

Telework Policy for Member & Committee Offices



Committee on House Administration

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All citations to the House Rules refer to the Rules of the House of Representatives

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GENERAL

The Telework Policy sets forth the guidelines and rules for Member and Committee offices that choose to establish their own Telework Program. As explained in more detail below, telework consists of routine, situational, or unexpected telework at an alternate work site (e.g., employee's residence) pursuant to an agreement between the employing authority and the employee, where the employee's primary duty station remains the physical location of the employing office.

Whether to offer employees the option of telework is entirely at the discretion of each employing authority, subject to the requirements of this Policy and as may be necessary or appropriate under the Congressional Accountability Act ("CAA"). Nothing in this Policy creates any obligation for Member and Committee offices to offer a telework option to employees. Teleworking is not a right or guaranteed benefit.

Any Member or Committee that chooses to allow employees to telework must first establish a Telework Program consistent with all applicable federal laws and regulations, House Rules and Committee on House Administration regulations, including those set forth in this Policy.

Using the guidelines set forth in the "Eligibility to Telework" section below, each employing authority who offers telework must determine which employees will be eligible to telework based upon the operational needs of the office; grounded in a determination as to whether the employee may perform the position's duties and responsibilities at an alternate work site without diminution of employee performance or the office's operations; and ensuring that teleworking employees continue to perform their duties in a satisfactory manner commensurate with their compensation.

Once an employing authority has established a Program consistent with this Policy and has made determinations as to which employees are eligible to participate and on what basis, but prior to an employee beginning to telework, a Telework Agreement must be signed by the employing authority. The Agreement must stipulate the terms of the employee's teleworking arrangement consistent with the requirements of this Policy, including specifying the alternate work site, whether the employee is eligible for routine, situational or unscheduled telework and stating the duties and responsibilities of both the employing authority and the employee. *(Sample Telework Program is included in the Model Employee Handbook and sample Telework Agreement are included at the end of this Policy.)*

In addition to the telework arrangements discussed in this Policy, there may be circumstances when teleworking may be appropriate or, in some cases, required in individual cases under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA), and/or other provisions of the CAA. The Office of House Employment Counsel ("OHEC") is available to assist employing authorities in evaluating such circumstances and their CAA legal obligations. Although this Policy applies equally to teleworking in such circumstances, there may be some situations where modifications or deviations from this Policy are appropriate under the CAA, for example, as reasonable accommodations. OHEC can advise employing authorities regarding such circumstances. However, nothing in this Policy is intended to indicate that teleworking is required by the CAA in any particular circumstance.

DEFINITIONS

Telework

Telework is a working arrangement, established by the employing authority and agreed upon by the employee in a written Telework Agreement, whereby the employee fully and successfully performs his or her duties while working at both an alternate work site and the employee's primary duty station. As defined below, teleworking at an alternate work site can be *routine*, *situational*, or *unscheduled*.

Routine Telework

Routine telework is a working arrangement whereby the employee is approved to work at an alternate worksite from his or her primary duty station on a regular and recurring basis, most often on agreed-upon day(s), which is specified in a written Telework Agreement. Examples include when an employee teleworks specific days each week (e.g., every Tuesday or Thursday), on a rotating basis or set weekly or monthly schedule, when the House is in recess, and/or some other similar recurring basis.

Situational Telework

Situational telework is a working arrangement whereby the employee is approved to work at an alternate work site on a case-by-case basis as the need arises which is specified in a written Telework Agreement. Examples include an employee with a short-term need for uninterrupted time to complete work on a complex project and an employee recovering from illness or an injury who is able to perform work but temporarily physically unable to report to their central work site.

Unscheduled Telework

Unscheduled telework is a working arrangement whereby an employee may opt for unscheduled telework at an alternate work site from his or her primary duty station when the office announces operating status of "Open with Option for Unscheduled Telework," as part of an office's Continuity of Operations Plan if the primary duty station is closed due to a natural or man-made disaster or part of a larger Continuation of Government. In such circumstances, staff are able to telework temporarily and for brief periods of time during such situations even absent a Telework Agreement. However, the existence of an executed Telework Agreement is required when employees telework on an extended and/or regular basis. Offices are encouraged to prepare for such scenarios by instituting an office policy detailing if/when employees are eligible/required to telework during an emergency and ensuring all staff have the necessary mobile equipment to do so.

