sick leave unless your child is sick.

In addition, if your agency has ordered you to evacuate your worksite and work from home during a pandemic health crisis, you may receive evacuation payments. However, you may not care for your child while you perform work.

9. *[hypothetical] My fiancé is very sick with the flu and I am the only person available to take care of him/her. May I use sick leave?*

You may use up to 12 weeks of accrued sick leave to care for a family member. The term "family member" includes any individual who has a close association with the employee that is equivalent to a family relationship. Your agency will determine whether your fiancé is covered by this definition.

10. *May I receive donated annual leave from my co-workers to care for a sick family member?*

Only if you have exhausted your own available paid leave. If OPM has established an emergency leave transfer program, you may also receive donated leave from the emergency leave transfer program.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Mandated Leave

1. *If someone exhibits signs of the flu, may a supervisor order him/her to leave work? If so, will the employee be paid during the absence?*

A supervisor can remind you or your colleague of the leave options for seeking medical attention, such as requesting sick or annual leave. If you're on approved sick or annual leave you will continue to be paid during your absence. Although an employee's use of leave is generally voluntary, in some situations you could be directed to take leave. This action generally requires advance notice, opportunity to reply, and an agency decision.

2. *If a supervisor orders an employee to leave work, will the employee be placed on administrative leave, or be required to use his/her annual or sick leave?*

Excused absence (administrative leave) is not an entitlement, and supervisors are **not** required to grant it. Agency policy on excused absences should be consistent with the Administration's Governmentwide policy on granting excused absence during a pandemic influenza, which will be addressed in separate guidance.

You may be required to use your sick or annual leave, or be placed on leave without pay if your medical condition warrants. These actions generally require advance notice, opportunity to reply, and an agency decision. The agency must have documentation sufficient to prove that its action was justified, and you may have the right to appeal.

3. *Can my supervisor require me to have a medical exam or physical and prevent me from returning to work until a doctor clears me?*

If your job requires you to be in a certain physical condition to perform adequately, you may be required to submit to a medical exam before returning to work. Most positions do not have established physical or medical requirements. If the criteria are met for requiring a medical examination and you refuse the exam, you risk discipline up to and including removal from Federal service.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Requiring Employees To Work

1. *If I have direct contact with the public in my job (e.g., investigator, park ranger, healthcare professional, police officer, firefighter), will I be required to report for work? If I refuse, do I risk sanction?*

You are expected to report for work. Failure to report for work without an administratively acceptable reason runs the risk of you being considered absent without leave and may warrant disciplinary action. Your agency will decide if the reason for your absence is acceptable.

Employees and supervisors should discuss any precautions—including personal protective equipment, hand hygiene and cough etiquette, social distancing measures, and other administrative policies—that might reduce the risks associated with work involving direct contact with the public.

2. *May I leave work or remain home because I feel I may contract the flu from co-workers?*

Any concern you may have about contracting the flu from a co-worker must be addressed with your supervisor. He or she can recommend an appropriate solution such as teleworking, changing work areas, or taking annual leave. If you refuse to report without cause, you risk disciplinary action.

3. *May my agency discipline me if I am absent without leave (AWOL), despite my good faith efforts to report for work?*

At their discretion and after consideration of the facts and circumstances, your agency may discipline you. If you feel you will have difficulty reporting, be sure to discuss the situation with your supervisor.

4. *May I refuse to use required safety equipment (e.g., protective equipment or decontamination stations) provided by my agency?*

Your agency may require you to follow certain procedures or use protective equipment when your health or safety is in jeopardy. You are expected to comply with agency safety and health policies, and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Security Clearances and Background Checks

1. *How are security clearances and background checks affected by emergency hiring during a pandemic?*

The requirements for such checks would remain unchanged for emergency hires; however, activities to complete them might vary (e.g., alternatives may be needed for face-to-face interviews with persons affected by a pandemic). Likewise, the requirements for background checks for ID badges (minimum NACI review) for Government building access would apply to emergency hires as well. As with other temporary appointees, suitability rules would not apply.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Overtime

1. *What are the rules about the number of overtime hours a supervisor may require me to work?*

No statutory or regulatory limits apply to the amount of overtime work a manager may require an employee to perform. However, an employee may be excused from overtime work for reasons such as the employee's illness or the illness of a family member. For information on computing overtime pay, see <http://www.opm.gov/oca/pay/HTML/FACTOT.asp> and <http://www.opm.gov/oca/pay/HTML/computeflsa.asp>.

2. *[hypothetical] I am working from home because of a pandemic influenza. I chose to work 4 hours in addition to my regular 8 hour per day work schedule. May I receive overtime pay for the additional 4 hours I worked?*

No, unless your agency required you to work the additional 4 hours. In unusual situations, your agency may approve overtime after the fact, if warranted. You should check with your servicing human resources office for the requirements for receiving overtime pay.

3. *Can management direct me to work on a Saturday or Sunday if my normal work schedule is Monday through Friday?*

Yes. Changes in your work schedule are permissible as long as they are consistent with law, regulations, and any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Hazardous Duty Pay or Environmental Differentials

1. *May employees receive hazardous duty pay or environmental differential pay for potential exposure to pandemic influenza?*

No. There is no authority to pay hazardous duty pay (HDP) or environmental differential pay (EDP) for potential exposure to pandemic influenza.

Miscellaneous Questions

1. *If I'm asked to work during the pandemic and I contract the flu while at work, will I be covered by workers' compensation?*

If an employee (or family member of an employee) believes illness or on-the-job death resulted from a work-related incident, he or she will be able to file a workers' compensation claim. However, the Department of Labor rules on entitlement to workers' compensation, and each case will be judged on its own merit. To apply for workers' compensation benefits, you will first need to contact your local servicing human resources office. Information on workers' compensation benefits for Federal employees can be found at <http://www.dol.gov/esa/regs/compliance/owcp/fecacont.htm> or by telephone at 866-OWCP-IVR (866-692-7487).