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<b>OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES INTERNAL DIRECTIVE</b>	<b>NUMBER: OHRM-4080-811-1</b>
<b>SUBJECT:  Teleworking</b>	<b>DATE:  October 1, 2002</b> <hr/> <b>Joseph V. Colantuoni /s/ Acting Director Office of Human Resources Management</b>

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## 1 PURPOSE

This directive sets forth the authority, policy, and responsibilities for managing the Teleworking program within the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) as required by DA-400-2 dated August 7, 2002.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

OHRM supports programs that improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, reduce the cost of office space, and assist employees in managing their work and family life. Teleworking has been shown to have a positive impact in all these areas.

## 3 POLICY

- a Employees, to include Division Directors, who perform duties that are suitable for teleworking and meet other established eligibility requirements, will be afforded the opportunity to telework.
- b Telework should be considered in providing reasonable accommodations for disabled employees and for addressing short-term agency or employee needs. Short-term uses could include allowing an employee to telework while the employee recovers from a minor injury affecting his/her mobility, or while working on a special work-related project with identifiable time frames and deliverables. In addition, teleworking may be considered for an emergency situation that involves safety concerns at the office. As a result, employees may be required to work temporarily at alternative worksites.
- c Employees may be approved both to telework and to work an alternative or compressed work schedule. Telework may be approved on a regular and reoccurring basis for employees for a minimum of one day a week to a maximum of three days a week. Exceptions for longer periods of time may be appropriate based on reasonable accommodations for disabled employees and for addressing short-term agency or employee needs.

## 4 REFERENCES

- a USDA Teleworking 4060-3 dated January 2, 2002.
- b DA Teleworking 400-2 dated August 7, 2002.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

- a Director of Office of Human Resources Management will: Review and approve or disapprove a Division Director's request to telework.
- b The Director, Human Resources Service Division (HRSD) will:
  - (1) Serve as the Telework Program coordinator for OHRM;
  - (2) Manage the telework program within OHRM;
  - (3) Provide OHRM Division Directors and staff with training, technical assistance, and consultative services regarding teleworking;
  - (4) Establish and maintain a database for all OHRM teleworkers; and,
  - (5) Complete the following information annually, on a Fiscal Year basis by October 31<sup>st</sup> of each year and incorporate the information into the annual report submitted to the Director of OHRM:
    - (a) Total number of employees in OHRM;
    - (b) Total number of employees participating in Telework (based on teleworkers definition – Appendix A).
    - (c) Statistical data pertaining to program participants with respect to race, sex, national origin, and disability; and,
    - (d) Percentage of increase or decrease in teleworkers since the last report.
- c OHRM Division Directors will:
  - (1) Inform employees of tasks which are suitable for teleworking and the eligibility requirements – see paragraph 6b;
  - (2) Review and approve or disapprove an employee's request to telework. However, before approving the request, the request must be sent to the Resource Manager to determine if equipment

and funds are available for related authorizations. Each request should be considered individually. If approved, sign a written telework agreement with the eligible employee. Provide a copy of the signed telework agreement to the employee, HRSD Telework Coordinator, Resource Manager, and the person responsible for approving time and attendance. Keep the original in the employee's time and attendance file. If disapproved, provide specific written reason(s) for the disapproval. Inform the employee that the disapproval may be sent to the second level supervisor for review and a final decision;

- (3) Ensure the teleworker is held to the same performance standards as those established in the traditional office. Separate standards for teleworking days are not to be established;
- (4) Ensure both teleworkers and non-teleworkers receive training prior to implementing a telework program in the division/office;
- (5) Schedule meetings when possible, when teleworkers are normally present in the main office; otherwise, consider expanding the use of conference calls for meetings with teleworkers;
- (6) Review each telework arrangement with each teleworker annually; to determine if the arrangement should continue; and,
- (7) Fulfill any labor-management relations obligations prior to implementing a teleworking program.

d Resource Manager will:

- (1) Review a telework request to determine if there is available excess equipment and sufficient funds to pay for authorized services – see paragraph 6a (5). Send request back to Division Director with information on availability of excess equipment and sufficient funds;
- (2) Upon receipt of a copy of the approved telework agreement, request a Federal calling card, when appropriate, and Ultra Call Forwarding for the approved teleworker. Also, hand receipt equipment to teleworker, if applicable;
- (3) Submit a completed General Services Administration (GSA) “Telecommuting Facility Reimbursement Information Sheet” to GSA Telecenter Coordinator, if applicable; and,

- (4) Upon termination of an arrangement, collect any equipment provided to the teleworker, cancel Federal calling card and Ultra Call Forwarding, and submit notification to GSA Telecenter Coordinator, if applicable.

e Telework participants will:

- (1) Submit a written request to his/her supervisor for review and a decision. Include in the memo: 1) reasons for requesting the teleworking arrangement; 2) benefits to the organization and the employee; 3) specific day(s) for teleworking; 4) location for the alternative worksite; 5) equipment that will be needed or will provide own; and, 6) proposed effective date for implementing the telework arrangement;
- (2) Utilize ultra call forwarding to transfer his/her own phone service from the traditional office to the alternative worksite and back to the traditional office at the end of the tour of duty;
- (3) Keep supervisor informed of their location each day he/she is at an alternative worksite;
- (4) Keep in contact with office colleagues to keep informed and updated; and,
- (5) Ensure customer service is maintained.