Primary Duty Station

Per the *Members' Congressional Handbook*, the primary duty station for Member office employees is either the employing Member's district or Washington, D.C., which is determined by the employee's primary residence. District offices include mobile and satellite offices or a

location where an employee holds regular office hours (e.g., public library, local, state, or federal government building).

Per the *Committees' Congressional Handbook*, the primary duty station for committee employees is Washington, D.C.

The primary duty station for individuals who are employed by three or more employing authorities must either be Washington, D.C., or the District of one of their employing authorities, which is determined by the location of the employee's primary residence. All employing authorities must agree in writing to the designation of the shared employee's primary duty station to ensure they are aware of potential costs to their individual MRAs to cover travel expenses if the shared employee's primary duty station is not in Washington, D.C., or the Member's district.

An employee's primary duty station cannot be the employee's residence or alternate work site.

Alternate Work Site

An alternate work site is a location approved by the employing office from which an employee may telework through a Telework Program. The site is usually the employee's residence but, with the express agreement of the employing office, may be another appropriate location, so long as appropriate confidentiality can be ensured. The alternate work site cannot be a political, campaign, or commercial office. Telework Agreements should specify whether and under what circumstances an employee may telework from a location other than the established alternate work site.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Telework is an option of the employing office rather than an employee benefit, and it does not change the terms and conditions of employment.

The teleworking employee remains at will and serves at the pleasure of the employing office. Accordingly, regardless of the existence of a Telework Agreement, the employee has the right to resign from the position at any time, and the employing office can terminate the employee with or without cause, or with or without notice, at any time, except that the employing office cannot terminate employment for reasons in violation of applicable federal law or Rules of the House of Representatives.

ELIGIBILITY TO TELEWORK

Offices should include in their Telework Program the process and criteria used to decide which employees are eligible to telework. Each employing authority is solely responsible for determining which employees are eligible to participate in telework and under what circumstances (i.e., routine, situational, or unscheduled).

Although there is no “one size fits all” approach to making eligibility determinations, every employing authority should take into consideration the following criteria when determining eligibility for telework:

1. **Operational Needs of the Office:** The employee’s official duties and responsibilities must be able to be performed at an alternate work site without diminishing the employee’s performance or office operations in any way. This includes consideration of whether the employee can be as responsive to managers, coworkers, colleagues, stakeholders, and constituents from the alternate work site as when such services are provided from the primary duty station.
2. **Employee’s Job Responsibilities:** The position must generally be one which requires minimum levels of supervision when the employee is performing work at an alternate work site. For instance, an employee may have certain responsibilities that require direct supervision, and which would not be amenable to telework. The employee may perform other functions which require minimal supervision. In such a case, it may be appropriate to allow the employee to telework only when performing duties that require minimal supervision. If the employee is responsible for the direct supervision of other employees, the employee must demonstrate an ability to effectively supervise others from an alternate work site.
3. **Employee’s Work Habits:** The employee must have a demonstrated ability to work without direct supervision, must be organized, disciplined, able to work independently, meet deadlines and manage distractions. Employing authorities may want to consider performance evaluations in assessing this standard. **Additionally, to ensure continued compliance, employing authorities are strongly encouraged to consider instituting regular check-ins for teleworking employees (e.g., when they begin work for the day, end work for the day, providing summaries of work performed while teleworking, etc.).**
4. **Employee Exempt Status Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA):** When determining employee eligibility for teleworking, employing authorities must be cognizant of the potential difference in their ability to monitor hours worked when an employee performs work at an alternate work site. The FLSA requires that all employees (unless exempt) be paid overtime for hours worked over 40 in any workweek, and this requirement applies equally to work performed at an alternate work site as to work performed physically in the office. Employing offices must ensure that the hours worked by teleworking employees (unless FLSA exempt) are carefully monitored to ensure that relevant overtime obligations are met. One way to do this would be to require the employee to certify by email to their supervisor daily their starting and ending time each day (and any breaks of 20 minutes or longer) and identify any time outside of normal work hours when they perform work. OHEC can assist employing authorities in determining which employees may be “exempt” from the FLSA’s overtime requirements, and in determining whether time is concerned “work time” under the FLSA. (Exemption status under the FLSA is different than essential/non-essential status associated with furlough.)

