Manager's Guide to Effective Teleworking/Telecommuting

Teleworking works best when employees and managers communicate clearly about expectations. The following checklist aims to help you and your employees establish effective teamwork, continued productivity, and service to the DePaul University community in light of the ramifications of COVID-19.

Understand relevant policies. Review the related policies and practices below that are detailed on the HR website at hr.depaul.edu.

Managers should ensure that they and their employees have read and understood these policies.

- Telecommuting
- Flexible work arrangements
- Sick time, short and long-term disability
- Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Review technology needs and resources. Become familiar with the technology tools available at the university, and make arrangements for staff to use these resources when working from home. Information about DePaul's technology resources can be found here.

Ensure employees know how to access technical support should they need assistance.

- Ensure employees know how to access their voicemail from home
- Request that employees set up remote access on their office computers
- Determine which platform(s) you will use to communicate as a team, clarify expectations for online availability, and confirm that everyone has access to the technology tool(s) and support resources.

Draft a work plan. Review the questions below with your staff and work through answers together.

- What routine responsibilities/tasks cannot be fulfilled while working remotely and how will it impact operations or other people? Are there alternatives to reduce the impacts?
- What routine responsibilities/tasks require regular communication and collaboration with others? Proactively contact each team member to confirm how you will communicate while everyone is working remotely.
- Employees often experience fewer interruptions while teleworking. Are there any special projects or tasks that you can advance while working remotely?
- What events or meetings are scheduled during the time in which the temporary telework arrangement is in place? Will they be postponed or canceled, or will they take place via technology? What follow-up needs to occur due to postponements or cancellations?

Make a communication and accountability plan. Managers should inform employees of their expectations regarding how often to send updates on work plan progress and what those updates should include. Managers should also communicate how quickly they expect the employee to respond while teleworking and the best ways for the employee to contact the manager while working remotely.

- Maintain team and one-to-one meetings.
- Conduct regular check-ins by phone or video chat. It will be important during this time to connect with your employees to provide regular updates, to establish structure to their work, and to keep everyone positive and optimistic. Check-ins should occur every other day or at least weekly.

Be positive. Maintain a positive attitude toward teleworking and show a willingness to trust employees; it will be key to ensuring a successful and productive arrangement. Rather than focusing on how many hours your employees are working, focus on measuring results and reaching objectives—regardless of the work arrangement. The employee's completed work product will be the primary indicator of success!