



TELEWORK FACT SHEET

FS 12-11: Performance Management and Teleworking

January 2012

1. As a supervisor, how do I manage the performance of my teleworkers?

In general, managing performance of your teleworkers is no different than managing the performance of your non-teleworkers. In fact, the law requires you to treat all employees equally when it comes to performance management, awards, work assignments, etc.

2. If I can't see my employees, how do I know they are working?

First, we want to assure you that throughout DOI, supervisors routinely do not see their employees on a daily or even weekly basis and have learned how to successfully manage their "virtual" workforce. So it can be done!

Examples of our virtual workforce include: ONRR - the senior official is located in the Main Interior Building. All of his employees - including his secretary, are located in other buildings around the country. OSM - Almost all of the the Office of Surface Mining auditors have their home as their official duty station. Their supervisor can be hundreds of miles away and may not see the auditor for weeks or months. USGS, BLM, BOR, FWS, NPS and others with regional headquarters - regional leaders are located in one place and their organization may be dispersed over several states. In USGS, regional executives supervisor center directors in many state. They may see each other monthly or quarterly. And similar situations exist in other bureaus. In the Solicitor's Office, the workforce is spread across the United States with supervisor hundreds or thousands of miles away. Your bureau or office, if not mentioned so far, is likely managing a virtual workforce somewhere in your organization - so just ask around to find experienced supervisors who can assist you.

You will know if your employees are working if they produce work products. We all know there are employees who come to the office and sit at their desk and don't get their work done...so how does it help if you can see them? The issue is not about where they work, it's about what your employees produce.

3. How do I set realistic work goals?

This is one of those great questions without an equally great answer. That's because every work situation is different, position descriptions differ, labor agreements differ and some aspects are personality driven. The real answer to his question is when you sign

a performance plan for your employee! So our suggestions are about how to establish a realistic performance plan.

Start with the position description, identify key duties and decide what you expect the person to do for each.

Then establish how well and how many "Xs" you expect the employee to complete in a year and then break that down by the week or month. We know that sometimes this is easier said than done. Consider measuring training, process improvement, cost savings, time savings, etc. If you are not sure what to measure, talk to your human resources officer - they can help you.

We recommend you do not break the work into daily "quotas". For a host of reasons beyond the control of the employee, they may not be able to make a target for one day but can easily make a weekly target as they manage the ebb and flow of the work cycles.

4. Can I require teleworkers to provide a report on their work accomplished?

You can do this only if you require non-teleworkers to do the same. See Fact Sheet 12-3, Special Reports for Teleworkers.

5. Can I require employees to put their government phone on call forward to their telework site?

Yes. Be sure you comply with any labor agreement.

6. Can I require employees to call me or email me throughout the day to see if they are working?

You can do this only if you require non-teleworkers to do the same. We *highly* discourage you from this approach. Taking this approach demonstrates a lack of respect and trust in your employees and will lead to morale problems.

7. What criteria must be met to prohibit an employee from teleworking?

Please read Fact Sheet 12-1- Eligibility and Participation. We also want to let you know that you may not prohibit telework based on the following criteria:

Rank: An individual cannot be prohibited from teleworking simply because of their rank (GS15, SES, etc.). Prohibitions must be based on the duties of the position.

Role: The fact that an employee is a supervisor cannot be used to prohibit the employee from teleworking. Prohibitions must be based on the duties of the position.

Geography or Level of Organizational Assignment: You may not prohibit an employee from teleworking because the work at a certain level of the organization (HQ, regional HQ, etc.) or because they work in a certain community. Prohibitions must be based on the duties of the position.

Students, probationary, term, temp, intermittent employees: Categorical prohibitions may not be established based on the employee's appointment status. Prohibitions must be based on the duties of the position.

7. What are my responsibilities in regard to telework for a contract employee that is in my organization?

You may not authorize or prohibit a contractor from teleworking. Contract employees are governed by their company's telework policy, not by the DOI policy unless their contract with DOI specifies otherwise.

If you have any questions or issues with a contract employee, contact your contracting officer or contracting officer representative.