5. **Specialized Needs:** The employee's need for specialized materials and/or equipment to perform their duties from an alternate work site must not pose an undue hardship upon the employing office.
6. **Restricted Access Materials:** Employees whose official duties require regular access to classified materials or materials that the employing authority has designated as office-only access are not eligible for telework.
7. **Disciplinary Issues:** Has the employee been disciplined for being tardy or for being absent without permission? Has the employee recently been placed on a Performance Improvement Plan that requires direct supervision and monitoring by a supervisor? These factors – applied consistently – may be relevant considerations in determining whether an employee is eligible for telework (or is eligible to continue teleworking). However, if an employing authority is considering denying telework to an employee based solely on an unexcused absence(s), please consult with OHEC first to evaluate any potential CAA liability issues.

Generally, except as may be required under the CAA, teleworking is not suitable for new employees, employees who require close supervision, or employees who require regular in-person interaction with co-workers, stakeholders, and constituents.

Paid interns are not eligible to telework unless due to a disaster (natural or man-made), pandemic or another emergency. To be eligible, an office must institute its continuity of operations plan requiring employees to telework.

TERMINATION/SUSPENSION/MODIFICATION TO A TELEWORK AGREEMENT

Offices may terminate, suspend, or modify the teleworking program for any reason, at any time. Offices may modify, suspend, or terminate an individual Telework Agreement at any time.

It is strongly recommended that an individual Telework Agreement be terminated if:

- The employee has been disciplined for being absent without permission more than once in a 12-month period. If an employing authority is considering terminating a telework arrangement for this reason, please consult with OHEC first to assess whether there may be any extenuating circumstances under the CAA which may excuse the absence.
- The employee has been disciplined for improper use of official equipment and/or resources.
- If the employee's performance and/or office operations diminishes during telework.
- If an employee does not comply with the terms of the Telework Agreement.

Terminations or modifications should be made in writing and in a timely manner.

SAFETY AT THE ALTERNATE WORK SITE

Offices may require employees to complete a safety checklist (see Addendum 2) self-certifying the alternate work site is free from hazards. The primary responsibility for the personal safety of the employee when working at a location other than the primary duty station, remains with each individual employee. The alternate work site must comply with applicable health and safety regulations. If the alternate work site is a private home, the teleworking employee is responsible for ensuring that the home complies with health and safety requirements.

The employing office may deny an employee the opportunity to telework or may rescind a Telework Agreement based on the existence or suspected existence of unsafe working conditions or hazardous materials in or at the alternate work site. The employing office may also have the alternate work site inspected for compliance with health and safety requirements. Inspections will be by appointment only. Offices should contact OHEC before engaging in on-site inspections.

Teleworking employees should follow basic safety precautions, including but not limited to:

- avoiding obstructions in the workplace;
- maintaining a clean workplace;
- eliminating trip-and-fall hazards;
- ensuring proper lighting, ventilation, and furniture; and
- taking fire safety precautions (e.g., smoke detectors).

If an employee incurs a work-related injury while teleworking, workers' compensation law and rules may apply. A teleworking employee must notify their employing office immediately and complete all necessary and/or employing office requested documents regarding the injury.

In the event of a job-related incident or accident during teleworking working hours, the employee must immediately report the incident to the employee's supervisor. The employee must allow agents of the employing office to investigate and/or inspect the alternate work site in the event of injury, theft, loss, or alleged tort liability related to the teleworking arrangement.

MEETINGS

Employees may not conduct official in-person meetings at their residence. Official in-person meetings should be scheduled at the employee's primary duty station or in a public place. Meetings via Zoom, Teams or other House-approved platforms may be conducted from the alternate work site. However, employees must ensure that the environment for all such meetings is professional. Additionally, employees must always remember that House Rules and the CAA apply while teleworking. Accordingly, employees who are teleworking are required to maintain compliance with their office's Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Policy and to report any violations of that policy.