6 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

a Telework Arrangements:

- (1) Participation in a telework arrangement is not an employee entitlement. An employee may participate in the program if the responsible supervisor or designee decides that the employee's job duties are suitable for offsite work, and the employee meets the eligibility requirements of section 6b.
- (2) A telework agreement covers a period of one year, unless a shorter period of time is identified on the agreement; and/or a new supervisor or Division Director is assigned. If a new supervisor or Division Director is assigned a new telework agreement is required.

**Current approved teleworkers must** complete a new telework agreement (Appendix B) and any other forms that were not previously completed.

- (3) The telework arrangement under which an employee will perform work must be clearly set forth in a written agreement and signed by the respective supervisor and employee. **The telework agreement cited in Appendix B must be utilized.**

Also, the teleworker who is teleworking from a home location must complete a Safety Checklist at Appendix D. For the teleworker who will be teleworking from a GSA telecenter, he/she must complete a GSA “Telecommuting Facility Reimbursement Information Sheet”.

- (4) Once the telework agreement is approved, the employee must contact his/her IRD network administrator to discuss network access for their particular staff office, and to answer questions regarding setting-up or supporting a remote workstation. After the discussion, the employee will complete, if applicable, a Remote Access Request Form cited in Appendix D and submit to OO, IRD.
- (5) An employee who works from his/her home must provide his/her own computer equipment, printer, and fax machine. Government equipment may be authorized by the Division Director based on availability of excess equipment.

The following will be **authorized** to an employee who works from home when it is **strictly used for work related tasks only**: 1) installation of a second phone line and monthly associated service fee; 2) installation of a data secure line and monthly service fee, when it is determined by the supervisor that the employee needs excess to a database in order to perform essential tasks; 3) installation of an internet service and monthly service fee of an internet provider. However, the Division Director may rescind or deny the authority when budget constraints are imposed.

- (6) The costs associated with an employee working from a USDA or GSA Telecenter will be authorized. However, the Division Director may rescind or deny the authority when budget constraints are imposed.
- (7) OHRM will provide a teleworking employee who incur long distance phone charges in the normal conduct of his/her duties with the required Federal calling card. There will be no

reimbursement for long distance phone calls when the Federal calling card is made available.

Also, a teleworking employee will be authorized the Ultra Call Forwarding Service. The teleworker **must use** this service to transfer his/her office phone from their location and return it to the office at the end of the tour of duty.

- (8) A telework arrangement does not alter the terms and conditions of the appointment. However, an employee's official duty station may change if he or she does not regularly commute into the agency office.

See Definition of official duty station at Appendix A. All pay, leave, and travel entitlements must be based on the employee's official duty station. The telework arrangement must not affect other conditions of employment (e.g., hours of work, unless otherwise specified in the Telework agreement).

- (9) Upon appropriate 24 hour notice, the supervisor or designee has the right to inspect the home or alternate worksite and equipment to be used by an employee to ensure that the workspace is safe, and all equipment is properly installed and functioning.
- (10) The Telework arrangement may be terminated by either management or by the employee. Advance written notification of termination of the teleworking relationship must be provided except in emergency situations. An employee's teleworking arrangement may be terminated if performance or productivity declines, or if the arrangement no longer benefits the organization's needs.

When an arrangement is terminated, the Division Director must provide a copy to the HRSD Telework Coordinator; resource manager; OO/IRD; the person who approves the employee's time and attendance; and the employee's time and attendance folder.

At termination, the teleworker must return any Government equipment provided and the Federal calling card to the resource manager.

- (11) The Telework arrangement shall be for the performance of official duties and shall not be treated as an opportunity to conduct personal business.

- (12) Telework may not be used to replace appropriate arrangements for dependent care. However, this does not preclude a teleworker from having a caregiver working in the home while he/she teleworks.
- (13) Management reserves the right to require employees to report to the traditional worksite on their scheduled telework day(s) as the need arises. In addition, management may require an employee, who is teleworking on any day, to return to the traditional worksite for a portion of a day, with sufficient notice (normally two hours) required to travel to the traditional worksite.

b Determining Eligibility:

- (1) Tasks and work activities that may be approved for telework are: thinking and writing; policy development; research; analysis (e.g., investigating, program analysis, policy analysis, financial analysis); report writing; telephone-intensive tasks (excluding receptionist duties); computer-oriented tasks (e.g., programming, data entry, word processing, web page design; and data processing).
- (2) Tasks and work activities that may not be approved for telework:
  - (a) Require the employee to have daily face-to-face contact with the supervisor, colleagues, clients, or the general public in order to perform his or her job effectively, and which cannot otherwise be achieved via email, telephone, fax or similar electronic means;
  - (b) Require daily access to classified or highly sensitive information; or
  - (c) A part of trainee or entry-level positions.
- (3) An employee suitable for telework is an employee whose demonstrated personal characteristics are considered well suited to telework by the supervisor. These characteristics include:
  - (a) Demonstrated dependability and ability to handle responsibility;

- (b) A proven record of high personal motivation; good time management skills; and,
  - (c) A proven or expected minimum performance rating of “fully successful or “equivalent”.
- (4) Probationary status employees “generally” would not be eligible for telework because probationary status periods are established to allow supervisors an opportunity to personally observe and evaluate employee performance.

## 7 INQUIRIES

Direct all inquiries to the Office of Human Resources Management; Human Resources Service Division; Room 2W, Washington, D.C. 20250; telephone Number (202) 720-5781.