INSURANCE AND TAXES

Employees are advised to consult with their insurance agent and a tax consultant for information regarding home work sites. Individual tax implications, auto and homeowner's insurance, and incidental residential utility costs are the responsibility of the employee.

CARE OF DEPENDENTS

Care of dependents should not interfere with a teleworking employee's ability to perform official duties.

Telework can facilitate an employee's ability to manage both work and dependent care. However, it is important to remember that telework is not meant to be a substitute for dependent care. Employees may not telework with the intent of or for the sole purpose of meeting their dependent care responsibilities while performing official duties. While performing official duties, employees are expected to arrange for dependent care just as they would if they were working at the primary duty station.

An eligible employee who is needed to care for a family member due to the family member's serious health condition and is taking intermittent leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") may be able to do so while teleworking if appropriate under the circumstances; however, the employee must ensure that they segregate and report time during the workday spent caring for a family member under the FMLA from work time. This is both to ensure that the employee receives the full benefit of the FMLA (and that the employing authority is aware when the employee is utilizing FMLA so as not to request work during such time), and to ensure that the office is able to accurately track work time and FMLA time.

An FMLA-eligible employee who is unable to telework due to his or her serious health condition should not telework during periods of incapacity when they are utilizing FMLA. For employees on intermittent FMLA leave for their own serious health condition, it is important that they segregate and report time during the workday when they are not working and using FMLA leave, and the time when they are working and are not using FMLA leave, for the reasons discussed above.

EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES AND WORK-RELATED EXPENSES

Only specifically authorized teleworking expenses are reimbursable. If the employing authority has authorized the employee to conduct work at a fee-based teleworking center, charges related to use of such centers are reimbursable, consistent with the *Members' Congressional Handbook* and *Committees' Congressional Handbook* regulations.

Use of Franked Mail

The employing authority must account for any mail sent under the Frank from an alternate work site on a **Certification of Franked Mail form**. Each teleworking employee must complete this form on a monthly basis and forward it to the primary duty station on the last business day of the

month. The completed form must be filed with the Office of Postal Operations by the second business day of the following month. The completed certification must bear the employing authority's original signature certifying its accuracy. In the case of a Member office, the information on the form should be incorporated into the consolidated certification covering all of the Member's district offices and/or alternate work sites.

Supplies and Equipment

The employing office may provide ordinary and necessary office supplies for employees to use at their alternate work site.

Employees may only use official computer equipment and software to conduct official business when teleworking. The office retains ownership and control of any and all software, equipment, data or documents taken and/or placed in an alternate work site. All employees are required to return all such equipment and documents (including returning or deleting copies, as the case may be) promptly upon request from their employing authority. Only mobile House equipment (e.g., desktop or laptop computers, desktop printers, monitors, etc.) may be transferred to the alternate work site.

Employees must follow House Information Resources (HIR) information security precautions and network computer configuration guidelines when teleworking. For any questions related to HIR's cybersecurity policies, please contact HIR's Information Assurance team via email at cybersecurity@mail.house.gov.

Teleworking employees shall comply with all House policies and employing office guidelines for uses of computer hardware and software, including:

- Users must only use House accounts and House information systems to conduct official business.
- Users must only use official House email accounts to conduct official business.
- Users will only use, transit, process, or store House information while connected to the local House network or to the House virtual private network (VPN).

Offices must maintain an inventory of the office equipment and software issued to the teleworking employee for use at the alternate work site. All office equipment and software used at the alternate work site must be noted in the Telework Agreement. The teleworking employee must notify the office immediately if any official equipment is lost, damaged or stolen. The office is responsible for immediately notifying the Chief Administrative Officer. Members are liable for any equipment that is damaged, lost or stolen. Members may seek relief from liability so long as the equipment was not lost, damaged or stolen due to the employee's negligence.

Maintenance, Repair and Replacement

All repairs to official equipment must be conducted at the primary duty station and the teleworking employee is responsible for bringing any equipment to the primary duty station for repair. Vendors, contractors, and employees of the Officers of the House may not be sent to the alternate work site.

If at any time an employee is unable to conduct their official duties due to a malfunction/problem with his/her official equipment or with connectivity to the House network, the employee may be asked to report to the primary duty station until the equipment is repaired and/or connectivity issues are resolved. Employees who are unable to effectively perform their regular duties as a result of such malfunctions or problems and who are unable to report to the primary duty station and therefore are unable to work, should generally be charged annual leave for the time they are unable to work.

Repair and/or replacement costs for privately owned furniture used at the alternate work site are the responsibility of the employee.

Furniture

Per the *Members' Congressional Handbook* and *Committees' Congressional Handbook*, the MRA and committee funds may be used to procure or reimburse the cost of items such as desks (standing or traditional), office chairs and desk lamps necessary for employees who telework. Offices are required to maintain an inventory of items used in telework locations. Offices must receive prior approval before purchasing any single item exceeding \$250.00.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY

Products, documents, and records used and/or developed while teleworking shall remain the property of the employing office and are subject to House and employing office policies regarding confidentiality and records retention requirements.

An employee served with a subpoena for employing office or House documents or files located at the alternate work site remains bound by House Rule VIII, and should contact the Office of General Counsel, (202) 225-9700, for guidance.

Restricted-access materials shall not be taken out of the central work site or accessed through the computer at the alternative work site unless approved in advance and in writing by the supervisor.

All records and official communications remain the property of the employing office and must be maintained on the employee's official equipment and saved per the employing office's records management procedures. All official equipment, documents and communications should be kept secure and confidential. Teleworking employees are responsible for ensuring that proper security measures are in place to ensure information is not accessed by anyone other than the teleworking employee.

LIABILITY FOR DAMAGES

Pursuant to law, the House of Representatives will not be liable for damages to a teleworking employee's personal or real property during the course of performance of official duties or while using House equipment in the employee's alternate work site unless there is liability under the

Federal Tort Claims Act or a claim made under the Military Personnel and Civilian Claims Act is deemed reimbursable.

TELEWORK AGREEMENT CONTENTS

Consistent with all applicable Federal laws and regulations, House Rules and Committee on House Administration regulations, offices must include the following in all Telework Agreements:

1. Address of the Alternate Work Site: Agreements should also stipulate whether and under what circumstances an employee may telework from a location other than the approved alternate work site including the process which the employee must follow to obtain approval to work at another location.
2. Type of telework: Specify if the agreement is for routine, situational, or unscheduled telework and provides details accordingly. For example:
 - a. For routine telework, which day(s) per week the employee will be teleworking, the general hours of work each day, and any periods when such hours are modified (e.g., during recess).
 - b. For situational telework, details on maximum number of days an employee is eligible to telework during each period of situational telework.
 - c. For unscheduled telework, details on when employees are expected/eligible to telework during a man-made or natural disaster and/or when the office has instituted its COG or COOP plans.
3. Term of the agreement: Consider a one-year renewable agreement, or even a six-month agreement in telework situations that may need to be revised more frequently.
4. Equipment and other expenses: Determine and specify equipment, supplies and other expenses that will be covered by the office.
5. Expectations: Specify frequency and modes of communication (e.g., email, Teams, text, call) between the telework employee and the employee's supervisor and/or co-workers. Offices are strongly urged to include other expectations such as employee VPN into the House network each day, be available by phone and email throughout the workday, regular check-ins when beginning and ending work for the day, providing summaries of work performed while teleworking, daily reporting of hours worked for FLSA non-exempt employees, etc.
6. Termination/modification: Explain that the agreement can be terminated or modified and outline the conditions for termination/modification.

Offices are encouraged to include the following content in individual employee Telework Agreements based on successful practices:

7. Safety: Employees should complete a self-certification safety checklist.
8. Requirements: Outline any additional requirements (e.g., technology).
9. Expectations for telework during an office closure: Describe weather and safety leave regulations, which state employees who voluntarily participate in a telework program and have an established Telework Agreement in place are generally expected to telework during an office closure due to weather conditions or other operating status emergency.
10. Information security: provide a summary of data security procedures in the agreement.

See *Appendix A, Sample Teleworking Agreement*.

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES

To and From the Primary Duty Station

Per the *Members' Congressional Handbook* and *Committees' Congressional Handbook*, transportation expenses incurred by an employee while commuting between their primary residence and primary duty station are not reimbursable. In addition, an employee who is authorized to telework may not be reimbursed for transportation expenses between his or her alternate work site, if the alternate work site is somewhere other than the employee's primary residence, and primary duty station.

To and From the Alternate Work Site

Employees who telework may be reimbursed for local transportation costs (i.e., mileage, rideshare) incurred while conducting official business near their alternate work site and primary residence.

Employees who telework may be reimbursed for expenses incurred while conducting official travel applicable with the *Members' Congressional Handbook* and *Committees' Congressional Handbook* regulations.

MANAGEMENT OF TELEWORK EMPLOYEES

It is important that offices effectively manage teleworkers to ensure that telework does not diminish the employee's performance or office operations. Managers should:

- Set clear expectations as to requirements for teleworkers to VPN into the House network and to be available by phone and/or email while teleworking.
- Set clear expectations regarding communications between employees and supervisors; employees and co-workers; employees and other offices (e.g., whether the communication will be via telephone, email, or other technologies, and how often the communication should take place).

- Take appropriate action to deny or revoke telework for employees who have been disciplined for misconduct.
- Deny telework for employees handling secure materials inappropriate for telework or whose work requires on-site activity.
- Effectively manage teleworkers to maintain compliance with their Telework Agreement.
- Treat teleworkers the same as the office treats non-teleworkers for purposes of performance reviews, training, work requirements, etc.

Performance Management

Managers must be deliberate about how and when they communicate with employees when they are teleworking. They also must understand how to measure and account for performance against established performance standards for the position while building connections with employees when they cannot see them.

Managers should be trained on fair and equitable performance management for hybrid teams, including raising awareness among supervisors that evaluation of an employee's performance should be based on factors such as accountability for results or quality of the work.

Time and Attendance

A telework policy should establish clear roles and responsibilities as well as effective lines of communication for accurate tracking of time and attendance. Managers and supervisors are required to obtain reasonable assurance that employees who telework are working when scheduled and that time and attendance information accurately reflects time worked as well as absences requested and approved.

Training

Offices are encouraged to have managers take training on how to effectively manage employees who telework.

APPENDIX A - SAMPLE TELEWORK AGREEMENT

The Telework Agreement form below is a basic template that can be tailored to match the employing authority's specific needs and circumstances. Generally, a Telework Agreement would include things like:

- listing the employing office's policies on telework and a signature indicating understanding and agreement to abide by those policies;
- listing the telework schedule technology used to facilitate the telework; and
- any other policy, provision or aspect of the agreement that the organization, the manager or the employee feels should be put in writing.

Telework Agreement

This document represents the agreement for the telework arrangement between _____ (Employing Office) and _____ (Employee). This document is not an employment contract and does not alter the "at will" employment status of the employee. This Telework Agreement incorporates by reference the duties and responsibilities of both the Employing Office and the Employee described in the Office's Telework Policy.

***NOTE:** Teleworking is not "being on call" but working a full day in the same fashion as when in the primary duty station (i.e., readily available by phone and email). Staff may not be in a telework status while in transit (i.e., driving, on a flight, etc.).*

Voluntary Participation

Employee voluntarily agrees to work at the approved alternate worksite indicated below and to follow all applicable policies and procedures. Employee recognizes that the telework arrangement is not an employee benefit and can be modified or withdrawn at any time in the sole discretion of the Employing Office.

Cancellation of Agreement

Employee understands that the Employing Office may cancel the telework arrangement and instruct the employee to resume working at the primary duty station at any time, in its sole discretion. In the event that the employment relationship is terminated, all items that are the property of the Employing Office/House of Representatives are to be returned promptly to the Employing Office.

Official Duty Station

The Employee's primary duty station is the employer's office located at _____. The Employees alternate work site is _____.

Work Schedule

Employee understands that the Employing Office has the discretion to determine or change the telework schedule. Work schedule will follow established office procedures for setting,

requesting and approval of available work schedule options. Identified work schedule ensures supervisor, coworkers, customers, etc., can interact with telework employee during the identified work schedule timeframes.

Time and Attendance. The employee will follow established office procedures for requesting and obtaining approval of leave. The supervisor must certify time and attendance for hours worked at the alternate work site. Employing Office and Employee agree that the Employee's official hours will be: _____

Official Duties. The employee may not conduct personal, campaign or political business while in official duty status at the alternate worksite.

Type of Telework

_____ Routine (Telework on a regular and recurring basis.)

[Specify days or dates employee will be regularly teleworking.]

_____ Situational (Telework on a case-by-case basis as the need arises.)

[Specify situations in which telework will be allowed as well as processes and procedures for determining when situational telework may be requested and how it will be approved.]

_____ Unscheduled (Telework when central work site is closed due to weather or as part of the office's Continuity of Operations or Continuity of Government Plan.

Term of the Agreement

[In this section, the Employing office can specify the length of the telework agreement (i.e., one-year renewable agreement, for the current Congress, on a trial basis).]

Assignments and Communication

[In this section, the Employing Office should provide specifics regarding work assignments, agreements on checking voice mail and email, daily check-ins, contacting the supervisor, recording of hours worked, providing status reports on a daily or weekly basis regarding work performed, etc.]

Employees are expected to come into the office as needed or requested even if the employee would otherwise be scheduled to telework. The Employing Office may in its sole discretion, work with employees to strike the right balance to include, when possible, providing alternative days/times to replace changes to regular telework schedules. Supervisors should also be flexible when possible, in situations where employees need modifications for unexpected or urgent personal matters.

Equipment

Official work can only be conducted on official equipment issued to the employee from the employing office. The employee has been provided the following equipment by the office to be used at the alternate work site (specify make and model of equipment and provide either Asset # or S/N, if applicable):

<i>Item</i>	<i>Asset #</i>	<i>S/N</i>
Laptop/Desktop:		
Docking Station:		
Monitor:		
Printer:		
Keyboard and Mouse		
Other Item 1:		
Other Item 2:		
Other Item 3:		
Other Item 4:		

Furniture

Official funds may only be used to purchase items such as desks (standing or traditional), office chairs and desk lamps necessary for telework at a cost not to exceed \$250 per item. The office _____ will _____ will not pay for furniture to be used at the alternate work site. If purchased the office will maintain an inventory of all furniture purchased. Employee agrees to return all furniture items purchased with official funds back to the office upon termination of the telework agreement or employment.

Travel Expenses

Employee will not be reimbursed for any expenses incurred to travel between the employee's primary residence or alternate work site to or from the employee's primary duty station consistent with the *Members' Congressional Handbook* and *Committees' Congressional Handbook* regulations.

Employee may be reimbursed for local transportation (e.g., mileage, rideshare) expenses incurred when conducting official business between their alternate work site and another location of official business within the Member's District or Washington, D.C. area, applicable with the *Members' Congressional Handbook* and *Committees' Congressional Handbook* regulations.

For employees who telework more than 50 miles outside the Washington, D.C. area, office should include the following language: [Employee may be reimbursed for official travel between their alternate work site and an official location so long as travel expenses do not exceed the cost of the direct route between the primary duty station and the official location. Employee must submit a Combined Travel Form and will be reimbursed either the cost of the direct route or actual travel expenses, whichever is less.

Weather and Safety

Employee must be prepared to perform work when an office may be closed due to weather or other circumstances.

Employee Checklist

. The employee understands and/or agrees to the following:

1. Has read the Telework Policy stating the policies and procedures of the program and agrees to comply with them.	
2. Has been issued equipment and understands their responsibility to ensure appropriate use of the equipment.	
3. Has read the policies and procedures covering classified secure, confidential and/or private information, understands and agrees to comply with them.	
4. Alternate worksite is an adequate and safe office space.	
5. Is required to and will comply with all Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives and the Office's Employee Handbook	
6. Performance expectations have been discussed and are clearly understood.	
7. Office may terminate employee participation at any time for any reason in Office's sole discretion.	
8. Failure to comply with the Telework Policy may subject him/her to termination.	

The employee agrees that he/she has read and understands the Telework Policy and this Agreement and agrees to abide by the provisions.

Employee's Signature

Title

Supervisor Checklist

Supervisors must use this checklist to ensure that telework requirements are met and that covered employees understand the policies and procedures of the telework program. A Telework Agreement is not final until the checklist is complete. After an item is completed, list the date on the line next to it.

Checklist Item	Date Completed
1. Telework guidelines have been explained to the employee and signed by supervisor and employee (attached).	
2. The provisions governing premium pay have been explained to the employee including that he/she must receive the supervisor's approval in advance of working overtime.	
3. Performance expectations have been discussed with the employee. Performance Standards are in place and have been signed.	
4. Policies and procedures covering classified, secure and privacy data including PII have been explained to the employee.	
5. The provisions governing changes to the terms and conditions of the Telework Agreement have been explained to the employee, including that they must	

receive the supervisor's approval in advance of any changes to the location of the alternate work site. Failure to obtain management approval may result in termination of the Telework Agreement.	
6. The employee has been given and signed the Safety Checklist, which identifies safety and adequacy issues that employees should consider when working from home (attached).	

Supervisor's Signature

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Staff Director/Chief of Staff Signature

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

APPENDIX B - SAMPLE SELF-CERTIFYING SAFETY CHECKLIST

Depending on the requirements of the employing authority, the telework policy may require the employee to complete a safety checklist self-certifying the home office (or other work environment) is free from hazards. If this is a requirement, the intent of the safety checklist must only be for program purposes, such as acquainting the employee with workplace safety.

Safety Checklist for Alternate Work Site

Participating employees may use the following checklist to assist them in a survey of the overall safety and adequacy of their telework site. The following are only recommendations, and do not encompass every situation that may be encountered. Employees are encouraged to obtain professional assistance with issues concerning appropriate electrical service and circuit capacity for residential worksites.

- ☐ Practice a fire evacuation plan for use in the event of an emergency.
- ☐ Check your smoke detectors regularly and replace batteries once a year.
- ☐ Always have a working fire extinguisher conveniently located in your home, and check the charge regularly.
- ☐ Computers can be heavy. Always place them on sturdy, level, well maintained furniture.
- ☐ Use a sturdy chair that provides good support and can be adjusted.
- ☐ Choose office chairs that provide good supporting backrests and allow adjustments to fit you comfortably.
- ☐ Locate your computer to eliminate noticeable glare from windows and lighting. Place computer monitor at height that is comfortable and does not require neck or back strain. Locate computer keyboards at heights that do not require wrist strain or place the keyboard on an adjustable surface.
- ☐ Install sufficient lighting in locations that reduce glare at the work surface.
- ☐ Arrange file cabinets so that open drawers do not block aisles.
- ☐ Be sure to leave aisle space where possible to reduce tripping hazards.
- ☐ Always make sure electrical equipment is connected to grounded outlets.
- ☐ Avoid fire hazards by never overloading electrical circuits.

- ☐ Inspect and repair carpeting with frayed edges or loose seams. Avoid using throw rugs that can cause tripping hazards in your work space.
- ☐ Locate computers, phones and other electrical equipment in a manner that keeps power cords out of walkways.
- ☐ Always power down computers after the workday is over and always turn off all electrical equipment during thunderstorms.
- ☐ Keep your work area clean and avoid clutter, which can cause fire and tripping hazards.
- ☐ Do not allow non-government employees to operate or repair government owned equipment.
- ☐ Always keep government files and information in a secure place and do not advertise your home office to strangers.
- ☐ Always use proper lifting techniques when moving or lifting heavy equipment and furniture.
- ☐ Always report accidents and injuries immediately to your supervisor.

Print Employee's Name

Title

Employee's Signature

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)